



**Office of the Governor
JB Pritzker**

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Gov. Pritzker Names New DCFS Director and Launches Comprehensive Review by Respected Experts to Evaluate Agency Operations

Building on a strong team of diverse experts in their fields, Governor JB Pritzker announced that Marc D. Smith, the Executive Vice President of Foster Care and Intact Services at Aunt Martha's Health & Wellness, will be his nominee to lead the Department of Children and Family Services.

Governor Pritzker has also expanded expert services that the University of Chicago's Chapin Hall already provides to DCFS, asking them to conduct an independent and comprehensive review of how the agency's Intact Family Services unit functions, and has asked for initial actionable recommendations in the next six weeks. This will ensure that respected independent experts with a deep understanding of DCFS operations and challenges can provide immediate input to the new director and administration.

"The most vulnerable people in Illinois are the children served by DCFS, and we must provide them the best services that our state can offer, which means assessing and implementing the recommendations of child welfare experts," **said Governor JB Pritzker**. "Within six weeks, Chapin Hall will deliver a report to the new DCFS director with strategic recommendations for improving children's safety and the quality of the services the agency is providing."

Following the initial recommendations, Chapin Hall will also provide a more comprehensive review of policies, practices and procedures in the Intact Family Services Unit in order to make additional concrete recommendations for action. Chapin Hall will apply a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary systems approach and will survey several areas, including infrastructure supports like technology to determine if there are better ways to detect increased risk and prevent harm to children. A copy of their scope of work is attached.

Background

Marc D. Smith will serve as Director of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).* Since 2009, Smith has served as the Executive Vice President of Foster Care and Intact Services at Aunt Martha's Health & Wellness, Illinois' largest provider of services to families in crisis. In the role, he collaborates with child welfare leaders, professionals, and other stakeholders to implement family-centered systems and practices that protect and support vulnerable children and families. Smith came to his most recent role after working for more than two decades as a social worker, trainer, and leader in child welfare. From 2004 to 2009, he served as a program administrator and recovery coach at Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities, where he managed the Child Welfare Division. Earlier in his career, Smith worked as a public service administrator for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services from 1993 to 2000. Smith has served on numerous boards, committees, and work groups, helping to shape policies and inform best practices in leadership and in the field. He has also led the development of program models that have increased the likelihood of family reunification, increased adoptions, and significantly improved the ability of workers and agencies to connect people with substance abuse treatment, mental health care, and other supportive services. A licensed clinical social worker and certified trainer, the Joliet resident received his Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Illinois State University and a Master's in Social Work from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

**Appointment pending confirmation by the Illinois Senate.*

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