



DAVID SANDERS, PH.D.  
Director

County of Los Angeles  
**DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**  
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Board of Supervisors

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November 9, 2004

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman  
Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair Pro Tem  
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Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David Sanders, Ph. D.   
Director

**OCTOBER 26, 2004 BOARD SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA ITEM #28-B RE: DCFS  
PHONE ABUSE - CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN**

This is in response to your Boards order of October 26, 2004 directing the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to provide a corrective action plan to ensure that every social worker is visiting the children as mandated by Departmental policy and to develop a plan to prevent future phone abuses by employees. This order was the result of a report by the Department of Auditor Controller dated, September 29, 2004, that substantiated fraudulent conduct by a former employee of the DCFS.

We have reviewed the investigation referenced above as well as the Department's investigation that led to the discovery of the fraudulent case work documentation. The Department took immediate corrective action upon learning of the fraudulent and abusive use of the referenced calling card, by reporting this to the Los Angeles County Auditor Controllers Office of County Investigations per policy and immediately de-activated the calling card. Attached for your review is a confidential summary of the events that occurred relative to this employee.

The Department has reviewed your Boards directive that our corrective action address a plan to ensure that every social worker is visiting children as mandated by Department policy. To comply with this directive, the Department will take the following actions:

- I. An immediate re-issuance of our policy related to visitation requirements will be widely distributed and made a priority topic of review in all forthcoming staff meetings within offices in which case work is carried out.

- II. Children Social Workers will be reminded that true, accurate, and timely documentation of all contacts with and about children and families that we serve must be adhered to as a matter of best practice and priority responsibility of their assignment.
- III. Supervising Children Social Workers will be reminded that, per current policy, they must ensure that staff whom they supervise are complying with completion of contacts including regularly conducted quality visits pursuant to Departmental policy with accurate and timely documentation of those visits.
- IV. Assistant Regional Administrators and Regional Administrators will be directed to utilize the Departments internal web site, "LAKIDS Utilization Reports", to regularly monitor visitation compliance within their managed areas. By utilizing LAKIDS generated reports for this purpose, the process evaluates compliance on 100% of the caseloads. Managers will review a monthly random sample of cases to assess compliance with policy. Managers will take immediate corrective action when non-compliance is assessed inclusive of equitable distribution of cases, individual staff direction and other action as warranted while taking into consideration policy, civil service rules and applicable laws, as well as Memorandum of Understandings with Labor Organizations, in order to achieve this Board directive.

In response to the Boards Order for a plan to prevent future phone abuses by employees, the Department has completed a thorough review of its current policies and practices of monitoring cellular phone and calling card usage. Our corrective action plan developed to prevent future phone abuse is as follows:

- A. Effective immediately upon learning of the abuses that led to the referenced County investigation, the Department took action to restrict all international access to Deputy Director level employees and above (April of 2004).
- B. The Department's Bureau of Budgets and Finance will work with the Internal Services Department (ISD) in reviewing our procedures and make suggestions for improved monitoring including the use of electronic transfer of information to expedite review of all cellular phone and calling card usage.
- C. Our Department's Personnel Section will notify our Procurement Section of any employees who have terminated employment within one business day, upon which time the Procurement Section will take action to immediately terminate any calling card or cellular phone service issued to that employee. As a back-up, the

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Procurement Section will receive a monthly list of employees who have terminated from County service for review and assurance of any action that needs to be taken.

- D. Office Heads remain responsible for distributing bills to employees with instructions to review all use of calling cards and cellular phone service to ensure the County is only paying for these devices when used for conducting County business and to carefully review any bill that reaches or exceeds \$200.00. Office Heads will retrieve all County equipment from employees separating from service prior to the end of that service, including but not limited to cellular phones and calling cards.
- E. A notification to all staff will be prepared and immediately distributed to remind staff that the use of all County equipment, inclusive of cellular phones and calling cards are limited for the purpose of conducting County business, and to remind them that abuse of this policy by any employee could be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Thank you for this opportunity to address this very important issue. If you have any questions, please contact me at (213) 351-5600 or your staff may contact Helen Berberian, Board Relations Manager at (213) 351-5530.

DS:AC:pc

c: Chief Administrative Office (cover memo only)  
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors (cover memo only)  
County Counsel

Attachment