

Wyoming Department of Family Services: 2025-2026 Budget Exception Request Summary

Updated December 11, 2023

Original - October 16, 2023

For the 2024 Budget Session, the Department requests exceptions totaling \$33 million (\$21.3 million in State General Funds, \$9.1 million in Federal Funds, and \$2.6 million in Other Funds). The Governor recommended approval of \$29.2 million (\$17.7 million in State General Funds, \$8.9 million in Federal Funds, and \$2.6 million in Other Funds). These requests and recommendations are described in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Department exception requests by category

Category	Priority #	Description	Department Request				Gov Rec
			Total	SGF	FF	OF	Total
Staffing	1	Wyoming Boys' School (WBS) - 3 new overnight dorm staff (SOYS03) positions for safety and full overnight coverage	\$337,261	\$337,261	\$0	\$0	\$337,261
Staffing	2	Convert 18 part-time social services aide positions (SOSPO3) to full-time positions	\$286,077	\$260,330	\$25,747	\$0	\$286,077
Staffing	3	4 new caseworker positions (SOSPO8) to increase capacity for Adult Protective Services and in-home prevention cases	\$610,492	\$555,547	\$54,945	\$0	\$305,247¹
Staffing	4	Wyoming Girls' School (WGS) - 1 new overnight dorm staff (SOYS03) position for safety and full overnight coverage	\$112,421	\$112,421	\$0	\$0	\$0¹
IT Upgrades	5	ETS Technology Replacement Program - Desktops, laptops/docking stations, hardware, software renewals	\$1,766,292	\$1,501,349	\$264,943	\$0	\$1,766,292
Services	6	Real-time employment and income verification tool for SNAP eligibility	\$1,114,350	\$557,175	\$557,175	\$0	\$1,114,350
Services	7	Continuation of Community Juvenile Service Boards	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,000,000
Services	8	Funding for continuation of evidence based prevention services to keep children safe at home (2023 General Session Budget Bill, Footnote #8)	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$0	\$1,000,000
Administrative	9a	Increase in court filing fee costs per 2023 General Session - HB0014 (Enrolled Act 89)	\$240,000	\$81,600	\$158,400	\$0	\$240,000
Services	9b	Rate increase for group homes, residential treatment centers, and BOCES	\$5,992,260	\$5,992,260	\$0	\$0	\$4,494,195²
Services	9c	Rate increase for crisis stabilization services	\$3,720,128	\$3,720,128	\$0	\$0	\$2,790,096²

¹ The Governor recommends approval of two of four requested caseworker positions (#2) and denies request for one WGS position (#4).

² The Governor's recommendation reduces the provider rate increase request by 25% (#9b, #9c, #9d).

Category	Priority #	Description	Department Request				Gov Rec
			Total	SGF	FF	OF	Total
Services	9d	Rate increase for family foster care providers	\$4,000,000	\$3,400,000	\$600,000	\$0	\$3,000,000²
Services	10	Add General Fund to increase the Emergency Solutions Grant which serves homeless people or those at risk of homelessness	\$696,370	\$696,370	\$0	\$0	\$696,370
Data	11	Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS)	\$1,329,714	\$1,329,714	\$0	\$0	\$1,329,714
Staffing	12	Wyoming Children's Trust Fund - Increase Other Fund authority in 100 series to fund the reclassification of Position #60010 from BABO08 to BABO10 ³	\$44,404	\$0	\$0	\$44,404	\$44,404
Budget Alignment	13	Increase Federal Fund spending authority for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation (MIECHV) grant award	\$2,817,712	\$0	\$2,817,712	\$0	\$2,817,712
Budget Alignment	14	Transfer Federal spending authority to Other Fund spending authority to align with the current revenue and expenses of Fund 546 (Child Support Revenue and Enhancement Account Special Revenue Fund)	\$0	\$0	-\$2,410,460	\$2,410,460	\$0
Budget Alignment	15	Transfer Federal spending authority to Other Fund spending authority to align with the current revenue and expenses of Fund 418 (Overpayments and Recovery Special Revenue Fund)	\$0	\$0	-\$74,346	\$74,346	\$0
Budget Alignment	16	Increase Federal Fund spending authority to match Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) grant award	\$6,828,312	\$0	\$6,828,312	\$0	\$6,828,312
Budget Alignment	17	WBS - Increase Other Fund spending authority to match Title I grant award from WDE	\$36,327	\$0	\$0	\$36,327	\$36,327
Budget Alignment	18	WGS - Increase Other Fund spending authority to match Title I grant award from WDE	\$50,789	\$0	\$0	\$50,789	\$50,789
Budget Alignment	19	Increase Federal Fund spending authority to match Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act grant award	\$55,888	\$0	\$55,888	\$0	\$55,888
Budget Clean-up	20	Transfer Position #21230 to 5915 - D-1 Clean-up	-\$142,174	-\$142,174	\$0	\$0	-\$142,174
Budget Clean-up	20	Transfer Position #21230 from 5801 - D-1 Clean-up	\$142,174	\$142,174	\$0	\$0	\$142,174
Budget Clean-up	21	Correct funding for Positions #20990 and #12570 - D-1 Clean-up	\$0	\$236,328	-\$236,328	\$0	\$0
Budget Clean-up	22	Correct funding for Position #13950 - D-1 Clean-up	\$0	\$70,603	-\$70,603	\$0	\$0

³ After the budget exception requests were finalized, A&I recommended reclassification of position #60010 to a SOSPO9 based on job duties. If approved, the estimated increase based on updated pay at 90% MPP for SOSPO9 and an estimated 25% for benefits is \$28,015.

Category	Priority #	Description	Department Request				Gov Rec
			Total	SGF	FF	OF	Total
Total			\$33,038,797	\$21,351,087	\$9,071,384	\$2,616,326	\$29,193,034

Staffing

The Department is making a few requests to address workforce challenges such as recruitment and retention and worker/client safety in facility settings.

- **WBS and WGS Positions (#1, #4)** - The Department requests three new WBS overnight dorm staff (SOYS03) positions and one new WGS overnight dorm staff to ensure worker and resident safety and full overnight coverage. *This is a new and ongoing request.*
 - Current overnight staffing can result in single staff coverage at night for some dorms and impacts to staff-resident ratios while creating additional strain on other positions when back-up is needed.
 - Turnover rate for the overnight staff in SFY23 was 23.5%⁴; 2023 employee survey results from both facilities cite safety as an opportunity for improvement.
- **Social Services Aide Positions Moving to Full-Time Status (#2)** - The Department requests converting 18 part-time⁵ social services aide (SOSPO3) positions to full-time to improve recruitment and retention for these hard-to-fill positions. *This is a new and ongoing request.*
 - Social services aides are entry-level positions with very high turnover (23.6%^{2,6}) because of low pay, reduced hours, and reduced benefits. Limited benefits are one of the most cited reasons for employee separation.
 - Social services aides work an average of 141 hours/month with an average monthly pay of \$2,301. The primary duties include but are not limited to assisting caseworkers by transporting clients to appointments and visits; coordinating visitation schedules; and supervising visits.
- **Caseworker Positions (#3)** - The Department requests four new caseworker positions (SOSPO8) to address increasing Adult Protective Services (APS) caseloads and a Departmental focus on keeping families at home whenever it is safe to do so. *This is a new and ongoing request.*
 - *Increased need for APS case management capacity*
 - The Department is statutorily required to provide case management services for vulnerable adults who are victims of or at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.⁷ Six caseworkers are solely dedicated to APS work, resulting in limited capacity to serve a rapidly aging population.
 - Since SFY 2021, the Department has experienced a 24.6% increase in APS cases and a 9.9% increase in its total caseload (APS and Child Protective Services).
 - If approved, four caseworker positions will be added in Sheridan, Torrington, District 6 (Gillette, Newcastle, Sundance) float, and Rock Springs.
 - *Increased focus on community partnerships to keep children safe at home*
 - Child Protective Services (CPS) prevention cases have nearly doubled since July 2022 and assessment cases (in-home cases) have increased by 75% since June 2022.
 - The Department prioritizes engaging with individuals and families directly or through community partners *before a crisis* hits and needs increased staff capacity to do so.

⁴ A&I Workforce Report July 1-2022 - June 30, 2023

⁵ Part-time budgeted at 130 hrs/month; Full-time budgeted at 173.33 hrs/month. Vacancy savings pay for hours worked >130/month.

⁶ Budget narrative shows a SOSPO3 turnover rate of 18.32% as of May 2023 (May 2022 - April 2023); rate updated for SFY2023.

⁷ [Wyo. Stat. § 35-20-103](#)

- **Children’s Trust Fund Reclassification (#12)** - On behalf of the Wyoming Children’s Trust Fund, the Department is requesting an increase in “other fund” spending authority to fund a reclassification of Position #60010 which has experienced increased job duties. *This is a new and ongoing request.*

IT Upgrades

The Department is making one request to address IT hardware and software needs which enables Department staff to efficiently and effectively perform their work functions.

- **ETS Technology Replacement Program (#5)** - ETS recommends replacement of IT hardware every five years to ensure IT equipment remains under warranty. Therefore, the Department requests replacement of IT hardware and equipment that will be out of warranty or reach end of life during the upcoming biennium. *This is a one-time request expected approximately once every five years.*
 - According to an ETS report, 847 computer replacements are needed during BFY25. Computers will be replaced in two phases as warranties expire.
 - Phase 1 (July 1, 2024): 469 replacements (300 desktops and laptops for Department staff and 169 for child support providers who are required to use the state network for security purposes.)
 - Phase 2 (July 1, 2025): 378 laptop replacements for Department staff only.
 - Also, an estimated 950 computer monitors, 475 speakers, and 521 computer accessories will reach their end of life during BFY2025 and 841 Microsoft Office licenses will be out-of-date.

Services

The Department is making several requests that will improve the quality and availability of services for Department clients and communities.

- **Employment and Income Verification Tool/Fraud Prevention Services (#6)** - The Department requests funds to continue 3rd party services that provide real-time employment and income verification checks for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligibility. *This is a new and ongoing request.*
 - Accurate employment and income verification reduces fraud risk and increases timeliness of application and benefits processing.
- **Community Juvenile Service Boards Funding (#7)** - The Department requests continuation of funding for Community Juvenile Service Boards (CJSB). *This is an ongoing request.*
 - CJSB funding was originally eliminated during the 2020 reductions. The Legislature reinstated CJSB funding during the 2022 Legislative session but only for the 2023-24 biennium.
 - The Department currently provides funds to 15 counties to provide prevention and diversion services. The Department continues to enhance and standardize the program, data collection, and reporting for participating counties.
- **Prevention Services Funding (#8)** - The Department requests continuation of funding for prevention services which were originally eliminated during the 2016 budget reductions. *This is an ongoing request.*
 - The Legislature approved a one-time \$1,000,000 appropriation in 2023 (\$500,000 GF and \$500,000 FF). This request would incorporate this appropriation into the standard budget, if approved. The Department’s federal Prevention Plan enables increased federal drawdown (50% match on SGF investments) for approved evidence-based prevention services.
 - Evidence-based prevention services are proven to strengthen children and families, reducing the likelihood of removal and allowing children to remain safely in their homes.

- The Department solicited proposals for community-based prevention services. Proposals demonstrated a need greater than the current allocation; an ongoing appropriation is requested.
- **Emergency Solutions Grant (#10)** - The Department requests a SGF investment to supplement the \$350,000 annual grant award and local match to meet an increased need for homelessness services identified by a 2019 statewide homelessness assessment. *This is a new and ongoing request.*
 - 7 community-based providers were awarded Emergency Solutions Grant funding in FFY2023 - Council of Community Services; Youth Emergency Services; Volunteers of America Northern Rockies, Comea, Sweetwater Family Resource Center, Community Action Partnership of Natrona County, and Self Help Center (Casper).
 - The Emergency Solutions Grant served 1,330 individuals in FFY2023 with services such as case management, emergency shelter, rapid rehousing, street outreach, and homeless prevention.
- **Rate Increases (#9b, 9c, 9d)** - The Department requests rate increases for group homes, residential treatment centers/qualified residential treatment programs (RTC/Q RTP), and Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) facilities (#9b); rate increases for crisis stabilization services (#9c); and rate increases for family foster care providers (#9d). *This is a new and ongoing request.*
 - The Department's current rate for room and board covers approximately 50% of actual costs. The Department had discontinued participation in collaborative cost studies with the Department of Health and Department of Education in 2016 due to budget reductions and rates have not been increased since.
 - The Department contracted with Guidehouse to conduct a cost study of current group homes, RTC, Q RTP, BOCES facilities, and crisis stabilization services. Proposed SFY2024 rates were based on methodology that adjusts for high administrative costs and low bed occupancy⁸.
 - The Department also requests rate increases for family foster home providers by the same percentage as congregate care providers. The distribution of costs for foster family homes is estimated at 85% SGF and 15% FF (Title IV-E).

Administrative

The Department is making one administrative request resulting from 2023 legislative session actions.

- **Court Filing Fees (#9a)** - The Department requests state general funding and federal fund match to account for a \$40/filing increase enacted through Session Law CH 0161/Enrolled Act 089 for an estimated 3,000 pleadings for child support orders and modification orders per year.

Data

The Department is making one request, in partnership with the Governor's Office, the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE), and the Wyoming Department of Health (WDH), to expand data infrastructure to answer key early care and education policy questions.

- **Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) (#11)** - The Department requests funding to sustain ECIDS which is currently funded by the State's Preschool Development (PDG) Grant and expires in July 2024. *This is a new one-time request.*
 - The Wyoming ECIDS is a shared secure space for analysis of integrated early care and education (ECE) data drawn from sources that were previously siloed in multiple agencies.

⁸ Methodology aligns with methodology used by the Wyoming Department of Health when establishing psychiatric residential treatment center (PRTF) rates.

- The Department is responsible for the technical administration of ECIDS and a 3rd party vendor, Third Sector Intelligence (3Si), provides maintenance, enhancement, and support.

Budget Alignment (No State General Funds)

The Department is requesting to update budget federal spending authority to align the Department's appropriation with estimated grant awards which will eliminate the need for repeated B-11 requests. *These requests are new and ongoing.*

- **Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) (#13)** - The Department requests additional federal fund authority to match the MIECHV grant award which funds evidence-based home visiting in 5 counties. Home visiting is a proven strategy for preventing child abuse/neglect.
- **Child Support Revenue and Enhancement Account Special Revenue Fund (CSREA) (#14)** - The Department requests a reduction in federal fund authority and an increase in other fund authority to align with current revenue and expenses of the CSREA (Fund 546) which comes from child support collections to reimburse programs such as Medicaid, foster care, and TANF cash assistance.
- **Overpayments and Recovery Special Revenue Fund (#15)** - The Department requests a reduction in federal fund authority and an increase in other fund authority to align with the current revenue and expenses associated with Fund 418 that is funded by collections from the Quality and Integrity program for overpayment. These funds are transferred quarterly back to the grant that the federal overpayment occurred.
- **Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) (#16)** - The Department requests additional federal fund authority to match the CCDBG award. Funds are used to continue provider-friendly payment practices, increase the utilization of child care assistance funds, and promote access to quality child care.
- **Title I Award to the WBS and WGS (#17, #18)** - The Department requests additional other fund authority to match the Title I award from the WDE. Title I funds instructional services and related activities for neglected or delinquent children.
- **Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) (#19)** - The Department requests additional federal fund authority to match the CAPTA award which support federally-required activities such as a major injury and fatality review and establishment of plans of safe care for infants with prenatal substance exposure.

Budget (D1) Clean-up

The Department is making a few requests to clean up the D1.

- **Transfer Position (#20)** - The Department requests transferring position #21230 from Budget Unit 5801 (WBS) to Budget Unit 5915 (Local Services). The position and its funding was incorrectly placed in Budget Unit 5801 and should move to Budget Unit 5915.
- **Correct funding for Positions (#21, #22)** - The Department requests correcting funding for two positions at the WBS (#20990; #12570) and one position at the WGS (#13950).
 - WBS and WGS do not directly receive federal funds. When developing the BFY2023 budget, all Federal Funds were removed from WBS and WGS through Chapter 17 moves.

Additional Requests Not Included in the Department Exception Requests

Request Type	Description	Amount
Capital Construction - WBS	Demolition and replacement of the Facility Maintenance Storage Facility (Level III Design and Construction). Recommended by State Construction Department; approved by State Building Commission.	\$1,590,390 (SGF)
Capital Construction - WGS	Demolition and replacement of the Stolt Administration/Education Building (Level III Design and Construction). Recommended by State Construction Department; approved by State Building Commission.	\$37,014,172 (SGF)
Total		\$38,604,562 (SGF)