



**EFFECTIVE DATE: August 12, 2013**

**DATE ISSUED: August 12, 2013**

**LATEST REVISION: N/A**

**SUBJECT: Organization and Structure of the Department of Children and Families**

The Department of Children and Families (the Department, or DCF) is responsible for a broad range of services to children, youth, women, and families in New Jersey. It operates from the following conceptual framework:

**Vision**

To ensure a better today, and an even greater tomorrow, for each individual we serve.

**Mission**

In partnership with New Jersey's communities, the Department of Children and Families will ensure the safety, well-being, and success of New Jersey's children and families.

This Administrative Order outlines the organization and functions of the Department of Children and Families, in accordance with its responsibilities mandated under Titles 9 and 30 of the New Jersey Statutes.

The Department was created in 2006 as the first cabinet agency designated exclusively to serving and safeguarding the most vulnerable children and families in the State. Previously, many of the Department's organizational units were part of the Department of Human Services and, prior to 1976, housed within the Department of Institutions and Agencies.

The Department consists of the Commissioner of Children and Families, who is the head of the Department and its principal executive officer, and such divisions, offices, commissions, councils, boards, and employees specifically referred to in statute, Executive Order, or designated by the Commissioner.

Listed below are the major components of the Department and a description of their functions and responsibilities:

**I. Office of the Commissioner**

The Commissioner is the principal executive officer of the Department and has the power to determine all matters relating to the unified and continuous development of all entities within the Department. This includes determining policy and regulating the administration of programs within the Department's jurisdiction. The Commissioner may create within the Department such organizational units as deemed necessary; shall appoint the chief of staff, deputy commissioners, assistant commissioners, and directors of the Department's divisions and offices to support the Department's programs and priorities, as deemed necessary; shall regulate the work of the Department through Administrative Orders and Policy guidelines; shall direct programmatic and fiscal monitoring; shall conduct studies and investigations, and take or direct any other actions deemed necessary.

## **II. Operational Divisions**

### A. Division of Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P)<sup>1</sup>

As New Jersey's child protection and child welfare agency, CP&P's mission is to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and youth and to support families within the State. CP&P is responsible for investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect and, if necessary, arranging for the child or youth's protection and services as well as treatment for the family. When a child or youth cannot be maintained safely with his or her family, CP&P also provides resource home placement and adoption services.

The Division of Child Protection and Permanency include:

- Area Offices, each lead by an Area Director, which provide oversight and direction for a group of Local Offices;
- Local Offices (each lead by a Local Office Manager, who reports to an Area Director), which are responsible for responding to specific child welfare and protective service reports within a certain geographic area;
- The Office of Adoption Operations, Resource Families, and Interstate Services, which is responsible for the recruitment, training, monitoring, and licensure of resource and adoptive homes needed for children and youth in DCF care. The Interstate Services Unit monitors the movement of children and youth to and from New Jersey pursuant to the Federal Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children; and
- The State Central Registry, which receives all reports of child abuse and neglect 24-hours a day, everyday, inclusive of all weekends and holidays. Reports requiring a field response are forwarded to the CP&P Local Office, which investigates accordingly.

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<sup>1</sup> Prior to July 2012, CP&P was known as the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS).

## B. Division of Children's System of Care (CSOC)<sup>2</sup>

CSOC serves children and youth with emotional and behavioral health care challenges, children and youth with developmental disabilities, and youth in need of addiction services. CSOC is committed to providing these services based on the needs of the child, youth, and family in a family-centered, community-based environment.

The Children's System of Care includes the following units:

- Office of Specialized Residential Treatment Unit, which provides consultative services to CSOC-contracted care management organizations to identify which CSOC-contracted residential treatment programs may be appropriate for particular youth;
- Office of Community Services, which provides policy and procedural guidance to CSOC-contracted care management entities, as well as monitors the delivery of community-based clinical services to CSOC-enrolled children/youth and their families;
- Office of Policy, Planning, and System Administration, which drafts policies and procedures that govern the work of CSOC staff and its System Partners. In addition, PP&SA collects, collates, analyzes, and reports on data generated by CSOC-contracted service providers to inform CSOC decision-making;
- Community Outreach Unit, which works directly with the community providers through the County Interagency Coordinating Council (CIACC). The CIACC is the local planning body for CSOC at the county level. This unit supports the work with the local court systems, inpatient commitment courts, and the juvenile justice system. The unit oversees the Developmental Disability Eligibility process and Constituent Affairs for the CSOC; and

## C. Division of Family and Community Partnerships (FCP)<sup>3</sup>

FCP promotes the health, well-being, and personal safety of New Jersey's children and families by working with parents, caregivers, organizations, and communities to ensure an effective network of proven support services, public education, and community advocacy to prevent abuse and neglect. It is comprised of the following offices:

- Office of Early Childhood Services, which is responsible for the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of prevention services for families and caregivers of children from pregnancy/birth to kindergarten. The

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<sup>2</sup> Prior to July 2012, CSOC was known as the Division of Child Behavioral Health Services.

<sup>3</sup> Prior to July 2012, DFCP was known as the Division of Prevention and Community Partnerships.

Office provides oversight and technical support to ensure evidence-based practice, ongoing quality improvement, and positive impacts for participants of funded programs. The Office works in close collaboration with local, State, and national partners to ensure integration of maternal, parent, infant, and early childhood services to promote family health and well-being, and prevent child neglect and abuse;

- Office of School-Linked Services, which coordinates the School-Based Youth Services Programs, Newark School-Based Health Services, the 2NDFLOOR Helpline, and the New Jersey Child Assault Prevention Project, to address the emotional, behavioral, and family needs that children and youth can encounter that may threaten their safety, well-being, and educational achievement. This Office is also responsible for the State's youth suicide reporting, prevention, and intervention activities;

- Office of Family Support Services, which provides leadership, support, and development to communities and family-serving organizations in order to identify strengths, needs, and community-based strategies that will improve the accessibility of support programs and improve the community context in which families live; and

- Office of Domestic Violence Services, which works with community providers and stakeholders in an effort to improve and enhance services that are culturally-competent, strength-based, empowering, accessible, and non-stigmatizing to those who voluntarily request these services.

#### D. Division on Women (DOW)<sup>4</sup>

DOW is charged with advancing public discussion of issues critical to the women of New Jersey and provides leadership in the formulation of public policy in the development, coordination, and evaluation of programs and services for women in the State.

The Division consists of the following programs responsible for establishing and supporting related community-based services:

- Sexual Assault Victims Services, which provide operating and technical support to agencies in each of the State's 21 counties. These services impact the problem of sexual violence by implementing 24-hour, seven day a week, Sexual Violence Programs (SVP). SVP's are required to provide victim-centered, crisis and advocacy services countywide to survivors of sexual assault, abuse, and harassment who are at least 12 years of age, and those collaterally affected by sexual violence;

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<sup>4</sup> Prior to joining DCF in July 2012, DOW was part of the Department of Community Affairs.

- Sexual Assault Prevention Services, which provide operating support and technical assistance to SVPs that are implementing primary prevention strategies designed to prevent the perpetration of sexual violence;
- Displaced Homemaker Services, which focus on helping women who, prior to a divorce, separation, death, or disability were financially dependent on another household member, become economically self-sufficient by providing a comprehensive range of services in the areas of education, employment, and training, while ensuring that all necessary case management and links to the various community resources are provided; and
- The Domestic Violence Address Confidentiality Program is designed to assist victims of domestic violence, who have relocated to a place unknown to their abusers, in their efforts to keep their new location confidential. The program provides its participants with a substitute address, which they may use when working with State and local government agencies.

### III. ADMINISTRATIVE AND ANCILLARY SUPPORT OFFICES

In addition to the Commissioner's Office and the four Operational Divisions, several offices provide operational oversight and support to the Divisions and Department overall.

#### A. Office of the Chief of Staff

The Chief of Staff oversees the following offices:

- Office of Administration and Legal Affairs, which is responsible for Human Resources, Cooperative Labor Relations, Ethics, Equal Employment Office/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA), Facilities Management, Tort Litigation, Emergency Management, Child Abuse Record Information (CARI) background checks, and Administrative Hearings;
- Office of Communications and Public Affairs, which is responsible for the Department's outreach and communications, media relations, public events, maintenance of the Department's website, and serves as the Department's Public Information Office;
- Office of Advocacy, which is responsible for providing direct assistance to constituents with questions or concerns about the Department's divisions, offices, and programs;
- The Office of Training and Professional Development, which is responsible for developing, providing, and coordinating training to Department staff;

- Office of Information Technology, which is responsible for providing technological support, including development and maintenance of NJ SPIRIT, DCF's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System;
- Office of Child and Family Health, which is responsible for supporting and developing the Department's policies and practices regarding the mental and physical health of children, youth, and families in the Department's care, including administering the Child Health Unit program throughout CP&P; and
- Office of Education, which provides intensive 12 month educational services and supports to DCF and select Department of Human Services children and young adults ages 3 through 21, who are exhibiting severe cognitive, emotional, behavioral, or physical disabilities, including youth deemed "at-risk" and youth who are pregnant or parenting. Services take place in DCF operated Regional schools and other affiliated community settings.

#### B. Office of the Chief Administrator

The Chief Administrator is responsible for supporting the Department's fiscal, contracting, and business needs. The Chief Administrator oversees the following offices:

- Office of Budget and Revenue, which is responsible for managing the Department's Budget as well as State and federal revenue;
- Office of Contracting, which is responsible for the development and management of the Department's contracts with vendors and providers;
- DCF Business Offices, which provide support to the Department's Statewide operations by administering contracts with providers and vendors;
- Office of Procurement, which is responsible for the purchasing of supplies, equipment, and services to support the Department's operation and administrative needs ; and
- Office of Accounting, which is responsible for the accounts payable for Grant in Aid child specific payments, administrative payments, third party contract payments, and Local Office Bank Account monitoring and reconciliation.

#### C. Office of Performance Management and Accountability (PMA)

PMA manages the qualitative processes within the Department as well as the reporting to the federal government on child welfare outcomes. Included in the scope of PMA is the Qualitative Review Process (QR), which involves intensive week-long county-based reviews of CP&P case practice as required by the Modified Settlement Agreement, the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), and any Program

Improvement Plan development and monitoring. PMA also includes the following offices/units:

- Office of Quality, which primarily coordinates the QR process and conducts ad hoc targeted reviews focused on improved Departmental service delivery. The Unusual Incident Reporting (UIR) process for providers licensed and/or contracted with DCF is also maintained within this office;
- Office of Research, Evaluation and Reporting, which is responsible for collecting, analyzing, and producing reports, both quantitative and qualitative, necessary to measure and support DCF's organizational performance. Additionally, this office produces monthly, quarterly, and semi-annual reports in compliance with State and federal reporting requirements;
- Office of Licensing, which is the Department's licensing and regulatory authority, along with Resource Home licensing within CP&P. OOL licenses and regulates child care centers, youth and residential programs, youth case management, day treatment programs, and adoption agencies;
- Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit (IAIU), which is a child protective service unit that investigates allegations of child abuse and neglect in out-of-home settings, such as resource homes, residential centers, schools, and detention centers. IAIU consists of a Central Administrative Office and four Regional Investigative Offices; and
- Office of Administrative Reviews is responsible for reviewing matters as identified and selected by the Commissioner. Administrative reviews may focus on client experiences from any of the Department's Divisions and may include, but are not limited to, incidents resulting in the fatality or near fatality of a child as a result of abuse or neglect or any other critical incident identified by the Commissioner or the Commissioner's designee.

### C. Office of Legal, Regulatory and Legislative Affairs

This Office serves as the primary liaison to the Governor's Office, legislative offices, and the Department's legal partners. This office also includes the following:

- Office of Legislative Affairs, which is responsible for tracking legislation, responding to legislative inquiries, and serving as the Department's liaison to the Office of Legislative Services and district legislative offices;
- Office of Policy and Regulatory Development, which is responsible for the development, maintenance, and dissemination of Department regulations, Administrative Orders, and policy; and
- Office of Grants Management, Auditing, and Records, which is responsible for the development and review of grants, requests for proposals, requests for qualifications, and requests for information. This Office also

manages audits of the Department and contracted entities and processes record inquiry requests, including serving as the Open Public Records Act Records Custodian and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act Privacy Officer.

#### D. Office of Adolescent Services

The mission of the DCF Office of Adolescent Services (OAS) is to support adolescents in their transition to adulthood to achieve economic self-sufficiency, interdependence, and engage in healthy lifestyles. OAS strives to ensure that services provided through the Department of Children and Families are coordinated, effective, meet best practice standards, are youth-driven, and adapt to the needs of families and communities. It does this through developing linkages with other service providers to create a more equitable and seamless service system, and by providing leadership and developing policy in the field of adolescent services. Specialized units within this office include:

- Adolescent Case Practice, which is responsible for collaborating with DCF staff and external stakeholders to ensure that youth receive appropriate case management, engagement, and transition planning through the development and implementation of effective policy, training, technical assistance, and programming;
- Employment Services, which is responsible for improving access to employment programs and opportunities for youth through collaborations, partnering with public and private sector companies, expanding vocational training through financial assistance, and providing support and resources to DCF staff and contracted providers. Through this work, our youth will be assessed for their employment readiness and aptitude, engaged to understand their career interests and educational opportunities, and assisted with gaining employment that will sustain them once they age out of care.
- Housing and Transitional Services, which provide oversight to a number of DCF-funded supervised and supported transitional housing programs, as well as life skills, after school programming, mentoring, permanency programming, aftercare, and wraparound services designed to assist adolescents/young adults in transitioning out of the DCF system of care and to prepare them for economic self-sufficiency and interdependence;
- Youth Engagement, which ensures the development of opportunities for youth participation in their case plans, programs, and communities through research and evaluation of youth engagement approaches. The strengthening of youth participation and youth voice through inclusion in family team meetings, court hearings, Youth Advisory Boards, Youth

Partnerships, and Youth Development Councils are additional mechanisms to promote seamless transitions into adulthood, while empowering youth towards self-advocacy and sustainable life skills; and

- Educational Support Services, which is responsible for supporting the educational needs of children and youth in the Department's care, including providing primary support to maintain educational stability for children and youth placed in out-of-home care and administering the New Jersey Foster Care Scholars program.

#### **IV. FUNCTIONS**

Each Division and Administrative and Ancillary Support Office is under the supervision of an Executive Staff Member, who shall determine divisional objectives consistent with the Department's mission and policies, and shall be responsible for the effective administration of the programs and facilities within the Division/Office.

The Executive Staff Member establishes procedures for review and control of his or her unit's activities that include, among others, the following:

A. Promulgate policy and procedural guidelines for all staff unless covered under DCF policies or Administrative Orders;

B. Appoint qualified staff within the Division/Office to ensure that operational goals are implemented and that the Director receives the necessary information and data to evaluate needs and develop plans on a Division/Office-wide basis;

C. Prepare an annual budget as part of DCF's overall budget planning;

D. Review procedures submitted by his or her organizational units to ensure they are consistent with Divisional/Office and Departmental policies and their assigned mission;

E. Evaluate, review, and/or audit practices to determine whether procedures are being carried out as designed, as well as their efficacy;

F. Periodically review the quality of the services provided through the Division/Office in conjunction with the Office of Performance Management and Accountability, and/or case reviews or other similar activities;

G. Maintain and review all fiscal procedures impacting his or her Division/Office to ensure efficient functioning and comprehensive accountability of his or her direct service components and contract/vendor providers;

H. Maintain training programs, generally in conjunction with the Office of Training and Professional Development, to ensure that staff have the knowledge, skills, and ability to support their work;

I. Develop mechanisms for the timely and thorough reporting and investigation of any unusual incidents or emergencies within the Division/Office or its units or as otherwise mandated by State or federal laws;

J. Ensure compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action guidelines in its personnel practices consistent with State and federal law as well as Executive Orders;

K. Maintain operation and security of any information technology systems used in its business processes; and

L. Develop and maintain procedures for emergency situations, including, but not limited to, those involving inclement weather, security, or other situations of an emergent nature.

## **V. Public Boards, Councils & Task Force**

### **A. Advisory Council on Domestic Violence**

The Advisory Council on Domestic Violence was established by statute in 1987 (N.J.S.A. 30:14-4). Its twenty members are drawn from government and nonprofit groups, and are appointed by the Governor. The Council is charged with:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of laws concerning domestic violence and making recommendations for their improvement;
- Reviewing proposed legislation to make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature;
- Studying needs, priorities, programs, and policies throughout the State;
- Ensuring that service providers and the community are aware of needs and services;
- Making recommendations for community education and training programs.

### **B. Domestic Violence Fatality and Near Fatality Review Board**

The New Jersey Domestic Violence Fatality and Near Fatality Review Board is authorized under N.J.S.A. 52:27D-43.17a. It allows the community to honor victims of domestic violence-related fatalities and work towards improving systemic and community responses to domestic violence. Its primary objectives are to:

- Identify domestic violence-related fatalities and near fatalities;
- Engage in quantitative and qualitative reviews of Statewide fatalities;
- Recommend system changes in order to promote victim safety, offender accountability, and work toward prevention of domestic violence fatalities.

#### C. Child Fatality and Near Fatality Review Board

The New Jersey Child Fatality and Near Fatality Review Board was established by the New Jersey Comprehensive Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.83. The purpose of the Board is to review fatalities and near fatalities of children in order to identify their causes, relationship to governmental support systems, and methods of prevention.

The Board is multi-disciplinary, and membership consists of ex-officio members and six public members appointed by the Governor who have expertise or experience in child abuse. Four Regional Community-Based Review Teams operate under the Board and their composition mirrors that of the Board.

#### D. New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect

The purpose of the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect is to study and develop recommendations regarding the most effective means of improving the quality and scope of child protective and preventative services provided or supported by State government, including a review of the practices and policies utilized by CP&P and FCP in the Department of Children and Families. The Staffing and Oversight Review Subcommittee (SORS) of the Task Force is charged with reviewing staffing levels of CP&P, making recommendations regarding recruiting, hiring, and retention of staff, and reviewing the Division's performance in the achievement of management and client outcomes.

The Task Force is comprised of volunteer members, who are broadly representative of the community, including members who have expertise in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect. Its 30 members possess a variety of experience ranging from child protection and law enforcement to advocates for children and parents.

#### E. Governor's Advisory Council Against Sexual Violence

Executive Order 40 of Governor McGreevy established the Governor's Advisory Council Against Sexual Violence on November 22, 2002. This multidisciplinary Council is comprised of governmental and non-governmental members from across the State, who are charged with reviewing and recommending policies, procedures, protocols, legislation, trainings, and standards related to sexual violence, and recommending solutions for the prevention of sexual violence.

#### F. New Jersey Advisory Commission on the Status of Women

The New Jersey Advisory Commission on the Status of Women (NJACSW) was created in 1974 to act as an advisor and advocate for New Jersey women of all races and creeds, N.J.S.A. 52:27D-43.14. It works with the Division on Women to address the critical concerns and issues confronting New Jersey women.

The NJACSW is composed of eleven members appointed by the Governor. The Commission:

- Advises elected officials and the Division on Women regarding issues affecting women;
- Acts as a resource for municipal, county, and local commissions and for women's organizations throughout the State;
- Empowers women through partnership, programming, and publicity.

#### G. Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council

The Youth Suicide Prevention Advisory Council was established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 30:9A-25 in 2004. The Council meets regularly to examine existing needs and services and make recommendations to DCF for youth suicide reporting, prevention, and intervention.



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Allison Blake, PH.D., L.S.W.  
Commissioner