



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NYC ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES ANNOUNCE UPCOMING ENHANCED COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

Protocols include DHS notification on changes in child welfare cases, Family Court orders; Increased information sharing

New York, NY – The NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and the NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS) today announced they finalized a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the enhancement of joint inter-agency communication and planning around ACS-involved families applying for or residing in shelter.

Currently, ACS and DHS work jointly to identify high-risk families in DHS shelters, and assess whether they can benefit from ACS' preventive services program. The MOU builds on existing practices to enhance coordination between the agencies, as well as their providers, and better support ACS-involved families who are navigating the shelter system.

“Strengthening coordination between ACS and DHS supports our focus as a service-oriented agency working to keep vulnerable children and families safe. Working alongside our partners in social service is vital to that goal, and we recognize that the communities we serve, and those served by DHS, often overlap,” said **ACS' Commissioner David Hansell**.

“We appreciate our ongoing partnership with ACS, and this collaborative effort will expand information sharing between the agencies to most effectively serve families and children who are involved in both the child welfare and shelter systems,” said **DHS' Commissioner Steven Banks**.

Agreements included in the MOU are:

- DHS shelter providers must provide ACS-involved families with child(ren) 1-year-old or younger, or have children who are medically fragile, with ACS' Safe Sleep materials and instruction upon placement— all cribs provided to ACS-involved families will include agency's Safe Sleep instructions.
- DHS shelter providers will facilitate delivering information on EarlyLearn NYC programs to ACS-involved families with child(ren) 4-years-old or younger;



- ACS will notify the DHS shelter provider when there is any change in the status of a child welfare case that warrants and increased (or decreased) level of intervention and/or supervision;
- ACS will notify the DHS shelter provider when a youth family member is placed away from the family;
- ACS will notify the DHS shelter provider of any Family Court orders known to ACS involving a member of the family;
- DHS will notify ACS caseworkers within 24 hours prior to any planned transfer of an ACS-involved family to a different shelter, when possible;
- ACS caseworkers will coordinate a conference or conference call within three days of ACS-involved family's placement in a shelter, which will include shelter staff;

Currently, on an ongoing basis, ACS and DHS leadership meet regularly to discuss shared concerns and develop strategies. The MOU has been signed by both agency Commissioners, with planning work ongoing and full implementation expected by Fall 2017.

About the New York City Administration for Children's Services:

The Administration for Children's Services (ACS) protects and promotes safety and well-being of New York City's children and families by providing child welfare, juvenile justice, and early care and education services. In child welfare, ACS contracts with private nonprofit organizations to support and stabilize families at risk of a crisis through preventive services, and provides foster care services for children not able to safely remain at home. The recently released ACS' 2016 [Foster Care Blueprint](#) indicates a 25% increase of children achieving permanency through kinship guardianship and a 5% in adoption rates even as the overall number of children in foster care continued to decline, among other significant progress made to improve case practice and outcomes for children and families in the foster care system. In juvenile justice, ACS manages and funds services including detention and placement, intensive community-based alternatives for youth, and support services for families. In early care and education, ACS coordinates and funds programs and vouchers for close to 100,000 children eligible for subsidized care.

For more information, please visit www.nyc.gov/acs

About the New York City Department of Homeless Services:

The Department of Homeless Services (DHS) works to prevent homelessness before it occurs, reduce street homelessness, and assist New Yorkers in transitioning from shelter into permanent housing. DHS collaborates with nonprofit organizations to provide temporary shelter and services that homeless New Yorkers need to help stabilize their lives and achieve housing permanency. In April 2016, Mayor de Blasio announced a major restructuring of the way



homeless services in New York City are delivered and created an integrated and streamlined management structure for DHS and the Human Resources Administration (HRA) under the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services.

Learn more about how DHS is turning the tide on homelessness, neighborhood by neighborhood, at nyc.gov/tide.

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