



Performance Management System

Office of the Child's Representative

August 1st, 2018

OCR is an independent agency within the Judicial Department



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OCR Mission

The mission of the Office of the Child’s Representative (OCR) is to provide 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 able to provide relevant information to the court or 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 its attorneys provide these children, Colorado’s most vulnerable and marginalized population in the courts, 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.

OCR Values

1. **Accountability:** Colorado’s children, attorneys, and taxpayers can count on OCR to ensure that each decision we make and action we take advances our mission in a fair and transparent manner.
2. **Efficiency:** OCR strives to accomplish its mission and conserve resources by streamlining efforts, adhering to deadlines, resolving conflict constructively, and honoring well-defined projects, processes, and roles. We balance our drive to achieve with thoughtful planning and implementation.
3. **Empowerment:** OCR cultivates an environment of respect and honesty. We value the experience and expertise of the children we serve, our contract attorneys, and our staff. We invest time to connect, focus on strengths, value feedback, and recognize success. We support each other in our mission to empower children.

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 who will diligently and effectively represent the child’s legal interests in a cost-effective manner.

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 accessible high-quality statewide training, and oversight. The OCR oversees attorneys who provide legal representation as guardians *ad litem* (GAL), counsel for child in a dependency and neglect case, and child legal representatives (CLR) in all 22 judicial districts across Colorado. The OCR ensures children’s voice and interests are paramount throughout the proceedings as well as in the development of law, policy and practice; both at the legislature, through partnerships with various child welfare agencies and stakeholders and active participation in policy committees throughout the state.

The OCR serves approximately 17,000 children annually in dependency and neglect, delinquency, truancy, paternity, probate, mental health and high-conflict divorce cases. A majority of these children are victims of serious child maltreatment and require representation for the entirety of their case. Many of these children have been removed from their family home and spend time in foster care. All of these children deserve high quality legal representation and a voice in the process.

Performance Goals

The OCR has identified three performance goals:

- Goal 1:** Provide children a voice in the Colorado legal system through effective attorney services and advocacy.
- Goal 2:** Optimize efficiencies in attorney practice and billing
- Goal 3:** Ensure attorneys remain current in state and federal law and regulations, social science research and evidence-based services.

These performance goals will be met by implementing identified strategies and by utilizing a continuous improvement system illustrated below:



Components

THE OCR GOALS & PRIORITIES	1) The OCR will provide children a voice in the Colorado legal system through effective attorney services and advocacy.	2) The OCR will optimize efficiencies in attorney practice and billing.	3) The OCR will ensure attorneys possess relevant skills and remain current in state and federal law and regulations, social science research, and evidence-based services.
<i>Strategies & Operations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure children’s voice and interests are paramount throughout the proceedings and in the development of policy, law and practice. Establish attorney qualifications and practice standards Provide oversight and evaluation of attorney practice Contract with attorneys based on data illustrating compliance with CJD and OCR practice standards Establish fair and reasonable compensation for OCR attorneys Investigate alternative methods of providing legal representation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage appropriations and assess program needs Assess judicial district needs Maximize use and effectiveness of OCR CARES (OCR’s on-line case management/billing system) Provide litigation support and facilitate practice innovations Provide social service professional (SSP) support to attorneys Process, manage, and evaluate attorney billings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultivate a learning and practice environment that supports excellence in legal representation Implement OCR Core Competencies Assess attorney education needs Require attorneys to meet minimum training requirements Disseminate updates on developments in law and social science Maintain current and relevant resources for attorneys’ use
<i>Measure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging and Empowering Youth data Stakeholder Survey Questions Annual verification process Tri-annual renewal process CJD 04-06 and OCR practice standards Activity Reports from CARES Cost per Case data Attorney Case load data Reference Interviews Attorney Interviews Court Observations Complaint Process/Data Attorney salary data Denver/Boulder CPI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Attorney to monitor additional fund requests Attorney Satisfaction Survey CARES reports/data Fiscal data through CORE and CARES Wait Time data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OCR Core Competencies addressed in trainings Relevant CLEs offered annually Ongoing training surveys to attendees Attorney compliance with training requirements. Attorney Satisfaction survey components related to available resources and training Stakeholder feedback on training Feedback from interviews of attorneys and judicial officers.
<i>Report</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggregate survey data for: Stakeholder Survey; E&EY Survey; Court Interviews; Complaint results Prepare individual reports and upload to attorney database to be used in interviews and District Analysis Quarterly Children in Court Report CARES data reports Quarterly Financial Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggregate survey data for Satisfaction Survey Quarterly Financial reports/projections Cost per case and CARES data reports Quarterly Wait Time report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggregate data of training surveys; satisfaction survey; attorney verifications of training; and trainings offered Resources available online Individual feedback from Stakeholders, attorney interviews and judicial officers on training needs
<i>Assess</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Needs Results of surveys for patterns Individual attorney data and performance Consumer Price Index data and revenue forecasts Attorney salary surveys for Colorado 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriation projection and need Results of survey data for areas of improvement or patterns Patterns or outliers in cost per case analysis or CARES reports. Monitor additional funding requests for patterns and trends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attorney satisfaction Core Competencies covered Areas of need for future trainings Attorneys in compliance with training requirements Currentness of available online resources Monitor OCR listserv for patterns and trends

<i>Improve</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise policies/CJD as needed ▪ Individual oversight and action by District Liaison as needed to address attorney performance. ▪ Implement program improvements as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Request adjustments to appropriations if needed ▪ Individual oversight and action by District Liaison as needed to address costs/patterns. ▪ Implement CARES or other system enhancements as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritize topics/sessions for future trainings ▪ Provide training webinars to address identified needs ▪ Individual oversight and action by District Liaison as needed to address training compliance and needs. ▪ Update online resources as indicated
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Timeline

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 Share results of Annual Performance Report and engage contractors/agency employees regarding assessment and improvement strategies
Feb-March	Compile and assess performance data Publish Performance Evaluation
April - May	Compile and assess additional performance data Written Report to JBC Implement improvements & identify training needs
June	Obtain feedback from agency employees Research, review, and complete Performance Plan
July 1	Performance Plan is submitted to the JBC Assess and improve Performance Management System