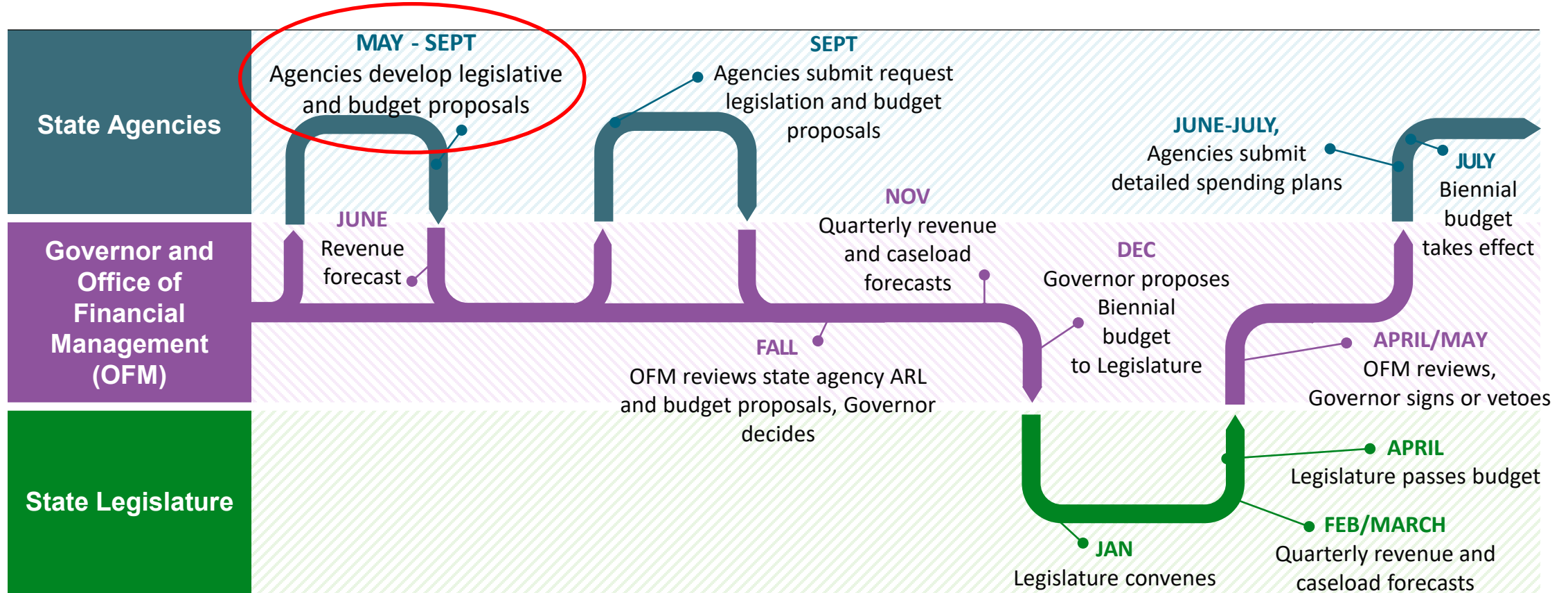

DCYF: 2024 Early Learning and Care DP/ARL Proposal



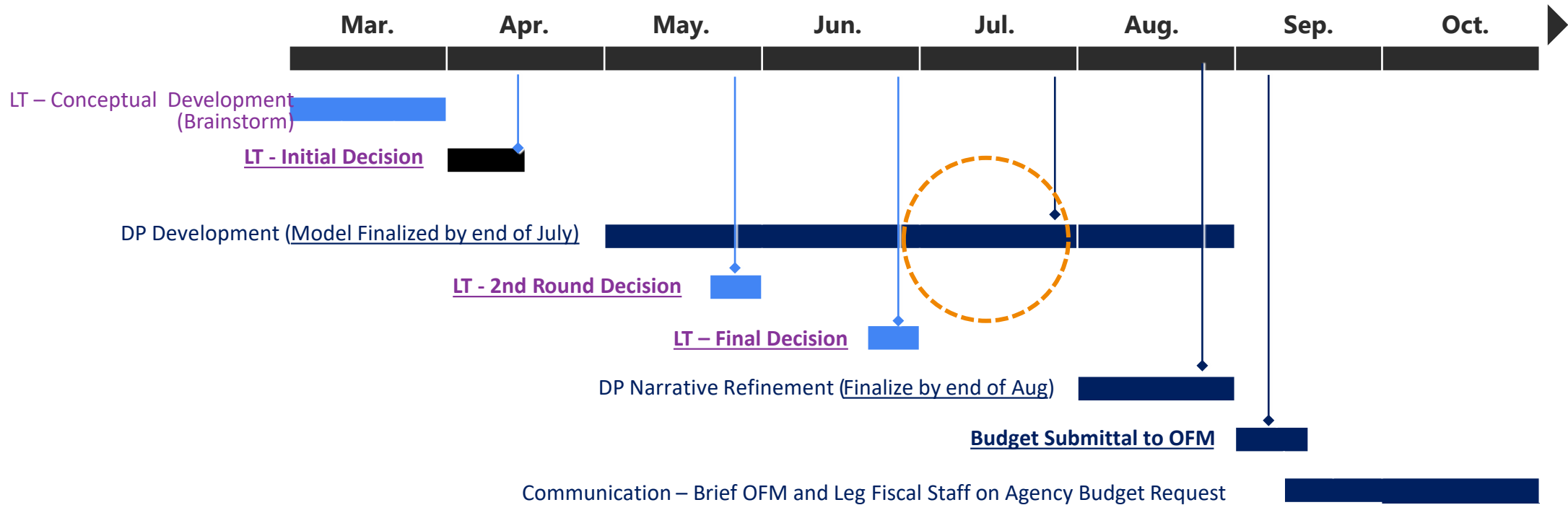
Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



Preparing for Legislative Session



Proposed Decision Package and Agency Request Legislation Timeline for 2025–27 Biennial Session



DCYF ARL/DP Development Process

May

- Conducting internal scoping meetings to determine key point people on staff to start stakeholder engagement

June

- Authorizing authority instructions and guidance for next biennium budgets

Through July

- Ideas and concepts further developed by program staff
- Government Affairs staff are drafting law changes
- Community engagement, feedback loop
- Work on cost modeling and fiscal estimates

August

- DPs and ARLs finalized

September 15-ish

- Agency decision packages and request legislation are due for inclusion in the Governor's budget.



Realities for 2025

- New Administration
- DCYF implementing significant investments and policy changes
- Declining revenues and slowing economic outlook
- Uncertainty over ballot initiatives and future revenues





DCYF Strategic Outcomes:

- 80 percent of Washington children ready for Kindergarten.
- High-quality early learning available and affordable to all in Washington.
- Prevention goals connected to early learning include:
 - Safely reduce the need for child abuse and neglect intakes. Reduce entries and re-entries into child welfare and juvenile rehabilitation.
 - Safely reduce the number of children in out of home care by 50%.
- Eliminate racial disproportionality and advancing racial equity in early education.

**Early
Learning
Draft
Decision
Package
Concepts
for 2025-27**

ECEAP Entitlement*

WCCC Eligibility Expansion*

Cost of Quality Care Model*

CCDF Updated Regulations*

Child Welfare Child Care

Child Care Complaint Unit*

Early Learning Decision Packages: In development . . .

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) Entitlement

- [RCW 43.216.556](#) requested funding to support 2026-27 school year ECEAP entitlement.
 - For 2026-27 school year:
 - Any eligible child is entitled to be enrolled ([RCW 43.216.505](#) defines “Eligible child”)
 - Voluntary enrollment
- DCYF must add approximately 6,515 slots.
- Funding request includes conversion of part day slots into school day/working day slots, sustainable slot rates, quality supports, and provider scholarships.

Early Learning Decision Packages: In development . . .

Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) Income Eligibility

- [RCW 43.216.804](#) ~~43.216.1368~~ requested funding to expand access and affordability related to income eligibility and related copayments.
 - Beginning July 1, 2025, income eligibility is at or below 75 % of the state median income adjusted for family size.
 - Required funding request to comply with the [Fair Start for Kids Act](#) (2021).
 - Beginning July 1, 2027, income eligibility is at or below 85 % of the state median income adjusted for family size, subject to amounts appropriated for this purpose.

Early Learning Decision Packages: In development . . .

WCCC Subsidy/Benefit Base Rates (rates) Paid to Providers

- [RCW 43.216.828](#) ~~43.216.749~~ provides:
 - Rates over time = full cost of high quality child care (i.e., COQC),
 - Rates to achieve the 85th percentile of market rates, and
 - DCYF to develop a cost model to produce rates that compensate licensed or certified providers at full COQC.
- Required funding request to comply with the [Fair Start for Kids Act](#) (2021).
- Increasing provider rates supports increased access and affordability for children through increased provider participation.

Early Learning Decision Packages: In development . . .

Federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) New Requirements

- New Rule effective April 30, 2024, expand availability and affordability for eligible children and families.
- Required funding to implement the following new requirements:
 - Enrollment based pay, and prospective provider subsidy payment;
 - Early care and education services through grants and contracts for underserved geographic areas, infants and toddlers, and children with disabilities; and
 - Providing a full 12-month eligibility when a new child is added during eligibility period.

Early Learning Decision Packages: In development . . .

Stabilizing WCCC Access for Children receiving Protective Services

- Increase continuity of child care for our most vulnerable children.
- Supports Kindergarten readiness.
- Increased funding to support 24 months child care ~~agency request legislation (ARL)~~.

Early Learning Decision Packages: In development . . .

Establish a new Compliance/Complaints Unit within Licensing

- Supports mission to protect children and strengthen families so they flourish.
- Separates general licensing duties from licensing complaint investigations:
 - Requested by providers,
 - Reduce potential conflict of interest,
 - Addressing steady increases and complexity of investigations, and
 - Supports more balance workload for program staff.

Prevention and Services Decision Package Proposals

Prevention and Services Decision Packages

In development . . .

- **Family Reconciliation Services (ARL)**
 - Phased implementation of moving FRS to a community-based model
- **Community Based Prevention (i.e., HV, FRCs)**
 - Funding for Family Resource Centers for capacity building and services
 - Fully funding home visiting rate increases
- **CSEC Response and Services**
 - Placement options, services, and identification efforts for children at risk or involved in commercial and sexual exploitation
- **Adolescent Focused Services**
 - Increased funding for Independent Living, YV LifeSet, etc.
- **Housing**
 - Increased funding for housing support services through the Child Welfare Housing Program to meet demand.

Background Check Decision Package Proposals

Background Check Decision Packages

In development . . .

Establish a dedicated background check system to increase Users positive experience and reduce waiting/response times

- Significantly reduce turnaround times:
 - Faster background checks enable quicker decision-making processes, which can be crucial for individuals seeking employment or keeping children and youth with families or kin
 - Eliminate the current bifurcated system through eliminating the reliance on the DSHS system
 - Enable portability to eliminate redundant checks
- Enhance operations and reporting capabilities:
 - Allow us to make informed policy and process decisions based on trends
 - Streamline manual processes to free up staff for other essential tasks
 - Improve auditing and transparency
 - Comply with federal requirements

Provides better access to fingerprinting services in rural areas where individuals may face barriers to accessing background checks services

- Requests a technical fix to serve the required 7 office ([SSB 5774](#)):
 - Requests funding for an additional 4 FTEs (Full Time Equivalent – i.e., employees) to serve all 7 offices
 - Currently DCYF is establishing 3 offices within existing funding and supplemental funding

Agency Request Legislation in development

Reducing operational costs

- [RCW 74.13.705](#)
 - *Request to repeal fees assessed*



How to get involved

Important Legislative Resources



Get Informed on the Legislative Process

[Legislative Information Center](#)

[Documents and Publication Policy](#)

[Legislative Publications](#) – most are free online (PDF) or order (small fee for paper)

[Classes and Tutorials](#)

[Overview of the Legislative Process](#)



Getting Involved



Contacting Your Legislators

Find your District

Looking up a bill: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/>

HB 1945

- How to comment on a Bill
- Get email alerts
- Documents/Reports
- Videos





Thank you!

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