



**JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Child Welfare Updates

**Susan Perry-Manning, Deputy Secretary for Human
Services**

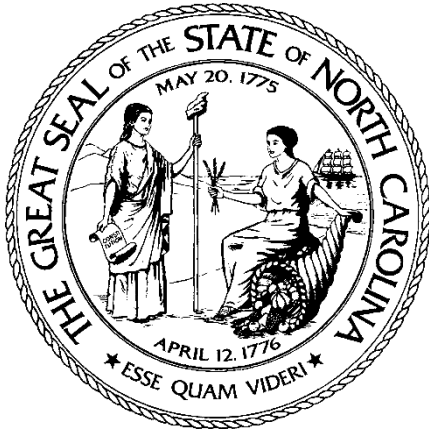
**Michael Becketts, Assistant Secretary for Human
Services**

**Sam Gibbs, Deputy Secretary for Technology and
Operations**

Oct. 10, 2017

Overview

- **Implementation of the Federal Program Improvement Plan**
- **NC FAST Implementation of the Child Welfare Case Management System**
- **Planning for Implementation of the Family-Child Protection and Accountability Act/Rylan's Law**



**JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Implementation of the Federal Program Improvement Plan

S.L. 2017-57, Sec. 11C.7

**Susan Perry-Manning, Deputy Secretary
for Human Services**

**Michael Becketts, Assistant Secretary
for Human Services**

Oct. 10, 2017

Child Welfare Overview – Key Legislation

- **Federal Legislation**

- **Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act – 1974**
- **Adoption and Safe Families Act – 1996**
- **Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act – 2008**

- **Major State Legislation**

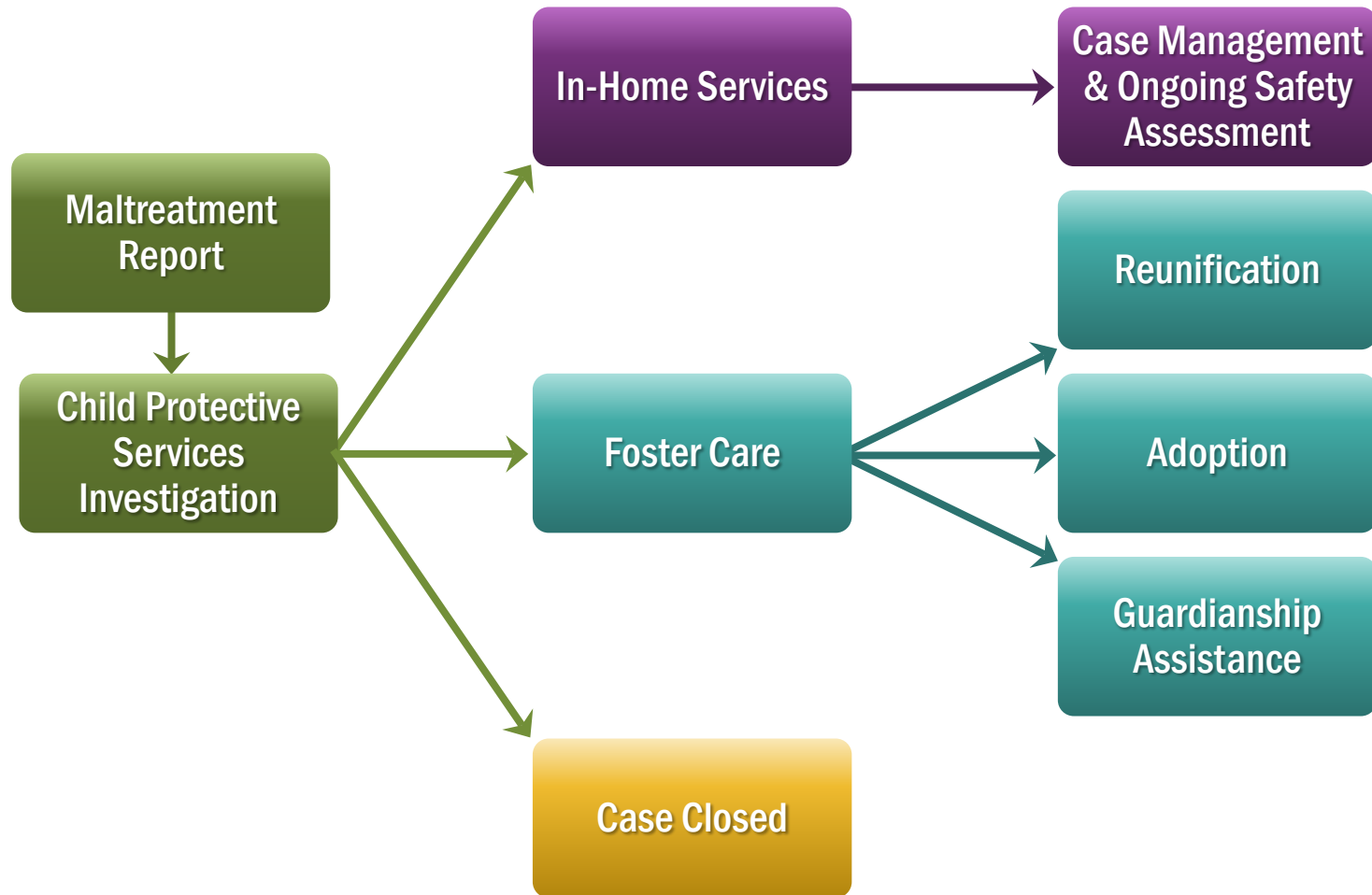
- **Fostering Success Act - 2015**
- **Foster Care Family Act – 2015**
- **Family-Child Protection & Accountability Act 2017/Rylan’s Law**

Scope of the Child Welfare System

All child welfare agencies in the U.S. have four core mandates from federal laws and regulations:

1. Respond to reports of child maltreatment
2. Serve families in their homes and help them overcome difficulties and keep their children safe
3. Provide alternative, safe living environments when children cannot be maintained safely in their homes
4. Provide a safe, permanent home for children as quickly as possible

Flow of Child Welfare Services



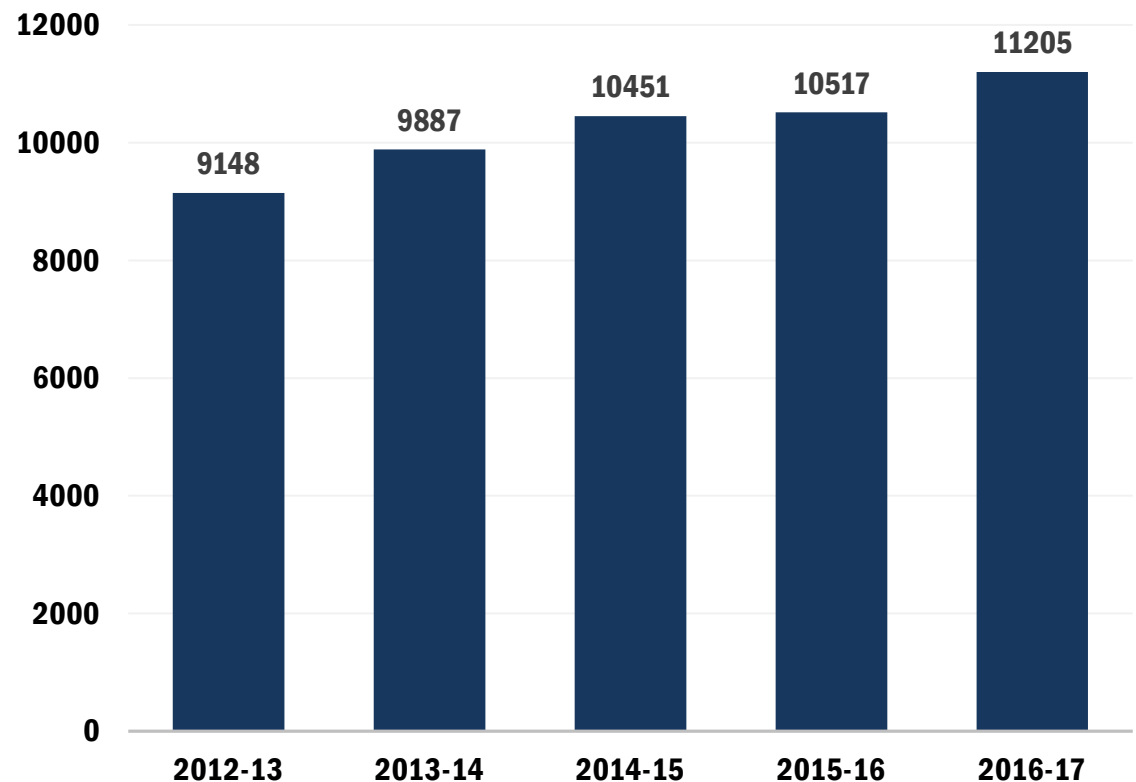
Child Welfare Overview – Foster Care

Children are placed in foster care when safety at home cannot be assured

Increase is due to a variety of issues including

- Parental opioid use
- Parental mental health
 - Impacts the severity of child neglect and abuse

Youth in Foster Care at End of the Fiscal Year



Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)

- **Federal performance review of child welfare services conducted in 2015**
- **Review included a sample of child welfare cases from 10 counties**
- **Rated on 7 outcome measures and 7 systemic actors**
 - **Outcome measures focus on child and family well-being**
 - **Systemic factors focus on staff training, monitoring and quality assurance, and availability and provision of appropriate services**

CFSR: Program Improvement Plan

- **North Carolina failed to meet expectations in each of 14 CFRS areas requiring a federal Program Improvement Plan (PIP)**
- **DHHS, county DSS departments, stakeholders and ACF worked together to develop PIP**
- **PIP is a 2-year plan that began January 2017 and will conclude December 2018**
- **PIP is designed to improve statewide performance**

PIP: Progress & Next Steps

- **Met all PIP activities to-date within agreed upon timeframes**
- **Appointed new leadership in DHHS Division of Social Services and Child Welfare Section**
- **Working to revise PIP to focus on outcomes and measure progress quarterly**
- **Incorporating PIP activities into broader child welfare reform effort**
- **Continuing implementation of NC FAST Child Welfare module to ensure accountability and improve performance**

JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



NC FAST Implementation of Child Welfare Case Management

**Sam Gibbs, Deputy Secretary for
Technology and Operations**

Oct. 10, 2017

NC FAST Overview

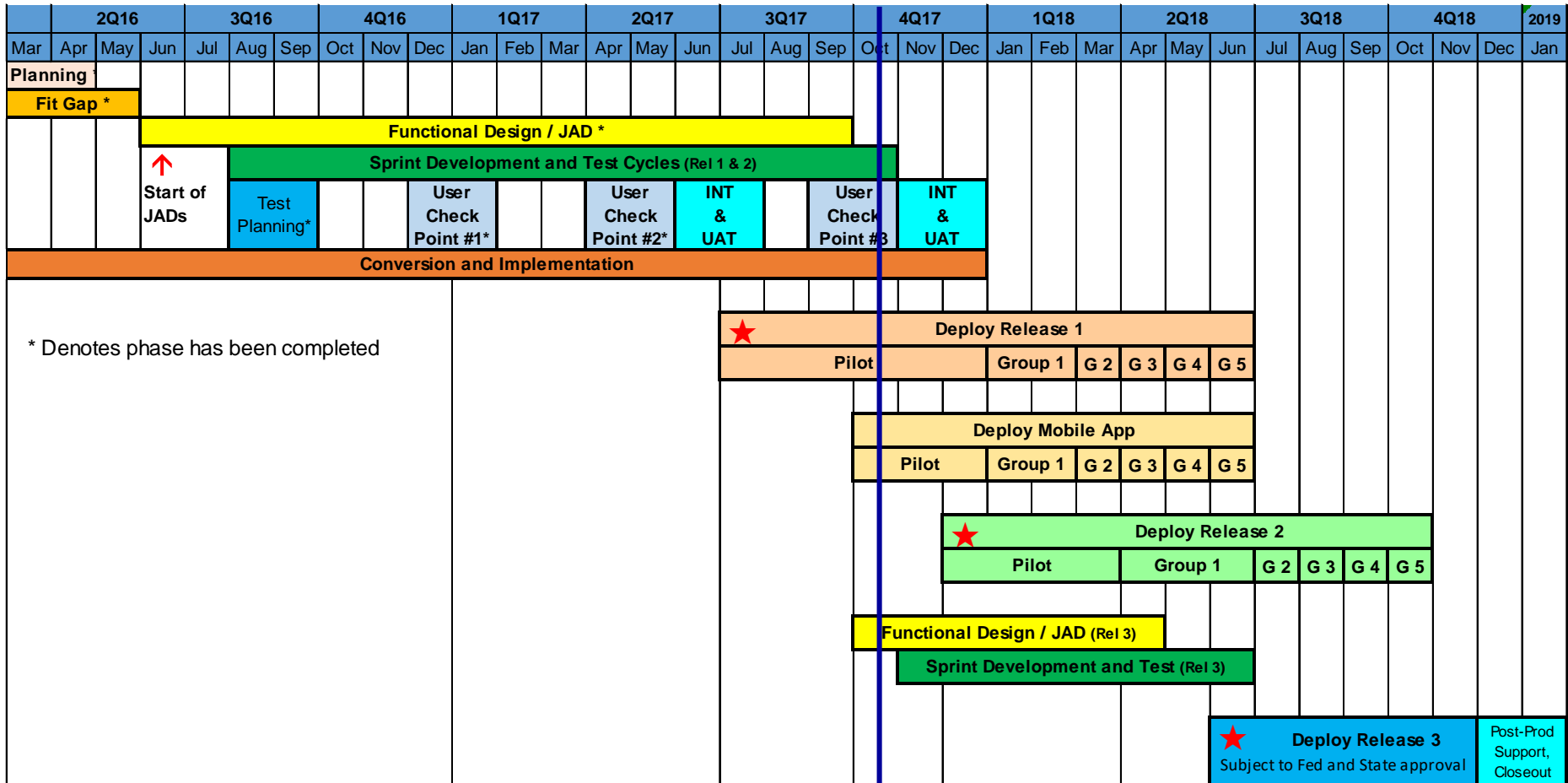
North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST)

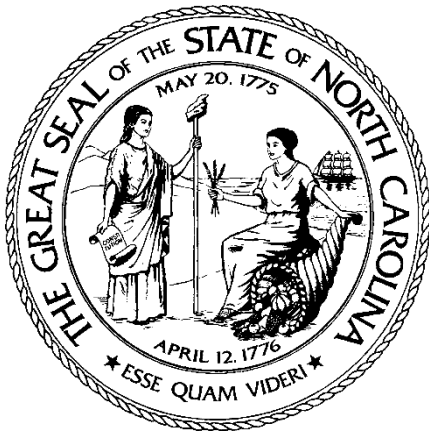
- **Developed as a tool to improve eligibility determination and service delivery for:**
 - **Food and Nutrition Services, Medicaid, Work First, Child Care Subsidy, Child Welfare, etc.**
- **Benefits include real-time sharing of client and case information across programs and counties and support for an integrated, cross-functional service delivery approach**

NC FAST Child Welfare Update

- On schedule for final completion in December 2018
- August 2017: 5 pilot counties began using Release 1 functionality
- 1,200 intakes entered in system; almost 700 family and investigative assessments
- 25 system enhancements identified as high priority items by pilot counties
- January 2018: Go-live for additional counties to provide time to deploy high priority enhancements
- June 2018 (extended from April): Completion of statewide implementation with enhancements
- Mobility functionality pilots: Allows case workers to input information in field via iPads
- As previously requested, additional funding needed for on-site support to help county child welfare staff incorporate use of NC FAST to streamline and improve how they do their work

Current NC FAST Child Welfare Timeline





JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Family-Child Protection and Accountability Act

S.L. 2017-41

**Michael Becketts, Assistant Secretary
for Human Services**

Oct. 10, 2017

Family-Child Protection and Accountability Act Overview

Law requires a reform of social services and child welfare system

Provisions of Act include:

- 1. Convene a Social Services Regional Supervision and Collaboration Working Group to:**
 - Create regional supervision structure of county social services departments**
 - Recommend any regulatory or legislative changes necessary to improve collaboration between counties in administration of social services**
 - Identify potential benefits and challenges for transitioning state from county-administered to regionally administered system**

Family-Child Protection and Accountability Act Overview

- 2. Reform State supervision and accountability of the existing social services system**
 - **Issue a Request for Proposals by 9/30/2017**
 - **Contract with an expert, third-party organization to work with DHHS to develop a recommended reform plan for social services and child welfare**

- 3. Establish written agreements between county DSS and DHHS for all social services programs, except medical assistance**
 - **Focus on mutual accountability and corrective action**
 - **Includes performance and administrative measures**

Family-Child Protection and Accountability Act Overview

4. Establish a Child Well-being Transformation Council

5. Implement specific policy and regulatory changes to improve the well-being of children and youth in foster care

- Implement a driver's license pilot project for foster youth**
- Pilot an intensive family treatment program for foster youth**
- Establish 90-day timeframe for processing foster home applications**
- Change policy regarding termination of parental rights**
- Change procedures related to returning physical custody to parents**

Key Milestones

	DATE	MILESTONE
2017	07/01	Rylan's Law went into effect
	09/29	RFP for third-party organization issued
	10/03	Working group convened by the School of Government
2018	02/15	Contract award for third-party organization
	04/15	Working group 1st report to NCGA
	07/01	Written agreements between DHHS and DSS effective
	10/01	Reform legislation recommendations to JLOC by DHHS
	11/15	DHHS regional supervision plan due
2019	01/01	TPR statute effective
	02/01	Working group 2nd report due to JLOC
2020	03/01	Regional supervision implemented
	09/02	Project end

Progress To-Date

- **DHHS meeting timeframe for processing foster home applications**
- **DHHS/AOC issued guidance to counties and courts regarding changes in procedure for returning physical custody to parents**
- **RFP for the third-party organization issued on 9/29/2017**
- **Working Group's first meeting held 10/3/17**
- **DHHS-DSS written agreements under development with input requested from each county social services Director**