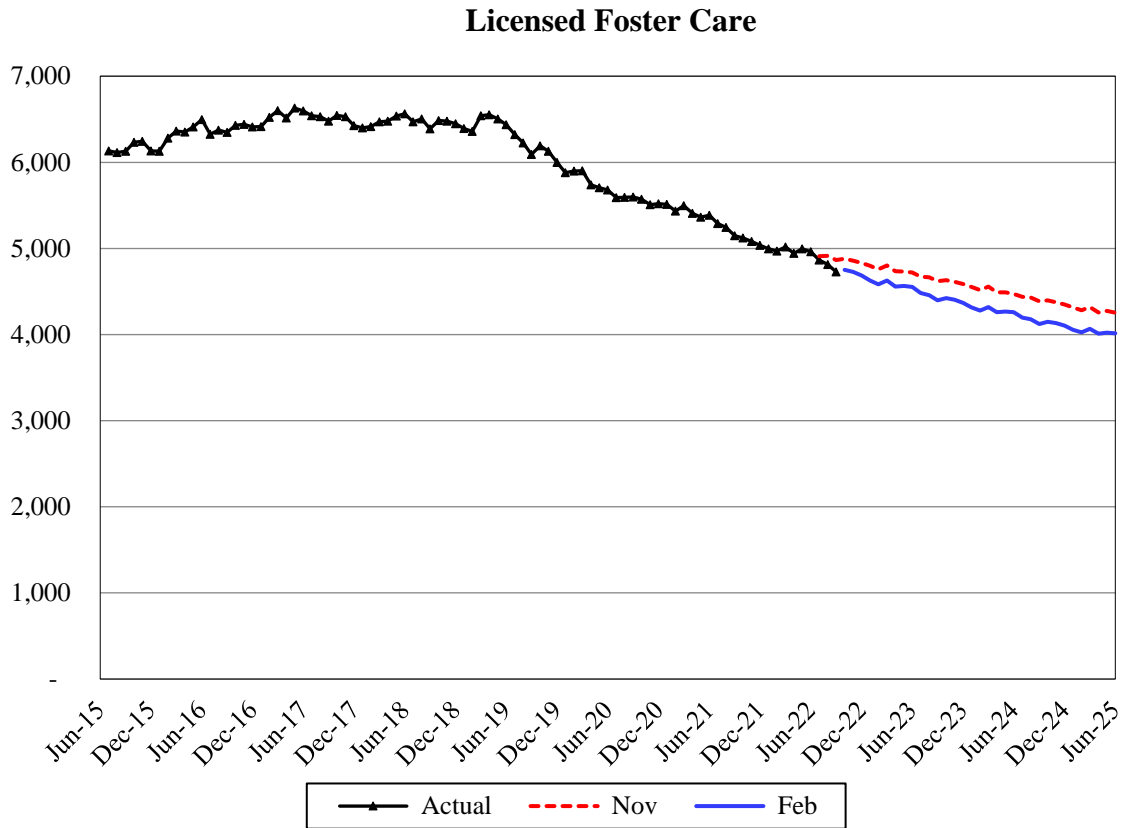


# Children's Services

## Licensed Foster Care

Caseload Forecast Council  
February 10, 2023



The Licensed Foster Care (LFC) caseload is a forecast of the number of children in licensed foster care during a calendar month. Financial assistance for licensed foster care includes a monthly stipend, medical care, and a variety of additional services. This caseload has two components – Basic Foster Care & Receiving Care (BFCRC) and Behavioral Rehabilitation Services (BRS). In September 2022, about 91.2 percent of the caseload was in BFCRC.

### Forecast Comparisons (Fiscal Year Averages)

Fiscal Year	Nov-22 Forecast	Feb-23 Forecast	Nov to Feb Difference	Percent Difference
2023	4,817	4,673	-144	-3.0%
2024	4,572	4,352	-220	-4.8%
2025	4,339	4,089	-250	-5.8%

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The February 2023 forecast is 144 cases or 3.0 percent lower than the November 2022 forecast for FY 2023 and, on average, 235 cases or 5.3 percent lower for the 2023-25 Biennium.

### **Tracking the Current Forecast**

	Nov-22 Forecast	Actual	Variance	Percent Variance
Jul-22	4,910	4,864	-46	-0.9%
Aug-22	4,914	4,812	-102	-2.1%
Sep-22	4,865	4,727	-138	-2.8%

Actuals are tracking, on average, 95 cases or 1.9 percent below the November forecast. The BFCRC caseload has been declining since April 2019 and the BRS caseload experienced a similar trend from September 2018 through early 2022. A BRS provider rate increase in October 2019 resulted in a temporary increase in system capacity and case counts, but the caseload resumed its decline with the onset of the pandemic. An additional BRS rate increase, effective April 1, 2022, was provided in the 2022 Supplemental Operating Budget (Chapter 297, Laws of 2022) and the BRS portion of the caseload has leveled off since then. The BFCRC portion of the caseload continues to decrease.

### **Fiscal Year Caseload Change**

	Fiscal Year	Caseload	Change from Prior Year	Percent Change
<i>Actual</i>	2016	6,251		
	2017	6,467	216	3.5%
	2018	6,493	25	0.4%
	2019	6,463	-29	-0.5%
	2020	5,980	-484	-7.5%
	2021	5,498	-481	-8.1%
	2022	5,066	-432	-7.9%
<i>Forecast</i>	2023	4,673	-393	-7.8%
	2024	4,352	-321	-6.9%
	2025	4,089	-263	-6.0%

### *Risks to the Forecast*

Risks to the LFC forecast are high due to the uncertainty surrounding the causes of the caseload declines first observed prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is not clear at what level the BFCRC caseload might stabilize or whether the BRS portion of the caseload will begin to decrease again. There are additional risks to the forecast from the effects of 2SHB 1227 (Chapter 211, Laws of 2021), which will revise standards, after June 30, 2023, for court ordered placement of a child into LFC and establishes a framework for licensing persons who provide foster care to a relative.

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