



# CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN

FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023  
QUARTER THREE  
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

June 23, 2023

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## Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Strategic Policy Initiatives

The Office of Colorado's Child Protection Ombudsman (CPO) is pleased to share this Quarter Three Performance Evaluation that tracks the agency's performance on its Strategic Policy Initiatives (SPI). SPI help to ensure that the CPO is effectively and efficiently implementing practices to address system-wide issues impacting child protection systems, while also providing a high quality of service for individuals seeking one-to-one assistance.<sup>1</sup> SPI are intended to guide the agency's work for multiple fiscal years. To create meaningful change, the CPO regularly updates SPI as the needs and resources of the agency expand, and as the field of child protection changes.

Though quarter three performance evaluations are intended to summarize agencies' performance on SPI from October 1st through December 31st, the CPO is sharing information from July 1st through March 30th – effectively covering the first, second and third quarters of the Fiscal Year (FY). The CPO is overseen by the CPO Board of Directors and agency staff routinely provide public updates regarding the agency's performance during bi-monthly board meetings.<sup>2</sup> Due to the amount of reporting required of the agency, the CPO is meeting the requirements of C.R.S. §2-7-204 by publishing two quarterly evaluations per year; however, as indicated, this report will present performance information regarding three quarters.

In its FY 2021-22 Performance Plan, the CPO identified three SPI to help guide the agency's work in the areas of communication and outreach, efficient and impactful practices, expanding expertise and promoting best practices. They include:

- Outreach and Education: Educate the public and stakeholders about the CPO to ensure equitable access to services and to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Services and Programs: Continue to develop and strengthen efficient and effective CPO practices to better serve Colorado citizens.
- Public Policy: Continue to serve as a leader in advancing reforms to Colorado's child protection system.

Each SPI has corresponding strategies, critical processes, key activities, as well as key outcome(s) and metrics, that help demonstrate the CPO's performance towards achieving the SPI. These are detailed later in this document. Key takeaways from quarters one, two and three of FY 2022-2023 include how the agency:

- Successfully expanded its outreach efforts in the first two quarters of FY 2022-2023, resulting in three consecutive record-setting months in Q3 for number of cases opened in FY 2022-23. The total number of cases opened during the first three quarters is up 9% from the same period in FY 2021-2022, while the number of cases in Q3 is up 27% from Q3 of last year.

- Continues to provide consistent, effective and equitable service to communities across Colorado while engaging clients, youth, families, child protection professionals and other stakeholders in identifying systemic issues.
- Collaborates with legislators, stakeholders and people with lived experience in Colorado child protection systems to develop and promote evidence-based solutions to the systemic issues experienced by our clients, youth, families and others in communities across the state.

The CPO is committed to establishing and tracking performance metrics. Please reach out to the CPO with any questions or for additional information.

**SPI 1 – OUTREACH AND EDUCATION: Educate the public and stakeholders about the CPO to ensure equitable access to services and to identify opportunities for improvement.**

The CPO is statutorily required “to help educate the public concerning child maltreatment and the role of the community in strengthening families and keeping children safe.” See C.R.S. § 19-3.3- 103(2)(c).

The CPO has identified the following strategies, critical processes, key metrics and outcomes as ways to increase the public’s knowledge of the CPO’s services while concurrently learning how best to engage with various communities.

***Strategy: Target communications and engagements to strengthen the CPO’s statewide presence and services.***

The CPO will work to ensure that all communities in Colorado have equal access to CPO services and information. Expanding engagement with communities less familiar with the CPO –particularly populations which are overrepresented in the child protection system – will be key to promoting impactful, equitable reforms to Colorado’s child protection system.

**Critical Process: Engage youth impacted by the child protection system to increase the number of youth who receive services directly from the CPO, promote equitable access to services and improve how the agency serves youth in Colorado.**

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**Key Activities**

**FY 2022-2023**

- Utilizing the results of youth surveys and working groups completed during Fiscal Year 2021-22, improve the CPO’s youth outreach materials and develop new materials and platforms to connect with youth in Colorado.
- Distribute youth-specific materials describing the CPO’s services to agencies, providers and communities serving youth in out-of-home placements.
- Complete outreach campaigns to increase the CPO’s direct contact with youth clients, including those in DYS youth centers and out-of-home placements. Discuss their experiences, needs and how the CPO may better serve them.
- Continue to engage youth panels and facilitate discussions with youth groups to re-assess the agency’s materials and services.

**FY 2023-2024**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

**FY 2024-2025**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

**Key Outcome(s) and Metrics**

- Distribution of youth-specific written materials, in both English and Spanish, as measured by

the number of sites in which materials are distributed.

- Engagement with youth impacted by the child protection system, as measured by the number of presentations and/or focus groups hosted by the CPO.
- Increased services to youth, as measured by an increase in cases initiated by youth.

### **Q1-Q3 Performance**

- **Utilize Results of Survey:** The report served as the basis for drafting the CPO's budget request item for the Tori Shuler Youth Outreach Program for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.
- **Materials Distributed:** A total of 84 youth posters and electronic copies were distributed to 14 statewide Division of Youth Services facilities. A review in Quarter 3 of the Devereux Shelter for Unaccompanied Migrant Children found that the facility failed to display the posters provided to the facility.
- **Outreach:** As part of the Timothy Montoya Task Force to Prevent Youth from Running from Out-of-Home Placement, the CPO commissioned a study from the University of Denver Action Lab that utilized focus groups in residential treatment facilities to capture the experiences and needs of youth who have experience running from a facility.
- **Engage Youth Panels:** Alongside the focus groups, the Timothy Montoya Task Force and Mandatory Reporting Task Force both hosted panels of former youth with lived experience in child protection systems.
- **Number of Sites Materials Distributed:** 14
- **Number of Presentations:** 4
- **Number of Cases Initiated by Youth:** 47

**Critical Process: Engage child protection professionals, including but not limited to treatment and service providers, educators, medical providers, mental health professionals and the child protection legal community.**

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### **Key Activities**

#### **FY 2022-2023**

- Complete outreach campaigns to at least four organizations/agencies/providers per year.
- Provide educational opportunities to interested entities about the CPO's services.
- Collect feedback from child protection professionals regarding issues impacting services and possible improvements to the CPO's education materials and engagement opportunities.

#### **FY 2023-2024**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### **FY 2024-2025**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### Key Outcome(s) and Metrics

- Engagement with professionals/providers, as measured by the number of presentations completed per quarter.
- Increased services to child protection professionals, as measured by an increase in cases initiated by child protection professionals

### Q1-Q3 Performance

- Outreach: The CPO met directly with nine agencies and organizations, including La Cocina, Colorado Counties, Inc., Urban Peak, Fostering Great Ideas, Pueblo County Department of Human Services, Adams County Department of Human Services, Denver Indian Family Resource Center, Raise the Future and Denver Health.
- Educational Opportunities: The CPO served as an educational resource at the state, national and global levels with presentations to the Office of the Respondent Parents' Counsel Conference, the Kempe Center's International Virtual Conference, the Global Oneness Summit, West Virginia Foster Care Ombudsman office, the United States Ombudsman Association Conference, the New Mexico General Assembly, the Alaska State Ombudsman and the American Bar Association / Kids in Need of Defense Unaccompanied Immigrant Children's Service Provider Training.
- Collect Feedback: A survey of the CPO listserv's 785 subscribers was distributed through the CPO newsletter, earning feedback from 25 respondents – overwhelmingly from the child protection professional arena.
- Number of Presentations: 19
- Number of Cases Initiated by Professionals: 108

**Critical Process: Engage caregivers – including parents, relatives, foster parents, adoptive parents and kin – of children involved in the child protection system to help ensure all caregivers have equitable access to CPO services.**

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### Key Activities

#### FY 2022-2023

- Develop and distribute caregiver-specific materials describing the CPO's services to agencies, providers and communities serving caregivers.
- Complete outreach campaigns to increase the CPO's direct contact with parent clients, including foster parents, adoptive parents and parents of youth in DYS youth centers.
- Discuss their experiences, needs and how the CPO may better serve them.
- Collect feedback from caregivers regarding issues impacting services and possible improvements to the CPO's services and future engagement opportunities.

#### FY 2023-2024

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### FY 2024-2025

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### Key Outcome(s) and Metrics

- Distribution of caregiver-specific written materials, in both English and Spanish, as measured by the number of sites in which materials are distributed.
- Engagement with caregivers impacted by the child protection system, as measured by the number of presentations and/or focus groups hosted by the CPO.
- Increased services to parents, relatives or other caregivers, as measured by an increase in cases initiated by parents, relatives or other caregivers.

### Q1-Q3 Performance

- Parent-Specific Materials: N/A
- Outreach: N/A
- Collect Feedback: Listening to caregiver concerns regarding inequitable access to existing complaint resolution mechanisms within county departments, the CPO collaborated with stakeholders through the CDHS Statute Review Group to bring forward Senate Bill 23-210 which improves the CPO's ability to address concerns.
- Number of Sites Materials Distributed: N/A
- Number of Presentations: N/A
- Number of Cases Initiated by Caregivers: 551 (Q1 - 153, Q2 - 183, Q3 - 215)

**Critical Process: Engage rural communities to ensure citizens across Colorado are informed of the CPO's services and have equitable opportunities to inform the agency and improve practices.**

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### Key Activities

#### FY 2022-2023

- Complete outreach campaigns to at least two rural judicial districts per year. During the campaigns, engage with entities such as child welfare departments, court improvement programs, school districts, regional hospitals, non-profit community organizations and law enforcement.
- Collect feedback from rural communities about issues impacting child protection services in their areas, as well as possible improvements to the CPO's services and future engagement opportunities.

#### FY 2023-2024

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### FY 2024-2025

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### Key Outcome(s) and Metrics

- Engagement with rural communities, as measured by the number of presentations completed

per quarter.

- The provision of services to those in rural communities, as measured by the number of cases initiated by those in rural communities.

### **Q1-Q3 Performance**

- **Outreach:** The Ombudsman and CPO Board of Directors are planning a rural meeting and visits with local stakeholders for Quarter 1 of Fiscal Year 2023-24.
- **Educational Opportunities:** N/A
- **Collect Feedback:** In the CPO' survey of its listserv, the agency received seven responses from outside the state's top 10 most-populated counties – including three from counties with a population under 50,000.
- **Number of Presentations:** N/A (The CPO regularly engages with a statewide audience that includes stakeholders in rural communities.)
- **Number of Cases Initiated in Rural or Small Communities (County Pop. <70,000):** 112

**Critical Process: Evaluate the CPO's listserv to determine which communities the CPO is engaging with and how to increase the CPO's statewide presence.**

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### **Key Activities**

#### **FY 2022-2023**

- Survey the CPO's listserv to identify communities not included.
- Determine strategies to engage with underrepresented communities.
- Expand the listserv to include underrepresented communities.

#### **FY 2023-2024**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### **FY 2024-2025**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### **Key Outcome(s) and Metrics**

- Increased awareness of the CPO, as measured by an increase in the CPO's listserv subscribers.



### **Q1-Q3 Performance**

- **Survey:** In the survey of the CPO's listserv, it was discovered that engaged subscribers are primarily director-level child protection professionals and the newsletter is not an effective tool in reaching youth, families and community members with questions or concerns about child protection systems in Colorado.
- **Engage Underrepresented Communities:** N/A (Planning to take place in Quarter 4.)
- **Share Listserv:** It was determined that the CPO newsletter is not an effective tool in reaching underrepresented communities.
- **Number of Newsletter Subscribers:** 785 (Increased from 710 since end of Fiscal Year 2021-22.)

**Critical Process: Engage legislators in the CPO's work.**

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### **Key Activities**

#### **FY 2022-2023**

- Complete one outreach campaign to all legislators every year.
- Survey legislators about their interest, and their constituents' interest, in child protection issues.
- Analyze survey data to develop and target communications.
- Provide additional educational opportunities about the CPO's services to interested legislators.

#### **FY 2023-2024**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### **FY 2024-2025**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### **Key Outcome(s) and Metrics**

- Engagement with legislators, as measured by the number of meetings or other interactions between the CPO and legislators.

### **Q1-Q3 Performance**

- **Outreach:** The CPO sent an introductory message to every member of the Colorado General Assembly and engaged individual legislators on specific inquiries.
- **Survey:** N/A (With the number of new legislators taking office, the CPO determined that a survey would not be the most effective method in engaging legislators regarding community concerns. The agency decided to engage in direct communication instead.)
- **Educational Opportunities:** The CPO hosted a Legislative Open House that was open to all General Assembly members and their staff. The agency presented its SMART Act Report and Annual Report to the legislature and presented its Fiscal Year 2023-24 budget to the Joint Budget Committee. Appearing before multiple legislative committees, the Ombudsman and staff testified on House Bills 23-1024 and 23-1027. The CPO also engaged in stakeholder meetings and discussions regarding House Bills 23-1142, 23-1160 and 23-1269.
- **Number of Meetings/Interactions:** 19

*Strategy: Provide consistent, timely and informative communications regarding the CPO's services, ongoing projects, ombudsman practice and findings.*

**Critical Process:** Continue to develop effective methods for delivering and promoting the CPO's services and ongoing work.

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### **Key Activities**

#### **FY 2022-2023**

- Hire part-time Public Information Coordinator.
- Send newsletters that feature the CPO's most up-to-date efforts, findings and recommendations to citizens, legislators and stakeholders.
- Post CPO work products to the CPO's website and social media.
- Attend stakeholder meetings related to child protection issues.

#### **FY 2023-2024**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### **FY 2024-2025**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### **Key Outcome(s) and Metrics**

- Awareness of child protection issues, as measured by the number of newsletters sent per quarter.
- Continual CPO presence in stakeholder meetings, as measured by the CPO's community outreach spreadsheet.

### **Q1-Q3 Performance**

- **Hire Part-Time Public Information Coordinator:** The part-time Public Information Coordinator was hired in August 2022 and a budget request item was submitted to transition the position to full-time in Fiscal Year 2023-24.
- **Send Newsletters:** The CPO has distributed a total of six newsletters promoting agency reports, task forces and successful case outcomes.
- **Post CPO Work to Website/Social Media:** The CPO has posted 10 updates on the agency website and 143 on its LinkedIn and Twitter accounts.
- **Attend Stakeholder Meetings:** The CPO is engaged in numerous task forces, working groups, committees, commissions, policy review teams and recurring meeting groups across Colorado child protection systems.
- **Number of Newsletters Sent:** 6
- **Number of Stakeholder Meetings Attended:** 124

*Strategy: Apply principles of diversity, equity and inclusion to the CPO's communications.*

**Critical Process:** Identify whether the CPO is serving all the states' racial/ethnic groups to develop targeted outreach campaigns.

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### **Key Activities**

#### **FY 2022-2023**

- Collect and analyze client racial/ethnic demographic data to determine which communities the CPO is serving.
- Pull and analyze child protection racial/ethnic demographic data to identify populations that are represented throughout Colorado.
- Compare the percentage of populations the CPO is serving to the percentages of each demographic present in the child protection system to inform ongoing outreach campaigns.

#### **FY 2023-2024**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### **FY 2024-2025**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### **Key Outcome(s) and Metrics**

- Increased services to various racial/ethnic communities, as measured by the number of cases initiated by various racial/ethnic groups.

### **Q1-Q3 Performance**

- **Collect/Analyze Data:** Working with Salesforce, which houses the CPO's internal database, the CPO developed a method for tracking client race and ethnicity that was implemented in Q3 and will serve as a source for collecting and analyzing this data moving forward.
- **Compare to Population:** As more data is collected, data will be analyzed alongside racial and ethnic demographics of the state's overall population, youth population and demographic of families involved in Colorado's child protection systems.
- **Number of Cases Initiated by Various Racial/Ethnic Groups:** N/A (This data will be reported on when an appropriate sampling of cases has been collected through the new method.)

**Critical Process: Develop inclusive processes, systems and communications that reflect principles of diversity, equity and inclusion to share the CPO's services with all of Colorado's diverse communities.**

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### **Key Activities**

#### **FY 2022-2023**

- Using an independent assessment of the CPO's materials – which was completed in Fiscal Year 2021-22 – amend outreach and education materials to reflect the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion identified by the agency.
- Based on the independent assessment, update the CPO's website to reflect the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion identified by the agency.
- Using the independent assessment, develop and implement an inclusive outreach and education campaign to demonstrate the CPO's commitment to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion principles in the child protection system.

#### **FY 2023-2024**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### **FY 2024-2025**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### **Key Outcome(s) and Metrics**

- Updated CPO outreach and education materials, as determined by the feedback provided by the independent assessment.
- Publication of new materials on the CPO's website.

### Q1-Q3 Performance

- Amend Outreach Materials: With feedback from the independent assessment, the CPO has applied a DEI lens to all outgoing communications, including the newsletter, social media posts and the agency website.
- Update Website: The CPO is planning a complete redesign of the agency website that will accurately reflect its values around diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Outreach: N/A (planning will take place in Q4)

*Strategy: Encourage citizens and stakeholders to use the CPO as a resource to improve the child protection system.*

**Critical Process: Offer opportunities for the public, legislators and other stakeholders to engage in the CPO's system work.**

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### Key Activities

#### FY 2022-2023

- Develop opportunities for the public, legislators and stakeholders to engage in the CPO's work by continually offering information regarding CPO projects, initiatives and legislative efforts.

#### FY 2023-2024

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### FY 2024-2025

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### Key Outcome(s) and Metrics

- Increased use of the CPO as a resource for child protection information, as measured by the number of opportunities offered by the CPO.

### Q1-Q3 Performance

- Offering Opportunities: The CPO offers members of the public an opportunity to have their voice heard in both the Timothy Montoya Task Force and Mandatory Reporting Task Force, which are both open to the public and include a period for public comment. The CPO also regularly meets with stakeholders, policymakers and members of the public to discuss concerns and issues with child protection.
- Number of Opportunities for Engagement: 76

**SPI 2 – SERVICES AND PROGRAMS: Continue to develop and strengthen efficient and effective CPO practices to better serve Colorado citizens.**

The CPO is statutorily required “to receive complaints concerning child protection services made by or on behalf of a child relating to any action, inaction, or decision of any public agency or any provider that receives public moneys that may adversely affect the safety, permanency, or well-being of the child.” See C.R.S. § 19-3.3- 103(1)(a). The CPO delivers a wide variety of services pursuant to its statute. These include one-on-one services for clients who contact the agency with concerns or questions regarding the child protection system, reviewing critical incidents – such as child fatalities – and monitoring the safety and well-being of unaccompanied immigrant children residing in state-licensed facilities.

The CPO has identified the following strategies, critical processes, key metrics and outcomes as ways to help ensure efficient and effective CPO services.

***Strategy: Provide ongoing professional development opportunities for CPO staff.***

The high demand for CPO services requires staff to be efficient in contacting citizens, identifying their concerns and determining what is necessary to help citizens resolve their inquiry. Ensuring CPO staff are supported will, in turn, ensure the CPO is providing services in an efficient and effective manner. The Critical Processes below, combined with the CPO’s policies outlined in the CPO’s Case Practices and Operating Procedures, will help the CPO provide all citizens quality services.<sup>1</sup>

**Critical Process: Provide CPO staff ongoing training and education.**

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**Key Activities**

**FY 2022-2023**

- Have CPO staff attend ongoing training - for various subjects to support ongoing program development and primary functions of the agency. Training subjects include, customer services, negotiation and mediation strategies, child welfare policy and practice, ombudsman theory and practice, equity, diversity and inclusion, and other applicable child protection issues.

**FY 2023-2024**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

**FY 2024-2025**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information about the CPO’s practices and procedures, please refer to the [Office of Colorado’s Child Protection Ombudsman Case Practices and Operating Procedures](#).

### Key Outcome(s) and Metrics

- The total number of trainings and educational opportunities attended, as measured by the CPO's community outreach spreadsheet.<sup>2</sup>

#### Q1-Q3 Performance

- Attend Ongoing Training: CPO staff members have participated in numerous trainings around collaborative safety, ombudsman theory, mandatory reporting, equity in child protection systems, accessibility, leadership development, agency administration and best practices in child protection.
- Number of Trainings Attended: 81

*Strategy: Apply principles of equity, diversity and inclusion to the CPO's services.*

**Critical Process: Provide CPO staff ongoing training and education on diversity, equity and inclusion to inform staff of the disproportionate impact of the child welfare system on communities of color, under-resourced communities and people with disabilities.**

### Key Activities

#### FY 2022-2023

- Provide CPO staff with ongoing diversity, equity and inclusion educational opportunities so they may work to address and recognize biases within the child protection system and how those biases impact clients' experiences and outcome.

#### FY 2023-2024

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### FY 2024-2025

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### Key Outcome(s) and Metrics

- Development of an EDI Strategic Implementation Plan.
- The total number of educational opportunities attended, as measured by the CPO's community outreach spreadsheet.

#### Q1-Q3 Performance

- Attend Ongoing Training: CPO staff members have been provided with several DEI trainings on topics such as healthy equity, DEI principles in the workplace, building inclusive environments, cultural competence and bias reduction.
- Number of DEI Trainings Attended: 8

<sup>2</sup> Every month, CPO staff record community outreach activities for the CPO Board in a spreadsheet, detailing conferences, trainings, meetings, presentations and other engagements with child protection system stakeholders.

*Strategy: Continue to develop the CPO's unaccompanied immigrant children's program – established by C.R.S. § 19-3-3- 103(1)(a.5)(I) –to better review and monitor the safety and well-being of unaccompanied immigrant children.*

**Critical Process: Engage unaccompanied immigrant children residing in state-licensed care that are in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement and professionals that serve them.**

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### **Key Activities**

#### **FY 2022-2023**

- Distribute youth-specific materials, in appropriate dialects and languages, describing the CPO's services.
- Complete quarterly visits to qualifying residential child care facilities to meet with youth and observe operations and care.
- Respond directly to any complaints the CPO receives from unaccompanied immigrant children residing in state care.
- Facilitate quarterly meetings with child protection professionals that work with unaccompanied immigrant children to build relationships, discuss concerns and/or CPO observations.
- Provide educational opportunities to interested entities about the CPO's services.
- Develop outreach materials for child protection professionals that work with unaccompanied immigrant children that outline the CPO's services and jurisdiction.
- Respond directly to any complaints the CPO receives regarding unaccompanied immigrant children residing in state care.

#### **FY 2023-2024**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### **FY 2024-2025**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### **Key Outcome(s) and Metrics**

- Increased knowledge of the CPO's services, as measured by the distribution of youth-specific written materials in relevant languages.
- Monitor the safety and well-being of unaccompanied immigrant children, as measured by the number of visits to residential child care facilities that serve unaccompanied immigrant children.
- The provision of services to unaccompanied immigrant children, as measured by the number of cases initiated by unaccompanied immigrant children.
- Engagement with child protection professionals that work with unaccompanied immigrant children, as measured by the number of meetings completed per quarter.
- The provision of services to child protection professionals that work with unaccompanied immigrant children, as measured by the number of cases initiated by child protection professionals that work with unaccompanied immigrant children.



### Q1-Q3 Performance

- Program Update: During Q3, the CPO was informed that Devereux facility, the only facility in the state of Colorado licensed to care for unaccompanied immigrant children, closed its program during March 2023.
- Distribute Youth-Specific Materials: During Q3, it was discovered that the CPO printed posters provided to the Devereux facility were not displayed in the facility.
- Quarterly Visits: The CPO conducted on-site visits of the Devereux facility in Q1 and Q3.
- Respond to Complaints from Unaccompanied Immigrant Children: N/A (The CPO did not receive any complaints from unaccompanied immigrant children.)
- Facilitate Meetings: The CPO held several meetings with child protection professionals serving unaccompanied immigrant children, including CDHS, the Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network and the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement.
- Respond to Complaints Concerning Unaccompanied Immigrant Children: 1
- Provide Educational Opportunities: N/A
- Develop Outreach Materials: N/A
- Distribution of Materials: N/A
- Number of Facility Visits: 2
- Number of Cases Initiated by Unaccompanied Immigrant Children: 0
- # Meetings with Professionals: 5

*Strategy: Continue to develop the CPO's process and procedures for reviewing egregious abuse or neglect, near fatalities or fatalities of a child, as established by C.R.S. § 19-3.3- 103(1)(a)(I)(A).*

**Critical Process: Develop and implement a unique, research-informed process for reviewing critical incidents in Colorado to improve and advance child protection systems.**

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### Key Activities

#### FY 2022-2023

- Facilitate an objective, multidisciplinary review of qualifying critical incident using Safety Science to identify areas of the child protection system that can improve.
- Draft and distribute public-facing reports.
- Assess possible improvements to the CPO's process for reviewing critical incidents in Colorado.

#### FY 2023-2024

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### FY 2024-2025

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### Key Outcome(s) and Metrics

- Increased knowledge of how the state’s child protection system is currently working on a systemic level and the identification of recommendations to improve the system, as measured by the number of reviews performed using Safety Science.<sup>3</sup>

### Q1-Q3 Performance

- Facilitate a Review: The CPO completed two mappings in two fatality cases.
- Assess Possible Improvements: The CPO has determined that the process can be improved by adopting a hybrid system and bringing the system in-house.

**SPI 3 – PUBLIC POLICY:** Continue to serve as a leader in advancing reforms to Colorado’s child protection system.

The CPO is statutorily required “to recommend...systemic changes, to improve the safety of and promote better outcomes for children and families receiving protection services in Colorado.” See C.R.S. § 19-3.3-130(2)(e). Additionally, the CPO must “...promote best practices and effective programs relating to a publicly funded child protection system and to work collaboratively...regarding improvement of processes.” See C.R.S. § 19-3.3- 103(2)(d).

To promote positive systemic changes, best practices and effective programs, the CPO must produce high-quality work in a timely manner while building strong partnerships with others working within the state’s child protection system. The CPO has identified the following strategies, critical processes, key metrics and outcomes as ways to encourage collaboration, identify areas of the child protection system in need of improvement, efficiently communicate its findings and ensure recommendations are being considered and/or implemented.

**Strategy: Identify and/or support systemic improvements to the child protection system**

**Critical Process: Analyze CPO data to identify systemic child protection issues.**

### Key Activities

#### FY 2022-2023

- Quarterly analyze trends within CPO data to identify any themes/topics/issues that are emergent or reoccurring.

#### FY 2023-2024

- Key activities are completed yearly.

<sup>3</sup> Every month, CPO staff record community outreach activities for the CPO Board in a spreadsheet, detailing conferences, trainings, meetings, presentations and other engagements with child protection system stakeholders.

**FY 2024-2025**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

**Key Outcome(s) and Metrics**

- The identification of child protection issues, as demonstrated in trend data.

**Q1-Q3 Performance**

- **Analyze Trends & Identify Issues:** The CPO has identified a number of trends through client concerns and data that will be reported on in Fiscal Year 2023-24.

**Critical Process: Facilitate and support stakeholder engagement through the CPO’s Public Policy Advancement Center.**

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In June 2022, two task forces were established in the CPO through the passage of House Bill 22-1240 and House Bill 22-1375. Each is designed to objectively examine issues that are critical to improving the state’s child protection system and are comprised of members with diverse experience and knowledge.

The Mandatory Reporting Task Force, established by House Bill 22-1240, will analyze 19 directives concerning the procedures and effectiveness of Colorado’s child abuse and neglect mandatory reporting system and possible improvements. The Timothy Montoya Task Force to Prevent Children from Running Away from Out-Of-Home Placement (Timothy Montoya Task Force), established by House Bill 22-1375, will analyze nine directives aimed at improving safeguards for children in out-of-home placement who have runaway behaviors.

**Key Activities**

**FY 2022-2023**

- Convene and facilitate the Mandatory Reporting Task Force, as established by C.R.S. § 19-3304.2.
- Convene and facilitate the Timothy Montoya Task Force to Prevent Children from Running Away from Out-Of-Home Placement, as established by C.R.S. § 19-3.3- 111.

**FY 2023-2024**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

**FY 2024-2025**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

**Key Outcome(s) and Metrics**

- The completion of task force reports, as delineated in Colorado state law.

### **Q1-Q3 Performance**

- **Facilitate Timothy Montoya Task Force:** The CPO has hosted six meetings of the Timothy Montoya Task Force as required by statute.
- **Facilitate Mandatory Reporting Task Force:** The CPO has hosted four meetings of the Mandatory Reporting Task Force as required by statute.
- **Task Force Reports:** The first reports for both task forces are due in Fiscal Year 2023-24.

*Strategy: Provide consistent, timely and informative communications regarding the CPO's public policy efforts, which may include findings and recommendations.*

**Critical Process: Communicate the CPO's efforts, findings and recommendations to the public, legislators and stakeholders.**

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### **Key Activities**

#### **FY 2022-2023**

- Send newsletters that feature the CPO's most up-to-date efforts, findings and recommendations to citizens, legislators and stakeholders.
- Post CPO work products to the CPO's website and social media.
- Attend stakeholder meetings related to child protection issues.

#### **FY 2023-2024**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

#### **FY 2024-2025**

- Key activities are completed yearly.

### **Key Outcome(s) and Metrics**

- Awareness of child protection issues, as measured by the number of newsletters sent per quarter.
- Continual CPO presence in stakeholder meetings, as measured by the CPO's community outreach spreadsheet.

### Q1-Q3 Performance

- Send Newsletters: The CPO has distributed a total of six newsletters in Fiscal Year 2022-2023, promoting agency reports, task forces and successful case outcomes.
- Post CPO Work to Website/Social Media: The CPO has posted 10 updates on the agency website and 143 on its LinkedIn and Twitter accounts.
- Attend Stakeholder Meetings: The CPO is engaged in numerous task forces, working groups, committees, commissions, policy review teams and recurring meeting groups across Colorado child protection systems.
- Number of Newsletters Sent: 6
- Number of Stakeholder Meetings Attended: 124

## Conclusion

The Child Protection Ombudsman respectfully submits this report to the Joint Budget Committee and the General Assembly, as is required under C.R.S. § 2-7-204. The CPO will comply with its requirements under the statute and will submit the required reports and evaluations.