

Executive Order 2014-01

Establishing a Cabinet-Level Child Safety and Family Services Division

WHEREAS, the safety of all children in the State of Arizona is of the utmost importance; and

WHEREAS, every child has the right to a safe environment and protection from harm; and

WHEREAS, throughout the United States and Arizona the unconscionable failure of some in society to care for and protect children is a long-standing problem; and

WHEREAS, the child welfare system in Arizona should promote and prioritize the safety of children and inspire public confidence; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to continuously monitor and review the effectiveness of the child welfare system's delivery of services and efficient utilization of resources and consider reforms to enhance child safety when appropriate; and

WHEREAS, the current Arizona child welfare system is broken and is not meeting expectations of prior reform efforts and it is time for significant reform; and

WHEREAS, A.R.S. § 41-1954 requires the Department of Economic Security, among other functions, to administer child welfare services to children, youth and families; and

WHEREAS, Article 5, Section 4 of the Arizona Constitution and A.R.S. § 41-101 provide that the Governor shall transact all executive business, supervise the official conduct of all executive officers, and ensure the laws be faithfully executed; and

WHEREAS, A.R.S. § 41-1953 allows for the establishment, abolishment or reorganization of the organizational units within the department in order to carry out the department's statutory functions; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Children, Youth and Families and the Office of Child Welfare Investigations are currently located within the Department of Economic Security; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Children, Youth and Families houses the state child welfare program, including Child Protective Services, foster care, adoption, and the Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Child Welfare Investigations is charged with investigating criminal conduct allegations of child abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, A.R.S. § 41-1969.01 states that the Director of the Department of Economic Security is responsible for the direction, operation and control of the Office of Child Welfare Investigations; and

WHEREAS, an independent, stand-alone organizational and direct reporting structure for the state child welfare program will ensure the effective delivery of services and efficient utilization of resources, providing appropriate outcomes for children, youth and families through transparency, increased accountability and coordinated service delivery; and

WHEREAS, maintaining operational support for the state child welfare program within the Department of Economic Security until a permanent, separate agency is established will allow for maximum administrative and financial efficiency in the short-term.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Janice K. Brewer, Governor of the State of Arizona, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of this State, hereby order and direct as follows:

1. The Division of Children, Youth and Families is abolished and the Division of Child Safety and Family Services is established. The Director of the Division of Child Safety and Family Services shall oversee and direct all administrative, programmatic, and management functions of the state child welfare program, including Child Protective Services, foster care, adoption, and the Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program.
2. The Office of Child Welfare Investigations shall also report to the Director of the Division of Child Safety and Family Services.
3. The Director of the Division of Child Safety and Family Services shall report directly to the Governor on all administrative and policy matters involving child welfare, including Child Protective Services, foster care, adoption, and the Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program.
4. The Director of the Division of Child Safety and Family Services shall administer the budgets of the state child welfare program and the Office of Child Welfare Investigations separate and distinct from one another.
5. The Director of the Division of Child Safety and Family Services shall consider the recommendations of the Independent Child Advocate Response Examination Team (CARE Team), as directed by the Governor, for the purpose of improving services, practices and outcomes for children, youth and families.
6. The Director of the Division of Child Safety and Family Services shall collaborate with the Governor's Office and with stakeholders, including the Arizona Legislature, in the development of a permanent, separate agency – autonomous from the Department of Economic Security – for state child welfare programs and services.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Arizona.

Janice K. Brewer
GOVERNOR

DONE at the Capitol in Phoenix on this thirteenth day of January in the Year Two Thousand Fourteen and of the Independence of the United States of America the Two Hundred and Thirty-Eighth.

ATTEST:

Kyle Blumeth
Secretary of State