

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES  
Director's Report  
DJJS/DFS Policy and Fiscal Affairs Board  
November 1, 2012

The Department of Family Services (DFS) presents the following updates related to personnel and budgetary status, as well as activities related to current initiatives and programmatic activities:

**Personnel/Budget:**

- Budget projections show that DFS is running slightly under budget and will finish the fiscal year end as such. In preparation for the legislative session, DFS worked collaboratively with the State to set the coming biennium's adoption subsidy budget growth. The department expects the State block grant award allocated during the last legislative session will remain the same during the next session.
- In October, DFS initiated recruitments to fill Family Services Specialist and Sr. Family Service Specialist positions. The recruitment processes are on-going, but we anticipate approximately 25 new case managers will start with the department in late November/early December. These new workers will begin DFS training in December and mandated State training in January. We expect these staff to be fully deployed in early spring.
- DFS also initiated recruitment for an Assistant Director position. The recruitment was posted with national child welfare/human services support entities. Interviews will be held in late November.

**Major Program Efforts:**

- *Coordination of a collaborative review of unlicensed placements of Independent Living Youth:* In early October, DFS convened a team of partners to review the unlicensed placements for independent living youth. In collaboration with State Youth Parole and Juvenile Justice, DFS staff developed a comprehensive review tool to evaluate the placement facilities and to assess the quality of living conditions for these youth. The review included 9 sites located throughout the community. A comprehensive review of findings will be completed in early November.
- *Implementation of District Attorney Representation of the Child Welfare Agency:* In collaboration with the DA's Office, DFS developed the roles and responsibilities for DA's and DFS staff in the implementation of this representation model change. DFS partnered with the DA's Office to provide DA's with comprehensive safety model education and training. Additionally, DFS and the DA's Office met with all DFS staff to educate them about new expectations in communications with non-agency attorneys. Meetings were also held with non-agency attorneys and other external stakeholders to educate them on and receive feedback regarding the proposed changes. DFS and the DA's Office will be evaluating this implementation in 90 days to determine what changes, if any, need to be made.
- *Request for Qualifications (RFQ) on Assessment and Receiving Homes:* In December 2012, DFS intends to release an RFQ for Assessment and Receiving Homes. This RFQ will solicit proposals to address short-term placement needs for children and youth. The scope of work will require that these homes provide support to biological caregivers, assisting families in moving swiftly to reunification. When reunification is not possible, these homes will help the department to fully assess children's needs allowing for stronger, more successfully long-term placements. The scope of work will include strict requirements for maintaining short-term placement without disruption. This model of shelter is utilized widely throughout other similar communities and has helped to increase long-term placement stability for children and youth in care.

The DFS Statistical Overview for September is attached.