



Colorado Office of the Child's Representative

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Fall 2015 Newsletter

Notes from the Executive Director

October is Legal Professionalism Month in Colorado. The Colorado Supreme Court and the Colorado Bar Association's [Proclamation of Legal Professionalism Month](#) reminds us that Professionalism is conduct reflecting the values contained in the Colorado Attorney Oath of Admission, the Colorado Principles of Professionalism and the Colorado Rules of Professional Conduct. These values require attorneys always to act competently, civilly and with integrity and to commit themselves to the public good and further the interests of justice. The aim of the proclamation is to encourage us as members of the legal profession to rededicate ourselves to demonstrating the highest standards of professionalism and to promote public trust in the rule of law.

As attorneys representing the best interest of children in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, inspiring confidence in the legal profession and the court system is no easy feat. The cases are complex, emotion-charged and fluid. You work with families who are often inexperienced, overwhelmed and distrustful. The other professionals involved may also be overwhelmed and stressed trying to secure services in systems with few or inadequate resources. The systems themselves place a premium on collaboration while you are expected to advocate zealously, competently and independently on behalf of each child's best interest.

And yet every day, in courtrooms and placements, conference rooms and treatment centers, you get it done. You work through difficult and changing circumstances and at times seemingly hopeless problems with an eye

towards not what the systems can offer but what the child needs. You research, persuade, take it up the administrative chain, file motions and litigate, always keeping the focus only on the best interest of the child. In so doing, each of you embodies the honor, integrity and excellence of our profession.

OCR is committed to continuing to promote this work as the very best of the legal profession. Please share your ideas on how we can best do that. We have come a long way but there is still far to go. Working together, we can build a plan that will carry us forward. Thank you for all you do on behalf of Colorado's children. ♦



Linda Weinerman, Executive Director



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Thank You, OCR Attorneys!

Feedback about OCR Attorneys from Children, Caregivers, and Parents from the 2015 Evaluations

- ▶ "He got me where I am now, did what he said he was going to do, and always kept his word." –*Youth*
- ▶ "She went out of her way to get me and my brothers back together because she knew that it was so important to me." –*Youth*
- ▶ "He was always there when I needed him, and I think he's fantastic. When we had meetings, [the GAL] was there and had his own input on the child's strengths and what needed to be done." –*Caregiver*
- ▶ "He was awesome. He always made me feel like he was there to help. He wasn't an enemy or going against me. He made me feel comfortable with the whole situation." –*Parent*
- ▶ "She cares about my best interests. She always makes sure I am doing good." –*Youth*
- ▶ "I feel like [my GAL] knows me so well. I don't even have to tell her things about my life, she just already knows." –*Youth*
- ▶ "Whenever something came up, and I knew the child needed to talk to someone who knew her really well, I would always reach out to [the GAL] first." –*Caregiver*
- ▶ "She absolutely had my daughter's best interest at heart at all times." –*Parent*
- ▶ "My GAL is a positive person in the community, and is always willing to help. Those kinds of people make a huge difference in the world. Even though my GAL might not be able to move mountains, she is able to move people's hearts. She is an angel walking among men... In all my years of being in court and DHS, I've never had someone that vouches for me like [my GAL] does." –*Youth*
- ▶ "The GAL is just really understanding; he will take the children aside and talk to them in a way a friend could. The kids have all taken quite a liking to [the GAL]." –*Caregiver*
- ▶ "He was fair. He made it known that he wanted what was best for the kids. He was very professional." –*Parent*
- ▶ "She understood where I was coming from and stuff, just everything that was happening in my life. She understood how to find the people who were my true friends and family, you know, like, how your friends can be your true family? She was also, just like, there for me, if I ever needed something." –*Youth*
- ▶ "[The GAL] had a great way of explaining the legal process and what was happening in the case. She could break down complex processes." –*Caregiver*
- ▶ "You can tell he's really interested in the long-term best interest of my son." –*Parent*
- ▶ "I felt more supported by [my GAL] than anyone else on my team. [My GAL] wanted to make sure I knew what I was going to do when I emancipated. She wanted me to have my ducks in a line." –*Youth*
- ▶ "The kids are thriving because of the work she does." –*Caregiver* ♦



Meet an OCR Attorney

Each quarter, the OCR will feature an attorney in our newsletter and on our website. Learn about the individuals who make OCR's mission a reality through their passion, skill, and dedication to Colorado's kids!



Ronisha Carson practices in the 2nd Judicial District as a Guardian ad litem and Staff Attorney with the Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center.

Q: Why did you choose to practice child welfare law?

A: I chose child welfare law because I have a background working with youth as a teacher and college mentor. It was a natural fit for me to continue working with youth as an attorney.

Q: What has been the most rewarding moment for you while working with children and families in the dependency and neglect system?

A: The most rewarding moments are successful case closures after reunifica-

tion. Not the cases where there has been marginal effort from the parent(s), but when the parent(s) really worked hard on their treatment plans to make the necessary changes for their children.

Q: Describe a challenge you face doing this work and your strategies to overcome it.

A: The biggest challenge is the mental and emotional energy it takes to do the job well and advocate for the best interests of the children. Sometimes the cases are very adversarial and what you are asking for is simply for the benefit of the child's well-being, but you have to fight so hard for it. That can really be emotionally draining.

Q: What advice do you have for an attorney new to child welfare law?

A: My advice is to have a good self-care plan in place. It could be regular exercise or having the right supports in place which will allow a healthy work/life balance. Additionally, take time to read through the Children's Code and relevant case law often. I found that I gained a better understanding of the Code as I gained more hands-on experience. Lastly, do not take anything personal and keep on fighting.

Q: What drives you to continue in this line of work and do you have any advice for a seasoned attorney?

A: The children I work with drive me to continue working in this field. Advice for seasoned attorneys is to never fall back in the status quo.

Q: Share a litigation strategy or case example when you were successful despite opposition from other parties to the case.

A: I represented the best interests of three siblings who were faced with a second removal from their parents. The case was an EPP case and had been open one year. To keep them together after removal, the Department placed them in a group center for children with developmental and physical disabilities. The Department's placement desk kept saying there was no other placement. These were young children (all under 9 years of age) that did not meet the criteria of this placement. I began making calls myself and contacted the prior foster parents of the children. The prior foster parents were willing to care for the children and, although it had been a year, the children remembered them. The oldest child cried and asked for the family during transport to the group center placement. There was a lasting mutual bond. The Court ordered the children be placed with the prior foster parents despite opposition from parent counsel and, initially, from the Department. The children thrived and made great progress in short time after being moved. On hard days, I think of this case and it gives me strength to keep fighting. ♦



Nominate, share your own story, and view our archive on our [Meet an OCR Attorney page online!](#)

Fall Legal Review

Summaries of new cases and legislation brought to you by OCR's Staff Attorneys

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■ 1. Colorado Court of Appeals

C.G., 2015 COA 106 (July 30, 2015): This proceeding involves relief requested after the death of a child. In the juvenile case, the department moved within one day of the filing of the petition to serve the father of the child by publication; ultimately, the court entered a default order regarding "John Doe," adjudicated the child dependent or neglected, and allocated parental responsibilities to the father of the child's half-sibling. The child died after the case had closed due to the caregiver's abuse, and the father of the child is pursuing civil relief in federal court under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. Whether the state had a special relationship to protect the child at the time of the abuse turns on whether Father filed a C.R.C.P. 60(b) to vacate the trial court's orders holding him in default, adjudicating the child as dependent or neglected, and awarding temporary legal custody and ultimately allocating parental responsibilities to the child's half-sibling's father. The juvenile court denied father's motion, finding that it was moot. In this decision, the Court of Appeals reverses the juvenile court's order. The Court of Appeals holds that because the orders challenged by father impact whether the state had a special relationship to protect the child and the department's obligations to exercise due diligence to notify father prior to pursuing notification by publication, father's request for relief is not moot.

C.Z., 2015 COA 87 (June 18, 2015): This appeal concerns a termination of parental rights pursuant to § 19-3-604(1)(b)(I). The juvenile court terminated parents' rights under this provision finding that no appropriate treatment plan could be devised to address the parents' unfitness due to their emotional illnesses, mental illnesses, or mental deficiencies. Parents appealed the decision, contending that § 19-3-604(1)(b)(I) conflicts with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In its decision, the Court of Appeals assumes that parents' mental impairments are disabilities under the ADA and holds that while the ADA does not limit the court's authority to terminate parental rights, it does apply to assessment, treatment, and other services provided through D&N proceeding. The Court of Appeals holds that the ADA does not pre-empt the § 19-3-604(1)(b)(I) no appropriate treatment plan provisions, reasoning that the ADA provides for a finding that no reasonable accommodations can be made and that a no reasonable efforts finding is equivalent to the no reasonable accommodations finding. While the court was not required to make express ADA findings, the Court of Appeals encourages courts to do so. The Court of Appeals also rejects father's equal protection argument, reasoning that parents determined una-

ble to meet their children's needs within a reasonable period of time are not similarly situated to parents who have the ability to become fit within a reasonable period of time.

J.O., 2015 COA 119 (August 27, 2015): In this case, the Court of Appeals affirms the juvenile court's imposition of the sex offender registration requirement. The Court rejects the juvenile's assertion of discretionary exemption from registration pursuant to § 16-22-103(5)(a)(III), reasoning that because J.O. was simultaneously adjudicated for unlawful sexual contact and indecent exposure, he did not meet 16-22-103(5)(a)(III) criterion for first offender exemption from the sex offender registry. The Court of Appeals also rejects the juvenile's 8th Amendment challenge of cruel and unusual punishment, reasoning that juvenile sex offender registration is not punishment.

P.K., 2015 COA 121 (August 27, 2015): This case involves an appeal of a juvenile court's denial of a juvenile's motion to withdraw his plea to a count of aggravated incest. The count of aggravated incest to which the juvenile admitted identified a time period that included dates when the juvenile was too young to be under the jurisdiction of the court. The Court of Appeals begins by framing the issue as a challenge to the juvenile court's subject matter jurisdiction, requiring a *de novo* standard of review rather than abuse of discretion. Applying this standard, the Court of Appeals holds that because the single count of aggravated incest in the charging document identified a date span during which the juvenile was ages 8-11, the charging document was defective and the juvenile court was without subject matter jurisdiction to accept juvenile's plea. If a charging document alleges a date span, all ages in the time period must be within the jurisdiction of the juvenile court. The Court of Appeals remands the case to the juvenile court with instructions to dismiss without prejudice.

People v. Nelson, 2015 COA 123 (September 10, 2015): In this decision, the Court of Appeals rejects a challenge to the imposition of an adult sentence, reasoning that HB 12-1271 did not remove the district court's discretion to sentence defendant as an adult under the circumstances of this case. Even though the defendant ultimately plead guilty to an offense not enumerated as an offense eligible for direct filing under the new statutory provisions, defendant's prior adjudications make him eligible for transfer to the district court pursuant to § 19-2-518(1)(a)(I)(B), supporting ongoing district court jurisdiction under § 19-2-517(6)(c).

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Legal Review

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■ 2. Colorado Supreme Court Pending Cases

In Interest of C.E.M. and M.F.M., 15SC514 (certiorari granted Aug. 31, 2015): Whether the juvenile court erred in terminating a mother's parental rights based on her continued relationship with the children's father, whom the juvenile court found to pose a threat to the children's welfare, where the mother's treatment plan did not prohibit her from maintaining a relationship with the father and was intended to allow her to do so as long as she reported all contact with him to the caseworker.

People v. Ybanez (14 SC 190) addressing the following issues:

- Whether the court of appeals properly applied plain error review to the defendant's claim that a guardian *ad litem* should have been appointed, when there was no objection at trial or the initial Crim. P. 35(c) motion.
- Whether a child charged as an adult with first-degree murder, whose parent is a victim of the crime and a prosecution witness, is entitled to a guardian *ad litem* to assist with his defense and to advise him regarding the waiver of his constitutional trial rights.
- Whether a lawyer's conflict of interest constitutes ineffective assistance of counsel where: (1) he received payment to represent a child from the child's parent, who is a victim of the crime and a prosecution witness; (2) he failed to put a waiver of the conflict on the record, as required by this court's authority; and (3) he failed to conduct any investigation of the parent's abuse of the child and presented no evidence of this abuse at trial.
- Whether the court of appeals erred according to *Miller v. Alabama*, 132 S. Ct. 2455 (2012), in instructing the district court to sentence petitioner to life in prison with no possibility of parole until after forty years.

In the interest of Baby A v. M.C. (14 SC 1045) addressing the following issues:

- Whether the court of appeals erred in its application of a special presumption in favor of the birth father to Colorado's statutory procedure and criteria for termination of parental rights set forth in section 19-5-105, C.R.S. (2014).
- Whether the court of appeals erred in holding that adoptive

parents had no cognizable rights or interests in this action.

- Whether the court of appeals erred in holding that the trial court abused its discretion in only considering biological father's one payment of child support during a three-month period in determining whether he has taken "substantial responsibility" for the children.

In the Interest of Minor Children, J.G. v. M.L. (15 SC 57) addressing the following issues:

- Whether the court of appeals erred in requiring jury findings as to the fault of each parent when a trial court is adjudicating a child dependent or neglected under the injurious environment provision of the Colorado Children's Code.
- Whether the court of appeals erred in holding that the status of a child as dependent or neglected must be considered in relation to each parent's acts or failures to act and the parent's availability, ability, and willingness to provide reasonable parental care.

The OCR's amicus curiae briefs are available at: tinyurl.com/ocr-amicus.

■ 3. Legislative Update

New Rules Implementing the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act

The State Board of Human Services has promulgated rules implementing P.L. 113-183. These rules:

- Limit the consideration of OPPLA to children ages 16+ and require a heightened review process and additional documentation for children prior to the adoption of an OPPLA goal and at each court hearing. The additional documentation required includes, but is not limited to, a "rigorous examination of kin and permanent connections," the youth's desired permanency

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Recent Court Announcements

The Colorado Supreme Court has revised Colorado Appellate Rules 28-34. Effective June 25, 2015, all briefs filed in the Court of Appeals should comply with revised C.A.R. 28, 28.1 and 32. Please visit the Supreme Court's webpage under Adopted Rule Changes to review the amendments.

On July 25, 2015, the Court of Appeals announced Appellate Rule 32(f) prohibiting the use of the names of minors and victims of sexual assault and minors in criminal cases and cases brought under Title 19.

Beginning in September 2015, the Judicial Department will calculate and assess 1% interest monthly on restitution balances to ensure compliance with a 2000 law requiring that any order for restitution automatically includes interest of 12% annually. The Judicial Department estimates that the change will impact 80,000 cases statewide.

Special announcements can be found in the sidebar at https://www.courts.state.co.us/Courts/Court_of_Appeals/Index.cfm. ♦

Legal Review

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outcomes, and steps taken to ensure involvement in developmentally-appropriate activities and social events. See 12 CCR §2409-4, 7.301.24(Q). (effective 8/1/2015)

- Include in the family search and engagement requirements a diligent and timely good faith effort to locate and contact parents of siblings of a child/youth in addition to noncustodial parents, grandparents, and other adult relatives. See 12 CCR § 2509-1, 7.002(A); 12 CCR § 2509-4, 7.304.52. (effective 11/1/2015)
- Require immediate notification of missing children and reasonable efforts to locate missing children; assess the factors that contributed to the child's status as missing and the child's experiences while missing, including whether the child is a possible sex trafficking victim; and respond to the identified factors and experiences through services. 12 CCR § 2509-4, 7.303.4.
- Implement the reasonable and prudent parent standard by authorizing foster parents and placements to use this standard to approve participation in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities. 12CCR§ 2509-4, 7.304.61, 7.701.200. (effective 11/1/2015)
- Enhance the planning process for successful transition to adulthood by requiring this process for all youth in foster care ages 14+, allowing youth to identify two significant persons to participate in the planning team, and requiring documentation of the youth's rights. 12 CCR § 2509-4, 7.305.2. (effective 11/1/2015)
- Expand eligibility for Chafee services to children ages 14-21 and enumerate factors to be considered in the prioritization of Chafee services. 12 CCR § 2509-4, 7.305.4(A), 7.305.41, 7.305.42. (effective 11/1/2015)
- Require the provision of vital life documents ninety days prior to the emancipation date of all foster youth over the age of 18 who have been in foster care at least six months. 12 CCR § 2509-4.7.305.5. (effective 11/1/2015)
- Implement successor guardian procedures. 12 CCR § 2509-4, 7.311.61. (effective 11/1/2015) ♦

Awards & Accolades

Congratulations to Diana Richett, the 2015 recipient of the CJDC Lifetime Achievement Award!



Diana Richett has been practicing juvenile law since 1982 when she started as a trial attorney in the Denver Public Defender's Office in the Juvenile Division. She has been in private practice since 1989 and continues to solely represent children either as a defense attorney in delinquency cases or as a Guardian *ad Litem* in dependency and neglect and delinquency cases. She is a founding director of the Colorado Juvenile Defender Coalition whose mission is to ensure excellence in juvenile defense and advocacy. She is the primary author of the Colorado Juvenile

Defense Manual sponsored by the Coalition and the Office of the Alternate Defense Counsel. She is a volunteer with LYRIC (Learn Your Rights in Colorado). She is the co-chair of the Bridge Committee with the Jefferson County Best Practices Team. Diana is also a volunteer with the Red Rover Readers program which uses animal-related stories to help children develop critical thinking skills and build empathy and compassion, and she volunteers with the Denver Pet Partner Animal-Assisted Therapy program. Through this program, she has partnered with her registered therapy animals—her three-legged dog Tiva, her amazing cat Simon with paralyzed back legs, and, currently, her cat Harold—to tutor children through the University of Denver Bridge Project at the Westwood Housing Project. In 2012, her cat Simon was honored with the Colorado Animal Hero Award in the service category for his outstanding work as a therapy animal. (In March 2014, sweet Simon received his angel wings. He is loved and is deeply missed by the many people and children whose lives he touched.) ♦



Highlights from OCR's Annual Report to the General Assembly (Sept. 2015)

The OCR files several reports and documents in the General Assembly throughout the year, including an annual report each September known as the OCR's General Assembly Report (GA Report). In addition to explaining the difficult work you do and the value of that work, the GA Report explains the functioning of the OCR and the manner in which OCR spends taxpayer dollars. Nearly 17,000 children received GAL, CLR, and state-paid attorney CFI services through the OCR in Fiscal Year 2014-15 (FY 14-15).

Once again, the evaluation process proved to be a great source of information regarding the importance of your work. We sprinkled many of the inspiring comments we received during interviews of youth, parents, and caregivers throughout the report—there were so many it was difficult to narrow the number of quotes we used (see Pg. 2 for more!). The stakeholder survey responses further confirm the importance of your work and expertise in these difficult cases:

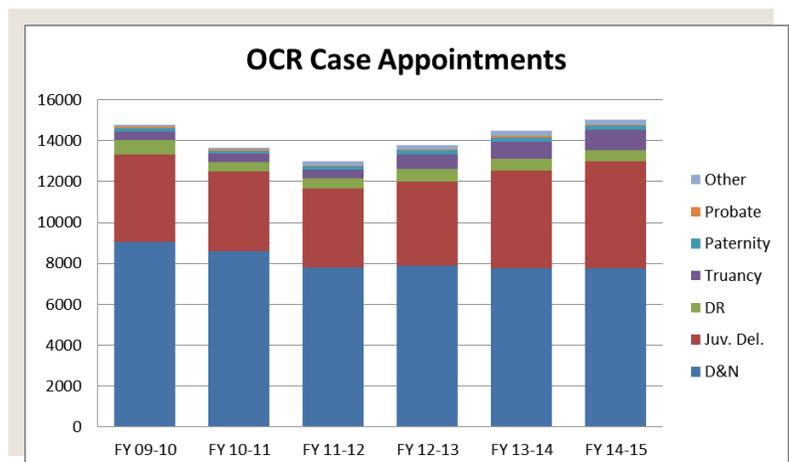
Question answered (respondents were allowed to answer "Do Not Know")	Strongly Agree or Agree
GAL possesses relevant advocacy skills	92%
GAL possesses requisite knowledge	93%
GAL familiar with community services	91%
GAL personally attends all court hearings	95%
GAL critically assesses department case plans & permanency plans	83%
GAL is respectful of others involved in the case	85%

OCR expended over \$19 million in attorney payments and litigation expenses in FY 15-16. The average cost per appointment during FY 14-15 was \$1,297. As in years past, the OCR spent less than 5% of its budget on its central administration.

Many of you report that case filings appear to be increasing and our data confirms those observations. Attorney appointments increased 1.26% in FY 14-15 over the number of FY 13-14 appointments. Dependency and Neglect appointments fell statewide by 5.2% while Delinquency and Truancy GAL appointments increased by 9.85% and 16.24%, respectively, this fiscal year. At right is a look at the trends in GAL appointments since July 1, 2009.

The report reviews the OCR's training program and the administrative functions of the agency. You may review the entire report on the OCR's website at <http://www.coloradochildrep.org/about-ocr/general-assembly-information/>.

Please contact Dorothy Macias at dorothymacias@coloradochildrep.org or her office line (720.351.4346) with any comments or questions. ♦





Announcements & Updates

GRID Updates Now Available!

The August 2015 update to the [Guided Reference in Dependency \(GRID\)](#) is now available in both electronic and paper form. Printed pocket part updates are available to all individuals who received the original bound GRID. A PDF version of the printed pocket part update is available for download [here](#).

OCR will have pocket part updates available for pickup at the [OCR 2015 Fall Conference](#) and will be disseminating the GRID updates at upcoming jurisdictional visits, meetings, and other contacts with attorneys and stakeholders. If you're interested in a hard copy and are unable to attend the OCR's fall conference, please complete a [Request Form](#).

The online [full PDF version of the GRID](#) now incorporates the 2015 updates into the text and eliminates the table of authorities and index; the PDF's search and bookmarking features enable quick access to relevant topics and law.

OCR Complaint Policy Amended

Following the September 8, 2015 Board Meeting, the OCR's Formal Complaint Procedure has been amended to include language addressing complaints concerning closed cases. Complaints regarding closed cases must now be filed within one year of the date the court terminated jurisdiction in the case. ♦

SPOTLIGHT ON *Education*



The [American Bar Association's Legal Center for Foster Care and Education website](#)

includes an interactive database of resources and documents related to the educational needs of children in foster care. The database allows attorneys and other child welfare professionals to search for specific information related to foster care and education.

Professionals can search by state for resources on the following topics:

- ✓ School Enrollment Stability and Continuity
- ✓ Foster Care Eligibility for McKinney-Vento
- ✓ Confidentiality and Information Sharing
- ✓ Education Decision-Making
- ✓ Special Education
- ✓ Equal Education Access and Opportunities
- ✓ Drop-out and Truancy
- ✓ School Discipline
- ✓ Education of Young Children Birth to Age Five
- ✓ Involving Youth in their Education Planning
- ✓ In-Court Education Advocacy
- ✓ In-School Education Advocacy
- ✓ Post-secondary Education
- ✓ Financing

Search results can also be narrowed by type, including studies/reports, legislation, direct advocacy tools, training documents, materials from education summits/forums/meetings, and many others. ♦



Financials: Budget & Billing



Thank you for your help in closing the books for Fiscal Year 14-15. The end-of-fiscal-year deadlines create pressures on your time and OCR appreciates your professionalism in meeting those short deadlines. As you know, the rate of billing in the first quarter of the fiscal year lead OCR to seek supplemental funding in January as we feared our budget would prove insufficient to pay attorney fees at the rate of billing OCR was experiencing. We reverted much of the \$1.5 million supplemental funding to the state's General Fund due to the efficiencies of your practice—in other words, OCR remained within its original approved budget. Because of the timing of the supplemental with the approval of our November 2014 budget request, the supplemental was rolled into the FY 15-16 budget. OCR plans to submit an FY 16-17 budget that essentially requests continuation of FY 16-17 funding.

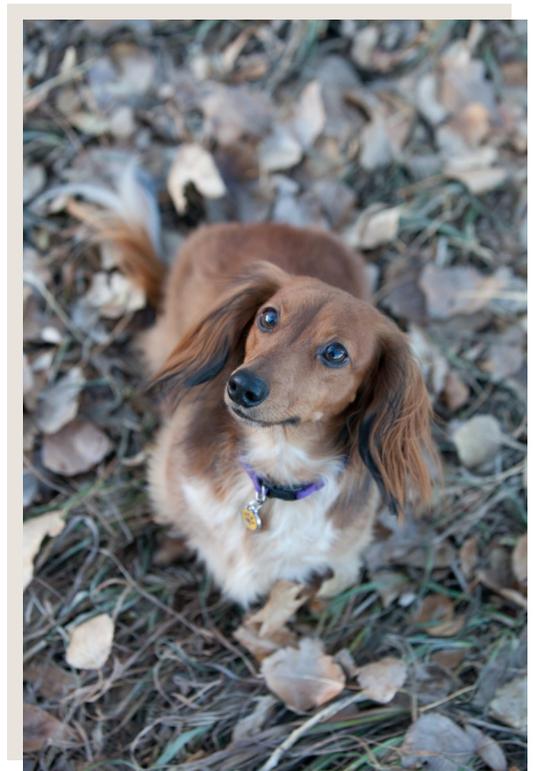
Updated Billing Policies & Procedures

Please note that July 2015 revisions to OCR's Billing Policies and Procedures have been posted on the OCR's website—please find the revised document at <http://www.coloradochildrep.org/attorney-center/billing/>.

- Attorneys must obtain OCR's **pre-approval to perform services under this agreement in excess of 12 hours per day**. Failure to obtain preapproval will result in nonpayment of such services and fees.
- **Maximum presumptive fees** established by the OCR for each case type are as follows:
 - ✓ Title 19- Dependency and Neglect: \$5,000
 - ✓ Title 19- Juvenile Delinquency and Direct file: \$2,000
 - ✓ Title 19- Paternity: \$1,250
 - ✓ Title 19- Other Matters (support, adoption, etc.): \$750
 - ✓ Title 14- Domestic Relations: \$1,250
 - ✓ Title 15- Probate: \$1,250
 - ✓ Title 22- Education (Truancy): \$750
 - ✓ Title 27- Mental Health: \$750
 - ✓ Appeals: \$3,000

Attorneys must receive OCR approval before exceeding the maximum presumptive excess fee thresholds.

- While OCR does not require attorneys to submit receipts for reimbursement for the actual cost of a child's meal up to \$10, attorneys are still required to **keep records of all expenses**.
- **If a case that requires indigence findings and an order of appointment**, enter that case in the correct numbering format into CARES before sending OCR the order of appointment. **In an audit of recent orders received by OCR, half of the cases had not been entered into CARES.** Please refer to the [DR/PAT Manual supplemental document](#) for detailed instructions. ♦





TRAINING RESOURCES



➤ **ABA Child Law Practice Article: Keeping Immigrant Families in the Child Protection System Together**

This article discusses a child in foster care who has a detained or deported parent and the concerns when a child welfare system and immigration enforcement must work together to meet the child's needs. This article provides an overview of the federal laws applicable to foster children facing a detained or deported parent including AFSA, Fostering Connections, MEPA, Foster Care Payments under IV-E, and ICE. It also provides practice tips and key questions for children's attorneys, parent attorneys, and child welfare agencies.

➤ **Children's Bureau Express: Pathways to College for Youth in Foster Care**

This report identifies policies and practices that can mitigate barriers for foster care youth attempting to achieve their postsecondary education goals. Specific hurdles such as lack of academic preparation, access to financial aid, and access to required documents are discussed and policy recommendations provided.

➤ **Toolkit Highlight: Youth in Court & Youth Empowerment Toolkit**

The OCR Youth in Court Toolkit and related resources are now available on the [OCR's online resource bank](#) under the title "Youth Empowerment" in Documents.

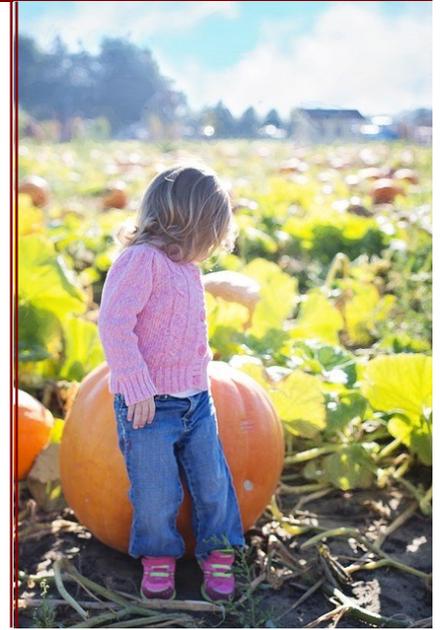
- ABA Center on Children and the Law - Youth Engagement Project.
- OCR Youth in Court Survey & Report.
- Youth Participation Report regarding youth aged 12 and older who attended a permanency planning or benchmark hearing in Colorado.
- Judicial Bench Cards that provide specific strategies to engage youth of various developmental levels.

➤ **The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)** released four research bulletins based on findings from the *Northwestern Juvenile Project*, which investigates the mental health needs and long-term outcomes of juvenile detainees. The Northwestern Juvenile Project complete bulletins series and e-books are available at: www.ojjdp.gov/publications/index.html.

- [*Detained Youth Processed in Juvenile and Adult Court: Psychiatric Disorders and Mental Health Needs*](#)
- [*Perceived Barriers to Mental Health Services Among Detained Youth*](#)
- [*Psychiatric Disorders in Youth After Detention*](#)
- [*Violent Death in Delinquent Youth After Detention*](#) ♦



TRAINING ALERTS



Upcoming Trainings

Additional details and training opportunities can be found in OCR's "Training Tuesdays" email bulletin! View training details, register for trainings, and/or subscribe to future email notices at tinyurl.com/trainingtues.

➔ [OCR Fall Conference 2015 - Solution-Focused Advocacy: Applying Recent Legal Reforms to Improve Case Outcomes](#)

Videos Online

Visit the [Training Materials page](#) of the OCR website to view these recently-added training videos and claim Home Study CLE credits:

➔ [OCR's New Attorney Orientation & Core Competencies for Dependency Attorneys](#)

➔ [GALs in Criminal Court: Protecting a Child's Right to Privacy](#)

➔ [OCR's Legislative & Legal Update Webinar](#) ♦

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Office of the Child's Representative (OCR) is to provide competent and effective legal representation to Colorado's children involved in the court system because they have been abused and neglected, impacted by high conflict parenting time disputes, or charged with delinquent acts and without a parent able to provide relevant information to the court or protect their best interests during the proceedings.

OCR Board of Directors

Terraine Bailey, Speaker Mark Ferrandino, Lynne Hufnagel (Co-Chair), Senator Cheri Jahn, Peg Rudden, Gwen Schooley, Joseph Wallis, (Former) Senator Al White (Co-Chair), Marc Winokur, Victoria Black (Youth Member)

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR	Sheri Danz
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	Mark Teska
STAFF ATTORNEY & LEGISLATIVE LIAISON	Dorothy Macias
STAFF ATTORNEY	Amanda Donnelly
STAFF ATTORNEY & TRAINING COORD.	Ashlee Jones
ACCOUNTANT	Katie Irwin
ATTORNEY REIMBURSEMENT & HR MGR	Melanie Jannicelli
INFORMATION SYSTEMS MANAGER	Rebecca Garrison
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	Amanda Parker

