

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF

Policy

The Department of Children and Families' Office of Government Affairs shall:

- assist in the drafting of proposed bills for approval by the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM);
- monitor proposed legislation during the General Assembly Session;
- draft legislative testimony;
- prepare other needed materials for legislative hearings and meetings;
- summarize for DCF staff and assist with the implementation of new laws;
- coordinate and consult with other agencies and branches of government related to legislative matters; and
- respond to inquiries from legislators throughout the year.

Annual Legislative Package

Prior to each Session of the General Assembly, the Commissioner, with the assistance of the legislative liaison, shall prepare and submit a package of legislative proposals to OPM. After obtaining OPM approval, the proposals shall be submitted to the General Assembly for consideration.

The stages by which DCF's legislative package are developed each year are as follows:

- solicit legislative requests from DCF staff, the State Advisory Council and Area Advisory Councils by August 15th of each year;
- review and refine proposals consistent with DCF's mission and goals and existing state and federal laws and regulations;
- submit draft proposals to the Commissioner's Office for review and approval;
- notify individuals and entities that have proposed legislation of the disposition of their requests;
- prepare and submit the legislative package on forms provided by OPM by the requested date;
- obtain approval of the package from OPM; and
- submit the approved proposals to the appropriate legislative committees.

General Assembly Activity

The legislative liaison shall act as DCF's liaison to the General Assembly. These duties shall include:

- review legislative documents on a daily basis, including, but not limited to, Legislative Bulletins, Calendars, Journals and List of Bills, to identify pending legislation of interest or concern to DCF;
 - monitor legislative activity and maintain a list of bills of interest or concern to DCF throughout the legislative session; which list shall be updated weekly and shall indicate the status or disposition of each bill;
 - regularly circulate the bill list to DCF senior management;
 - provide copies of pending legislation to senior DCF staff with responsibility for its subject matter for the purpose of review and comment;
 - attend regularly-scheduled meetings with DCF's senior administrators throughout the Session to discuss pending legislation in detail and determine next steps;
 - draft testimony for proposed bills of interest to DCF and recommend legislative strategies to the Commissioner and other senior administrators; and
 - summarize new laws requiring DCF action and distribute the summary to all DCF staff.
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Legislative Implementation

The legislative liaison shall assist with implementation of new legislation and regulations. Duties shall include:

- prepare implementation strategies by working with DCF managers with program responsibility for the subject matter of new legislation;
 - notify the Office of Legal Affairs of new laws and regulations; and
 - coordinate legislative implementation planning.
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Requests and Inquiries from Legislators

Throughout the year, the legislative liaison shall respond to requests for information and other inquiries from legislators or legislative staff. In response to these requests, the legislative liaison's duties shall include:

- record background information detailing the nature of the inquiry and maintain a log of all such inquiries noting the date, name of requester and the nature of the inquiry;
- contact the DCF staff responsible for the subject matter of the inquiry for verification, clarification and timely resolution of the inquiry;
- coordinate legislative inquiries with the Ombudsman's Office to prevent duplication of effort; and
- document all responses to legislative inquiries.

Note: In no instance may the legislative liaison violate the provisions of state or federal confidentiality laws.
