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Governor Quinn Appoints Director of Department of Children and Family Services

Richard Calica Brings Years of Leadership, Social Work Experience to DCFS

CHICAGO – November 23, 2011. Governor Quinn today announced the appointment of Richard Calica as director of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) beginning Dec. 15. Calica is a lifelong social worker with extensive leadership experience in serving children and families throughout the state. A national authority in child welfare and licensed clinical social worker, Calica offers broad expertise in family preservation and support.

“We are committed to ensuring that the children of Illinois have the support and protection they need to become healthy, productive and responsible adults,” Governor Quinn said. “Richard Calica’s decades of experience in caring for neglected and abused children bolster our efforts towards building a better future for all Illinois children.”

“All children deserve the opportunity to grow up in a healthy environment with strong support systems,” Richard Calica said. “It is my highest priority to ensure the safety of our children and I am honored to accept this new mission to help and protect children who are abused and neglected.”

Richard Calica currently leads the Chicago-based Juvenile Protective Association as executive director, a position he has held for 33 years. In addition to having maintained a private Clinical Social Work practice, Calica has served on the faculty of the Institute for Clinical Social Work and at the Loyola University of Chicago School of Social Work.

Calica served as chairman of the Governor’s Task Force on Family Preservation from 1993-1994 under Governor Jim Edgar and currently serves as chair of the DCFS Risk Assessment Advisory Committee. He previously worked at mental health centers and as an instructor at the University of Chicago School Of Social Administration. Calica currently serves on numerous committees related to social work and child welfare.

Calica holds a master’s degree in social work from the University of Chicago and completed a post graduate fellowship in clinical social work at Michael Reese Hospital and Medical Center Division of Psychiatry. He acquired his bachelor’s degree in psychology from Brooklyn College. He is a past president of the Child Care Association of Illinois and has served as a consultant for numerous leading child welfare organizations.

DCFS and its private sector partners have safely reduced the number of children in foster care from more than 52,000 in 1997 to less than 15,500 today. The department focus on strengthening families is central to maintaining the safety of youth in state care and the health of the communities they come from. For more information about DCFS, please visit www.state.il.us/dcfs/index.shtml

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