

Department for Children, Youth and Families

Backup Material for Authorization to submit a Proposal for available funding through the Office of Children and Family Services for Co-location/Collaboration of a Behavioral Health Worker and Child Protective Services

The Department respectfully requests Legislative authorization to submit a proposal for grant funding from the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). There is availability of federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 (CARA) fund in State Fiscal Year 2025-2026. The purpose of this funding is to help states improve their response to families and infants affected by substance Use disorders (both alcohol and drugs). OCFS has provided district with the allocation amount for the next three years (attachment A). Albany County identified allocation is \$90,000 for 2025-2026.

OCFS issued a Local Commissioners Memorandum (LCM) on October 3, 2025, to inform local social services districts about the availability of funds for child protective services (CPS) and partnerships with behavioral health consultant, public health nurse, early childhood specialist, peer recovery specialist, and/or parent advocate to work alongside CPS staff. The funds may be used to hire or contract for per diem behavioral health consultant, public health nurse, early childhood specialist, peer recovery specialist, and/or parent advocate to support the work of CPS staff. Please note due to the expedited timeframe in which the Department needed to submit the grant application the Department did not have sufficient time to request Legislative authorization for such grant application prior to submission.

The Department for Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) recognizes the needs and challenges that often beset children and families that interface in both the Child Welfare system as well as the Substance abuse system. The structure of DCYF as an agency that focuses on integrated services, and strengthening and supporting families is in alignment with this initiative. The opportunity to implement strategies to improve the response to families and infants affected by substance use disorders. In New York State the prevalence of parental alcohol/drug misuse is substantial; 16% of indicated reports had a substantial allegation of parent drug/alcohol misuse.

The Department recognizes the enormous benefit of utilizing a part-time behavioral health consultant to work alongside the CPS caseworkers can enhance our ability to engage with families affected by substance use disorder and support the parent's recovery process.