

**Title IV-E FY21 Annual Progress Report**

**1. Reimbursed Funds Received**

	<b>County</b>	<b>1Q- FY21</b>	<b>2Q- FY21</b>	<b>3Q- FY21</b>	<b>4Q FY21</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Apache	\$3,866.82	\$4,195.51	\$3,749.36	\$4,824.16	\$16,635.85
2	Cochise	\$13,222.13	\$19,141.57	\$18,603.51	\$21,173.65	\$72,140.86
3	Coconino	\$41,665.54	\$38,645.57	\$38,940.40	\$32,659.34	\$151,910.85
4	Gila	\$12,447.38	\$17,158.82	\$11,306.52	\$7,439.93	\$48,352.65
5	Graham	\$4,626.68	\$11,549.50	\$11,207.25	\$5,364.73	\$32,748.16
6	Greenlee	\$437.67	\$1,302.57	\$483.20	\$797.21	\$3,020.65
7	La Paz	\$11,324.95	\$12,293.02	\$12,503.99	\$16,308.56	\$52,430.52
8	Maricopa	\$632,054.94	\$853,956.62	\$796,361.64	\$913,414.87	\$3,195,788.07
9	Mohave	\$48,997.06	\$77,674.36	\$63,939.30	\$65,206.20	\$255,816.92
10	Navajo	\$8,526.58	\$12,488.97	\$13,237.78	\$14,934.28	\$49,187.61
11	Pima	\$278,390.15	\$325,574.72	\$392,072.42	\$182,851.93	\$1,178,889.22
12	Pinal	\$92,502.33	\$78,456.86	\$88,854.79	\$86,636.29	\$346,450.27
13	Santa Cruz	\$28,174.15	\$4,924.29	\$19,738.16	\$24,009.62	\$76,846.22
14	Yavapai	\$62,031.02	\$56,650.60	\$51,992.13	\$55,992.93	\$226,666.68
15	Yuma	\$21,882.95	\$23,053.41	\$25,267.54	\$21,406.69	\$91,610.59
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,260,150.35</b>	<b>\$1,537,066.39</b>	<b>\$1,548,257.99</b>	<b>\$1,453,020.39</b>	<b>\$5,798,495.12</b>

**NOTE: The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter reimbursement has not yet been issued to the counties, but this is their expected reimbursement.**

**2. Utilization of Reimbursed Funds Received and How the Funds are Utilized:**

**Apache**

Funds expended were utilized to purchase video and computer equipment to develop educational videos and podcasts to educate parents, foster parents, attorneys, stakeholders, and the community on dependency related issues and how a case progresses through the court system. All videos and podcasts produced will be made available on the court's website free of charge to the public.

**Cochise**

Used Title IV-E funding to pay for a portion of the total cost of a web-based case tracking system whose benefits include:

- The ability to access secure information from any location with internet access;
- Private attorneys hired on behalf of the county for dependency cases will also have access to case information through the new system and be able to submit dependency case billings via the new system.

The new case tracking software will be used for all case types by the indigent defense offices, but it will directly benefit dependency case representation by allowing attorney access to the voluminous case reports that are inherent with dependency cases.

### **Coconino**

Public Defender's Office funds were used for salary and ERE for dependency attorneys and support staff, including one legal assistant, two paralegals, and one temp employee. Coconino County is huge geographically, and funds were earmarked to enable staff to meet with clients in person, wherever their placements were located. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the closure of the reservation, and DCS' visitation policies, attorneys were not able to visit with clients. Funds were also used to purchase general office supplies, memberships for attorneys, cell phone bills, and office equipment for support staff.

Legal Defender's Office funds were used for salary and ERE for increasing the hours of our social worker and some technology to allow staff to meet remotely with clients during the pandemic.

### **Gila**

The funds were utilized by the Dependency Case Processing Initiative (DCPI) program to assist twenty-seven (27) families involved in Gila County out of home dependency cases in which services were offered to parents. Of the twenty-seven (27) families served, there were forty-six (46) children and fifty-nine (59) parents.

The DCPI program consists of two to three conferences for each case, in which the families and stakeholders are ordered to participate in at the Pre-Hearing Conference, along with subsequent reporting and follow up. At the Pre-Hearing Conference, the parents are provided with a packet that has important contact and service information on case specific services directed and behavioral changes identified whenever possible. At the first conference, the parents are handed binders which assist in participation, compliance and tracking of the services and behavior changes of each parent.

### **Graham**

They have not yet used reimbursement monies on improvement of dependency representation. The county is strategizing the best use of the funds they have received.

### **Greenlee**

Payment for attorney representation in dependency cases and dependency training was held for attorneys to receive their CLE hours.

### **La Paz**

No funds have been utilized to this point. The county is strategizing the best use of the funds they have received.

### **Maricopa**

To date, Maricopa has used their reimbursement dollars to aid in county expenditures as well as for social workers for parents in the dependency system.

### **Mohave**

Program funds were used to establish and promote a new DAP pilot program including funds to reimburse a portion of Commissioner/Judicial Assistant salaries due to the expedited and lengthy nature of DAP hearings. Discretionary funds were spent facilitating, supplementing and enhancing the move into the new Superior Court Facility.

### **Navajo**

No funds have been utilized to this point. The county is strategizing the best use of the funds they have received.

### **Pima**

The County hired one additional attorney at the Office of Children's Counsel, one social worker at the Legal Defender's Dependency Office and one social worker at the Public Defender's Dependency Office.

### **Pinal**

A new Court Commissioner position was created to focus primarily on a Dependency caseload. More attorneys were added to the Dependency rotation.

### **Santa Cruz**

No funds have been utilized to this point.

### **Yavapai**

The funds were utilized for contract services and to partially fund an in-house dependency attorney position.

### **Yuma**

The County utilized the monies for Guardian Ad Litem's in dependency cases.

## **3. Explain the positive effect(s) you have seen/expect to see**

### **Apache**

Working in conjunction with the Legacy Teen Center students and production team to develop these videos and podcasts and make available to the public on the court's website. We have also partnered with the Apache County Youth Council and area schools on educating teachers, parents and students on trends that are adversely affecting the youth within Apache County. Drug use by the youth in our communities continues to be a major issue in Apache County.

### **Cochise**

It is expected that the improved information access provided by the software will aid attorney effectiveness in the courtroom as well as enhance communication with clients through secure, easily accessible information.

### **Coconino**

Public Defender:

There has been a reduction in caseload which has increased the ability to spend more time on cases and better serve the needs of their clients. As a result, better outcomes overall for the people we serve are anticipated. Continued membership in professional organizations has allowed their attorneys opportunities to increase their professional knowledge and seek learning opportunities as they arise. Having administrative support also allows them to better serve clients and address specific needs.

Legal Defender:

Having increased funding for their social worker has allowed more frequent contact with clients, better attendance at CFT meetings and increased time for attorneys to work on their cases, all of which results in better representation of parents and children.

### **Gila**

DCPI conferences assure that the parents are connecting with service providers and clarifying the behavioral changes necessary for permanency. These conferences allow fewer hearings for each case because the conferences serve the same purpose, but utilize none of the Court's actual calendar, freeing calendar time for other cases needing the judges attention. Parents, attorneys and stakeholders have expressed appreciation for the streamlining effect that the conferences provide. Some stakeholders have even expressed the desire that all cases be eligible for the DCPI program.

Additionally, the conversations generated at the DCPI conferences along with the reports produced, assist Attorneys in speaking with their clients. It is particularly helpful when making reasonable assessments about how to move forward with the most efficiently toward permanency because there is recent data available and accountability for the stakeholders.

It is their assertion that the combination of these efforts results in less time in out of home care and expedited permanency. They expect this trend to continue and as more comparative data becomes available, it is anticipated that the statistics will bear out the efficacy of the program for Gila County.

### **Graham**

Not applicable as funding has not been utilized yet.

### **Greenlee**

Greenlee does not have attorneys who reside in the county. They are able to pay quality attorneys to assist in lower dependency caseloads who travel from neighboring counties.

### **La Paz**

Not applicable as funding has not been utilized yet.

### **Maricopa**

Maricopa County Public Defense has been using multidisciplinary teams to help parents reunify with their children in parental dependency cases. The Social Workers assist parents in removing barriers to expedite reunification. This program began as a trial project prior to receiving Title IVE funds. Their departments have had many parental dependency cases with successful outcomes. The pilot program was limited to 20 cases. However, with the Title IV E funding this program has continued to grow, and they now have 254 cases in the program.

### **Mohave**

The Mediator/PP5 facilitator is responsible for all mediations held in the dependency case. This includes PP5 facilitation and court ordered pre-trial adjudication and pre-severance trial adjudications. The mediator has attended a telephonic meeting with the Pima Superior Court staff, AOC staff and local stake holders regarding the Dependency Alternative Program (DAP) pilot program. The mediator will be the point person, together with the Presiding Juvenile Judge, in the implementation of the DAP program in Mohave County.

### **Navajo**

No funds have been utilized at this point.

### **Pima**

There would be more manageable caseloads and additional support for attorneys as social workers provide direct support to clients and assist with home visits.

### **Pinal**

The County has added one Dependency Commissioner whose caseload is solely comprised of dependencies. This has allowed the Court to meet time standards.

Additional attorneys whose primary caseload are Dependency cases have been added, and this has increased the quality of representation for both child and parents.

### **Santa Cruz**

The County expects to see a very positive effect once a decision is made on how to use the funds.

### **Yavapai**

Expects to see lower attorney caseloads, so attorneys can spend more time per case, thus increasing quality of representation and helping their clients get better outcomes.

### **Yuma**

Improved compliance with court-ordered case plans; improved parental engagement and participation in the dependency process; reduction in the number of case continuances; reduction in participant anxiety about the dependency process; increased trust of the Department of Child Safety; and an increase in the number of family reunifications.

**4. Future Plans: Explain how you anticipate using reimbursed monies in the upcoming fiscal year.**

**Apache**

The County continues to conduct virtual meetings with stakeholders to identify areas of concern that need immediate attention and focus. Unfortunately, the pandemic has delayed progress on production and development of proposed videos and podcasts due to time constraints of current staff trying to address the jury trial backlog. To alleviate this issue they are currently seeking the assistance of a professional videographer to work alongside the Legacy Teen Center production team. Upon completion of the introductory video regarding a dependency case and how it progresses through the court system, they plan on expanding the video library to include several different life skills podcasts in an effort to assist juveniles preparing to age out of foster care/independent living, educational videos on parenting, and awareness on current issues negatively impacting communities and how to combat them.

**Cochise**

The County will implement the new web-based case tracking software and hire indigent defense and private attorneys to meet the growing demand of their dependency case load. The County will also continue to support a Dependency Alternative Program.

**Coconino**

Public Defender:

Hope to increase opportunities to travel for professional trainings and conferences as well as to home visits as clients are placed throughout the state. They would also like to hire part-time staff to help with the administrative duties that support their dependency attorneys. They will continue to use funds to pay for attorney salaries, support staff, and supplies. If the opportunity arises, they will support offering training locally for clients and attorneys.

Legal Defender:

Continue to fund their full time social worker position. As they move back into more in-person contact with clients, they will allocate additional funds for travel for their social worker to increase their ability for more frequent contact with their child clients. They are planning to send their social worker and attorneys to trainings specific to dependency representation as these become available.

They are also working on creating office space to hire a part-time caseworker with the specific intent of supporting parents and placements in accessing services and facilitating reunification in a shorter timeframe. They will also consider joining with the Public Defender to provide local trainings.

**Gila**

In the upcoming fiscal year, the DCPI program will continue to serve families whose children are placed in out of home care and services are offered by the Department of

Child Safety. Between March 30, 2021 and July 1, 2021, no out of home dependencies were filed originating in Gila County.

In the coming year, it is anticipated that the sample size of families who qualify for this program will increase with additional insights into the efficacy of the program and how to improve it.

### **Graham**

The Court is still working to determine a positive impact for which to use the funds. They anticipate creating plans for implementation in this current fiscal year.

### **Greenlee**

The County will continue to pay for quality attorneys to assist in the dependency caseload and to provide dependency training to the attorneys.

### **La Paz**

The Superior Court plans to hire a Juvenile Court Commissioner to conduct a regular Dependency calendar and will also conduct mediation hearings for Dependency matters.

### **Maricopa**

Maricopa County Public Defense will continue to expand the multidisciplinary Social Worker program to reduce the amount of time parents and children are separated. A position has been created and recruitment is currently taking place, to manage this program. This position will be funded by Title IV-E reimbursed funds.

Additional funds will also be used to increase the number of attorneys working on dependency cases to reduce per attorney caseloads permitting the attorneys to dedicate more attention and time to each case.

A text messaging system is being implemented and will send reminders to parents in order to increase court attendance and reunifications.

### **Mohave**

Fiscal Year 2022 will see a six month follow up on successful cases and continued outreach and training of DCS workers to help identify cases that meet the DAP criteria. Their DAP case goals should double. The Courts would like to explore providing locked I-Pads to children who have been assigned a CASA. The idea would be to facilitate, through locked ZOOM access, meetings with the dependent children and their CASA representatives. Meetings can take place despite long distances and COVID restrictions or lockdowns.

### **Navajo**

Because of COVID restrictions, no new initiatives were authorized. The Presiding Judge will determine the use of these funds.

### **Pima**

They increased the dependency rates for contracted counsel effective July 1, 2021 and will use Title IV-E funding to cover that increase. They anticipate this will attract additional attorneys to take on dependency cases and reduce caseloads to more manageable amounts.

### **Pinal**

They will be working closely with the Office of Public Defense Services and will have a comprehensive plan in place to monitor Dependency numbers and making sure that there is quality child and/or parent representation.

They will track Dependency numbers to ensure that they are adhering to time standards and that Dependency hearings are scheduled in a timely manner.

### **Santa Cruz**

The funds will likely be used to improve the ability of attorneys to manage their caseloads by having enough attorneys to properly handle the workload. They will strive to improve attorney-client ratios.

### **Yavapai**

The County has added two new contractors for fiscal year 21-22. They are committed to starting DAP, and the plan is to utilize Title IV-E funds to compensate attorneys and help with the cost of the program.

### **Yuma**

The Court intends to use a portion of the Title IV-E funds to reinstate the Dependency Parent Support Program and hire a Family Support Specialist. They will also use funds for attorney fees.