



## Office of Children and Family Services

KATHY HOCHUL  
Governor

SHEILA J. POOLE  
Commissioner

October 17, 2022

Dear Commissioners:

As you are aware, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) has identified mobile response units as a strategy to develop and operate coordinated programs of community-based family support services and family preservation services. Mobile response services can provide in-home or in-community intervention to prevent child maltreatment among families at risk, assure children's safety within the home, and preserve integrity of the family unit in which children have been maltreated, when the family's needs can be safely addressed effectively in the home.

The mobile response is a demonstration project to evaluate the improved outcomes for children and families when intensive coordinated supports are provided in a targeted manner. At a minimum, the mobile response vans must be staffed with a licensed clinician, a behavioral health specialist, a family and/or peer advocate, a service navigation specialist, or a domestic violence (DV) advocate. OCFS is providing this current round of funding to support the DV advocate (**see Attachment A, Domestic Violence Advocate Allocations**). A DV advocate is any person who is acting under the direction and supervision of a licensed and approved domestic violence program and has satisfied the training standards required by OCFS.<sup>1</sup>

Domestic violence remains one of the primary reasons a family interfaces with the child welfare system. OCFS' goal is to provide immediate and relevant mobile response support to parents and caregivers, which will empower them to assist their child(ren) at home and mitigate disruptions, thus supporting the healing process.

It is important that DV advocates be incorporated seamlessly into the continuum of services as part of your mobile response services pilot. As a member of the mobile response team, the DV advocate will work with the parent or caregiver and child, when DV factors are present, to reduce or de-escalate identified behaviors and may provide intervention services to address any immediate concerns as well as ongoing needs. As a member of the mobile response team, the mobile response DV advocate will focus on the core services<sup>2</sup> of

- counseling,
- safety planning,
- community education/outreach activities,
- advocacy,
- language access,
- information and referral services, and
- support groups.

Services will be available during and after business hours and will be responsive to immediate needs. Services will also be available for ongoing needs for families, including domestic violence survivors.

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<sup>1</sup> 18NYCRR Part 462.5.

<sup>2</sup> 18NYCRR Part 462.4.

It is essential that DV advocates participate in any required training and credentialing, and receive ongoing supervision and professional development to support their efficacy as response team members.

Funding provided must be utilized for the hiring of a full-time DV advocate. Funds can also be used for the cost of related salaries, fringe benefits, and travel expenditures.

To receive the allocated funds, please complete and submit **Attachment B, Attestation of Use**, to: [FamilyFirstNY@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:FamilyFirstNY@ocfs.ny.gov) by **October 28, 2022**.

Also required is the completion and submission of **Attachment C, Annual Program Report Template and Instructions** to: [FamilyFirstNY@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:FamilyFirstNY@ocfs.ny.gov) by **September 30, 2023**.

The subaward identification reference is **Attachment D, Attachment for U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Grants**

### Claiming Requirements

Claims for these funds must be submitted as described below. These funds are to be used only to reimburse expenditures beginning September 1, 2022, and ending August 31, 2023, and final accepted in the Automated Claiming System (ACS) by November 31, 2023.

Expenditures for the mobile response DV advocate project should be claimed through the RF17 claim package for special project claiming. These costs are first identified on the RF2A claim package as F17 functional costs and reported in the F17 column on the LDSS-923 *Cost Allocation Schedule of Payments Administrative Expenses Other Than Salaries* and the LDSS-2347, Schedule D, *DSS Administrative Expenses Allocation and Distribution by Function and Program*. After final accepting the RF2A claim package, the individual project costs are then reported under the project label "Mobile Response DV Advocate" on the LDSS-4975A, RF17 Worksheet, *Distribution of Allocated Costs to Other Reimbursable Programs*.

Salaries, fringe benefits, staff counts, and central services costs are directly entered on the LDSS-4975A RF17 Worksheet, *Distribution of Allocated Costs to Other Reimbursable Programs*, while overhead costs are automatically brought over from the RF2A, Schedule D, and distributed based upon the proportion of number of staff assigned to this project. Employees not working all their time on the mobile response DV advocate project must maintain time studies to support the salary and fringe benefit costs allocated to the program.

Non-salary administrative costs are reported with the appropriate object of expense codes on the LDSS-923B, Summary-Administrative (page 1), *Schedule of Payments for Expenses Other Than Salaries for Other Reimbursable Programs*. Program costs should be reported as object of expense 37-Special Project Program Expense on the LDSS-923B, Summary-Program (page 2), *Schedule of Payments for Expenses Other Than Salaries for Other Reimbursable Programs*.

Total project costs should be reported on the LDSS-4975, *Monthly Statement of Special Project Claims Federal and State Aid (RF17)*, as 100% federal share. For each local department of social services (LDSS), the expenditures reported for *Family Peer Support Services* will be reimbursed up to the amount of the district's allocation. Further instructions for completing the time studies, the LDSS-923 and Schedule D, and RF17 claim package are found in Chapters 4, 7, and 18,

respectively, of the *Fiscal Reference Manual* (FRM), Volume 3. The FRM is available online at <http://otda.state.ny.net/bfdm/finance/>.

### **Contacts**

Questions pertaining to the allocations may be directed to:

Shonna Clinton, Local Operations Manager, Bureau of Budget Management

(518) 474-1361, [Shonna.Clinton@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:Shonna.Clinton@ocfs.ny.gov)

Any Automated Claiming System (ACS) claiming questions should be directed to the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA):

Lauren Horn (Regions I-V), Bureau of Financial Services

518-474-7549, [otda.sm.Field\\_Ops.I-IV@otda.ny.gov](mailto:otda.sm.Field_Ops.I-IV@otda.ny.gov)

Domestic violence adversely impacts family safety and well-being and puts children at increased risk for maltreatment. Increased collaboration between child welfare and DV advocates can greatly increase safety and foster healthier outcomes for families. OCFS is pleased to welcome the addition of a DV advocate as a valued member of the mobile response pilot program.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Ghartey Ogundimu', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lisa Ghartey Ogundimu, Esq., Deputy Commissioner  
Division of Child Welfare and Community Services

## Attachment A

### Domestic Violence Advocate Allocations

District	Allocation
Albany	\$60,000
Monroe	\$60,000
Onondaga	\$60,000
Westchester	\$60,000
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>\$240,000</b>

## Attachment B

### Attestation of Use

This is to certify that the Albany Co. department of social services will use the allocation of these funds authorized in the amount of \$ 60,000 to Contract with DV advocate (insert brief description of use of funds). Such funds will not be used to supplant any other state or local funds. Claims for reimbursement under this appropriation will not be submitted for the same type and level of funding covered by any other state or locally authorized appropriation.

#### Plan for use of funds – check all that apply:

- ☐ Funds will be used by the local department of social services.
- ☒ Funds will be used to contract with a service provider.
- ☐ Funds will be used to hire a full-time domestic violence advocate

  
Commissioner's signature

10/19/22  
Date

Email completed **Attachment B** to [FamilyFirstNY@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:FamilyFirstNY@ocfs.ny.gov) or to Gail Geohagen-Pratt at [Gail.Geohagen-Pratt@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:Gail.Geohagen-Pratt@ocfs.ny.gov) by **October 28, 2022**.