

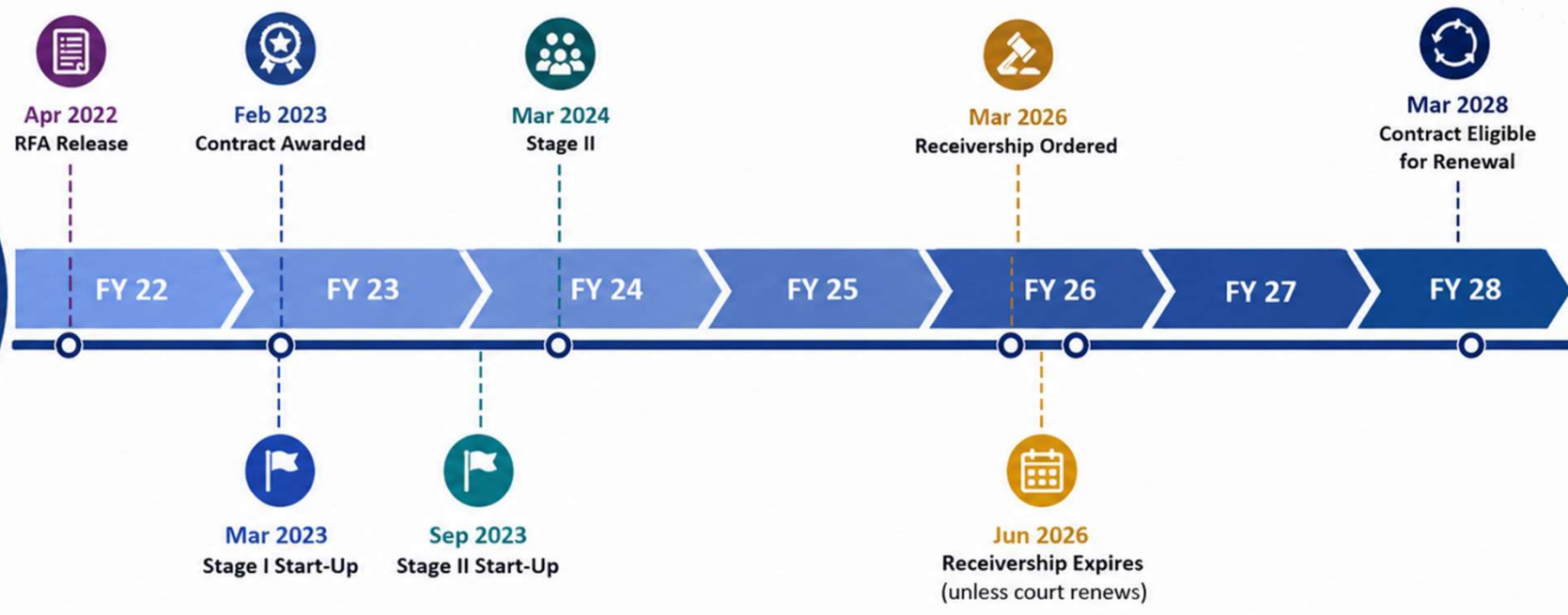
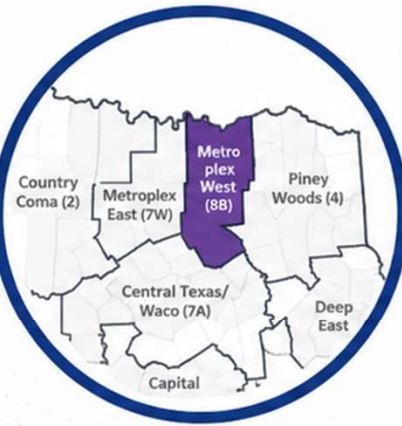


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DFPS Receivership

Lindsey Van Buskirk
CPS Interim Associate Commissioner

EMPOWER's Timeline as a Single Source Continuum Contractor



Note: Timeline reflects key milestones and is subject to change. Dates represent fiscal years (FY).

What is CBC Receivership?



Subchapter B-2 of Chapter 264, Tex. Family Code allows DFPS to petition the court to appoint a receiver based on a list of criteria.



The following criteria were cited by DFPS in filing for receivership of EMPOWER:

1



DFPS has determined that conditions exist that present an imminent danger to the health, safety, or welfare of children that DFPS has referred to the SSCC for services.

2



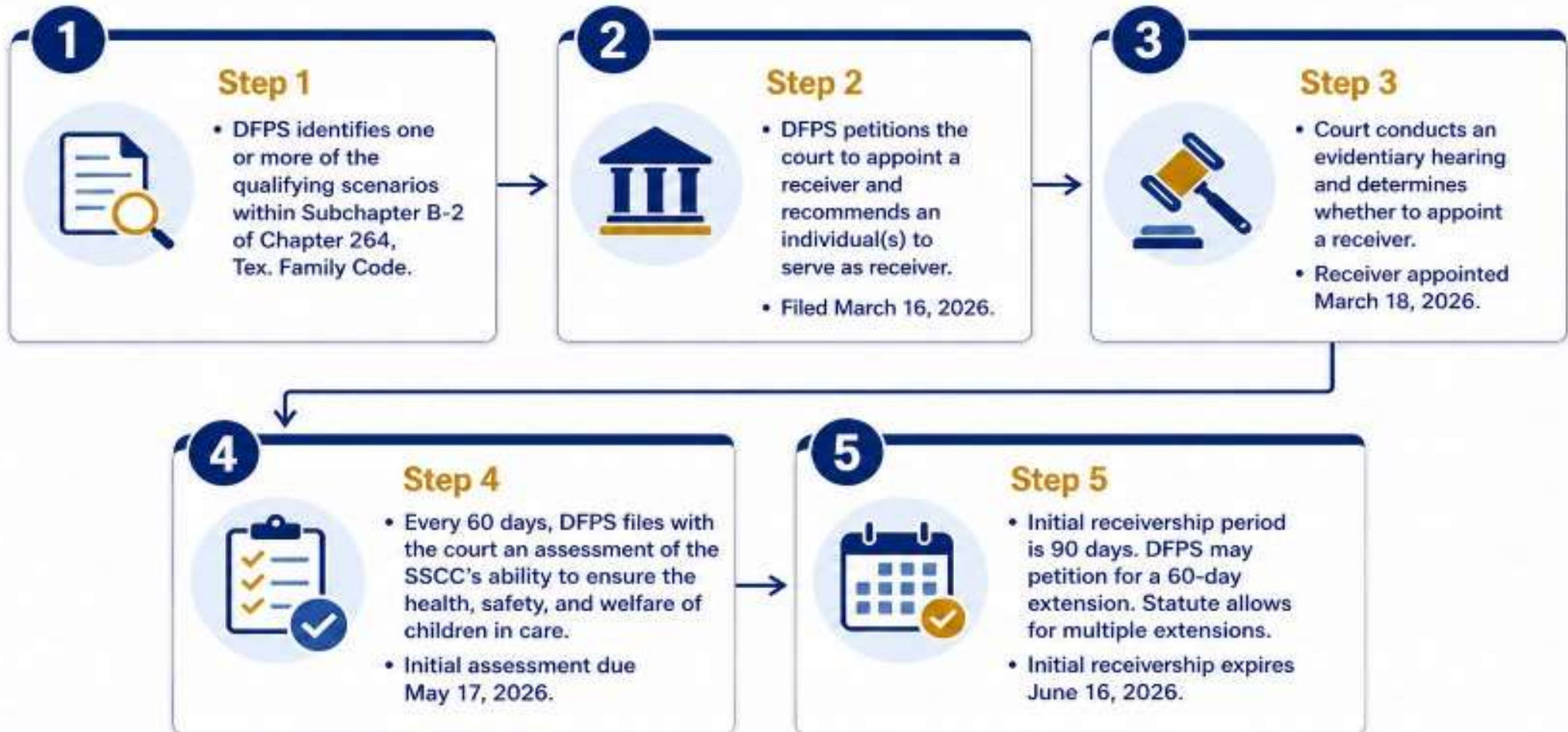
The SSCC has been subject to a quality improvement plan, corrective action plan, or other remedial statutory or contract measure, but the SSCC has continued to fail to perform their contractual responsibilities satisfactorily.

3



The SSCC has failed to comply with a court order, or incurred a sanction against DFPS due to the SSCC's failure to comply with a court order.

What is the Process of Receivership?



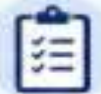


DFPS vs. Receiver Roles

DFPS and the Receiver have distinct but complementary responsibilities to ensure effective oversight and improved outcomes for children and families.



DFPS ROLE



Maintains responsibility for contract decisions, including issuing Continuous Quality Improvement Controls (CQIs) and Corrective Action Plans (CAPs).



Determines whether it is necessary to terminate an SSCC contract.



Determines when court intervention is needed, including filing for receivership.



RECEIVER ROLE



Has full operational authority over the SSCC's day-to-day functions.



On-site throughout the period of the receivership.



Make changes and improvements to business practices including provision of case management services.



WHAT STEPS HAS THE RECEIVER TAKEN SO FAR?

- ✓ In collaboration with DFPS, requested DFPS resources and staff to complete Safety Visits for all youth under EMPOWER's purview.
- ✓ Instructed EMPOWER to transition documentation of all case management activities into IMPACT.
- ✓ Requested a review of existing waivers approved for EMPOWER.
- ✓ Requested key data needed to complete assessment of EMPOWER operations.
- ✓ Instructed EMPOWER to provide financial information and cease all independent actions that may present risks to contract performance.
- ✓ Created a financial account to ensure accountability of funds.
- ✓ Conducted regional townhalls with EMPOWER staff.



EMPOWER Receivership By the Numbers, Progress, and Current Priorities



BY THE NUMBERS

 **2,429**
youth in care currently served by EMPOWER.



 **As of April 27, 2026:**

-  **99.87%** of Empower youth have been seen in Safety Visits
-  **1,029** case reads have been completed.
-  **406** DFPS staff assisting with Safety Visits.
-  **56** DFPS staff assisting with case reads.

PROGRESS TO DATE: ENSURING SAFETY

-  DFPS collaborated with the Receiver to ensure children under EMPOWER's purview had a face-to-face visit with a DFPS caseworker.
-  DFPS conducted case reads to identify trends and patterns requiring targeted intervention and system improvement.

CURRENT PRIORITIES: PROMOTING STABILITY

-  Simultaneous to the safety checks mentioned above, DFPS has begun working with the Receiver to conduct a Staff Experience and Support Assessment of EMPOWER staff.
-  DFPS Learning and Development staff are delivering trainings tailored to the specific needs of EMPOWER staff, on topics including supervisory development, IMPACT training, and court preparedness.

All data as of April 27, 2026. Numbers are subject to change as new information becomes available.



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FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Strengthening partnerships. Improving outcomes. Together.



PROJECT

A department-wide effort to strengthen family engagement principles and practices across DFPS divisions. Reinforces a collaborative approach that values families as partners and empowers them to actively participate in decisions affecting their children and family outcomes.

Focuses on reinforcing engagement into daily casework practice across our Alternative Response, Investigations, Family-Based Safety Services (FBSS), and Conservatorship (CVS) programs.

It emphasizes **early, intentional, and ongoing collaboration** with parents, and extended kin.



GOALS



Ensure child safety and prevent removals

Strengthen family partnerships to identify risks early and keep children safely at home whenever possible.



Increase kinship at first placement

Prioritize placing children with relatives and promoting connections to family and community.



Improve services to families

Deliver responsive, family-centered services and service plans focused on identified safety concerns and reason for removal to support well-being, healing, and long-term stability.



WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THIS WORK



Policy updates to reflect strong family engagement expectations



Standardized tools and resources to support consistent practice



Training and coaching to build skills and confidence



Cross-stage alignment across divisions and partners



Improved communication and continuity for families throughout their journey



PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING KINSHIP CARE

PROJECT

DFPS program areas are collaborating with internal and external stakeholders to increase the number of children connected to and placed with kinship.

Specifically, DFPS intends to:

- Increase kinship as the first placement.
- Increase support services to kinship caregivers.
- Decrease the time for services to be initiated for kinship caregivers.
- Provide the kinship caregiver with supports when they are given legal custody at the end of a case.

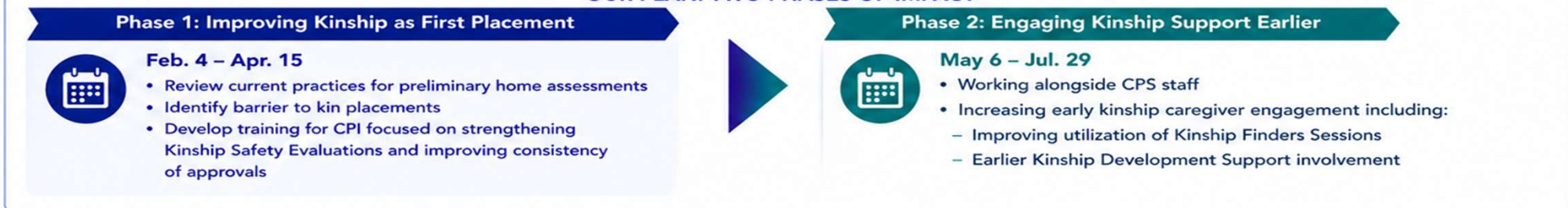
GOAL

Increase the number of children connected to and placed with kinship by strengthening practices, engaging staff earlier, and delivering timely supports to kinship caregivers.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THIS WORK

- Workgroup**
 - KINnected from the Start Workgroup 2.0
 - All levels of staff from CPI, Special Investigations, Faith Based Community Engagement, and Family Group Decision Making
- Collaboration**
Working together across program areas and with external partners to improve kinship outcomes.
- Two-Phase Approach**
Focused on improving kinship as the first placement and engaging staff support earlier in the process.
- Training & Practice Improvement**
Review current practices, remove barriers, build staff capacity, and improve consistency.
- Stronger Supports for Kinship Caregivers**
Provide earlier, timely, and ongoing supports—including after legal custody is granted.

OUR PLAN: TWO PHASES OF IMPACT





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RIDER 40 CAMPAIGN

Statewide Campaign to Support Kinship Care



Rider 40 Campaign kicked off on
December 1, 2025



Rider 40 requires DFPS to establish and promote a statewide campaign on kinship care to be no later than December 1, 2025.

CAMPAIGN COMPONENTS



REBRAND

Updates to key materials to strengthen our message and reach.

- ✓ **Update for After the Call Brochure**
(launching June 2026)
- ✓ **Kinship Quarterly Newsletter**
(Completed 1/1/2026)
- ✓ **Kinship Caregiver Training**
(Completed 04/10/2026)



SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

Toolkit for Kinship Campaign for branding purposes.

- ✓ This has been completed and is available on the newly updated DFPS public kinship webpage. This toolkit was also shared with stakeholders.



KINSHIP VIDEO SERIES

Two videos have been released with more to come this year.

- ▶ [Kinship Care – Providing Love and Care in a Familiar Setting](#)
- ▶ [Kinship Care: Providing Love and Care in a Familiar Setting – ENGLISH](#)



Our goal: Increase awareness, engage communities, and support kinship caregivers across Texas through clear, consistent messaging and accessible resources.





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FAMILY TEAM MEETING (FTM) PILOT PROGRAM



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Family Team Meeting (FTM) - Purpose, Objective, Design and Eligibility



As part of our Family Engagement Initiative, DFPS is implementing a FTM Pilot.



PURPOSE & OBJECTIVE



Purpose

- Determine whether **earlier family engagement** improves outcomes by initiating the FTM earlier in the investigation.
 - Based on cases meeting eligibility criteria.



Objective

- Reduce removals and evaluate current policy and practice related to FTM criteria.



PILOT DESIGN & ELIGIBILITY FOCUS



Eligibility Criteria

- Cases with substance use as the primary danger indicator on a safety assessment and a safety intervention is needed.



Pilot Implementation

- Implementing in Regions 1, 2, and 7 North
- Capacity-limited approach to ensure manageable workloads and fidelity to the model.



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Family Team Meeting (FTM) Model



**FTMS SERVE AS A
STRUCTURED MECHANISM
FOR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT,
PROVIDING:**

1



**Family/kinship
identification**

2



**Safety network
mapping**

3



**Identification of
family services**
(e.g., substance use treatment)



DESIGNED TO DRIVE:

1



**Early engagement
with parents and
extended family**

2



**Early identification
of kinship
supports**

3



**Faster connection
to community-
based services**

4



**Reduce reliance on
foster care through
prevention or when
necessary, kinship
placement**



Family Team Meeting (FTM) Pilot - Phased Rollout Timeline

 TASK	 TIMEFRAME
 Planning & Communication with Field Leadership	October 2025 - May 2026
 Field Staff Communication & Rollout	Late May 2026
 Pilot Launch	June 1, 2026
 Initial Active Pilot	June-August 2026
 Ongoing Pilot	August-October 2026
 Data Analysis & Initial Report Out	Est. December 2026