

April 30, 2025

To the Honorable Members of the Illinois General Assembly:

In compliance with the requirements set forth in the Data Governance and Organization to Support Equity and Racial Justice Act (20 ILCS 65 *et. al*) (the “Act”), the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services hereby submits a progress report detailing the action steps and progress made since the last annual report dated July 1, 2024, to enable the collection and cataloguing of data described in Section 20-15 of the Act have been standardized and, to the extent possible, the data sets and programs that are planned for the coming year.

The Act requires the Department of Children and Family Services to “report statistical data on racial, ethnic, age, sex, disability status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and primary or preferred language demographics of program participants for each major program” administered by the Department of Children and Family Services.

While “major program” is not defined in the statute, the agency has adopted the following definition provided by the Governor’s Office of Management and Budget: *a major program is a program with an enacted appropriation of greater than \$1 million in the prior fiscal year; direct services provided to individuals and/or a reasonable expectation that demographic information can be aggregated via proxy data without substantial cost or disruption to program delivery.*

The Department of Children and Family Services has further defined “program participants” as children and families that receive direct service within programs with enacted appropriations of greater than \$1 million, where demographic information can be aggregated without disruption to program delivery.

Using these definitions, the Agency has identified the following programs and program participant populations for analysis:

Parents and children who are subjects of an investigation by Child Protection;
Parents and children directly served through open service cases with Intact Family Services; and
Parents and children directly served through open service cases with Permanency Services.

Since the July 2024 statistical report, the Department of Children and Family Services has taken the following actions to assess the changes needed to catalogue demographic data for each of the aforementioned programs.

Following the July 2024 statistical report the Department of Children and Family Services has determined that Race (consistent with Federal reporting categories), Ethnicity, Age, Sex, and Primary Language have been defined and standardized for the following programs: Parents and children who are subjects of an investigation by Child Protection; parents and children directly served through open service cases with Intact Family Services; and parents and children directly served through open service cases with Permanency Services.

In the coming year, the agency will utilize the Office of Equity's guidance to further refine and standardize definitions for the remaining demographic categories and ensure standardization exists across all programs identified in this report. The Department of Children and Family Services will work with the Department of Innovation and Technology and the Governor's Office of Management and Budget in the coming months to streamline its data collection and collect the relevant data from major program participants.

As the State works to implement the Act, the Department of Children and Family Services product managers, information and technology staff, and diversity, equity, and inclusion leaders will work with the Department of Innovation and Technology and the Governor's Office of Management and Budget to analyze currently catalogued data, identify data gaps, and determine how to collect demographic information. As we continue to implement the process and infrastructure changes necessary to collect the data required, we will continue to work to provide the required demographic data to inform program design and policy-making endeavors.

Very Sincerely and Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "H. Mueller", is positioned above the printed name.

Heidi E. Mueller
Director