



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

# **Fiscal Year 2025 Report on Provider Admission Data**

**As Required by the  
General Appropriations Act,  
House Bill 1, 88th Legislature,  
Regular Session, 2023  
(Article II, Department of Family and  
Protective Services, Rider 45)**

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September 30, 2024

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## Executive Summary

Pursuant to House Bill 1, 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023 (Article II, Department of Family and Protective Services, Rider 45) the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) must submit an annual report that includes an analysis of foster care placement referrals by DFPS or a Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) and the corresponding admissions information with paid foster care providers.

DFPS staff utilized the General Placement Search (GPS) application to track placement referrals and admission information, including reasons for provider denials. SSCC staff provided corresponding placement referral data to DFPS quarterly. Providers receiving foster care reimbursement payments for children in DFPS conservatorship are required to respond to all placement referrals with an acceptance or denial and, if declining a placement, a denial reason must be included. Centralized placement teams from DFPS and the SSCCs require provider responses for all referrals.

The report data does not include fiscal year 2024, quarter 4 due to submission and reporting time constraints<sup>1</sup>. However, the available data supports the trends reported by providers concerning referral denials due to limited capacity and an inability to meet the needs of the child. A small percentage of the total referrals made resulted in admission with no noted quarter-to-quarter trend about how the referrals relate to placement acceptance. Admission numbers may be affected due to a child potentially having several referrals made during a single placement search episode, with only one placement option being secured.

DFPS noted the need for further qualitative analysis of placement referral data for future reporting purposes. Furthermore, a reevaluation of placement search processes is necessary to ensure DFPS and SSCC placement staff are only sending appropriately matched referrals to providers as this may decrease the volume of annual placement referrals in future report data. DFPS should also provide any necessary technical assistance to providers who have not provided referral responses as the information is contractually required and assists with data accuracy.

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<sup>1</sup> The fiscal year 2026 submission of this report will include data for fiscal year 2024, quarter 4 through fiscal year 2025, quarter 3.

## Introduction

As required by Rider 45, providers receiving foster care reimbursement payments for children in DFPS conservatorship must submit a quarterly report to DFPS that includes:

- The number of children referred by DFPS or an SSCC;
- The percentage of referrals that resulted in an admission;
- The percentage of referrals that did not result in an admission, broken out by the various reasons for the denial; and
- For children that were admitted, the average length of time of placement.

For this initial reporting, DFPS collected and analyzed fiscal year 2024, quarters 1 through 3 placement referral data from the GPS system and SSCCs quarterly to identify trends in placement referrals, acceptance rates, and denial reasons from providers. Fiscal year 2024 quarter 4 was unavailable at the time of writing this report but will be included in the next annual report. DFPS also uses the referral data as an aid for identifying areas for improvements to increase admission rates and placement stability for foster children.

## Background

To comply with Rider 45 reporting requirements, DFPS collaborated with its SSCC partners and providers to develop methods to best capture the necessary placement referral data. DFPS used IMPACT data to report on the average time in placements for children in the care of the Legacy system and the SSCCs. For foster children in the care of the Legacy system, DFPS utilized the:

- GPS application to track the number of children referred to each provider;
- Number resulting in an admission; and
- Reasons for denial in the provider contacts.

DFPS trained its placement staff on the new reporting requirements and provided guidance regarding capturing acceptance and denial responses within the GPS application. DFPS developed a communication plan with providers and SSCC staff to inform them of the new requirements and developed a collection tool – Move It application – to assist SSCC data collection and submission. The SSCCs must maintain a log of all referrals including acceptance and reasons for denials for youth in their care with one response needed per child referral, as well as report placement referral data to DFPS quarterly.

Providers are required to respond to all placement referrals with an acceptance or denial. DFPS Legacy and SSCC contracts were amended with the following language, reflecting the new reporting requirement:

“Providers are now required to respond to all placement requests with an acceptance or denial. If declining a placement, Providers must include the denial reason (i.e., insufficient capacity, child characteristic, cannot meet child’s needs, child does not meet admission criteria, etc.”

Residential Child Care Contracts (RCC) replaced the *24-Hour Requirements Form and Addendum* with the updated form, *Doing Business with DFPS RCC*, to incorporate the new provider reporting requirement.

Providers receiving foster care reimbursement payments for children in DFPS conservatorship must submit a quarterly report to DFPS that includes:

- The number of children referred by DFPS or an SSCC;
- The percentage of referrals that resulted in an admission;
- The percentage of referrals that did not result in an admission broken out by the distinct reasons for the denial; and
- For children admitted, the average length of time of placement.

At the end of the fiscal year, providers must submit a full year dataset, due by September 7, to account for any lapses in data entry from previous quarters.

## Understanding Trends in Admissions and Denials by Paid Foster Care Providers

Table 1 summarizes trends in admissions, denials, and length of time in placement for admissions for fiscal year 2024, quarters 1 through 3, including the number of children eligible for a referral by Legacy and CBC catchment area, as well as the total of referrals made during the reporting period. However, it does not include fiscal year 2024, quarter 4 as it was unavailable at the time of writing the report.<sup>2</sup>

Eligible children are those in DFPS conservatorship at any point during the timeframe. Not all children experienced a change in placement or referral to paid foster care during the period.

**Table 1. Total Referrals and Children Eligible for a Referral by SSCC and Legacy<sup>3</sup>**

Population	Total Referrals	Eligible Children	Referrals to Eligible Children Ratio
<b>Metroplex West (OCOK)</b>	23,110	2,694	8.6
<b>Big Country and Texoma (2INGage)</b>	40,550	1,476	27.5
<b>Panhandle (Saint Francis)</b>	22,459	1,492	15.1
<b>South Central and Hill Country (Belong)</b>	8,279	993	8.3
<b>Metroplex East (EMPOWER)</b>	55,680	2,718	20.5
<b>Piney Woods (4Kids4Families)</b>	7,537	1,690	4.5
<b>Deep East (TFCN)</b>	7,815	1,267	6.2
<b>Legacy</b>	222,102	13,318	16.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>387,532</b>	<b>25,648</b>	<b>15.1</b>

<sup>2</sup> Future productions of this report will use a moving window of four quarters, so the fiscal year 2026 submission of this report will include data for fiscal year 2024, quarter 4 through fiscal year 2025, quarter 3.

<sup>3</sup> Source: DRIT 114204

## Referral Results

Table 2 summarizes the SSCC and Legacy referrals to providers by the response given. If the provider:

- Admitted the child from the referral (i.e., admission);
- Explicitly denied the referral (i.e., denial); or
- Did not deny the referral, but admission did not occur (i.e., no admission, acceptance, or no response).

**Table 2. Referral Results Fiscal Year 2024, Quarter 3 Year To Date (YTD)<sup>4</sup>**

Referral Result	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	TOTAL
<b>Admission</b>	2,656	3,121	3,449	9,226
<b>Denial</b>	70,524	77,094	105,933	253,551
<b>No Admission (Acceptance or No Response)</b>	31,184	40,275	52,605	124,064
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104,505</b>	<b>120,704</b>	<b>158,436</b>	<b>387,532</b>

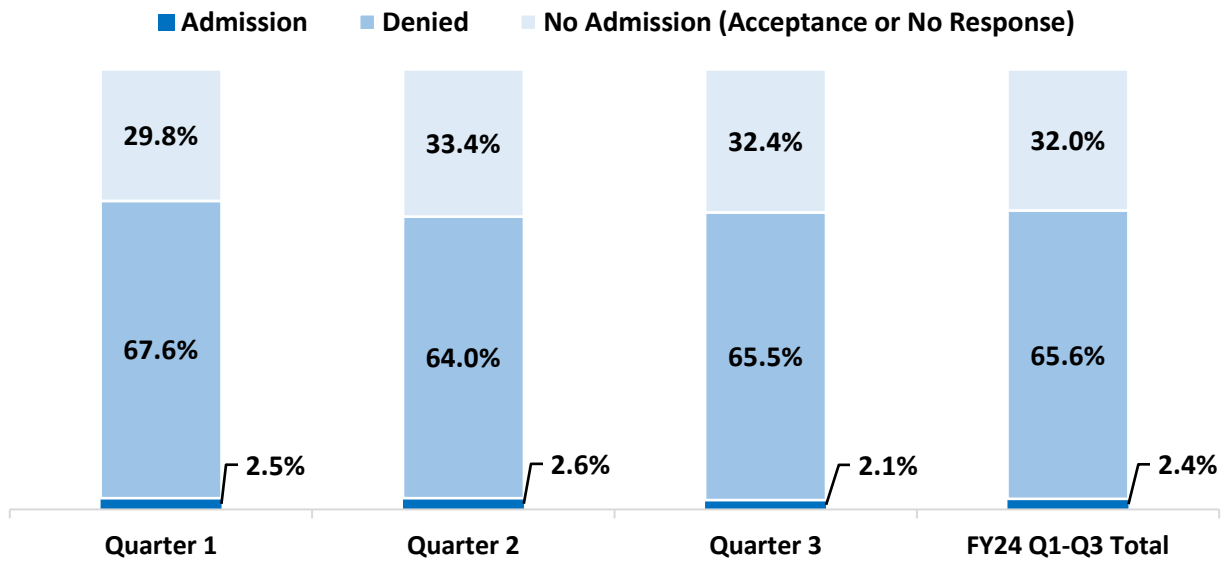
Figure 1 shows a very small percentage of total SSCC and Legacy referrals result in admission, as well as the appearance of no trend quarter-to-quarter on how referrals relate to admissions. The most likely cause for this is a child may have several referrals made while searching for a possible placement, but only one of the accepted referrals will result in actual placement for the child.

IMPACT data indicates that 11,458 paid placements began in the timeframe, which should reflect the population of placements that require referrals and would be counted as admissions (Table 1). The data consolidated from the SSCCs and Legacy system reflected 9,226 admissions (Table 2). This discrepancy indicates that the number of referrals could be an undercount.

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<sup>4</sup> DRIT 113178, SSCC Rider 45 Submissions, Q1 – Q3

**Figure 1. Referral Results Fiscal Year 2024, Quarters 1 - 3 by Quarter<sup>5</sup>**



## Denial Results

Figure 2 below summarizes the reasons given by providers for SSCC and Legacy referrals that were denied, such as a lack of available bed space (capacity), an inability to meet the need(s) of the child (child’s needs), or some other reason like assaultive behavior or a history of running away (other).

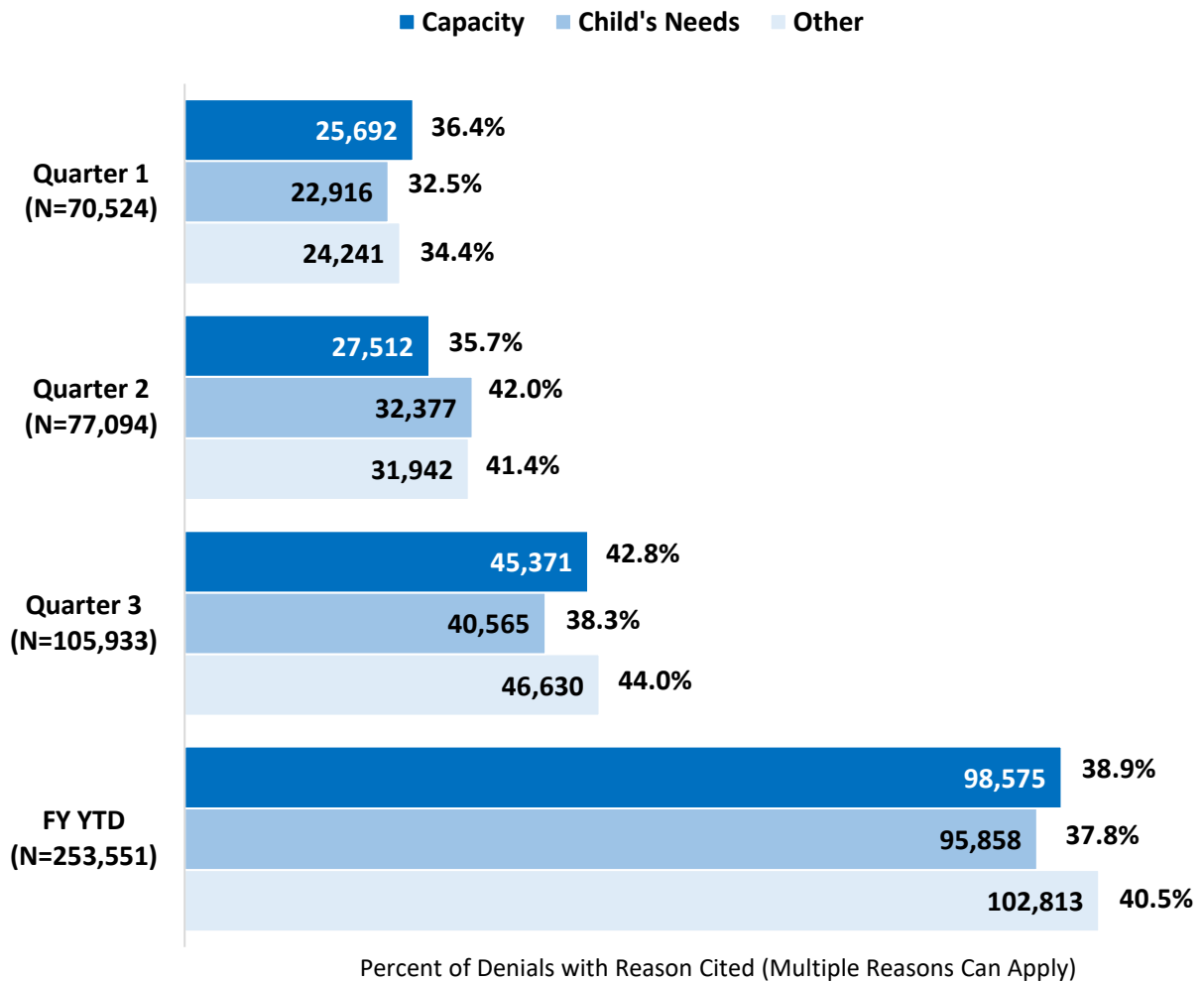
Providers also denied referrals without providing a reason, which is counted in the other category. A total of 46,996, or 45.41 percent, of the overall denials counted as other were denials for Legacy referrals where the provider did not provide a reason for the denial.

A denial may have more than one reason. As such, the total of referrals denied each quarter as listed above will not match the total of reasons cited for denial as listed below.

<sup>5</sup> DRIT 113178, SSCC Rider 45 Submissions, Q1 – Q3



Figure 2. Denial Reasons Fiscal Year 2024 Quarters 1 - 3 by Quarter<sup>6</sup>



This data shows that overall, most denials are because either the provider does not have an available bed to place the child, or the provider is unable to meet the child’s needs.

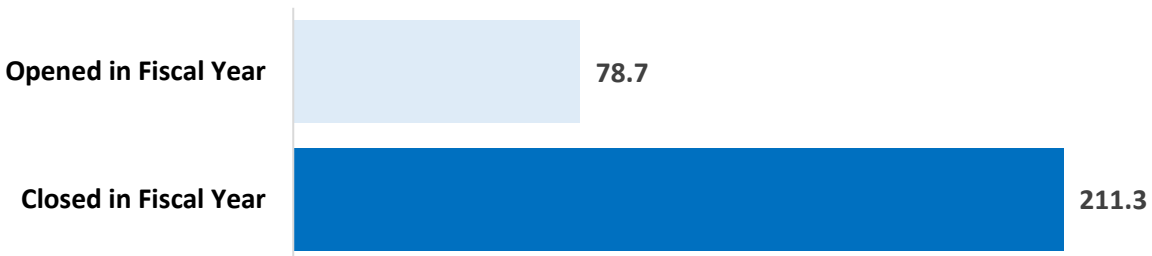
## Days in Placement

Children spent, on average, 78.7 days in placements that began in the first three quarters of fiscal year 2024. Note these results are difficult to interpret because children could have been admitted up until the last day of the reporting period, and therefore, would pull the average down. For instance, children who were admitted on the last day of the reporting period would have a length of one placement day, but they may end up staying in the placement much longer. Thus, the full length of the placement will not be captured in this metric.

<sup>6</sup> DRIT 113178, SSCC Rider 45 Submissions, Q1 – Q3

Of the 14,345 placements that closed in the fiscal year to date, the children spent on average 211.3 days in their placements. These values vary significantly from the values for placements in the “Opened in Fiscal Year” group due to the inclusion of placements opened as far back as 2010. Presenting closed in the fiscal year metrics better represents the experience of children in their placements, but it has the limitation that those placements may have begun, and therefore, had a referral from many years ago. See Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3. Days in Placement in Fiscal Year 2024, Quarter 3 YTD<sup>7</sup>**



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<sup>7</sup> Source: DRIT 113562

## Conclusion

With the data available, the trends for provider referral denials are consistent with provider feedback collected by DFPS and SSCC partners: a lack of beds or an inability to meet the needs of the child for whom the referral was issued. However, the number of referrals outnumber the admissions by a ratio of 42 referrals for each admission. These referrals reflect the considerable effort the SSCCs and DFPS make to find appropriate placements for children.

Technology enhancements used by DFPS and the SSCCs have assisted in better data collection capabilities. Further improvements in technology and placement processes could be warranted to reduce unnecessary referrals to providers and increase acceptance rates. Additionally, ongoing technical assistance may be needed to ensure providers meet the obligation to provide responses to all placement referrals, minimizing the amount of other and no response data points. These changes would improve the data accuracy for this report.

Increasing capacity for youth with complex needs and behaviors would aid in balancing the placement acceptance rate within the provider network. This could be accomplished, in part, through establishing programs within the state designed to stabilize, support, and assist in transitioning these youth to less restrictive environments. These youth would also benefit from improved behavioral health services within current placements to increase behavioral stability and positive outcomes for youth. Without significant improvements to provider capacity and access to specialized treatment programs, there will be continued disparity between placement referrals and placement acceptance of all youth.

To address placement capacity shortages, DFPS has expanded existing programs, such as Treatment Family Foster Care, increasing the age of admission and growing capacity in the state. DFPS has also awarded capacity expansion grants to providers throughout the state to meet the needs of our harder to place children. Through these initiatives, DFPS has access to more potential placement options for children with higher needs, however, these providers retain the right to refuse a placement referral based on capacity or inability to meet the child's needs. DFPS continually evaluates capacity data to determine current and anticipate future funding needs and legislative requests.

## List of Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Full Name</b>
CBC	Community-Based Care
DFPS	Department of Family and Protective Services
GPS	General Placement Search
IMPACT	Information Management Protecting Adults and Children in Texas
RCC	Residential Child Care Contracts
SSCC	Single Source Continuum Contractor
YTD	Year to Date