

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 16, 2020

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Joint statement from HFS, DCFS and the ACLU on the managed care transition for youth in care

Working in partnership with the ACLU to improve the transition of Illinois' foster children to managed care, the Department of Healthcare and Family Services and the Department of Children and Family Services announced that this transition will now occur on April 1. This date is part of an agreement between state agencies and the ACLU designed to ensure the transition for youth in DCFS' care to managed care best meets the needs of these children and families. This agreement is part of ongoing work between the state agencies and the ACLU to identify any challenges that may arise in this transition and ensure effective steps are taken to address those challenges.

In response HFS, DCFS and ACLU released the following statement:

"The administration and the ACLU share a deep commitment to ensuring high quality health care for all of Illinois' foster children. Our common goal is to be certain that this program operates as intended, and that children and families across the state are able to access the health care they need. Over the past several weeks and months, we have been engaged in good faith conversations to address any potential questions about the program – and the ACLU has been a strong partner not only in identifying questions but also working toward solutions.

"Following weeks of collaboration between HFS, DCFS and the ACLU, we have reached an agreement that will help us better reach this goal on a timeline that ensures a smoother transition for children and families. Over the coming months, we will continue to work closely together to ensure that all children receive the health care they need."

Background from HFS:

- Children and young adults eligible for YouthCare who are no long under the guardianship of DCFS will be transitioned to a managed care program on February 1.
- YouthCare has already hired more than 200 Care Coordinators and operations staff to manage the transition smoothly and effectively.

- As the program manager, HFS is committed to ensuring that when fully implemented, YouthCare will provide crucial services that do not exist today and new coordination that will ensure behavioral and physical health needs can be met.

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 calls received on the Child Abuse Hotline, 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 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.

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