
Performance Management System

Office of the Child's
Representative

August 1st, 2015

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AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Office of the Child’s Representative (OCR) is the state agency mandated to provide competent and effective legal representation to children involved in the Colorado court system. OCR was created by the General Assembly in 2000 to improve representation for Colorado’s most vulnerable children by establishing minimum practice standards and providing litigation support, accessible high-quality statewide training, and oversight. The OCR oversees attorneys who provide legal representation as guardians *ad litem* (GAL), child legal representatives (CLR), and, as well as attorneys appointed to serve as or state-paid Child and Family Investigators (CFI).

OCR serves children who have been abused and neglected, impacted by high-conflict parenting time disputes, and/or charged with delinquent acts and without a parent or guardian available to safeguard their best interests during the proceedings. In Fiscal Year 2014-15 (FY 15), the OCR served nearly **17,000 children** involved in dependency and neglect, delinquency, truancy, paternity, probate, and high conflict divorce cases. A majority of these children are victims of serious child maltreatment and require representation for the entire life of their case. Many of these children have been removed from their family home and spend time in foster care.

OCR Mission Statement: The mission of the Office of the Child’s Representative (OCR) is to provide competent and effective legal representation to Colorado’s children involved in the court system because they have been abused and neglected, impacted by high conflict parenting time disputes, or charged with delinquent acts and without a parent available to protect their best interests during the proceedings. As a state agency, the OCR is accountable to the State of Colorado to achieve this mission in the most cost-efficient manner without compromising the integrity of services or the safety and well-being of children. The OCR is committed to ensuring that children whose interests are represented by its contract attorneys, Colorado’s most vulnerable and marginalized population in the courts, receive the best legal services available to protect and promote their safety and well-being and to have their voice heard throughout all aspects of a case.

VISION: Each Colorado child in need of an OCR attorney will receive comprehensive legal advocacy from a skilled attorney who has expertise in juvenile law and who will diligently, zealously, and effectively represent the child’s interests and promote the child’s safety, well-being, and voice throughout all aspects of the case. These services will be provided in a cost-effective manner.



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| PRIORITY: | 1) The OCR will contract with qualified and skilled attorneys to provide effective legal advocacy to children involved in the court system. | 2) The OCR will provide attorney services in a cost-effective manner. |
| <i>Activities & Operations</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish attorney qualifications and practice standards ▪ Provide oversight and evaluation of attorney practice ▪ Contract with attorneys according to district needs ▪ Provide statewide training of and support for attorneys ▪ Investigate alternative methods of providing legal representation ▪ Engage with community stakeholders to ensure appropriate attorney involvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seek fair compensation rates ▪ Maximize use and effectiveness of OCR’s electronic case management/billing system ▪ Maintain billing policies and procedures which promote competent, efficient, and appropriate legal representation. ▪ Manage appropriations and assess program needs ▪ Process, manage, and evaluate attorney billings ▪ Provide practice support to reduce attorney hours |
| <i>Measure</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attorney compliance with applicable Chief Justice Directives and OCR practice standards ▪ Effective engagement and empowerment of children/youth and family ▪ Impact of OCR attorney representation on outcomes for children | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whether OCR’s appropriation secures a sufficient pool of qualified attorneys and promotes efficient oversight ▪ Attorney activity and cost per case ▪ Effective and efficient use of support staff by attorneys ▪ Case fees, expert witnesses, and other litigation support are justified by case needs |
| <i>Report</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OCR’s on-line case management/billing system, Colorado Attorney Reimbursement Electronic System (C.A.R.E.S.), data ▪ Court observations ▪ Interviews of children/youth, parents, and placement providers ▪ Attorney discipline, complaint, and training records ▪ Judicial and stakeholder feedback ▪ Interviews of and feedback from attorneys ▪ Evaluation of multidisciplinary office | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Salary/rate survey ▪ C.A.R.E.S. data ▪ Court data ▪ CORE ▪ Attorney and OCR staff feedback |
| <i>Assess</i> | <p>Whether</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual attorney data supports contracting decisions ▪ OCR meets needs of children in each judicial district ▪ OCR policy, support, oversight, and training promotes effective legal services and advocacy | <p>Whether</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OCR provides sufficient qualified attorneys to meet children’s needs ▪ Costs are reasonable and justified ▪ OCR systems and support promote optimum use of tax dollars |
| <i>Improve</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise policies, qualifications, practice standards, delivery model, support, and training, as indicated ▪ Develop attorney recruitment strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Request adjustments to appropriations, as necessary ▪ Revise policies, electronic case management/billing system, and support, as indicated |

TIME-LINE

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| August 1 | Post OCR's Performance Management System |
| October | Compile and assess performance data Draft Annual Performance Report |
| November 1 | Publish Annual Performance Report |
| November - December | Present to joint legislative committees of reference and JBC Solicit feedback from agency employees Solicit feedback from agency contract attorneys in even number years |
| April - May | Compile and assess performance data Written Report to JBC Implement improvements & identify training needs |
| June | Research, review, and complete Performance Plan |
| July 1 | Performance Plan is submitted to the JBC Assess and improve Performance Management System |