

State of Alaska FY2002 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Health and Social Services
Office of Public Advocacy
Component

Component: Office of Public Advocacy

Contact: Janet Clarke, Director, Administrative Services

Tel: (907) 465-1630 **Fax:** (907) 465-2499 **E-mail:** Janet_Clarke@health.state.ak.us

Component Mission

The mission of the Division of Family and Youth Services is to protect children who are abused and neglected or at risk of abuse and neglect.

Component Services Provided

The Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) is appointed by the court to act as an independent advocate for a child's best interests in a child protection proceeding. The GAL does not make decisions about a child's future, but makes recommendations to the court to enable the court to make the best possible decision. The GAL's recommendations are designed to ensure that the child is protected, that appropriate services are provided to the child and the family, and that a permanent plan is implemented for the child in a timely manner.

The GAL is responsible to independently gather information about a case, monitor and facilitate progress of the case through the system, insure all relevant information is available to the court, and seek cooperative solutions to the child's situation within the scope of the child's welfare.

Component Goals and Strategies

- 1) TO PROVIDE GUARDIAN AD LITEMS FOR NEW CHILD IN NEED OF AID (CINA) CASES IN ORDER TO ASSIST IN INCREASING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN ADOPTED OR PLACED IN PERMANENT HOMES.

Key Component Issues for FY2001 – 2002

Federal and State law, including Alaska's HB 375 (Chapter 99, SLA98) mandate shortened time frames for children to be placed into permanent placements. The changes were to encourage and enable the State to emphasize permanency planning and to place children who are in State custody into stable, safe, supportive, and permanent homes without unnecessary delay.

The Child Protection Legal Assistance BRU, created within DFYS in FY1999, strengthens the State's ability to process Child in Need of Aid (CINA) cases through the legal system to increase the number of children legally eligible to be adopted. This BRU provides funding for RSA's with the Public Defender Agency and the Office of Public Advocacy for processing Child in Need of Aide cases. The Public Defender Agency provides attorney resources to concentrate on CINA cases and the Office of Public Advocacy provides Guardian Ad Litem for these new cases.

DFYS maintains RSA's with the Department of Law and the Court System to address the problem of backlogged adoption court cases. The Division anticipates that the services provided by these agencies will continue to be a significant factor in Subsidized Adoption and Guardianship caseload growth into FY2002.

Major Component Accomplishments for FY2000

CHILDREN RELEASED FROM DFYS CUSTODY TO PERMANENT PLACEMENTS

- A) FY1998 105 children were released to the custodianship of permanent placements
- B) FY1999 112 children were released to the custodianship of permanent placements
- C) FY2000 180 children were released to the custodianship of permanent placements

CHILDREN WHO HAD PARENTAL RIGHTS TERMINATED

- A) FY1998 48 children had parental rights terminated

- B) FY1999 145 children had parental rights terminated
- C) FY2000 351 children had parental rights terminated

Statutory and Regulatory Authority

- AS 47.10.088 Termination of parental rights and responsibilities.
- AS 47.10.086 Reasonable efforts.
- AS47.10.050 Appointment of guardian ad litem or attorney.
- AS 25.24.310 Representation of minor.
- AS 47.10.080 Judgments and orders.

Key Performance Measures for FY2002

Measure: This component is for pass through funds and the performance measures for the Division of Family and Youth Services are set up under the Purchased Services and Front Line Social Workers BRU.

(Not yet addressed by Legislature.)

Status of FY2001 Performance Measures

	<i>Achieved</i>	<i>On track</i>	<i>Too soon to tell</i>	<i>Not likely to achieve</i>	<i>Needs modification</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This component is for pass through funds and the performance measures for the Division of Family and Youth Services is set up under the Purchased Services and the Family and Youth Services BRU. 			X		

Office of Public Advocacy
Component Financial Summary

All dollars in thousands

	FY2000 Actuals	FY2001 Authorized	FY2002 Governor
Non-Formula Program:			
Component Expenditures:			
71000 Personal Services	0.0	0.0	0.0
72000 Travel	0.0	0.0	0.0
73000 Contractual	185.0	185.0	185.0
74000 Supplies	0.0	0.0	0.0
75000 Equipment	0.0	0.0	0.0
76000 Land/Buildings	0.0	0.0	0.0
77000 Grants, Claims	0.0	0.0	0.0
78000 Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0
Expenditure Totals	185.0	185.0	185.0
Funding Sources:			
1004 General Fund Receipts	185.0	185.0	185.0
Funding Totals	185.0	185.0	185.0

Office of Public Advocacy
Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2002

None

Summary of Component Budget Changes
From FY2001 Authorized to FY2002 Governor

All dollars in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2001 Authorized	185.0	0.0	0.0	185.0
FY2002 Governor	185.0	0.0	0.0	185.0