



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

SEP 20 2013

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
**Administration on Children, Youth and Families**  
1250 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20024

The Honorable Dannell P. Malloy  
Office of the Governor  
State Capitol  
210 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

I am writing on behalf of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to congratulate the State of Connecticut on the successful completion of its Program Improvement Plan (PIP), developed and implemented following the State's Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). The State has completed all required PIP action steps and has achieved all of its PIP goals. As a result, ACF is rescinding all associated CFSR penalties.

The Administration for Children and Families, in collaboration with the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF), conducted the CFSR to identify both strengths and areas needing improvement in the State's child welfare system. The review focused on seven outcomes in the areas of safety, permanency and well-being, and seven systemic factors that impact those outcomes. The CFSR culminated in an on-site review the week of September 22, 2008.

We issued the CFSR Final Report on March 30, 2009 and notified the State that it was not in substantial conformity with six of the seven CFSR outcomes and two of the seven CFSR systemic factors. Additionally, Connecticut was required to meet six National Standards in the areas of: *absence of maltreatment recurrence; absence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care; timeliness and permanency of reunification; timeliness of adoptions; permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods; and placement stability*. Five of these National Standards were achieved during the two year PIP time period. The placement stability standard was achieved during the year following the PIP time period. The State implemented its Program Improvement Plan during the two year period from January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2012.

Prior to our approval of Connecticut's PIP, DCF began to develop a comprehensive Practice Model consolidating the work of the three major DCF program divisions of Child Welfare, Behavioral Health and Juvenile Justice in order to provide a conceptual framework for its work with children and families. The six domain areas in the Practice Model guided the work in the PIP which included goals and objectives based on the areas needing improvement from the March 2009 CFSR Final Report. The overarching goal to *Implement an Agency Practice Model* was supported by three priority strategies: *Improve Supervision and Management; Improve Achievement of Permanency; and Improve Systems*. Throughout the two year PIP period Connecticut remained focused on the change that needed to occur in order to improve outcomes. As a result, the State succeeded in achieving major systemic change, including the

implementation of family-centered practice, purposeful visitation and family-centered assessment.

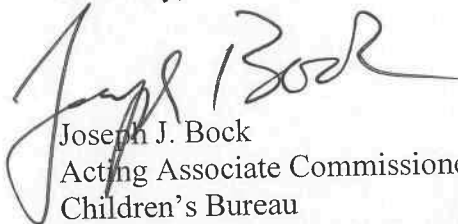
The Connecticut PIP addressed the CFSR findings through four primary goals: *develop and implement a practice model that will ensure consistent child welfare practice in Connecticut; strengthen child welfare supervision and management to support the implementation of the practice model and ensure better outcomes for children and families; ensure the continuity of relationships and connections are preserved for children and youth in foster care; and improve the systemic factors that support effective child welfare practice and promote safety, permanency and well-being.*

ACF and the State, through an ongoing partnership, jointly assessed the progress throughout the PIP period. As a result, ACF has verified the State's completion of all action steps. The achievement of all data and program goals negotiated between the State and ACF were also met during the year following the completion of PIP action steps.

This is an important milestone in our ongoing work to support the safety, permanency, and well-being of Connecticut's most vulnerable children. We commend your DCF staff, under the leadership of Joette Katz, for their diligent efforts to achieve systemic change through Connecticut's PIP. We look forward to our continued partnership as we all work together to improve the lives of Connecticut's children and families.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Robert Cavanaugh, Child Welfare Program Manager in Region I, at (617) 565-2449 or by email [bob.cavanaugh@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:bob.cavanaugh@acf.hhs.gov). You may also contact Penny Mattor, Children and Families Program Specialist, at (617) 565-1109 or by email [penny.mattor@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:penny.mattor@acf.hhs.gov).

Sincerely,



Joseph J. Bock  
Acting Associate Commissioner  
Children's Bureau

cc: Joette Katz, Commissioner; Department of Children and Families; Hartford, CT  
Miranda Lynch-Thomas, Supervisor; CFSR Team; Children's Bureau; Washington, DC  
Robert Cavanaugh, Child Welfare Regional Program Manager; CB, ROI; Boston, MA  
Penny Mattor, Children and Families Program Specialist; CB, ROI; Boston, MA