Fiscal Year 2024-25
Agency Budget Plan

FORM A - BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY

OPERATING REQUESTS (FORM B1)	For FY 2024-25, my agency is (mark "X"):
	X Requesting General Fund Appropriations.
	X Requesting Federal/Other Authorization.
	Not requesting any changes.

NON-RECURRING REQUESTS (FORM B2)	For FY 2024-25, my agency is (mark "X"):
	X Requesting Non-Recurring Appropriations.
	X Requesting Non-Recurring Federal/Other Authorization.
	Not requesting any changes.

CAPITAL REQUESTS (FORM C)	For FY 2024-25, my agency is (mark "X"):
	Requesting funding for Capital Projects.
	X Not requesting any changes.

PROVISOS (FORM D)	For FY 2024-25, my agency is (mark "X"):
	X Requesting a new proviso and/or substantive changes to existing provisos.
	Only requesting technical proviso changes (such as date references).
	Not requesting any proviso changes.

Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's budget process.

	Name	*Phone*	*Email*
PRIMARY CONTACT:	David O'Kelly, Controller	803-898-3987	David.okelly@dss.sc.gov
SECONDARY CONTACT:	Susan Roben, Chief Financial Officer	803-898-7427	Susan.roben@dss.sc.gov

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2024-25 Agency Budget Plan, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

	Agency Director	*Board or Commission Chair*
SIGN/DATE:	*(signature)*	
TYPE/PRINT NAME:	Mike Leach	

This form must be signed by the agency head – not a delegate.

Agency Name:	Department Of Social Services
Agency Code:	L040
Section:	38

BUDGET REQUESTS			FUNDING					FTES				
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total
1	B1 - Recurring	Child Welfare Placement Stability	14,352,105	4,977,709	336,077	0	19,665,891	58.19	24.17	2.64	0.00	85.00
2	B1 - Recurring	Senior Hunger and Food Insecurity	1,146,209	184,835	0	0	1,331,044	0.40	1.60	0.00	0.00	2.00
3	B1 - Recurring	Working Families Child Care Scholarships and Support	10,000,000	666,457	0	0	10,666,457	0.00	6.00	0.00	0.00	6.00
4	B2 - Non-Recurring	Economic Services System Application Modernization (ESSAM) – DDI Phase	8,812,499	8,812,499	0	0	17,624,998	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS			34,310,813	14,641,500	336,077	0	49,288,390	58.59	31.77	2.64	0.00	93.00

Agency Name:	Department Of Social Services		
Agency Code:	L040	Section:	38

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	1

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Child Welfare Placement Stability**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $14,352,105** **Federal: $4,977,709** **Other: $336,077** **Total: $19,665,891**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2024-2025? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	**85.00**

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
	X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	X	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	X	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	X	IT Technology/Security related
		Consulted DTO during development
		Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
		Education, Training, and Human Development
	X	Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	Goal 1; Strategy 1.2; Measure 1.1.1 and 1.2.1 Goal 3; Strategy 3.1; Measure 3.1.3 Goal 3; Strategy 3.2; Measure 3.2.2

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	Foster Parents, Kinship Caregivers, Group Home Facilities, Child Placing Agencies. Allocation of funds is based on the level of care, age of the child, and support needed for foster children and youth, and related initiatives.

FUNDS

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

Foster Family Board Rate Increase - $863,915 Total Funds

$587,635 - State General Funds

$276,280 - Federal Authorization

The agency reviews foster family board rates on an annual basis and adjusts as necessary to ensure the monthly rates for regular foster care, difficulty of care (DCBR) and kinship care continue to meet the USDA guidelines for the cost of raising a child in the Southeast region. This request is directly related to a Proviso change request for 38.14 (DSS: Family Foster Care Payments).

Group Home Quality Services – Cost of Care Adjustment - $5,207,772 Total Funds

$3,889,871 - State General Funds

$1,317,901 - Federal Authorization

Group homes are designed to meet the needs of children and youth who are unable to live at home, in traditional family foster care or therapeutic foster care. In these situations, group homes offer time-limited safe environments for youth deemed at-risk due to experiences of unstable care, maltreatment, and behavioral problems, until they can be stepped-down to a family-based placement. The agency, in its mission to have a system that is trauma-informed, family-centered, strengths-based, culturally responsive, and recognizes that children belong in the least restrictive, most family-like, and trauma-informed setting possible, where they can thrive and grow, is realigning its levels of care for group homes. Along with Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP), there will be a Moderate level of care and an Enhanced level of care based on the needs of the foster child/youth. Enhanced group care programs provide supervision and a greater intensity of programming required to manage children and youth who present more intensive problems than those in Moderate group care, but who cannot be served in a QRTP. Because of the increased responsibility of the group home providers, along with increased costs of staff recruitment and retention for group homes, the ongoing youth mental health crisis, which has put an increased burden on group homes and the children and youth in their care, and increases in costs of food and utilities, the agency must increase rates paid to these providers who are caring for our South Carolina children in foster care.

Short-Term Residential Crisis Assessment and Stabilization Center - $2,135,250 Total Funds

$2,008,084 - State General Funds

$ 127,166 - Federal Authorization

DSS recognizes the need to provide quality, short-term, temporary, structured twenty-four-hour care and treatment to children and youth who have special care needs due to physical, medical, emotional, behavioral, and developmental problems. The goal is to assess and stabilize the youth's behavior so that they can be placed in the least restrictive placement setting.

Katana Safety Devices - $477,822 Total Funds

$366,984 – State General Funds

$ 95,739 – Federal Authorization

$ 15,099 – Other Funds

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Healthcare and Social Service workers are nearly five times as likely to suffer a serious workplace violence injury than workers in other sectors. KATANA Safety is the only device that attaches directly to any smartphone and in case of emergency, bypasses the phone's lock screen via the patented quick trigger device activation to provide employees with instant help. The KATANA technology establishes a vital

connection between our front-line case management employees and the 24/7 emergency response center providing round-the-clock protection, no matter where an employee is located, or what situation they are in. The 24/7 response center can be accessed anytime employees feel uncomfortable or unsafe, enabling KATANA to dispatch appropriate emergency services directly to their exact GPS location. Employee feedback continues to indicate that physical safety for front-line staff is a significant retention factor.

Leased State Fleet Vehicles - $864,000 Total Funds

$578,880 – State General Funds

$285,120 – Federal Authorization

The agency has received over 700 Child Welfare Case Management FTEs since FY2015-2016. With this large increase in staff that need to access state fleet vehicles to perform their job, the agency is requesting the funding to lease an additional 80 vehicles. A detailed analysis was completed looking at our current state fleet, average trips per fleet, average trips per vehicle, average miles per vehicle, etc. to come up with a mileage utilization of either underutilized, at target, or overutilized vehicles. Child Welfare must complete their investigation within 24 hours to meet the required guidelines, which means a certain number of vehicles must be available at all times, depending on the size of the county and staff. We were able to utilize some additional 'turn-in' vehicles from state fleet for a pilot in Richland County, and this county saw an increase in their timeliness of response, and improvement in their metrics.

Placement Staffing - $2,503,811 Total Funds, 24.00 FTEs

$1,701,572 – State General Funds

$ 726,965 – Federal Authorization

$ 75,274 – Other Funds

Staffing is being requested to enable expansion of the Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM) roles to ensure initial CFTM's on all children and youth at risk of entering foster care of within 24 hours of entering foster care are completed. This could provide a positive impact on the number of children and youth in foster care by identifying safety services and/or kin placements early on to prevent foster care entry when possible, or identification of and placement with kin whenever possible. Additional staffing is being requested to allow the agency to accept more non-kin and non-therapeutic foster family applicants, in addition to the kin licensing work that is already occurring, to meet capacity demands for all families wishing to have their license managed by DSS, and to increase recruitment and licensing and support work. Additional Placement Specialists are needed to assist with handling the volume of placement needs, especially in the Midlands and Upstate regions. The volume of children and youth in these regions and the volume of placement location services needed late in the day and after hours necessitates the need for this request. We are also requesting positions in our regional Adoptions Offices to work on the timeliness of completing adoption summaries, assisting with improving timeliness of adoption finalization, and reducing the fiscal impact of prolonged unnecessary stays of legally free children and youth in foster care awaiting their forever family.

IV-E Subsidy/KinGAP/Adoption Staffing - $619,035 Total Funds, 5.00 FTEs

$389,249 – State General Funds

$229,786 – Federal Authorization

These positions are being requested to monitor adoption finalizations and ensure all required documents have been received, assist in providing resources to people who are reunited via the Reunion Registry or are receiving their de-identified adoption records. They will also handle all re-negotiations for adoption and KinGAP subsidy payments, and will assist with finalizing records and files, along with overseeing guardianship determinations and completing guardianship agreements statewide in accordance with the implementation of KinGAP.

Child Health and Well-Being Staffing - $1,089,879 Total Funds, 8.00 Total FTEs

$781,771 – State General Funds

$249,473 – Federal Authorization

$ 58,635 – Other Funds

The agency is requesting additional Healthcare Quality Improvement Coordinators and Therapeutic Services Coordinator positions to assist with

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

scheduling and entering of initial dental encounters and following up on missing well child visits. We have seen improvement in scheduling of initial well child visits since the addition of the initial Healthcare Quality Improvement Coordinators, which is improving data compliance and ensuring children and youth in foster care have timely well-child and dental visits. This addition would increase the compliance and relieve the burden of scheduling these visits from our front-line case management staff. The Therapeutic Services Coordinator positions will assist with transitioning youth who have been in congregate care for six months or more, to a less restrictive setting with supportive services. These positions can also support with staffing youth who have experienced two or more negative placement moves in the past thirty days to help determine what therapeutic supports are needed to stabilize placement.

Child Welfare Caseload Staffing - $3,208,370 Total Funds, 30.00 Total FTEs

$2,383,553 – State General Funds

$ 727,026 – Federal Authorization

$ 97,791 – Other Funds

Out of Home Abuse and Neglect (OHAN) has experienced a 38% increase in volume since April 2023 and the agency is requesting additional positions to meet caseload standards and staffing ratios. The agency is requesting additional Case Manager Assistant positions to assist with improving required documentation, as well as assist staff with transportation needs related to visitation, appointments, etc. This will relieve the burden from our front-line case management staff. The agency also requests additional Team Leader and Team Coordinator positions to achieve established ratios and caseloads as the agency has seen notable success in county offices where the 1:8 ratio is met in reducing caseloads and the quality of casework, practice and metrics have also improved.

Support Staffing - $2,327,949 Total Funds, 18.00 FTEs

$1,376,330 – State General Funds

$ 868,046 – Federal Authorization

$ 83,573 – Other Funds

The agency is requesting positions to support the work required of Child Welfare, including positions for the systems transformation and engagement work of the agency – these positions will identify root causes to inform and support data-driven program improvement efforts through diversifying and expanding systemic critical incident reviews across additional critical incident types, identifying stakeholder-informed root causes for program improvement efforts. Additional positions will analyze the results of an ongoing service recipient survey for child welfare services, coordinate with program directors to drive solutions and plans to improve outcomes and comply with federal and state requirements. These positions will be critical as the agency prepares for the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) development and statewide assessment. The agency is requesting additional training and development staff to meet the current demand for training needs of our child welfare Team Leaders, Team Coordinators, and also to sustain the ongoing Coach Approach training. Additional positions are needed in the areas of the Office of Inspector General and Individual and Provider Rights to support the expanded program staffing in areas of safety, local law enforcement communication and collaboration, and the timely resolution of appeals submitted to the agency. Lastly, the agency requests additional positions for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) for additional capacity to fully engage in CQI activities to support the increased work. The Child Welfare Division is in the process of developing county action plans, and the CQI staff will need to play a key role in the successful implementation of these plans to help ensure the counties are making the needed improvements to best serve children, youth and families.

Child Welfare Case Manager Salary Increases - $368,088 Total Funds

$288,176 – State General Funds

$ 74,207 – Federal Authorization

$ 5,705 – Other Funds

The agency is requesting to increase the minimum starting salary for approximately 113 child welfare case manager assistant positions. The case manager assistants are responsible for assisting with and monitoring documentation, and assisting with transportation needs related to visitation, appointments, etc. This relieves the burden of these tasks from our front-line case management staff. While the overall agency vacancy rate is 14.88% (as of 9/22/23), and the overall vacancy rate for the Child Welfare Division is 13.61%, the vacancy rate for case manager assistants is 17.70%, while the turnover

rate for case manager assistants was 26.9% over the past year. The current hiring salary impacts DSS's ability to hire and retain qualified staff, which forces our front-line case management staff to perform these tasks, taking them away from focusing on finding appropriate placement for foster children and youth, or finding alternatives to prevent them from entering foster care.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Department Of Social Services		
Agency Code:	L040	Section:	38

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	2

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Senior Hunger and Food Insecurity

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $1,146,209** **Federal: $184,835** **Other: $0** **Total: $1,331,044**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2024-2025? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	2.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	X	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
		Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		Consulted DTO during development
		Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES		Education, Training, and Human Development
	X	Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	Goal 2 – Family Strengthening & Stability – help preserve the family unit by enhancing the capacity of individuals and families to provide for their own needs.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	Individuals aged sixty (60) and older.

FUNDS

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program Expansion - $1,100,000 Total Funds

$1,100,000 - State General Funds

$ 0 - Federal Authorization

These funds will expand the operation of the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) in South Carolina. This annual program, funded by the federal government, provides vouchers for individuals aged 60 and older to obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from participating farmers markets and other vendors. In order to qualify, individuals must have income that is at or below 185% of the federal poverty level.

South Carolina has never received enough federal funding to meet the need/demand for this program, and every year we are forced to turn seniors away. For the FY23 season, over 2,600 seniors were waitlisted in 20 counties. Six (6) counties had to cancel distribution events because there were no more vouchers available due to increased interest in the program. These additional funds will allow the agency to supplement the federal funding in order to serve approximately 10,000 additional seniors per year and maintain a $50 benefit level.

The expansion of this program with state dollars could help address a lack of consistent access to enough healthy food, like fresh fruits and vegetables, for older South Carolinians to live an active, healthy life. South Carolina farmers also benefit by participating in this program by selling their produce directly to senior citizens.

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program Expansion Staffing - $231,044 Total Funds, 2.00 Total FTEs

$ 46,209 - State General Funds

$184,835 - Federal Authorization

The agency is requesting funding for 2 positions to assist with the increased workload due to the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program expansion. These positions will perform work related to billing, federal reporting, program monitoring, farmer/vendor recruitment, outreach and enrollment, and voucher distribution. These positions would also assist counties that do not have the infrastructure to hold multiple enrollment events.

Agency Name:	Department Of Social Services		
Agency Code:	L040	Section:	38

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	3

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Working Families Child Care Scholarships and Support**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $10,000,000** **Federal: $666,457** **Other: $0** **Total: $10,666,457**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2024-2025? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	6.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	**Mark "X" for all that apply:**	
	X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
		Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	X	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		Consulted DTO during development
		Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	**Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:**	
		Education, Training, and Human Development
	X	Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	Goal 2, Strategy 2, Performance Measure 2.2.1; 2.2.2

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	Child Care Providers licensed or regulated by the agency on behalf of working families.

FUNDS

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

Child Care Scholarships for SC Working Families - $10,000,000 Total Funds

$10,000,000 - State General Funds

$0 - Federal Authorization

The agency requests $10 million in recurring dollars to provide child care scholarships for families whose income falls between 85% of the State Median Income (SMI) and 300% Federal Poverty Level (FPL). For example, a family of three whose income is between $64,064 and $74,580 per year would qualify under this expansion.

Between October 2020 and July 2023, 71,239 children were approved for a SC Working Families Child Care Scholarship and placed in a child care slot. Since January 1, 2023, the average number of children approved has increased 3,292 each month.

85% of the SMI is the highest income level allowable under federal law. DSS has been able to serve families with income up to 300% FPL using federal stimulus funds, which expire September 30, 2023. Beginning October 1, 2023, the income eligibility threshold will decrease from 300% FPL to 85% of the State Median Income (from $74,580 to $64,063 for a family of three).

These additional state funds will allow DSS to provide child care scholarships for an estimated 2,800 children per year. Scholarships would be made available on a first come, first served basis. Providers must participate in the state's voluntary ABC Quality program to accept these scholarships.

Child Care Staffing - $666,457 Total Funds, 6.00 Total FTEs

$0 State - General Funds

$666,457 - Federal Authorization

The agency is requesting six (6) positions to address the increase in child care scholarship applications recruit and, enroll additional child care providers, connect children to providers, and ensure providers are reimbursed timely. These positions will also process licenses, renewals, and conduct health and safety inspections for the increased number of child care providers enrolled in ABC Quality – an increase of 494 since March 2020.

Agency Name:	Department Of Social Services		
Agency Code:	L040	Section:	38

FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	4
	Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Economic Services System Application Modernization (ESSAM) – DDI Phase
	Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	$17,624,998
	What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2024-2025? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	**Mark "X" for all that apply:**
	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	X IT Technology/Security related
	X Consulted DTO during development
	X Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
	Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding
	Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	**Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:**
	Education, Training, and Human Development
	X Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This decision package focuses on the agency's technology infrastructure, which supports the entire agency, and relates to the four defined goals, as listed in the Agency Accountability Report.
	What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Professional service providers and contractors.
	What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	**Economic Services System Application Modernization - $17,624,998 Total Funds** $8,812,499 – State General Funds $8,812,499 – Federal Authorization The Department is requesting nonrecurring state matching funds to cover the requirements and design phase for the Economic Services System Application Modernization (ESSAM) project, which will replace agency's 35-year-old legacy Mainframe SNAP and TANF Eligibility Systems. These systems are responsible for determining eligibility and issuing benefit payments to over 300,000 households and over 630,000 individuals, receiving nearly $2 billion in annual benefit payments. The outdated technology required to maintain the current legacy system no longer meets modern business/operational needs. The programming language used in the legacy system is no longer used in modern enterprise systems, and the programmer skillsets required to maintain the system are costly, and often no longer available. Due to the age of the system, DSS no longer has the ability make system changes and provide appropriate enhancements to improve client experience, benefit timeliness, or program integrity and operational efficiency/effectiveness, posing major risks to the State. The Request for Proposal (RFP) was released on August 3, 2023, with bids due by November 1, 2023, and contract execution no later than June 3, 2024. System design and development will begin during FY2024-2025, with an estimated FY25 total cost of $17.6 million, and an overall total estimated project cost of $74 million. Current estimates show the design, development, testing, and implementation phases of the project spanning until FY26-27. As communicated previously, in addition to the FY24-25 request, and the FY23-24 non-recurring appropriation received, DSS intends to request additional non-recurring state appropriations for the 50% in required state matching funds for the duration of the project, followed by associated ongoing maintenance and support matching funds, following system deployment

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Department Of Social Services		
Agency Code:	L040	Section:	38

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	38.14

Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark "NEW").

TITLE	Family Foster Care Payments

Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	II. Foster Family Care Payments

Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	Priority #1 – Child Welfare Placement Stability

Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2024-2025? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Amend

Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	None

Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	This proviso was first adopted in FY2002-2003. The rates in this proviso are amended annually as needed based on inflation, to provide funding for the basic needs of foster children, including kinship care assistance.

Ages – Old Rate

0-5 $644 Per Month

6-12 $752 Per Month

13+ $794 Per Month

FISCAL IMPACT	This amendment would result in an increase in the amount foster parents receive for the needs of foster children in their care, and it would meet the US Department of Agriculture cost of raising a child study.

Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT	The Department of Social Services shall furnish as Family Foster Care payments for individual foster children under their sponsorship and under kinship care: Ages 0-5 ~~$644~~ **$670** per month Ages 6-12 ~~$752~~ **$783** per month Ages 13+ ~~$794~~ **$827** per month These specified amounts are for the basic needs of the foster children to include kinship care assistance. Basic needs within this proviso are identified as food (at home and away), clothing, housing, transportation, education, and other costs as defined in the U.S. Department of Agriculture study of the Annual Cost of Raising a Child to Age Eighteen. Further, each agency shall identify and justify, as another line item, all material and/or services, in excess of those basic needs listed above, which were a direct result of a professional agency evaluation of clientele need. Legitimate medical care in excess of Medicaid reimbursement or such care not recognized by Medicaid may be considered as special needs if approved by the sponsoring/responsible agency and shall be reimbursed by the sponsoring agency in the same manner of reimbursing other special needs of foster children.

Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Department Of Social Services		
Agency Code:	L040	Section:	38

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	38.23

Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark "NEW").

TITLE	Internal Child Fatality Review Committee

Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	NA

Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	NA

Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2024-2025? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Amend

Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	None

Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	The agency is requesting to amend this proviso to remove the fiscal year reference to eliminate the need for amendment every year simply to update the fiscal year. No other changes are being proposed

FISCAL IMPACT

NA

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT

~~For Fiscal Year 2023-24,~~ The Department of Social Services shall continue the work of the Internal Child Fatality Review Committees (internal committees) pursuant to the authority granted in Sections 43-1-60(3), 43-1-80, and 63-7-910(E) of the 1976 Code to allow for the rapid and expeditious review of reported child fatalities that are reported to the Department of Social Services on suspicion of abandonment, child abuse, neglect or harm as defined in Section 63-7-20. This review process will enable the department to respond to the safety needs of any surviving siblings and will lead to improvement in the department's efforts to prevent child fatalities caused by abandonment, child abuse, neglect or harm. Each internal committee shall be composed of a board-certified child abuse pediatrician, an agent from the State Law Enforcement Division, a local law enforcement officer, a representative from the local coroner's office, and representatives from the Department of Social Services. The internal committee may invite other service provider organizations as deemed necessary. The department is authorized to provide reasonable compensation for board-certified child abuse pediatricians serving on an internal committee. Internal committees shall have access to information and records maintained by a provider of medical care regarding a child whose death is being reviewed by the internal committee, including information on prenatal care; all information and records maintained by any state, county, or local government agency, including, but not limited to, birth certificates, law enforcement investigation data, county coroner or medical examiner investigation data, parole and probation information and records, and information and records of health agencies that provided services to the child or family. The meetings, information obtained by, reports prepared by, and statements made before the internal committees are confidential and protected from disclosure pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, criminal and civil proceedings, and subpoenas as set forth in Sections 63-7-940 and 63-7-1990.

Agency Name:	Department Of Social Services		
Agency Code:	L040	Section:	38

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	38.25

Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark "NEW").

TITLE	Federally Certified Child Support Enforcement System Project

Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	NA

Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	NA

Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2024-2025? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Delete

Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	None

Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	The agency is requesting to delete this Proviso. The Child Support Enforcement System Project (PACSS) was certified by the Federal Government in 2019, and as stated in the Proviso, pursuant to the Social Security Act and SC Code Section 63-17-610, Clerks of Court shall utilize the federally certified child support system and the state disbursement unit developed by the department to perform required child support functions. This Proviso is no longer needed.

FISCAL IMPACT

NA

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT

~~In order to expedite the completion and certification of the Automated Child Support Enforcement System required by the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Section 654a), the Department of Social Services is authorized to adopt, to the fullest extent possible, the system and operating procedures of the Delaware Transfer System. To the extent the Transfer System operating processes deviate from, or are incompatible with, current South Carolina practice, the department is authorized to determine the most effective and efficient practice to comply with federal requirements. The department shall work with Clerks of Court to identify and prepare for the changes involved in the implementation of the Transfer System which may impact their current operating practices with regards to performance of required child support functions. Pursuant to the Social Security Act and S.C. Code Section 63-17-610, Clerks of Court shall utilize the federally certifiable child support system and the state disbursement unit developed by the department to perform required child support functions.~~

Agency Name:	Department Of Social Services		
Agency Code:	L040	Section:	38

FORM E – AGENCY COST SAVINGS AND GENERAL FUND REDUCTION CONTINGENCY PLAN

TITLE	Agency Cost Savings and General Fund Reduction Contingency Plan

AMOUNT	$8,969,602

What is the General Fund 3% reduction amount? This amount should correspond to the reduction spreadsheet prepared by EBO.

ASSOCIATED FTE REDUCTIONS	NA

How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?

PROGRAM / ACTIVITY IMPACT	To meet a three percent reduction in general funds expenditures, DSS would reduce active contracts, excluding those under which services are delivered directly to clients. The reduction of these contracts would hinder the agency's ability to continue to perform certain services necessary for the proper administration of DSS. The agency would also execute a two-week furlough of all staff whose compensation is $50,000 or more, putting a strain on staff and their families. Lastly, DSS would eliminate its current forecasted vacant positions, excluding frontline case managers, putting a heavier burden on current staff who are already absorbing an increased workload.

What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?

SUMMARY	**3% Reduction State General Funds Reduction $8,969,602 Total Funds (100% State Funds)** Description of Reduction Amount: Contract Reductions - $2,040,319 Furlough staff making $50,000 and over for 10 days - $1,623,572 Eliminate forecasted vacant positions, except frontline case managers - $5,305,711

Please provide a detailed summary of service delivery impact caused by a reduction in General Fund Appropriations and provide the method of calculation for anticipated reductions. Agencies should prioritize reduction in expenditures that have the least significant impact on service delivery.

AGENCY COST SAVINGS PLANS

NA

What measures does the agency plan to implement to reduce its costs and operating expenses by more than $50,000? Provide a summary of the measures taken and the estimated amount of savings. How does the agency plan to repurpose the savings?

Agency Name:	Department Of Social Services		
Agency Code:	L040	Section:	38

FORM F – REDUCING COST AND BURDEN TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS

TITLE	DSS – Reducing Cost and Burden to Businesses and Citizens
	Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

EXPECTED SAVINGS TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS	See narratives with amounts below.
	What is the expected savings to South Carolina's businesses and citizens that is generated by this proposal? The savings could be related to time or money.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	**Mark "X" for all that apply:**
			Repeal or revision of regulations.
		X	Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens.
			Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden.
		X	Other

METHOD OF CALCULATION	NA
	Describe the method of calculation for determining the expected cost or time savings to businesses or citizens.

REDUCTION OF FEES OR FINES	Elimination of background check fees for child care providers.
	Which fees or fines does the agency intend to reduce? What was the fine or fee revenue for the previous fiscal year? What was the associated program expenditure for the previous fiscal year? What is the enabling authority for the issuance of the fee or fine?

REDUCTION OF REGULATION	None
	Which regulations does the agency intend to amend or delete? What is the enabling authority for the regulation?

SUMMARY	The agency continued to deploy emergency funding to strengthen the State's child care system so that it can better support eligible parents. As of 9/22/23, the Department has approved more than $448 million in child care stabilization grants and nearly $59 million in health and safety grants to providers. Over $185 million was issued in operating grants to child care providers that had to close or who lost revenue due to low enrollments as a result of COVID-19. Since October 2020, in response to COVID-19, DSS's Division of Early Care and Education has been offering additional child care assistance for lower-income working families, with approximately 77,000 children having been approved for SC Vouchers. Since July 2022, DSS has been offering technology grants to child care providers to purchase equipment or services needed to support child care business operations and classroom functionality. Over $54 million in technology grants have been issued to 1,728 child care providers.
	The agency stopped charging child care centers for background check fees, effective with the 2021-2022 fiscal year, and continues this practice. This has reduced the burden on these centers by between $175,000 and $200,000 per year.
	The Healthy Bucks program provides coupons allowing SNAP recipients to obtain additional fresh fruits and vegetables when purchasing fresh produce at grocery stores or farmers markets with SNAP benefits through their EBT cards. Each coupon allows the recipient to double the amount of produce purchased. DSS expanded the types of vendors authorized to participate in the Healthy Bucks program to include small grocery stores and convenience stores, allowing greater access to fresh fruits and vegetables for SNAP recipients. The agency increased from 47 active Healthy Bucks vendors to 53 from 2022 to 2023.
	South Carolina continues to issue Pandemic EBT (P-EBT), a federal program created to help mitigate the financial impact created by prolonged school closures and children

consuming meals at home that they otherwise would have received through the national free or reduced-price meals program. In fiscal year 2023, approximately $280 million in benefits were issued to 530,000 children statewide.

Employment Services staff collaborated with Economic Services County Operations staff to improve the referral process between SNAP eligibility and SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) programs, and increased SNAP E&T enrollments, which assisted 1,387 South Carolina TANF and SNAP E&T program participants obtain employment.

The agency has spent approximately $200,000 as of 6/30/23 in Federal stimulus funding for home remediation and stabilization items to help adults remain in their home and to prevent adults from coming into DSS custody or being placed in an institution.

Provide an explanation of the proposal and its positive results on businesses or citizens. How will the request affect agency operations?