

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

P.O. Box 419064, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9064

**Reason for this Transmittal**

- State Law or Regulation Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order or Settlement Change
- Clarification requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by DCSS

June 28, 2001

ERRATA

TO: ALL IV-D DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: CORRECTED ATTACHMENT "HEARING ROOM GUIDELINES" AND ADDITIONAL ATTACHMENT

REFERENCE: LCSA LETTER NO. 01-07

This letter is to provide you with a corrected copy of the recently released LCSA letter No. 01-07. The Department of Child Support (DCSS) has made a change to the attachment "Hearing Room Guidelines." The original guidelines did not reflect the state hearing room requirement to have the United States Flag, California State Flag and the California State Seal displayed in the room. Item number four in the guidelines will now reflect this requirement. Item number five now reads to include the sentence "A sample state hearing room layout is attached."

The Department has made this change to the guidelines to meet the requirements necessary to have the state hearing rooms appearance appropriate for quasi-judicial proceedings. The flags and seal will be purchased by the Department and distributed to the counties as soon as possible.

The Department included the additional attachment after receiving requests from some counties to provide a sample layout of a state hearing room.

Please contact Francine Woods, Chief of the Customer and Community Services Branch, at (916) 464-5377 or by email at francine.woods@dcss.ca.gov, if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

CURTIS HOWARD
Assistant Deputy Director
Child Support Services Division

Attachments



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**HEARING ROOM GUIDELINES**

The State Hearing Division (SHD) of California Department of Social Services will conduct child support state hearings in every county in the State of California. All child support state hearings must take place at the local child support agency office or other site designated by the local child support agency.

The SHD recently provided guidelines to individual counties regarding the minimum standards for hearing rooms. The purpose of this letter is to communicate the hearing room guidelines uniformly to all counties. The following list provides the minimum standards for hearing rooms:

1. The hearing room must be large enough to allow reasonable entry and exit, including access for wheelchairs (a minimum of 12 by 17 feet). The room should accommodate seating for a minimum of one Administrative Law Judge and four other people. If the size of the hearing room meets this minimum standard, the county must also have an alternative larger room available for occasional hearings which involve six or more people.
2. The room must have adequate ventilation.
3. The room must be sufficiently soundproof to prevent interference with the proper electronic recording of the hearing and to preserve the confidential nature of the proceedings.
4. The room should have a United States flag, a California State flag, and the California State seal prominently displayed. DCSS will purchase and distribute the required flags and seal to each LCSA as soon as possible.
5. The room must be furnished so that the Administrative Law Judge is at the head of a T-shaped table/desk arrangement. A sample state hearing room layout is attached.
6. The room must have a telephone and sufficient electrical outlets to facilitate the use of electronic recording equipment.
7. The room should have an appearance appropriate to quasi-judicial proceedings and should be maintained in that fashion. Accordingly, it should not have the appearance of a dual-purpose room (e.g., storage room, lunchroom with microwave or refrigerator, etc.).
8. The county must provide a level of security at the hearing room site which insures the safety of all agency personnel and which is equivalent to the security which is provided to other county employees who are in similar public contact situations.
9. The county shall cooperate with the SHD in providing a storage area so the hearing room can be supplied with materials used during hearings (e.g., tapes, forms, etc.). SHD will provide a cabinet for such supplies.

We would request all counties to notify the SHD prior to any change in hearing room locations so that CDSS can work with counties to attempt to meet the above criteria.

Please contact Francine Woods, Chief of the Customer and Community Services Branch, at (916) 464-5337 or by email at francine.woods@dcss.ca.gov if you have any questions or concerns regarding these guidelines.

State Hearing Room Sample Layout

State seal can be mounted
to wall behind the ALJ

State hearing rooms can be arranged
using one "T" shaped table or using
two tables to form a "T" shape

Flags should be placed on either
side of the ALJ

