

# The Agency

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## Office of the Child Advocate

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### Agency Operations

The Office of the Child Advocate is charged with fulfilling a statutory mandate to protect the legal, civil and special rights of all children and youth involved in the care of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). In so doing, the Office strives to improve conditions and circumstances through monitoring, compliance, and advocacy.

The office is staffed with 5.8 authorized full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. The office is responsible for oversight of DCYF care for 5,300 children and yearly monitoring site visits to monitor their care at 120 group homes and residential programs in the state. The office also provides direct legal representation for at least 35-40 children voluntarily placed in state care.

The office reviews and monitors systematic and individual issues related to 250 residents at the Rhode Island Training School. It provides direct oversight and on-site visits on a weekly basis. The Office of the Child Advocate also files Victim Compensation claims for children who have been physically and/or sexually assaulted and are in the care of the State.

### Agency Objectives

To monitor the Department of Children, Youth and Families to ensure that it offers children in its care adequate protection and quality services, while affording these children respect for their individual rights and dignity. These activities include, but are not limited to, public education, legislative advocacy, investigation, and litigation.

To review and make recommendations regarding the Department of Children, Youth and Families procedures; to investigate institutional abuse allegations and child fatalities; to provide information and referral on matters relating to children; participate in voluntary admissions procedures; to monitor child placements; to conduct annual site visits at residential/group care programs; and to review the Department of Children, Youth and Families' compliance with day-care licensing laws.

### Statutory History

In 1980, the General Assembly created the Office of the Child Advocate. Its powers and duties are codified in R.I.G.L. 42-73. The office of the Child Advocate possesses a statutory right of access, including subpoena power, to all providers, the Family Court, Department of Children, Youth and Families, and law enforcement records. There is also a right of physical access to all child-care programs and children in care.

In 1992, the office of the Child Advocate's responsibilities with respect to children in state care were statutorily expanded to include review of child fatality cases and representation of child victims of crime pursuant to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act.

# The Budget

## Office of the Child Advocate

	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Enacted	FY 2010 Revised	FY 2011 Recommended
<b>Expenditures By Object</b>					
Personnel	467,832	501,619	571,061	543,161	576,202
Operating Supplies and Expenses	16,059	9,557	17,087	14,998	14,661
Aid To Local Units Of Government	-	-	-	-	-
Assistance, Grants and Benefits	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal: Operating Expenditures	<b>\$483,891</b>	<b>\$511,176</b>	<b>\$588,148</b>	<b>\$558,159</b>	<b>\$590,863</b>
Capital Purchases and Equipment	1,558	829	-	-	-
Debt Service	-	-	-	-	-
Operating Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$485,449</b>	<b>\$512,005</b>	<b>\$588,148</b>	<b>\$558,159</b>	<b>\$590,863</b>
<b>Expenditures By Funds</b>					
General Revenue	445,443	501,518	547,048	512,265	545,058
Federal Funds	40,006	10,487	41,100	45,894	45,805
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$485,449</b>	<b>\$512,005</b>	<b>\$588,148</b>	<b>\$558,159</b>	<b>\$590,863</b>
<b>FTE Authorization</b>					
	<b>5.8</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>5.8</b>
<b>Agency Measures</b>					
Minorities as a Percentage of the Workforce	18.0%	18.0%	33.0%	33.0%	33.0%
Females as a Percentage of the Workforce	100.0%	100.0%	83.0%	83.0%	83.0%
Persons with Disabilities as a Percentage of the Workforce	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Program Measures</b>					
Percentage of Inspected Facilities Compliant with Standards and Care	90.0%	90.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%