County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, California 90020
(213) 351-5602

DAVID SANDERS, PH.D.
Director

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District
YVONNE BRATHWAITE BURKE
Second District
ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District
DON KNABE
Fourth District
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

June 12, 2006

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chair Pro Tem
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: David Sanders, Ph.D.
Director

MAY 10, 2006 BUDGET HEARINGS: DCFS VACANCY STATUS REPORT

On May 10, 2006, during the Board's Special Meeting on the 2006-07 Proposed Budget, testimony was heard from SEIU Local 660 representative Lonnie Woods regarding inadequate staffing and salary levels within the Department. The Board instructed the Department to:

1. Report back on the number of budgeted positions that have been funded and remain vacant; and,
2. Report on the progress and challenges in filling its vacancies.

On April 4, 2006, the Board authorized the Department to fill 301 interim ordinance items to improve safety and permanency outcomes for at-risk children and families. The department is working with the Department of Human Resources (DHR) with significant effect on filling its vacancies and with union leadership on the most effective allocation of staffing resources.

Since April, much progress has been made in filling the 301 interim ordinance positions as well as additional vacant positions represented by Local 660. The Department has hired:

(1) 162 (100%) of its full-time Children's Social Worker (CSW) positions. With the June 12, 2006 academy, there will be zero CSW vacancies;
(2) 40 (66%) of its 61 Intermediate Typist Clerk (ITC) vacancies. At the direction of the Board, the department reserved 21 ITC items for Career Development Interns and is awaiting candidates from DHR;
(3) 55 (66%) of its 83 Eligibility Worker (EW) vacancies;
(4) 27 (84%) of its 32 Supervising Children's Social Worker (SCSW) vacancies; and
(5) 5 (100%) or of its 5 hard-to-fill Public Health Nurse vacancies.

We are pursuing an aggressive staffing plan to keep pace with our CSW projected and budgeted requirements with academies scheduled for June 26, 2006; July 17, 2006; August 7, 2006; and August 21, 2006. The July 17 and August 21 academies focus on the hard-to-fill Antelope Valley needs. We are working diligently with the universities and are pleased to report that 105 Master of Social Work (MSW) stipend graduates have chosen DCFS by making formal applications for the summer academies. We anticipate more MSWs as the graduation and application process continues in coming weeks. As you know, MSWs are necessary in staffing our adoption positions, which are central to the Board approved staffing accretions to the FY 2006-07 Proposed County Budget.

While we have made great strides in filling our clerical positions overall, we continue to experience challenges in maintaining staffing levels for clerical support in the Antelope Valley, West Los Angeles and Santa Clarita offices and our 24-hour operations. The supply of clerical candidates is made more difficult by the fact that many County departments are using the same DHR-promulgated registers of candidates. This highly competitive situation together with expensive commuting means positions in high demand locations go unfilled for long periods, while we await more names from DHR.

We are also working with DHR to recruit and select qualified applicants for specialized jobs in Accounting (8 vacancies) and Information Technology (12 vacancies). To enable accurate job announcements and selection procedures, job analyses are in process for these important positions.

On June 6, 2006, the Department met with the leadership of Local 660 and agreed to continue constructive dialogue on the implementation of the Clerical Workload/Workflow Study completed by Walter McDonald and Associates, and the training and deployment of clerical staffing resources. During the meeting, we compared staffing data with the union representatives and discovered that the Union's information was not the most up-to-date; more current information demonstrated staffing progress. We are confident that our ongoing meetings with union representatives and frequent communications will help us integrate our work to support the work of our line operations. We have agreed to keep the union in the communications loop, and enlist their assistance as needed.

For any questions, please feel free to contact me at (213) 351-5600 or your staff may contact Helen Berberian, Board Relations Manager at (213) 351-5530.

DS:AC:
SN:DW:am

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors