

# DHS Child Protection Caseworker Grade 109



TM/SM



Otero County, with its blend of historical significance, agricultural prosperity, and community spirit, represents an important part of Colorado's southeastern landscape. The county covers an area of approximately 1,270 square miles, consisting of plains, agricultural land, and also boasts some beautiful canyon land which is prime for hiking and biking.

The economy of Otero County is largely based on agriculture. It is known for its production of various crops, including melons, vegetables, and grains. Cattle ranching is also a significant industry. The area has a rich history tied to the early Native American inhabitants, Spanish explorers, and later, the development of the American West. The Santa Fe Trail, a major trade route in the 19th century, passed through the area. Bent's Fort, a reconstructed 1840s adobe trading post on the Santa Fe Trail, is located just outside La Junta.

The county offers a variety of outdoor activities, including hiking, fishing, hunting, and bird watching. The nearby Comanche National Grassland provides ample opportunities for exploring nature. The grassland is also home to the Picket Wire Canyonlands, which feature the largest dinosaur track site in North America.

For more information about Otero County see the link below.

<https://oteroounty.colorado.gov/>

**Salary Range**  
**\$44,344 - \$48,601**  
**Annually**

*(Depending on qualifications and experience)*



Bent's Old Fort  
Photo by Lex Nichols

# The Otero County DHS Child Protective Services Office

The Otero County Child Protective Services Office investigates reports of child abuse or neglect and ensures the child's safety. CPS may also be called upon to address abuse or neglect that occurs in out-of-family settings, such as schools, day care, or foster homes.

## Position Overview

Provides intake and/or ongoing social casework services to families where child abuse or neglect is present or suspected. Assignments include the provision of extensive assessment and situation evaluation, counseling, crisis intervention, resource mobilization and information and referral around all areas of child protection. Requires 24-hour on-call coverage for emergency intake and crisis intervention on a rotating schedule. Requires residency in Otero, Bent or Crowley County.

### Duties:

- Conducts investigations of alleged physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect; determines if situation warrants the recommendation of placing children outside the home; supervises placement of children and coordinates parent/child visits; determines when and if a child should be recommended to return to their home.
- Makes evaluation and assessment of need for services; provides crisis intake and/or develops long-term case plans appropriate to the children and family. Monitors progress of clients and modifies case plans as needed.
- Provides individual or family counseling on an ongoing or crisis basis to children and their parents who are experiencing severe problems in the parent-child relationships.
- Makes collateral contacts with such community resources as law enforcement and medical personnel to obtain additional information, coordinate services, or secure their assistance.
- Gathers and consolidates background information to present as documentation for court hearings, as progress reports in judicial reviews, or as summaries in facilitating appropriate placements.
- Participates in staffings with school, mental health facilities, child protection review teams, and other professionals involved with the family members.
- Attends court hearings; confers with lawyers, children, parents, witnesses and significant others in references to their respective roles.
- Serves as information and referral source to other employers and to the public.
- Provides as variety or ancillary assignments as needed including preparing and maintaining client records and completing required forms and reports.

## Job Requirements and Difficulty of Work

This position requires working knowledge of casework principles and methods of human needs and behavior pertaining to child development, parenting, attachment, and separation. Knowledge of social group work principles and methods. Knowledge of medical symptoms related to injuries or failure to thrive in children. Working knowledge of the battered child syndrome, and the laws dealing with child abuse, neglect and other dependency conditions. Knowledge and skill in interviewing techniques, crisis intervention methods, and relevant treatment modalities including play therapy, parent effectiveness training, behavior modification, reality therapy, transactional analysis and family therapy. Knowledge of community resources, of agency rules, regulations and procedures related to servicing children. Ability to establish support with harmful or hostile family members. Ability to accept and set realistic limits with multi-problem, dysfunctional clients. Independent ability to analyze complex situations, formulate plans and make quick decisions as needed. Ability to clearly and concisely express oneself both verbally and in written format. Ability to establish and maintain harmonious professional relationships with other employers, outside agencies, and the public. Ability to effectively testify in court hearings.

Work is characterized by working established guidelines as found in the Department of Social Services staff Manuals, the Children's Code, and the Directory of Residential Child Care Facilities, relevant laws, transmittal letters, county procedures and memoranda in determining eligibility for services and the scope of services to be delivered. Cases frequently require individualized judgement to evaluate the nature and degree of intervention and for how long the outside intervention is to continue, including the length of any placement. Incumbent is not expected to handle the more difficult situations without technical supervision. Must have basic computer skills.

## Responsibility

Incumbent keeps supervisor informed of the progress of each case. All critical decisions are made by the supervisor. Close, detailed supervision is provided before and during the course of work.

## Personal Work Relationships

Work requires contact with legal, medical, psychiatric professional; members of the judicial system, clients; community organizations and resources; foster parents and other members of the agency for the purpose of developing effective treatment plans for clients and to help clients solve problems; and to educate the community about child abuse and neglect.

## Minimum Qualifications

- Education: BA/BS in Behavioral Science or related field
- Experience: Social Services or related field preferred.



## Special Requirements

- Valid Colorado State Driver's license, insurance, and reliable transportation.
- 24-hour on-call on rotating schedule.

## Essential Functions of the Job

*The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

A notable amount of time is spent outside the office with the sponsoring agencies. Remaining time is spent in a standard office environment requiring normal physical effort.

Position requires fieldwork contact with clients and environments that are unsanitary. The worker is exposed to verbal abuse, possible contagion, and threats of physical abuse. Occasionally, worker uses physical exertion in transporting children and clients. This job requires travel throughout the county and surrounding area.

Must have dexterous use of both hands. Must have corrected vision and hearing. Must be able to lift up to 10 pounds.

## Application Process

All applications must be submitted through the **Colorado Work Force Center** in La Junta. Please contact them regarding this position in order to submit the application and all pre-interview testing.

Application available for download at:

<https://oterocounty.colorado.gov/departments/human-resources>

*Please return completed application to the Colorado Workforce Center in La Junta.*

### La Junta Workforce Center

308 Santa Fe Ave.

La Junta, CO 81050

Phone Number: (719) 383-3191 Fax: (719) 384-8317

Serving: Serving Otero, Bent & Crowley counties

Note: Job Hotline: 719-384-5627

E-mail: [cdle\\_la\\_junta\\_wfc@state.co.us](mailto:cdle_la_junta_wfc@state.co.us)

Office ID: 5162



# Full Benefit Package

a) **FICA** (7.65%)

b) **Retirement** – mandatory employee contribution 6%

- Examples Only: Base Salary \$3000.00 x 6%=\$180.00 withheld monthly  
Base Salary \$2500.00 x 6%=\$150.00 withheld monthly  
(6% county match – 5 year vesting)

c) **Health Insurance**

- \$286.00 single coverage (\$450 deductible) – \$858.00 County contribution
- \$579.00 family coverage (\$450 deductible) – \$1,740.00 County contribution
- \$222.00 single coverage (\$5600 deductible, no Dental or Vision)

d) **\$40,000 life insurance**

e) **Workers' Compensation**

f) **Vacation Leave** (12 days)

g) **Sick Leave** (9 days) Plus 8 hours upon hire

h) **Paid Holidays** (12 days)

- Other Optional Benefits will be addressed upon hire. Check with personnel.
- Employment is contingent upon the applicant passing a pre-employment physical and mandatory drug test.
- Additional employment data gathered may include criminal history, motor vehicle records, workers' compensation history, and previous employer verification.
- No medical inquiries will be made, or workers' compensation information gathered until after a conditional job offer has been given to the applicant.
- Flexible Schedule available after one year of employment.