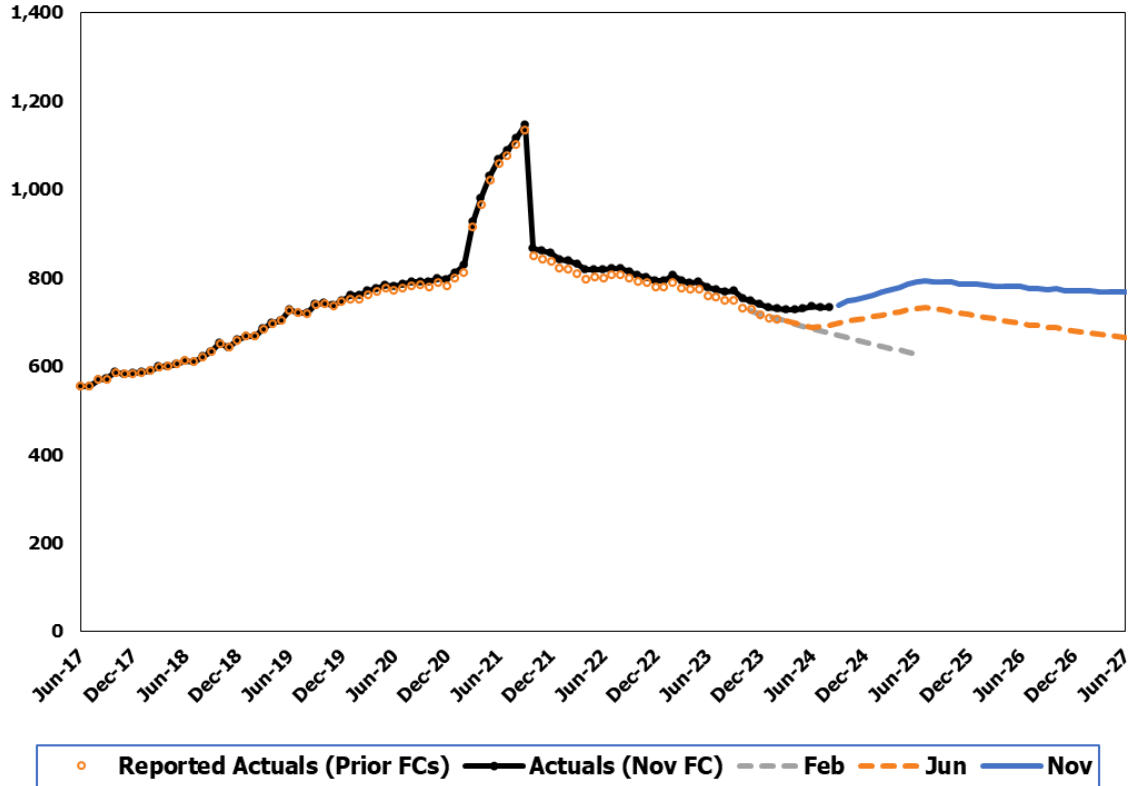


**Extended Foster Care**



The Extended Foster Care (EFC) caseload is the count of youth receiving certain foster care benefits after turning 18 years old. EFC is intended to promote better outcomes for youth who have aged out of the traditional foster care system.

**Forecast Comparisons (Fiscal Year Averages)**

Fiscal Year	Feb-24 Forecast	Jun-24 Forecast	Nov-24 Forecast	Feb to Nov Difference	Percent Difference	Jun to Nov Difference	Percent Difference
2025	652	710	759	107	16.4%	49	6.9%
2026		715	785			70	9.8%
2027		679	771			92	13.5%

The November 2024 forecast is 107 cases or 16.4 percent higher than the February 2024 forecast for FY 2025 and, on average, 81 cases or 11.6 percent higher than the June 2024 forecast for the 2025-27 Biennium. Part of the change from the June forecast is due to a change in historical caseload data. Staff at the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) have determined that an automated report designed to flag duplicate case records was identifying duplicate records that had already been corrected rather than records in need of adjustment. As a result, the case counts were being adjusted twice and the caseload was

reported lower than it should have been. The remainder of the change in the forecast is due to a slowing rate of caseload decline.

### Tracking the Current Forecast

Month	Jun-24	Actual	Variance	Percent
	Forecast			Variance
Mar-24	703	728	25	3.6%
Apr-24	697	726	29	4.2%
May-24	692	730	38	5.5%
Jun-24	687	734	47	6.8%
Jul-24	689	733	44	6.4%
Aug-24	693	733	40	5.8%

Actuals are tracking, on average, 37 cases or 5.4 percent above the June forecast.

### Fiscal Year Caseload Change

	Fiscal Year	Caseload	Change from Prior Year	Percent Change
Actual	2018	586		
	2019	663	77	13.2%
	2020	753	90	13.5%
	2021	866	113	15.0%
	2022	908	42	4.8%
	2023	800	-108	-11.9%
	2024	744	-56	-6.9%
Forecast	2025	759	15	2.0%
	2026	785	26	3.4%
	2027	771	-14	-1.8%

Eligibility for EFC has been expanded repeatedly, contributing to continued caseload growth until late 2021. Case counts for the period from April 2020 through September 2021 reflect a temporary policy change that allowed youth who turn 21 while enrolled in EFC to continue receiving EFC support. The downward trend in the caseload seen since the end of the temporary extension is likely a downstream effect of declines in other foster care caseloads for children and youth aged 17 and under.

The November forecast includes a step adjustment modeling the estimated caseload impact of E2SSB 5908 (Chapter 192, Laws of 2024) which made changes to EFC eligibility requirements and directed the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to develop, subject to appropriations, incentive payments for youths in EFC who are engaged in certain educational or work activities or who are receiving Subsidized Independent Living payments.

### Risks to the Forecast

The risks to this EFC forecast are moderate and primarily due to uncertainty around how many additional youths may participate in EFC given the revised eligibility standards and incentive payments to be made under E2SSB 5908.

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