



# FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA

The Child Welfare Division is home to 290 employees who work across the continuum from prevention to permanency in four regional offices. The county operates a multitude of workforce initiatives and has been experiencing a stable vacancy rate at or below 10% for the past year. As a QIC-WA site, DFS leadership seeks to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of its workforce efforts to maximize its investments in staff.

## PROJECT GOALS

Build the capacity of the Fairfax County Department of Family Services (DFS) Child Welfare Division Leadership Team to use data to effectively monitor workforce capacity and evaluate the implementation and success of initiatives.



*"What should we keep doing and what should we stop investing in?"*

## KEY FINDINGS

The QIC-WA partnered with the Fairfax ReSTOR (Recruitment, Selection, Training, Onboarding and Retention) team to conduct a thorough needs assessment of their workforce. Priority opportunities included supervisor support, onboarding, career development, discipline, recognition and rewards, and workforce analytics capacity. Four focus groups were held with supervisors to further discuss these topics and the following themes emerged:

- The new supervision model has value for newer supervisors and a process should be established to keep it updated.
- Data quality allows agencies to accurately use workforce data.
- Current onboarding practices can benefit from streamlining.
- There were mixed views of promotion opportunities and concerns about workforce succession.
- There was mixed support for handling discipline issues, and supervisors commented on how challenging it is to move through the discipline process with underperforming staff.
- Supervisors appreciate the employee recognition and well-being efforts of the county, but there are some concerns about how readily they are available to everyone.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- Building analyst capacity to visualize and share data effectively will make existing data more useful for the division.
- Implementing multiple workforce initiatives without feedback loops or evaluation plans in place makes it difficult to assess their effectiveness. It is also difficult for supervisors and staff members to manage multiple initiatives.

## NEXT STEPS

- Develop tools to help leadership shift staffing when needs change.
- Continue to improve existing dashboards based on evidence-based practices and user feedback.
- Consider how to use data analytics to support succession planning.
- Provide guidance for future evaluation of workforce initiatives, including use of technology, to drive implementation and outcomes.