



Serving Children and Families

V. SUSAN ALFORD
STATE DIRECTOR

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

January 8, 2016

VIA E-MAIL and U.S. MAIL

The Honorable Nathan Ballentine
Subcommittee Chairman
Legislative Oversight Committee
South Carolina House of Representatives
Post Office Box 11867
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Dear Chairman Ballentine:

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to present to the Healthcare Subcommittee on November 23, 2015. This is to provide the follow up information that DSS was to provide the Subcommittee.

- **Interim Report of Caseload Allocation and Formal methodology for caseload distribution and allocation of staff.**

The agency is negotiating the terms of a class action lawsuit in an effort to reach settlement of the lawsuit without litigation. The agency has agreed and the federal court has ordered the agency to work with the appointed federal court monitors to design, conduct, and complete a workload study. This work with the monitors is in progress. At the completion of the study, and with the agreement of the monitors, the agency must adopt limits for its work force. The study and the setting of workload limits is due for completion at the end of March 2016.

- **Results and analysis of the employee satisfaction survey developed by USC.**

See enclosed Employee Satisfaction Survey Summary Reports.

- **New Agency wide strategic plan.**

This plan will be completed and submitted by January 27, 2016.

- **Feedback from the entities you were contacting regarding the agency's law recommendation item number 7 (Child Fatality Review Committee).**

DSS meets regularly with the representatives of the State Child Fatality Advisory Committee and others who are impacted by Proviso 38.29. The group is working to establish the local child fatality review process Proviso 38.29 anticipates. DSS shared with this workgroup a draft statute that proposes to codify the proviso. Because the workgroup is still in the early stages of implementation under the current proviso, the consensus is that it would be premature to enact a statute codifying a local child fatality review process. Thus, SCDSS recommends statutory enactment be delayed and that Proviso 38.29 be extended for at least an additional year.

- **Any information related to the agency's investigation into the allegations regarding the Spartanburg County office, including, but not limited to, actions taken to investigate, findings made, and actions taken as a result of the findings.**

The Spartanburg County DSS received 21 comments in the Public Survey, some of which raised allegations of nepotism and of an employee being hired into a position for which he was not qualified. After an investigation by the SCDSS Office of Human Resources, these allegations were deemed to be unfounded. The employee named in the complaint is related by marriage to another employee in the county. That employee did not have input into, nor was she consulted, relative to his hire or recent promotion. They are in separate chains of command in the office reporting to different supervisors. The employee named as being unqualified for a supervisory job met the qualifications of the job. While he did not have long-term DSS experience, he did have supervisory experience in the public sector.

Other comments from the Public Survey contained complaints about poor supervisor/management conduct, dress code issues, misuse of office space and children being brought to work. After the comments were published, the DSS Spartanburg County Director requested assistance from the SCDSS Office of Human Resources in June 2015 in addressing the complaints. Staff from the SCDSS Office of Human Resources provided training to Supervisors in the county on DSS Policies and Procedures, focusing on disciplinary actions and professional conduct. Use of office space for working out was discontinued and all employees were advised to follow the agency's dress code policy. Employees and Supervisors were reminded that bringing children to work in lieu of taking leave or making childcare arrangements was prohibited.

- **Updated language regarding the potential negative impact level, specific for each program, at which the agency believes the General Assembly should be put on notice so the General Assembly can take some action to help prevent the situation from becoming a crisis (update this information in the Program Evaluation Report and send the entire Program Evaluation Report.**

See enclosed Report.

The Honorable Nathan Ballentine
January 8, 2016
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If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact me directly at (803) 898-0585 or Susan.Alford@dss.sc.gov.

Sincerely,

Signature Redacted

V. Susan Alford
State Director

VSA:ms

Enclosures

cc: The Honorable Wm. Weston J. Newton
The Honorable Mia S. McLeod
The Honorable Walton J. McLeod
The Honorable Bill Taylor



Employee Satisfaction Survey

Summary Reports

The South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) conducted an Employee Satisfaction Survey of all staff from November 2 - 9, 2015. A total of 1,628 employees completed all or part of the survey. The survey was developed by DSS State Director Susan Alford with support from the Center for Child and Family Studies at the University of South Carolina and a committee of DSS county staff. Questions were based on surveys successfully conducted by other state social services agencies. The DSS Survey Committee suggested additional questions and provided input on all of the survey questions. A draft survey was forwarded to the State Director for final approval. The survey had three sections: Social and Physical Work Environment, Supervisor Relationship, and Overall Agency Satisfaction. Employees were asked to rate statements in each area. Additional comments were solicited at the end of each section.

Several demographic questions were included at the end of the survey in an effort to learn more about who completed the survey. At least a few staff from each county completed the survey. Richland County had the largest number of participating staff. Nine percent of the respondents did not answer the question on gender. Of those who did respond, 87% were females. Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 70 years old. The median age was 26. More 40-year-olds completed the survey than any other age group.

Social and Physical Work Environment

The highest ratings here were in the social areas. Employees believed they had good working relationships with their co-workers (87%). They also believed their co-workers were committed to doing quality work (75%). Two-thirds of the employees believed they had a sense of teamwork on the job (67%). Over half of the employees (59%) responding to this survey agreed with the statement, *The physical environment is adequately equipped to support all job functions*. Half of the employees indicated they often experienced stress in the workplace.

Social and Physical Work Environment (Agree–Strongly Agree)

I have a good working relationship with my co-workers.



My co-workers are committed to doing quality work.



The office environment is conducive to getting work done.



I experience a sense of teamwork at work.



Employees treat each other with respect in the workplace.



The physical environment of the office is adequately equipped to support all job functions.



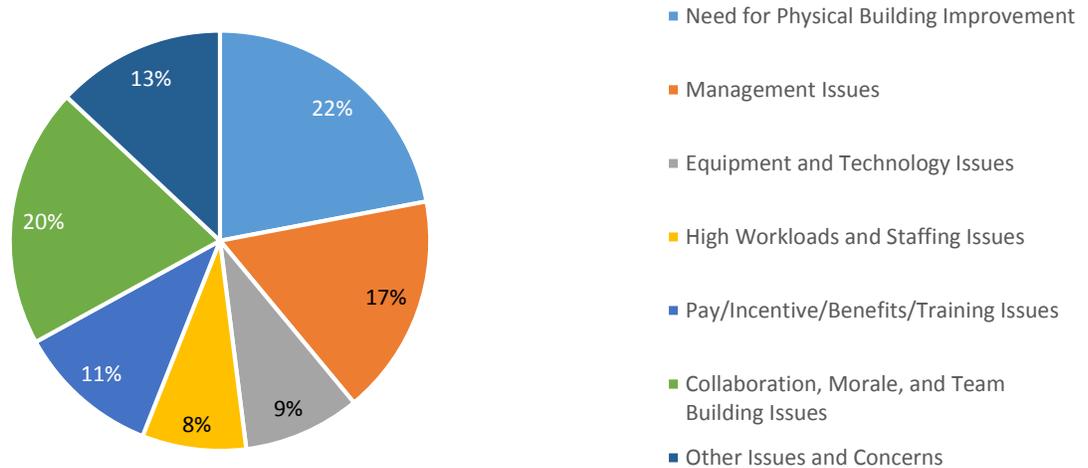
Stress (Often – Very Often)

How often do you experience stress in your work environment?



Participants were asked to provide additional feedback regarding building a better workplace environment. The comments were grouped into categories. The largest percentage of comments focused on the physical building. Some praised new buildings provided by their counties. Others focused on the need for improvements.

Workplace Environment Comment Categories



One comment represents much of what the employees expressed. Additional examples of comments are included in Appendix 1.

Provide adequate space for work with protections in place to uphold HIPPA standards. The county building in which I am housed is filled with mold, strange odors, and is constantly under construction because repairs are not done correctly the first time. I fear that constant displacement not only makes me less productive, but it puts confidential client information at risk. Additionally, upgrades need to be made to technology so copiers/scanners/fax machines are not down the majority of the time (which they are now).

Supervisor Relationship

Most of the employees responding to statements regarding their relationships to their supervisors agreed that they were, overall, satisfied with their supervisors (77%). These employees also generally agreed (89%) that they were not supervised too much at work; that their supervisors (83%) respected their knowledge, skills, and abilities, and treated them with respect; and that they had a good relationship with their supervisors (83%). Employees also generally believed they were able to make decisions affecting their work (82%).

A majority of employees also agreed that their supervisors had realistic work expectations (76%); that their supervisors were consistent and fair with employees and promptly responded and followed through on their concerns (72%); and that work assignments were distributed fairly (69%).

Well over half of the DSS employees responding to the survey felt encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to grow professionally (61%), and just over half (51%) believed that DSS recognized strong

job performance by employees. In interactions with their supervisors, many employees (61%) believed they were often encouraged to share concerns or ideas, and just over half (51%) believed their supervisors often recognized employees for good work.

Supervisor Relationship (Agree – Strongly Agree)

I believe that I am supervised too much at work.

11%

I respect my supervisor's knowledge, skills, and abilities.

83%

I am treated with respect by my supervisor.

83%

I have a good working relationship with my supervisor.

83%

I believe that I am able to make decisions affecting my work.

82%

Overall, I am satisfied with my supervisor.

77%

My supervisor has realistic work expectations.

76%

My supervisor is consistent and fair with employees.

72%

When I bring up a concern, my supervisor responds promptly and follows through.

72%

Work assignments are distributed fairly.

69%

My supervisor encourages me to take advantage of opportunities to help me grow professionally.

61%

Management within my organization recognizes strong job performance.

49%

Interactions with Supervisor (Often – Very Often)

I am encouraged to share my ideas/thoughts/concerns with my supervisor.

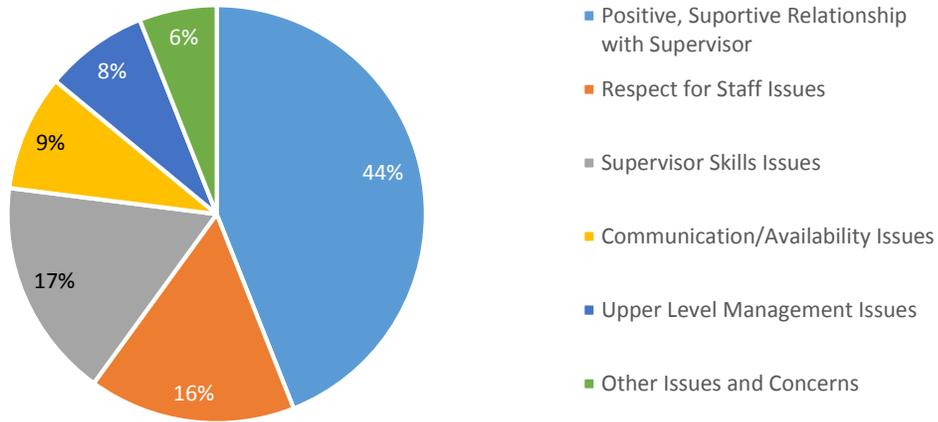
62%

My supervisor recognizes employees for good work.

56%

Participants were asked to provide additional feedback regarding their relationships with their supervisors. The comments were grouped into categories.

Supervisor Relationship Comment Categories



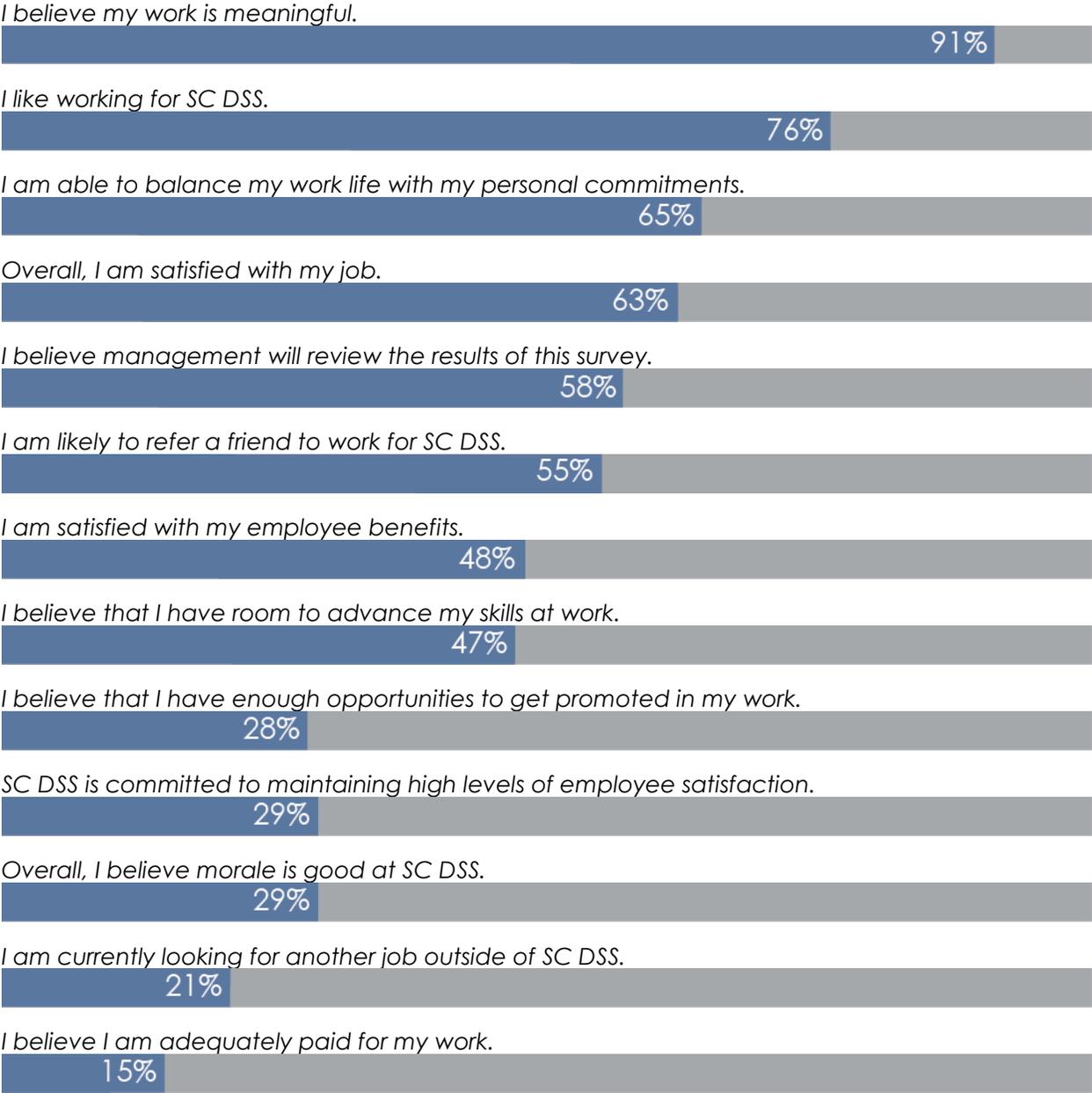
Examples of selected comments are included in Appendix 2. Many staff had good things to say about their supervisors, while others had suggestions for improvements. A few comments are included here.

My supervisor is very understanding and she really exhibits the “open door policy.” She is always willing to listen to you, whether it is work or home related. She understands there is life after work and encourages workers to do our best and use best case manager practice.

My supervisor is fairly new, only been here since the first of the year. She had no knowledge of this program, and thus has to continually ask the former supervisor for answers to everything. They also have her attending so many meetings and trainings that she is not here to properly supervise the staff.

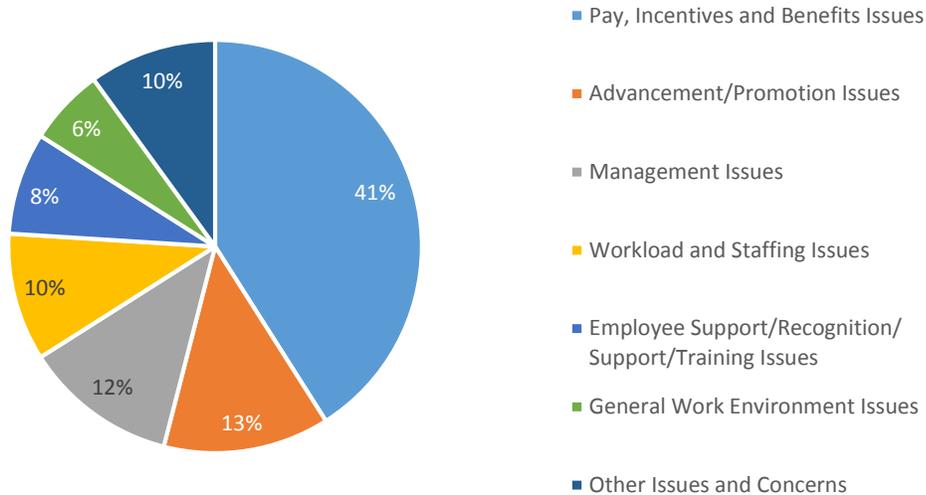
Overall Satisfaction with the Agency

The highest rating in this section of the survey was for the statement, *I believe my work is meaningful*, with 91% agreeing or strongly agreeing. The lowest rating was for the statement, *I believe I am adequately paid for my work*, with only 15% in agreement. Over three-quarters of the employees (76%) agreed or strongly agreed that they liked working for SC DSS. Only 21% said they were looking for another job outside of DSS. Ratings for all questions in this section are charted below.



Participants were asked to provide additional feedback regarding the overall morale of the agency. The comments were grouped into categories.

Overall Satisfaction Comment Categories



Examples of selected comments are included in Appendix 3. A large percentage of the comments focused on pay incentives and benefits. A few representative comments are included here.

A 2-person household that makes less than \$31,000/year is eligible for government assistance. Many DSS employees are single mothers, and starting pay in many positions is less than \$31,000/year. That means that workers who are helping families with SNAP benefits are themselves eligible for SNAP benefits.

When I started this job 3 years ago, I loved it and thought I would be here until I retire. That has changed drastically as my caseload has gone from 15-20 kids to 30-40 kids. It is barely possible to fit in the home visits for 30+ kids a month when there are only 30 days in a month and the kids are placed all over SC. There are also many days when I can't do home visits due to court, staffings, supervised parent/child visits at the office, FCRB meetings, adoptions staffings, etc. I feel that the only way to get all of my work done is to skip lunch breaks and work late every day. This makes my family upset and leads me to want to find a new job.

Appendix 1: Social and Physical Work Environment

The following section shows example comments pertaining to each Social and Physical Work Environment category. **All responses are unedited and in their original format.**

NEED FOR PHYSICAL BUILDING IMPROVEMENT (N = 142)

Work area is crowded, noisy, and impossible to accomplish anything. Additional staff moving to huge open area will further complicate work production. In order to work, headphones are a necessity.

Cubicles are dehumanizing. Our building smells of mold, the walls are dirty, the plumbing has issues, the roof leaks, and any time people come to fix things, they end up getting ceiling tile dust on our equipment, or something. We work in a sad, sad building.

We need a better cleaning crew. I think this would make the workplace environment a little better, because no one want to come to work and see yesterday trash or smell the restroom from there desk.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES (N = 118)

The management staff must be trustworthy & capable of making integral decisions. The agency should consider changing the criteria for management positions. A Degree shouldn't be the only determining factor. An individual's work ethic, knowledge of the agency, passion for doing what's right and length of service years, should also be taken into consideration. All staff should be given the opportunity to grow within the agency.

Provide leaders who are committed to the organization's mission and provide good professional ethic. It appears there is culture of hiring leaders base on who they are associated with rather than their Knowledge, skills, and abilities.

The leadership demonstrates very poor professional ethics. There is little trust or opportunities to develop synergy. There appears to be no structured process for selecting the best candidates for advancement.

Open and frequent communication from the top to the bottom. At this point, it seems that the flow of information has been disrupted. Leadership at the state level should provide for and support infrastructure at the regional and local level - - space, furniture, phone service, computers, vehicles, hiring processes. The agency seems more fragmented at this point than ever before - - lack of communication causes unnecessary stress and extra work, the hiring and onboarding processes have slowed down again, etc..

EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES (N = 57)

Most of the problems we encounter are related to issues such as computers going down, problems with computers, telephones going down (we're an interviewing county), etc.

There have been problems with printers in the office lately. This becomes an issue when workers are not able to print out important forms that they need to do paperwork for the day. Also, some laptops have had viruses and have been shipped to be repaired. There are no extra laptops in the office for workers to use temporarily while they wait for their laptop to return. This creates an issue because workers get behind in paperwork because it takes a week for their laptop to come back. All offices should have extra laptops on hand.

IT support is not adequate. IT equipment does not meet staff needs and no one listens to issues. Users of tablets need to be included in decision making about IT leases. Immediate office environment is fine but the overall DSS office environment is not supportive to getting work done. Too many conflicting processes that hinder completion of work – too many entities reviewing and slowing down hiring and approvals to do work-related activities – this should be streamlined. The agency is perceived as dysfunctional and is the worst it has ever been in many years. The recent issues about the bonus and exclusion of TGE staff from bonuses was perceived as mean-spirited and insensitive to many TGE staff with many years of service.

HIGH WORKLOAD AND STAFFING ISSUES (N = 49)

The environment at the office is very bleak. The hiring practices are not adequate for this area. When you bring in outside people who have never worked at Social Services and put them in higher positions and they are unable to tell the people below them as what needs to be done. This is so so sad. Workers look for management for guidance and the supervisors look for the coordinators to give them guidance, but when you have people in there that don't have the experience, it hurts the county as a whole.

Focus more on what can be done to help get cases staffed and caught up since our county is so far behind and our caseloads are so high, instead of spending 30 minutes during a staffing meeting talking about "headbands" and other things staff cannot wear to work; a speech that is given every single staff meeting Given that the director's own admin assistant came walking into the meeting with a tank top on not five minutes after the director said during a staff meeting that tank tops were not allowed in the office unless a jacket was covering them, the conversation was a complete waste of time if only certain employees have to follow the rules.

There is a need to balance workloads to avoid the situation where 20% of the staff does 80% of the work. There are highly committed, hard-working staff members, but there are others who are riding the clock or engaged in busywork to avoid taking on too many responsibilities.

PAY/INCENTIVE/BENEFITS/TRAINING ISSUES (N = 76)

I feel that to build positive workplace environment this needs to begin with the improvement of the health benefits of the employees. The fact that no preventive or well-check-ups are covered through the state offered health plan is a disservice to the employees and the public that they serve. While having information on living a healthy life and providing blood pressure checks or covering a mammogram or pap smear is a benefit, it is negated by the employee needing to pay upwards of \$300 for their yearly physical with their primary care physician or for themselves or their spouse covered by the plan or annual visit to their ob-gyn. Many employees forgo seeing their primary care physician or ob-gyn for annual check-ups because they cannot afford to do so providing the chance of potential health problems to go unnoticed until it's too late costing the employee and DSS more in the long run.

While one component received just recently received salary increases ranging from 5% to 15%, the other equally hard working component of the agency received 0%. Perhaps this was simply an oversight because everyone working at DSS deserves salary increases!

Recently raises were given to some employees and not others. Just because some one did not fall in to the slot that was given raises do not mean that their job is less deserving. They work just as hard as the ones that got the raise. That did not help the work environment. Not blaming the co-workers that got the raise, but how the process was handled.

Child Support Services needs better training and an actual training program for new employees. The management team needs to all be on the same page and employees need to be notified of changes. Hard work, quality work and dedication to your work should be expected and should be appreciated. Everyone should be respectful of each other and work as a team.

COLLABORATION, MORALE, AND TEAM-BUILDING ISSUES (N = 129)

I believe everyone needs more teambuilding exercises. Units don't work together and supervisors from other units don't always work together which can make getting things done hard. I believe there needs to be more open discussion among all employees and supervisors, not just decisions made above everyone's head with no input from the people who need to carry those things out.

Work on building a more cohesive team; sometimes it feels like there are "cliques" and if you are not part of one, it's a struggle to get help to get your work done. I have found some coworkers who are very helpful, but not all.

There doesn't seem to any teamwork taking place. It is beginning to seem like every one's main goal is to focus on themselves rather than as a team.

I believe that my manager could be more supportive, respectful and available. I believe that my manager should provide me with constructive feedback regarding my performance. I believe that my manager should refrain from negatively discussing me with others or my personal business.

Morale builders. Those who work very hard and take PRIDE in their work are treated the same as those who could care less. It doesn't pay to be a hard worker at our office because you seldom are appreciated and get extra work because supervisors know they can count on you.

It would be nice sometime to actually get credit for the things you do and appreciation for working so hard.

Our work environment would be better if employees respected boundaries and did not gossip and spread rumors. Our jobs are very stressful at times with deadlines and having others running around speaking very loudly and being childish makes it difficult to complete tasks.

OTHER ISSUES AND CONCERNS (N = 87)

Provide easier access to State Vehicles. Assign more state vehicle parking spaces to Harden Street building. Provide easier access to restroom facilities at Harden Street Building. Assess Harden Street building and consider moving personnel/departments so that employees can have more comfortable work areas. Provide more equipment for employees such as individual printers. Have a better sense of urgency to fix broken equipment in the office such as copy machines.

Appendix 2: Supervisor Relationship

The following section shows example comments pertaining to each Supervisor Relationship category. **All responses are unedited and in their original format.**

POSITIVE, SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH SUPERVISOR (N = 200)

My supervisor is one of the better ones here at DSS. She works with her employees and is nearly always available to assist us with questions and concerns. She makes time for us to staff and tries to keep us on track. She advocates for us when we are not being treated fairly or in instances when we are receiving reports that should not be accepted as investigations.

My supervisor is very helpful and she lets me know exactly what she expects. She relates to any issues that you may have at work and in life in general. She has a very positive relationship with her administrative staff, and that is exactly what makes us have a pleasant work environment.

RESPECT FOR STAFF ISSUES (N = 73)

My supervisor can have a very sarcastic attitude at sporadic time which can impact my performance in my work because it is not helpful in completing my job duties while at times my supervisor can be friendly and helpful. I feel that this job is very important to the lives of children that I interact with daily and it can be discomfoting when I am not treated appropriately.

While I believe that I am treated fairly for the most part, other supervisors in my area are not. My supervisor does not treat everyone with respect and does not value her employees opinion.

I have a relationship with my co-workers, whom are managers. The environment is stressful in here. When you have a manager who deliberately set out to be mean, spiteful and retaliatory for no reason against co-workers, it is hard for you to trust and work with them. My supervisor allow a certain person (whom she shows favorite towards and became close with) to go to training vs. all of the staff in her division. You can tell she's trying to groom her for a management position but this person should not be in a management position (again, who you know not what you know)

Individuals who have been with the agency for a while, do not have the opportunity to grow or have other opportunities to suggest other decisions. I have seen workers who make threats on leaving and THEN something is done.

I have worked for this agency and want grow, unfortunately I am unable due to not having a degree. I believe my skills, my knowledge, and also my loyalty for the agency should mean something. I don't get that here.

SUPERVISOR SKILLS ISSUES (N = 78)

I think my supervisor has the ability to be effective but she is inconsistent with micro managing all staff. It would be better if she micromanaged or did not but the confusion of both can be overwhelming. I believe the locations of the children is important and should be divided up more fairly. Some of us travel above the midlands while others have most of their caseloads in the low country. The concerns is if it has been divided fairly to ensure we all have children in various placements.

Do not trust my supervisors decisions. I feel my supervisor does not follow up with his job responsibilities. I feel that supervisor does not care about quality work or work being done correctly as long as something is being done.

My relationship with my supervisor is not a good one. My supervisor does not distribute work evenly to all employees, but gives the strongest and hardest working employees most of the responsibilities. My supervisor does not treat everyone fairly.

Supervisor is fairly new and we're just adjusting to each other. Overall, I feel the relationship is positive.

COMMUNICATION/AVAILABILITY ISSUES (N = 39)

Communication in this agency is lacking. I feel that program areas do not talk to each other and customer service and agency image is impacted.

Supervisors are not always available to staff cases with their workers. Not being able to staff cases causes caseworkers to get behind on cases- especially those that need closure. It is unfair to clients that have done their part and want to move forward with their case but can't because their caseworker is not able to staff the case with the supervisor.

The supervisors in the office don't communicate well with each other much less with their employees. I am never told I am doing a good job. I am only reprimanded when I do a less than satisfactory job. I feel that I work extremely hard during the week and am only punished for not doing an even better job than my best. It is very discouraging.

Due to my supervisor's busy schedule and the number of case workers in my unit I have a difficult time getting a hold of my supervisor to staff my cases when I need advice or have questions in a timely manner

UPPER-LEVEL MANAGEMENT ISSUES (N = 38)

My supervisor came from my area, very hard worker so, I trust her wisdom and knowledge about the work. However, the upper management limits my supervisor and forces her to pass on work to the workers who are efficient from the inefficient workers for the number games.

Management is great at the local level. Upper state management doesn't appreciate the work done by temporary employees and doesn't recognize quality of work or the value of these employees.

I do not trust my supervisor or upper management. There is a lack of communication across the board. I have shared issues with my direct supervisor and upper management about the hardships we face in APS and I was told that I complain too much, panic too much and require too much supervision. I was discouraged from asking too many questions and was also described as a person who just got hired although I have been with the agency for two years. I feel I have great ideas to help the program, but they are not supported and almost always frowned upon. I am very nervous and afraid to voice my concerns anymore.

I think my supervisor does a great job but she still shows favoritism. There are workers that does an outstanding job with all of their cases across the board with FCRB, FGC, Court, Dictation ect and she does not praise the good work ethics.

OTHER ISSUES AND CONCERNS (N = 28)

Sometimes the work environment in the unit does not seem to be "consistent and fair." One worker can be constantly scrutinized and under the microscope while another worker is off doing personal duties during their working hours and does not get spoken to about it. It seems that sometimes one worker can get away with certain things that other workers would not be able to do.

My immediate supervisor shares needed information with employees. However, she does not stand up for us to her supervisor. Her supervisor feels that he can tell us what to do when he doesn't even know what we do. He does not treat all employees the same and has his favorites within the group.

When I first started with the agency, I felt that when I expressed my opinion or concerns, she did not appreciate it but I have recently had to do so and my concerns were addressed and taken seriously versus being minimized as before. My supervisor now tells me that she likes the fact that I share my opinion about things.

At the customer service window, two people are always needed and Law Services is needed as well. I don't feel safe in the work place because customers are always angry and never satisfied with the work we do.

Appendix 3: Overall Satisfaction with the Agency

The following section shows example comments pertaining to each Overall Satisfaction with the Agency category. **All responses are unedited and in their original format.**

PAY, INCENTIVES, AND BENEFITS ISSUES (N = 273)

My concern with pay is that it seems to be inequitable. Positions requiring the same level of work can vary 20,000 - 30,000 dollars. (For example, County Directors). Male Supervisors "appear" to make more than female supervisors of equal positions. Certain positions that do not require direct supervision of staff seem to be compensated greater. The recent pay raises generated some inequities, such as employees making more than Supervisors - not because of longevity, but because of how the distribution of raises fell.

I think it is terrible that our insurance is steadily getting worse and worse and we do not get any incentive to stay with DSS each year and I could travel 20 minutes farther each morning and cross into North Carolina and get paid about \$52,000 a year to do the same job.

ADVANCEMENT/PROMOTION ISSUES (N = 85)

I do not see any way for me to grow in the company. I also believe that with the expertise that I have brought to the table that will benefit my case load and my co workers, many of which have little to no experience, is not being paid for. It is not fair to expect me to give my all for the same pay.

There is no opportunity for advancement at DSS unless you know someone or suck up to people. There are people in supervisory positions who have never worked in the area they supervise or have less than 3 years of experience as a case manager when they are promoted.

I have been looked over several times for promotion. I have learned people are promoted based upon talking the talk and not walking the talk. Friends promote friend whether they can do the job or not. They expect experience people to do the work for others who are not experience and who make major mistakes. They tell the people who have been looked over for promotions to "clean it up"

MANAGEMENT ISSUES (N = 79)

People in the state office do not have the experience to try and direct counties. You have leaders who have less two or three years of experience trying to tell people what to do. They just don't know policy! Also you shouldn't have to wait a week to get an answer to a question. There should be a person a supervisor could call and get a correct answer. We have supervisors in the counties who have 20 - 40 years of experience or more. Place them over a certain number of counties to answer questions. If they have questions then they could call the State office.

I think that employees have no faith in the administration to make any changes. We get asked all the time about what we think needs changed and none of the things ever happen. We hear all the time that they are making changes based off what the employees say but I strongly believe that is a lie because the changes being made don't really benefit the employees. It only makes things harder for us to be able to do your jobs adequately and timely.

The agency has changed for being customer focus to number driven and leaders do not demonstrate professional ethics.

WORKLOAD AND STAFFING ISSUES (N = 69)

Since I do not work at SCDSS (just in county), it is hard for me to comment. However, I visited our State Office one day and heard nothing but complaints from the workers. It seems to be the same with them as it is with us in the counties. Over-worked, underpaid, under staffed and having someone put into a position that has never worked in that area but now are enforcing procedures that seem unnecessary and making our job more difficult.

I have to work, however, I feel that we are overworked and underpaid. I feel that we could be offered more incentives and that we should be paid a whole lot more than what we are. This is a dead-end job and it seems like upper management does not care about the child support sector. The years on this job are no way close to the pay. I think that your pay should equal the years.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION/SUPPORT/TRAINING ISSUES (N = 56)

I believe SC DSS does not do enough to reward workers who produce quality work. I believe SC DSS does not do enough to reprimand workers who do not produce quality work. All workers, regardless of work ethic, are treated equally in pay, which is unfair and not in-line with competitive workplaces. Because of this, SC DSS will retain and promote workers who have poor work ethics, and those workers who feel they are not rewarded for their work will leave the agency.

I think we are overworked and underpaid. I really believe that we don't get paid enough for the work we do. And even we get bonuses, they are nearly taxed to where you lose a good portion of it, in which I don't think it should be taxed at all. Sometimes here at DSS I don't feel like the employees are appreciated enough. I think the demand is high, but the gratitude isn't that high. I like my job, but sometimes you do feel unappreciated for what you do.

I don't feel like anyone cares about me or the other case managers I work with. I feel like the directors and program coordinators pretend to care to our faces, but actually do not. I feel like we don't get paid for what we do, we don't get recognized for doing a good job, and we don't have time for our own lives. People here have health problems because of the stress. Since I started working here, I can't sleep at night because I wake up thinking about the families, or what I need to do, or second guess the decisions I've made. I don't think anyone honestly knows how stressful this job actually is.

We are not encouraged to seek training to further our professional development. That is only reserved for supervisors and the "special few". People are not promoted from within in this Division. It seems they would rather have "new blood" - which usually results in people not having the knowledge base to do the job.

GENERAL WORK ENVIRONMENT ISSUES (N = 34)

The higher, better things about one's job don't stand well without the lower things such as reliable, working equipment, a pleasant work station, a clean building and a safe place to park. Or even a place to park. The security in our building does not inspire feelings of safety. Glass doors; an ancient security guard who might be helping move equipment or any other sort of friendly task instead of being vigilant; an unchanged door code (almost a year now) won't stop an angry parent or disgruntled ex employee with a gun. I can't believe employee safety is not more important to DSS.

DSS should have WiFi for employees so they won't have to use up their data during breaks and lunch. Also, DSS does not look at the inventory to make sure there is enough of everything. For example, we are out of air freshener in the restrooms these past two weeks. I was told more air fresheners will be ordered, but there are still no air fresheners.

TOO much unfairness when it comes to pay increases. Only select groups get them and it should be across the board. to me it is very discriminatory. Working in cubicles, in old nasty buildings with no windows and no sunlight is terrible.

I love my job and what we do everyday. It is hard to stay with an employer when you are over worked and under paid. I don't feel like comp time is paid attention too because their is no tracking system for Comp time. The children are why I stay at DSS. I love all of my kids.

I have a great job. I love my work. I think Ms. Alford intends to do a good job. I will likely leave soon although I don't think it is to the benefit of the agency. I could not recommend that a friend come into a work atmosphere such as this. It's such a shame.

Even for DSS, morale is at an all-time low. I am beginning to lose hope that this agency can ever turn itself around.

Currently working on Disaster, 11 hours a day, 5 days a week--not enough--want us to work Saturday, Sunday, holidays, and we cannot take time off at Christmas. We were told 85% staff required every day during holidays. It will be impossible to have a normal family holiday with no time to decorate, cook, or shop. While the rest of the agency decorates office doors, goes to division parties, and goes home at night we keep working with NO END IN SIGHT.

Until the last year I loved my job at DSS. I was hired to serve the people of my county. Since we have gone to the universal caseload and are on the telephones interviewing people from across the state - you lose the personal relationship with the clients. It is as if we are production workers - you do not have time to listen to the clients needs, etc because you have got to hurry up, complete the interview, process the benefits and get on to the next interview. It seems as if DSS is not concerned about relationships with clients anymore.

OTHER ISSUES AND CONCERNS (N = 70)

please find a way to share the outcome of this survey with CD's, frontline and supervisors in 2016 and follow up surveys to determine any change in morale/satisfaction.

I love my job in relation to the families and children that I serve on a daily basis. If it was not for this, I would quit today.

The agency's mission statement is "Serving Children and Families". In order to provide the necessary administrative functions in a cohesive manner, please ensure that all divisions are moving in the same direction. The implied mission statement should be "Serving Children and Families with Care, Quality, and Respect".

Let us move forward with the goal of providing the best service for our client and employees.

Overall, I am satisfied with my job and am enjoying my work experience.

I enjoy working for SCDSS and am very thankful for the opportunity to do so.

For the statement that I like working for SC DSS...I would like to really let you know and all of my coworkers can vouch for me. My slogan here at SC DSS is that "I LOVE MY JOB AND DON'T YOU FORGET IT"
