

# January 6, 2023

## External Budget Webinar Q&A

**Q: Why isn't the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) rate at the inflation rate? People are being asked to do the same amount of work for effectively less, which results in more turnover.**

**A:** That is a good question, however, we cannot speak to that. Much of that decision making happens during the bargaining process with the governor and DCYF is not part of that.

**Q: Does the Nurse Home Visiting suite of programs continue and/or increase funding in '23-'25?**

**A:** That is in our prevention decision package, and we do see increases in the home visiting line of service, both in existing contracts and also expansion. We will likely be bringing on new slots and potentially new providers across the entire array of home visiting services.

**Q: Can you talk a bit about how you coordinate with folks in the Governor's office around advocating for these items?**

**A:** We don't advocate, but we inform and educate. We work very closely with the Office of Financial Management (OFM) analysts, the governor's policy advisor, as well as leadership in the governor's office. We have weekly meetings with leadership in the governor's office.

**Q: We are thankful for DCYF's ask of the 40% increase for Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP). Can you tell us what you are hearing about the possibilities of the 40% from legislators?**

**A:** To date, we have heard nothing. As session starts we will most likely hear more.

**Q: I would like to ask for ECEAP eligibility to align with Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) eligibility; 75% of state median income (SMI).**

**A:** We will certainly take that into consideration for future asks.

**Q: Does the new investments from the Federal Government under the Block Grants have to go through the legislature for disbursement?**

**A:** The legislature will choose how they would like to utilize that federal funding. They may or may not leave some of that up to the agency while following federal guidelines.

**Q: When do we find out if the legislature approves the proposed expanded Relative Guardianship Assistance Program (RGAP) eligibility?**



**A:** We will know at the end of April and beginning of May what has passed and what has not passed.

**Q:** We're worried about Early ECEAP - it unfortunately looks like without new money (not included in Governor's budget) - we'll have a minimum 38% cut in slots. What's the latest on making sure we can keep serving kiddos?

**A:** There has been some preliminary conversation around next steps there, but a decision has not been made.