

**CHILDREN'S ADMINISTRATION**  
**Family Assessment Response**



**2015-17 BIENNIAL BUDGET**

Request	FY16	FY17	15-17
FTE	39.0	46.0	42.5
GF-State	\$2,500,000	\$4,000,000	\$6,500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</b>	<b>\$8,000,000</b>	<b>\$13,000,000</b>

**DECISION PACKAGE SUMMARY**

The Children's Administration (CA) requests resources to continue the implementation of Family Assessment Response. By funding this request, CA is expected to finish implementation in all offices by the end of Fiscal Year 2016.

**PROBLEM STATEMENT**

In the 2012 legislative session, Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6555 allowed for the creation of a differential or alternative response within child protective services. In Washington, this alternative is called Family Assessment Response (FAR) and CA began implementation in three offices on January 1, 2014. This response is a new form of engagement for families who have come to the attention of the child welfare system. This engagement, combined with intensive delivery of services and other supports, has been effective in other states in reducing the rate of placement in out of home care and preventing re-referral into the child welfare system.

**PROPOSED SOLUTION**

CA received funding in the 2013-15 biennium to implement FAR. These resources have provided additional staff and services necessary for the successful roll out of FAR. However, CA needs additional resources to complete the phase in of FAR across the state. This phase in will be complete by July 1, 2016.

In addition to social workers and services for families, CA is requesting the ongoing funding of FAR lead positions in every office. These office leads are currently provided through CA's base funding but only on a temporary basis during the implementation of FAR in that office. CA does not have the resources to fund these positions on an ongoing basis. These positions form key relationships with the community around the CA office, providing valuable referrals to community resources. A crucial component of FAR is reestablishing connection for the families to their community supports so they can avoid future crisis without coming back into the CA system. The lead positions are critical for



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maintaining the family and community relationships. The FAR office leads also provide valuable ongoing training and quality assurance for the Family Assessment Response program.

#### EXPECTED RESULTS

The budget request supports DSHS Goal 3: Protection – Each individual who is vulnerable will be protected. The decision package is essential to implementing the CA's Strategic Objective 3.3: Percentage of children with a founded allegation who have a new founded allegation within six months will decrease.

This request supports the Results Washington goal to help keep people safe in their homes, on their jobs, and in their communities and decrease the rate of children with founded allegations of child abuse and/or neglect.

CA implemented FAR in three offices on January 1, 2014. Five more offices began implementation in July 2014. Preliminary data from the offices shows a very low rate of placement in out of home care (2 percent) but this has not been compared to the rate for similar cases across the state. However, the out of home placement rate in Washington is historically 12 percent for all cases. Families and social workers anecdotally state that FAR has led to increased engagement between them, which leads to acceptance of services and placement prevention, even for some families with long child welfare records.

#### STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

Stakeholders were instrumental in the passage of the differential response program or FAR in Washington. They have supported adequate funding for this approach and have indicated they will continue to do so. They are particularly interested in promoting the continued existence of FAR office leads and the community connections that the leads can facilitate.



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