

# Competency-based Personnel Selection

## OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

During the needs assessment process three areas of opportunity were discussed for possible intervention at the Oklahoma Human Services (OKDHS) Division of Child Welfare Services:

1. hiring of new workers,
2. promotion decisions for lead worker and supervisor positions, and
3. staff recognition and rewards.

Ultimately, one theory of change was developed to step through the “if, then” logic for implementation of a [standardized hiring process](#) to improve worker retention and performance.

The theory of change development process was informed by various data examined throughout the needs assessment, input from the [Oklahoma QIC-WD Steering Committee](#), and relevant research and best practice for hiring and selection. Overall, it was anticipated that by addressing inconsistencies in hiring practices and implementing a standardized, competency-based hiring process for new Child Welfare Specialists, new hires would be a better fit for the role, resulting in improved job satisfaction, self-efficacy, performance and retention for new hires. In turn, these outcomes were anticipated to improve organization-wide retention and performance. Additionally, a reduction in turnover for new staff was expected to lead to reduced office vacancy rates, a better balance of caseloads, and higher job satisfaction, performance and retention for teams in the experimental sites. Ultimately, these improvements were expected to improve continuity of case practice and safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families.

The following image depicts the theory of change beginning with a problem statement followed by a series of steps that lay out the logic on how that problem will be addressed.

**Supervisors understand and exhibit buy-in for the necessity of improvement in the hiring system**

SO THAT

A standardized competency-driven process for selection of new caseworkers is employed by OK DHS

SO THAT

The selection process is consistent, efficient, and identifies job candidates who are a better fit for their role and are more likely to perform well and stay in the job

SO THAT

New staff have higher job satisfaction, performance, and retention

SO THAT

Supervisors spend less time on hiring new employees and managing poor performers

SO THAT

Vacancy rate is reduced

SO THAT

Supervisors spend more time developing high potential employees

SO THAT

Workload balance is improved

SO THAT

Workers exhibit self-efficacy and proficiency of practical casework skills

SO THAT

New and current staff have higher job satisfaction, performance and retention

SO THAT

Each regional office is consistently fully staffed with a proficient workforce

SO THAT

SO THAT

Continuity of effective case practice is increased

SO THAT

Families and children experience gains in safety, permanency, and well-being when encountering the OK child welfare system