

For Immediate Release

December 22, 2023

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Illinois DCFS Achieves Re-Accreditation through COA
Illinois remains largest state child welfare agency to obtain standard

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) announced today that it has again achieved accreditation status becoming reaccredited by COA (formerly known as Council on accreditation), becoming one of only four state child welfare systems in the country to meet the council's stringent performance standards. DCFS was one of the first state child welfare systems to be accredited by COA in 2000 and has maintained its accreditation since.

"COA Accreditation is the gold standard, affirming that Illinois DCFS is meeting the highest national standards of best practices by providing the highest quality services to our communities across the state, conducting our operations successfully and managing our funds effectively," said **DCFS Director Marc D. Smith**. "Illinois is the largest state child welfare agency to receive this accreditation and I am incredibly proud of our staff who work tirelessly every day to protect our children and support families."

"Achieving COA Accreditation validates DCFS's priorities and best practice goals. It also speaks to the dedication of DCFS employees across the state who contributed significantly to this effort. I look forward to working with DCFS as they continue on this path," said **Senator Sara Feigenholtz**.

COA Accreditation, a service of Social Current, is an objective, independent and reliable validation of the department's performance. The accreditation process involved a detailed review and analysis of the agency's administration, management and service delivery functions and on-site interviews with trustees, staff and clients at the Harvey, DeKalb, Decatur and Collinsville field offices against international standards of best practice.

The standards driving accreditation ensure that services are well-coordinated, culturally competent, evidence-based, outcomes-oriented and provided by a skilled and supported workforce. COA Accreditation demonstrates accountability in the management of resources, sets standardized best practice thresholds for service and administration and increases the department's organizational capacity and accountability by creating a framework for ongoing quality improvement.



Benefits of accreditation include increased client participation, improved internal operations, a greater accountability to the families and children served by the department, statewide uniformity in case files and improved case management and documentation.

About the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Founded in 1964, DCFS is responsible for protecting children from abuse or neglect by responding to reports received by the Child Abuse Hotline at childabuse.illinois.gov (non-emergency situations) or 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873). With the goal of keeping children safe, DCFS strengthens and supports families with a wide range of services. When keeping a child safe means removing them from the home, DCFS makes every effort to reunite them with their family. When the best interest of the child makes this impossible, DCFS is committed to pursuing guardianship or adoption by loving families to provide children with a safe and permanent home. DCFS is also responsible for licensing and monitoring of all Illinois child welfare agencies.

***COA Accreditation**, a service of Social Current, is an independent, not-for-profit accreditor of the full continuum of community-based behavioral health care and social service organizations in the United States and Canada. Over 2,000 organizations – voluntary, public and proprietary; local and statewide; large and small – have either successfully achieved accreditation or are currently engaged in the process. To learn more, visit www.social-current.org.*

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