



Presentation to the House Committee on Human Services

Governor's Executive Order on
Child Protective Services

July 15, 2004

Overview of Governor's Executive Order

- Executive Order RP35 was issued on July 2, 2004, in response to reports that indicate systemic problems within the Child Protective Services (CPS) program.
 - The order directs the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to oversee the systemic reform of the CPS program of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).
 - Specific actions and outcomes required under the executive order:
 - Review of case files;
 - Administrative & organizational reform;
 - Partnering with law enforcement & local communities; and
 - Review of state policy and statute.

HHSC Response

- HHSC will conduct a comprehensive evaluation and performance review of the CPS Program.
- Initial steps:
 - Begin case review
 - Develop work plan for review of CPS policies and procedures

CPS Case Review

- Auditing of CPS cases for compliance with CPS policies, procedures, documentation, and reporting standards
 - Team of 30 deployed to Arlington on July 12, 2004
 - Will work full time for approximately six months
 - Selecting statewide random sample of cases
 - Cases will be read by CPS staff under guidance of Office of Inspector General (OIG) Internal Affairs personnel.
 - Case reading staff results will be audited by OIG auditors and HHSC Internal Audit.
 - Random field reviews and employee interviews will be done by OIG field staff in the General Investigations Division.

HHSC Work Plan

- Overview:
 - Utilize a team of child welfare experts from other states to conduct a thorough evaluation and review of CPS policies and procedures.
 - Solicit and incorporate input from stakeholders to design a work plan to guide the evaluation and review process.
 - Legislators
 - Department of Family and Protective Services Council
 - Judicial representatives
 - Outside child welfare experts

HHSC Work Plan

- Key Elements:
 - Assess major policies and practices governing abuse and neglect
 - Analyze alternative models of delivery within the child welfare system
 - Evaluate best practices
- Timeline:
 - Implementation plan due in 90 days
 - Final report due on December 31, 2004, will include:
 - A review all actions taken to address deficiencies; and
 - Recommendations for statutory changes.