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Upon appointment, Director Alford committed to strengthening the child welfare system in South Carolina. That critical work has already begun by receiving funding to hire 177 additional case workers and 67 caseworker assistants and aggressively recruiting for those positions, increasing salaries of caseworkers, restructuring the child welfare division, streamlining the foster home licensure process, and improving the support structure for existing foster homes. DSS anticipates that the agreed upon provisions of the interim relief agreement will continue this forward momentum, and DSS is hopeful that it can continue to work towards a full resolution of the lawsuit.