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Competency-based Personnel Selection

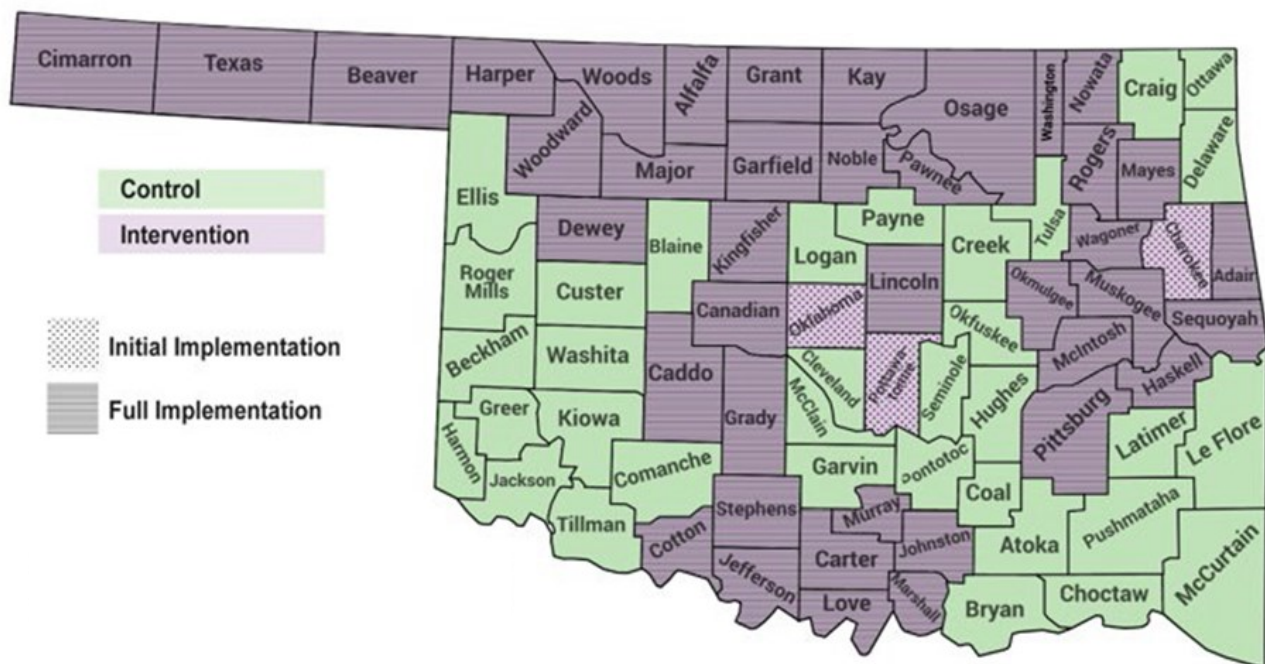
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

The Child Welfare Services division of Oklahoma Human Services (OKDHS) is a state-administered child welfare agency. The OKDHS divisions are supported by centralized operations including Human Resource Management (HRM). A small team of human resources professionals within Child Welfare Services work closely with HRM to support Child Welfare Services' personnel needs.

The executive team of Child Welfare Services includes the director and deputy directors (who lead teams of district directors, field administrators, and program administrators). The agency is divided into five field regions serving 27 districts and 77 counties. At least one district director leads each district. The district directors supervise child protective services, permanency

planning, and family-centered services. Foster care and adoptions (FC&A) have a more centralized structure with field managers overseeing those operations across districts.

The Child Welfare Specialist (CWS) job consists of four levels. CWS I-III provide direct services to children and families. New hires to Child Welfare Services can start as either a CWS I or II depending on their previous social work experience and education level. CWS Is are promoted to a CWS II after 1-year as a CWS I. CWS IIIs serve in a lead worker/mentor role and CWS IVs are child welfare supervisors. In 2017, Child Welfare Services employed 1,780 CWS I-IIIs and 388 supervisors (CWS IV). Each supervisor is responsible for a unit of approximately four CWS I/II and one CWS III.



QIC-WD Project Overview

The QIC-WD worked with a steering committee to develop and implement a standardized competency-based hiring process for new CWSs that was designed to hire individuals with the attributes that are relevant to the job (see [Intervention Overview](#) for more information). The hiring process included a structured interview, a writing assessment, and a typing assessment.

The project was initially implemented in three counties, Oklahoma, Pottawatomie, and Cherokee, and was then implemented in 40 additional counties. The districts

were randomly assigned to implement the new hiring process or to a control group (see map). Because FC&A is structured differently, that program was randomized at the field manager level, rather than district level.

Turnover

In 2017, the statewide turnover rate for CWS I/IIs was 25%, meaning that roughly a quarter of frontline staff left OKDHS that year. This rate varied by region from 16-39% for CWS I and 23-32% for CWS II. The statewide turnover rate was 13% for CWS III and 7% for supervisors (CWS IV) ranging by region from 11-18% and 5-12%, respectively.

