



In This Issue:

- March is Social Work Month!
- Supervisor Wins National Award
- FY09 – 10 Budget Summary
- IT Proposed Consolidation
- Strategic Plan
- Preview: Safety Conference
- Rosie D Implementation Delay Request
- Transitional Care Unit
- DCF Style Guide
- PayInfo
- Contact Information

March is Social Work Month!



On behalf of the entire Department of Children and Families' community, we'd like to express our thanks and deep appreciation for our social workers. In a time with fewer resources, and greater hardships, our social workers are essential to the hope and well-being of the agency, children, and families we serve. Their dedication and passion is unmatched. [[back](#)]

Supervisor wins national award

Michelle Gordon, one of our central office recruitment supervisors, was recognized as one of the "Star Awardees" for completing the 2007-2008 Minority Adoption Leadership Institute from the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Adoption. Her Action Research was entitled "Reducing Disproportional and Disparate Outcomes for the Loneliest Children in the Child Welfare System." Her work was presented on her behalf during the 4th Annual MALDI Institute in Washington, DC on December 1-3, 2008. [[back](#)]

FY09-10 Budget Summary

On January 28th, amid a deep and unprecedented national recession, Governor Deval Patrick submitted his Fiscal Year 2010 budget proposal and an emergency plan for closing a \$1.1 billion budget gap in the current fiscal year.

What does this mean for DCF?

- FY09 estimated spending (with 9C cuts): \$816.4m (reduction of \$20m from approved July 1, 2008 funding level of \$836m.
- FY10 House 1 is funded at: \$791.4m
 - An estimated \$16.9m reduction compared to FY 09 estimated spending.
 - Includes a transfer of \$8m to Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) for the consolidation of information technology at the secretariat level.
- There are no significant funding increases for DCF in FY10 House 1; the domestic violence account is level funded at FY09 levels.
- FY10 House 1 consolidates DCF's twelve existing appropriations into five.
- DCF is working with the House and Senate Ways and Means Committees as the FY10 budget moves through the Legislative Appropriation process.

To learn more about the Governor's Emergency Recovery Plan and his FY2010 Budget Recommendation, visit:

www.mass.gov/governor/recoveryplan [[back](#)]



IT Proposed Consolidation

One of the provisions in Governor Patrick's 2010 budget proposal is to consolidate information technology (IT) planning, budgets, staff and applications across all agencies at the Secretariat level, for each Secretary. This means the IT infrastructure, data centers and Commonwealth wide applications will be consolidated at EOHHS.

EOHHS is at the beginning of this process, and has convened an IT governing board to steer the overall consolidation; Commissioner McClain is a member of the governing board. DCF will be contributing to the development of the plan, however at this time, we are not certain how this will be operationalized at the agency level, and will need to wait for further development of the plan. Commissioner McClain is working with DCF CIO Mary Ellen Bennard to identify DCF's information technology needs for 2010, 2011 and beyond.

DCF relies on our IT staff to ensure that our technology needs are met and to enhance our technology abilities to better meet the needs of our clients. We are confident that the decisions made to address this consolidation of IT infrastructure will support the ongoing mission and operations of the Department. [\[back \]](#)

Strategic Plan

The Department began a strategic planning process in June, 2008. Five teams were convened to provide recommendations on DCF's agency goals of Safety, Permanency, Well-being, Community-Connected Practice, and Effective Leadership. The teams were comprised of DCF social workers, supervisors and managers, as well as family and community representatives. Each team identified opportunities for improvement and made recommendations for strengthening our core practice functions and incorporating innovative approaches. The Strategic Planning teams offered more than five hundred recommendations which were integrated and prioritized, and then presented at Regional forums involving over 900 staff and external stakeholders. The result of the diligent work of our planning teams and input from the Regional forums is the Department's Strategic Plan for Strengthening the Safety Net.

This plan builds upon prior planning and development efforts and sets forth an action plan to achieve our agency's primary objectives of:

- Safely Stabilizing and Preserving Families;
- Safely Reunifying Families; and
- Safely Creating New Families

The approaches outlined in the plan emphasize core practices that engage and empower families, new structures and processes that match our intervention to the needs of the child and family, and strategies to ensure that as an agency we are achieving positive outcomes with our children and families. The DCF Integrated Casework Practice Model set forth in the plan incorporates opportunities for extended screening, differential response, and integrated assessment and service planning processes. Our ongoing collaboration with collaterals, community partners, and the larger child welfare community is fundamental to ensuring that children and families have access to the services and supports they need.

The plan will be posted on the DCF intranet within the next few weeks, for review and comment. There will be multiple opportunities for learning about the new practice model and the implementation plan throughout the spring and summer.

For more information, please visit:

http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dss/news_strategic_planning.ppt [\[back \]](#)

Preview: Safety Conference

The safety of child welfare workers is paramount to the Department. The long-awaited DCF Safety Conference: Supporting Staff, Strengthening Practice is being held on March 12, 2009 at the Courtyard Marriott in Marlborough. The day long conference is sponsored by the Massachusetts Child Welfare Institute and the Statewide Safety Committee for over 200 DCF and provider participants.

Commissioner Angelo McClain will give the keynote address. Morning and afternoon workshop topics include safety planning, navigating critical incidents, working with law enforcement, vicarious traumatization and self-care. The conference participants will create an action plan to bring back vital skills and knowledge to area office staff. [\[back \]](#)

Rosie D Implementation Delay Request

MassHealth has recently filed a motion in United States District Court seeking a partial extension of the service implementation deadline in the class action lawsuit known as "Rosie D. v. Romney."

The proposed modification would extend the implementation deadline for four services: In-Home Behavioral Services, In-Home Therapy Services, Therapeutic Mentoring and Crisis Stabilization — moving the start date twelve months from June 30, 2009 to July 1, 2010. The original implementation deadline of June 30, 2009 would remain for Intensive Care Coordination (ICC), Mobile Crisis Intervention and Caregiver Peer-to-Peer Support. (Note that all of these services must be approved by the federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) prior to implementation. CMS has approved ICC. Approval for all other services is pending.)

MassHealth has made a careful decision not to request an extension for the implementation deadline for ICC, Caregiver Peer-to-Peer Support and Mobile Crisis Intervention. ICC is the "heart" of the new system, addressing the most significant unmet need identified by the Court: the lack of comprehensive care coordination for MassHealth children and youth across the State with a serious emotional disturbance. Caregiver Peer-to-Peer Support, which is provided by "Family Partners," is an integral part of ICC. Mobile Crisis Intervention will be provided by teams of mental health professionals trained to work with children and youth and their families and will be an essential resource for providing behavioral health services to children and youth living at home.

MassHealth believes that these services, in combination with the current Family Stabilization Team (FST) service, will go along way in this proposed first wave of implementation towards meeting the needs identified by the Court.

Currently, MassHealth is on track to implement all services by the current June 30, 2009 deadline and, pending the Court's action on this request, MassHealth will continue all implementation activities to meet this deadline.

MassHealth's decision to file a motion to modify the implementation schedule comes in the wake of the state and nation's severe fiscal crisis. Decreased state revenues forced Governor Patrick to implement a fiscal action plan in October, cutting \$1.053 billion from the state budget including \$353.7 million from the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (\$292 million from MassHealth alone). [\[back \]](#)

Transitional Care Unit

Transitional Care Units, or TCU's, are short term placement programs designed to meet the needs of latency age and adolescent youth in the care or custody of the Department who are on the CARD list waiting for a more permanent placement in a foster home, intensive foster home, community group home or kinship setting. Children for whom the discharge plan is to return home are also eligible if more time is needed to prepare the transition home. The Department of Children and Families, Mass. Health and the five Managed Care Entities (MCE's) serving Medicaid eligible youth collaborated in the design of TCU in order to ensure that it met both DCF and federal Medicaid requirements for care of youth in a community setting. The programs were procured by the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership on behalf of all the MCE's. The full cost of care is paid for by Medicaid.

Children who may benefit from this service are identified either by the regional Mental Health Specialists or by the MCE Clinical Manager. The Mental Health Specialist will contact the Area Office responsible for the child and obtain agreement for the placement. Currently there are 6 agencies providing TCU services: YOU, Inc., St Vincent's, St. Ann's, Health and Education Services, The Italian Home, and Providence Hospital.

We expect that the program will help to reduce the number of children on the CARD list, and is likely to continue and possibly expand. If you have a child that is ready for discharge from a psychiatric hospital and meets the eligibility criteria noted earlier, please contact your regional Mental Health Specialist to discuss the case further. [\[back \]](#)

DCF Style Guide



The Public Affairs office has created a resource for you to use regarding proper use of our new name, logo, and state seal. Please visit the 'Public Affairs' page on the intranet to review this guide and to find templates to use when creating new materials.

[\[back \]](#)

PayInfo

SUPPRESS YOUR PAY ADVICE NOW and you'll be a winner for doing your part to reduce your carbon footprint! Thanks for your participation! For more information, please visit:

<https://payinfo.state.ma.us/PayInfo/FirstTime.asp>

[\[back \]](#)

Contact Information

Massachusetts Department of Children & Families

Angelo McClain, Commissioner

Central Office
24 Farnsworth Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02210

617-748-2000
1-800-kids-508
www.state.ma.us/dcf

For general questions or comments please contact:
alison.goodwin@state.ma.us

For Intranet updates, contact:
joseph.green@state.ma.us

For Internet updates, contact:
alison.goodwin@state.ma.us