



COLORADO OFFICE OF
**THE CHILD'S
REPRESENTATIVE**

Presentation to the Joint Judiciary
January 19, 2023



OCR MISSION

OCR gives children and youth a voice in Colorado legal proceedings through high-quality legal representation that protects and promotes their safety, interests, and rights.

Vision

Justice, opportunity, and healthy families for all court-involved children and youth.

Values

Accountability: Colorado's children, attorneys, families, and communities can count on OCR to ensure that each decision we make and action we take advances our mission in a fair, inclusive and transparent manner.

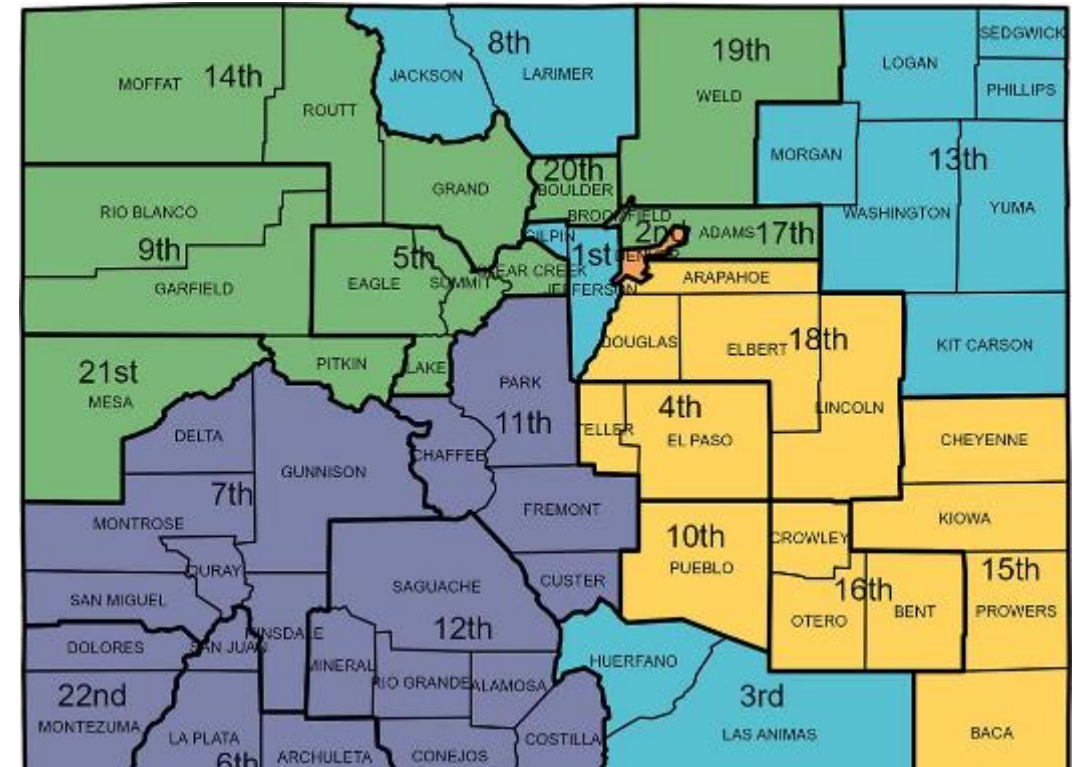
Efficiency: OCR strives to accomplish its mission and conserve resources by streamlining efforts, adhering to deadlines, resolving conflict constructively, and honoring well-defined projects, processes, and roles. We balance our drive to achieve with thoughtful planning and implementation.

Empowerment: OCR cultivates an environment of respect and honesty. We value the diverse experiences and expertise of the children we serve, our attorneys, and our staff. We invest time to reflect and connect, focus on strengths, value feedback, and recognize success. We stand for justice and support each other in our mission to empower children.

OCR ATTORNEYS

OCR contracts with approximately 270 attorneys covering all 22 Judicial Districts

- GAL or CFY is appointed for every child or youth named in a D&N case in Colorado.
- CFY is appointed for every youth in a Foster Youth in Transition Program Case.
- GALS are appointed at the discretion of the court in Juvenile Delinquency, Truancy, Paternity, Probate, Adoption, Mental Health, and Domestic Relations matters.
- GALS may also be appointed for a victim or witness.
- GALS are appointed for every youth 16 or 17 years old seeking a marriage license.





WILDLY IMPORTANT GOAL

OCR will successfully implement HB22-1038 and further infuse youth voice in the culture of OCR and related legal services.

Provided High Quality
Training and Resources

Updated CJD 04-06

Improved Website

WHAT WE DO

OCR is an independent state agency within the judicial branch charged with providing competent and effective legal representation to children and youth involved in judicial proceedings in Colorado. OCR establishes attorney practice standards and provides litigation support, accessible high-quality statewide training, and oversight of the practice.



OCR SMART GOALS

Goal 1

- Provide children a voice in the Colorado legal system through effective and efficient attorney services and advocacy.

Goal 2

- OCR will optimize efficiencies in attorney practice and billing.

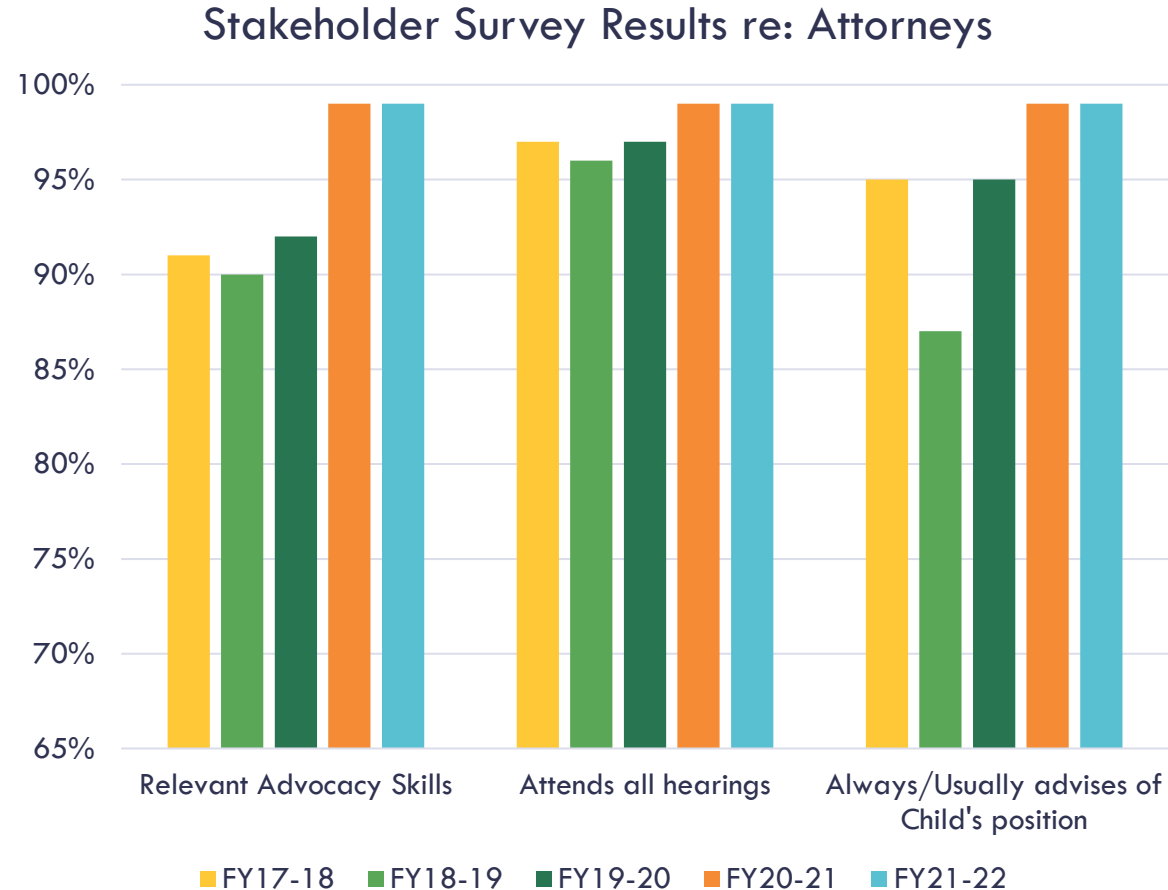
Goal 3

- OCR will ensure attorneys and case consultants remain current in state and federal law and regulations, social science research, best practices in diversity and inclusion, and evidence-based services.

GOAL 1: PROVIDE CHILDREN A VOICE IN THE COLORADO LEGAL SYSTEM THROUGH EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ATTORNEY SERVICES AND ADVOCACY.

In FY22 the OCR:

- Conducted **193** references interviews (**62** from youth).
- **214** court observations.
- In FY22, **95%** of initial 30-day visits with youth were completed.
- Received **239** judicial stakeholder surveys and **140** youth surveys.
- Attended or sponsored **12** youth events.



GOAL 2

OCR will optimize efficiencies in attorney practice and billing.

- C.A.R.E.S. – online case management and billing system.
- Periodic review
- Accurate budget forecasting

GOAL 3

OCR Training Program



30 new trainings
in FY22



83 new CLE hours



Total of 424 hours
available online



Fall Conference

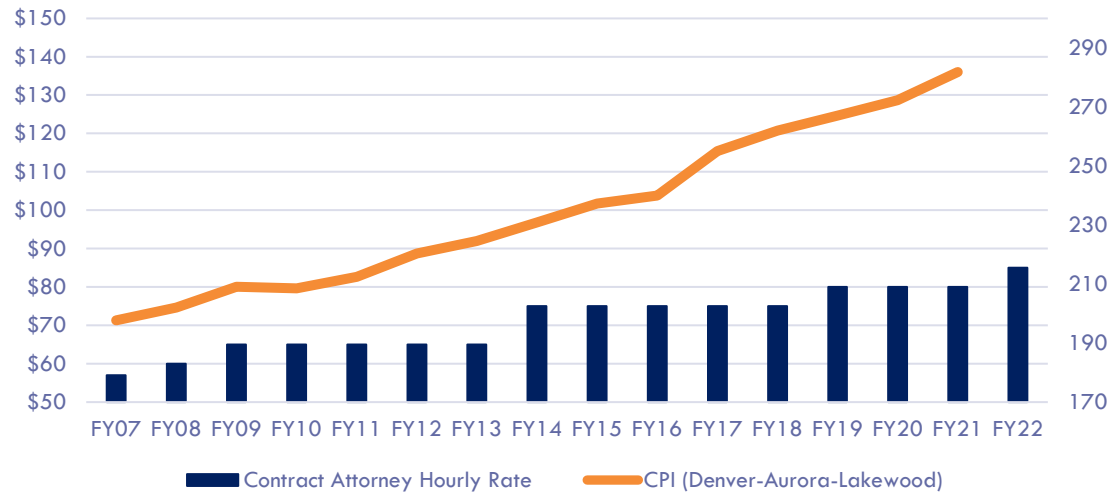
FY24 Budget Priority

"In light of the rising costs of, well, everything, and the inability of the OCR to offer group insurance or loan forgiveness like other public interest attorneys, it seems a fair rate would be closer to \$100/hour."

R1: Attorney Contractor Rate Increase (joint request with OADC and ORPC).

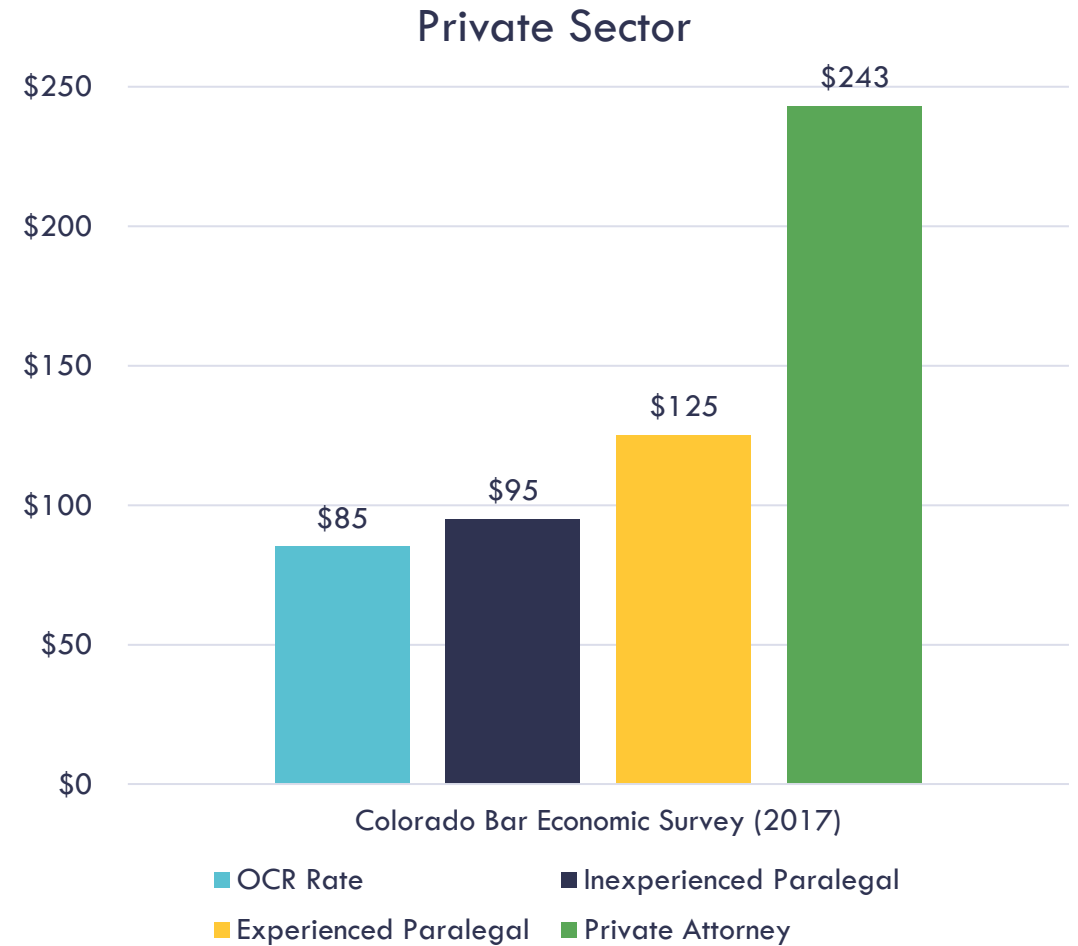
R4: Staff Contractor Rate Increase (joint request with OADC and ORPC).

FAIR AND REASONABLE COMPENSATION

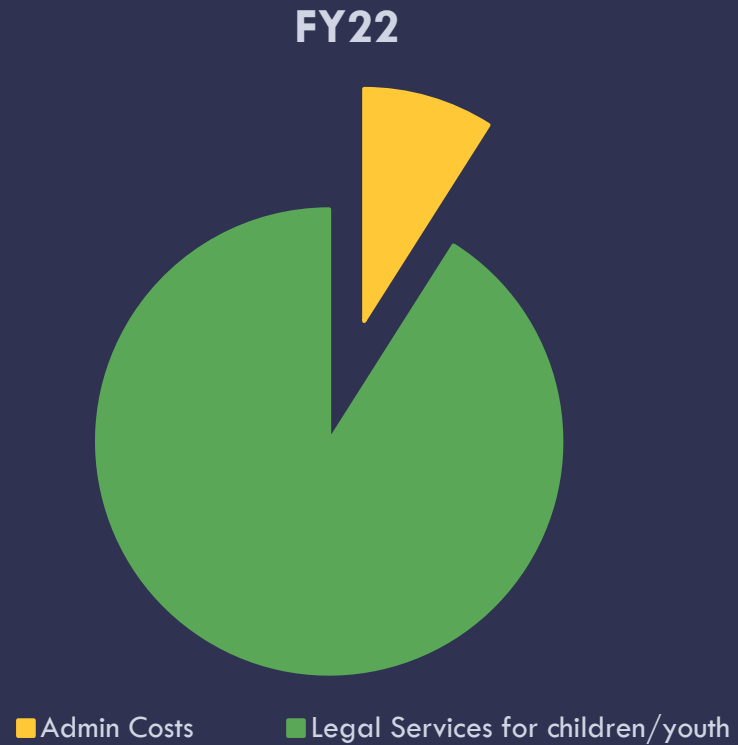


History of OCR Attorney Rates

2009 to 2014	\$65
2015 to July 1, 2018	\$75
2018 to 2022	\$80
2022 to current	\$85



CASELOAD DRIVEN BUDGET



OTHER GENERAL FUND BUDGET REQUESTS

R2

Court-Appointed Counsel Caseload/Workload Adjustment

-\$634,018

R3

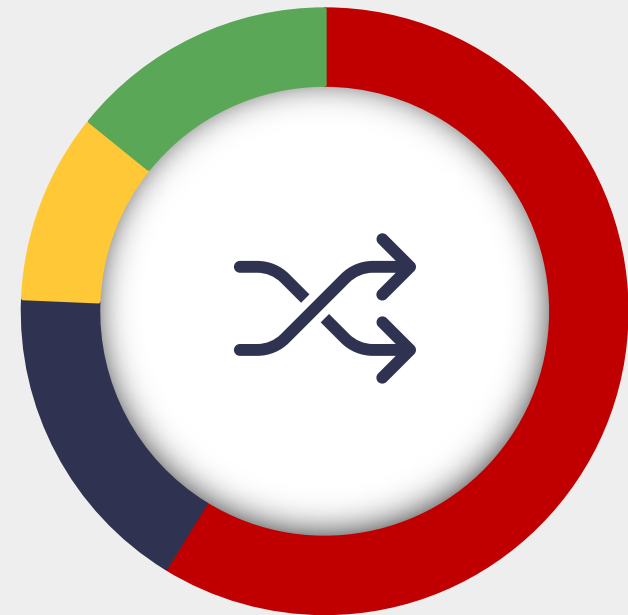
EDI Staff Attorney \$181,935

R5

Administrative Staffing Adjustments \$109,291

R6

Common Comp Plan \$152,851 (general fund)



■ CAC Reduction ■ R3 ■ R5 ■ R6



R3 — EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AN INCLUSION STAFF ATTORNEY POSITION

- State/district legal policy and system advocacy.
- Case specific litigation strategies and supports to confront disparities in the courtroom.
- Recruitment/retention of diverse attorneys and staff.



R7 INCREASE TO TRAINING APPROPRIATION

Reappropriated
IV-E Funding

SHE CARES, GENUINELY CARES.
I THINK THAT'S SUCH A
WONDERFUL THING. SHE'S
GIVEN ME HOPE AND
HUMANITY AGAIN IN A
SYSTEM WHERE MOST PEOPLE
DON'T CARE AND WE ARE
JUST NUMBERS.

- YOUTH FEEDBACK ABOUT AN
OCR ATTORNEY

THANK YOU!



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Please feel free to contact us with questions,
comments, or need for information related to
children and youth in Colorado legal proceedings.

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