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Local Commissioners Memorandum

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To:	Commissioners of Social Services Directors of Services
Issuing Division/Office:	Division of Child Welfare and Community Services Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth
Date:	December 20, 2010
Subject:	Child Welfare/Juvenile Justice Transition and Permanency Planning Protocol
Contact Person(s):	See page 4
Attachments:	No
Attachment Available Online:	OCFS <i>intranet</i>: Community Service Team Contact List OCFS <i>internet</i>: Community Service Team Contact List

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Local Commissioners Memorandum is to describe the protocol and the process by which the Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) and the local departments of social services (LDSS) should work collaboratively, from the point of disposition in an Article 3 proceeding in Family Court, to develop Discharge/Community Support Plans for those youth placed with the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) who:

- Are in the custody of an LDSS at the time of placement with OCFS; and/or
- Have no identified viable discharge/release resource; and/or

- Have a release resource who needs intensive services in order to support the youth's return home or to the community.

This protocol applies to all youth placed with OCFS who fall into one or more of the categories described above. The intent is to enable youth returning to the community to have an identified, stable resource and that appropriate services are provided to support the youth's integration back into their community.

II. Background

Placement of a juvenile delinquent with OCFS should last only as long as necessary to address the concerns that resulted in placement. In recent years, OCFS' DJJOY has made a concerted effort to improve coordination and discharge planning activities for youth placed in an OCFS facility. These efforts are aimed at improving the likelihood of successful community re-integration through a coordinated partnership between DJJOY and the LDSS.

While the majority of youth placed with OCFS have an appropriate available placement resource and supports available back in their home communities, there are a small number of youth for whom there is no known viable placement resource or support plan to meet the youths' intensive needs. Reasons for this may include parents' refusal to have the youth returned, the existence of orders of protection prohibiting the youth from contact with family or household members, safety concerns expressed by families or evident from the circumstances, and the death or incarceration of parents. Also, youth may sometimes remain in the legal custody of an LDSS, giving the LDSS an obligation to plan for permanency. Discharge planning for these youth requires intensive planning and cooperation between DJJOY and the LDSS, and may, in some instances, require legal action in order for the LDSS to assume physical and legal custody of the youth upon completion of their placement in OCFS custody.

III. Program Implications

Identification of LDSS Planning Liaison

In many counties, an LDSS representative is present at the Family Court proceeding when the youth is placed with OCFS. Whenever possible, the LDSS should advise OCFS of the name and contact information of the LDSS worker who should be the point of contact for DJJOY.

Placement Process & Ongoing Contact with LDSS

With the exception of youth who go directly to a voluntary agency for placement, all male youth in OCFS custody begin their placement with a required fourteen (14) day stay

in the Ella McQueen Reception Center located in Brooklyn, NY. Female youth in OCFS custody begin their placement at the Tryon Girls Reception Center in Johnstown, NY.

The youth is then transferred to the designated OCFS residential placement facility best suited for the youth.

In order to promote continuity and coordination with the LDSS, the following activities will occur from the point that a youth included in this protocol is placed with OCFS.

Within sixty (60) days of the youth's placement, the OCFS Community Service Team (CST) Case Manager staff will alert the LDSS contact person if there is a potential lack of a viable discharge/release resource for the youth. In the event that the lack of a viable discharge resource does not become known until later in the placement, LDSS will be notified immediately by the CST Case Manager.

Within sixty (60) days of placement, the CST Case Manager will coordinate the scheduling of a meeting/conference call/videoconference with the LDSS contact person to take place no later than ninety (90) days from the date of placement. LDSS staff are strongly encouraged to participate.

(Note: In several LDSSs, an ongoing schedule of monthly discharge coordination meetings including LDSS, DJJOY and Probation has already been established for this purpose.)

The CST Case Manager will have monthly contact with the LDSS's designated staff person for youth placed with OCFS to provide updates and status reports. LDSS staff will be encouraged to participate in monthly planning meetings to:

- Identify barriers to the youth returning home to the family and community.
- Identify and assess alternative family resources for safety, stability, and commitment to the youth, as needed.
- Secure a safe and timely discharge of the youth to the community with adequate resources and services to promote a successful transition.
- Facilitate joint planning between DJJOY and LDSS staff for the purpose of assessing the youth's service needs and identifying appropriate services to be offered to the family.

The LDSS will provide guidance to DJJOY staff on the appropriate resources available through contracted agencies or community-based service providers, if needed. The LDSS may include other county partners and/or contract agencies as appropriate in the planning meetings. Possible partners could include the local Youth Bureau and/or Juvenile Probation. Case-specific information shared in the planning meetings must be treated as confidential.

III. Contact Persons

Any programmatic questions should be addressed to the appropriate Regional Offices, Division of Child Welfare and Community Services, or to the Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth.

BRO: Dana Whitcomb (716) 847-3145	Dana.Whitcomb@ocfs.state.ny.us
RRO: Karen Buck (585) 238-8201	Karen.Buck@ocfs.state.ny.us
SRO: Jack Klump (315) 423-1200	Jack.Klump@ocfs.state.ny.us
ARO: Kerri Barber (518) 486-7078	Kerri.Barber@ocfs.state.ny.us
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NYCRO: Patricia Beresford (212) 383-1788	Patricia.Beresford@ocfs.state.ny.us
DJJOY: Dan Maxwell (518) 486-5513	Dan.Maxwell@ocfs.state.ny.us

A list of [Community Service Team Contacts](#) is posted on the OCFS internet. It can also be accessed from the Resources page (<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/resources.asp>) of the internet website by scrolling down to the Juvenile Justice heading. The list is updated periodically.

The updated list of [Community Service Team Contacts](#) is also posted on the OCFS intranet website. It can be also be accessed on the intranet website by going to the DJJOY/Juvenile Justice page (<http://ocfs.state.nyenet/djjoy>) and scrolling down to the link for the contact list.

/s/ Laura M. Velez

Issued By:

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Title: Deputy Commissioner

Division/Office: Child Welfare and Community Services

/s/ Joyce Burrell

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