

RESOLUTION NO. 183 -2019, ENSURING ADEQUATE STAFFING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES' FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES ADMINISTRATION, CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES INVESTIGATING BUREAU, AND CHILD PROTECTIVE AND PREVENTATIVE SERVICES BUREAU IN SUFFOLK COUNTY

WHEREAS, caseworkers in the Department of Social Services' Family and Children's Services Administration, Child Protective Services Investigations Bureau, and Preventative Services Bureau perform critical work to keep children safe from abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, while County employees dedicate their lives to the protection of children and the most vulnerable, it is sometimes difficult for the County to retain sufficient staffing to ensure appropriate caseloads; and

WHEREAS, multiple studies have shown that the optimal caseload for persons providing services to children and families is 12-15 per employee to ensure the caseworker's attention to each case and to mitigate the emotional toll that performing such work; and

WHEREAS, while the County typically averages 15 to 20 cases per caseworker these numbers fluctuate over the course of the year and can grow as high as 29 cases for highly skilled and experienced caseworkers during peak demand periods; and

WHEREAS, the County has a long standing policy to automatically backfill positions when vacancies occur in the Family, Child and Adult Case Services bureau; and

WHEREAS, in order to ensure that there is sufficient information for policymakers to make determinations regarding County resources and ensure appropriate staffing, the Department of Social Services should regularly report to the Legislature on caseloads and staffing turnover for Family and Children's Services Administration caseworkers; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature should also receive monthly notifications specifically indicating each instance any Child Protective Services Investigations Bureau or Child Protective and Preventative Services Bureau caseworker has a caseload in excess of 15 cases at any given time so that there is greater transparency and policy makers have the information necessary to ensure appropriate working conditions for these employees; now, therefore be it

1st RESOLVED, that the Department of Social Services is hereby directed to provide written reporting on a quarterly basis to the Legislature's Education and Human Services Committee; and be it further

2nd RESOLVED, that each quarterly report shall include, but not be limited to, information regarding the number of Child Protective Services Investigations and Child Protection Services and Preventative Services cases handled by the bureau in the preceding three month period, the average number of cases assigned to caseworkers at any given time during that period, the actual assigned caseload for each caseworker during that period, the

number of caseworkers who left the Family, Child and Adult Case Services bureau during the preceding three month period and the number of caseworkers hired during that same period; and be it further

3rd **RESOLVED**, that the quarterly reports shall be filed on January 15th, April 15th, July 15th and October 15th of each year; and be it further

4th **RESOLVED**, that the Commissioner of the Department of Social Services shall provide an oral report to the Education and Human Services Committee no later than March 15th of each year, reviewing the preceding year's caseload statistics for the Family and Children's Services Division; and be it further

5th **RESOLVED**, that the Department of Social Services shall maintain a record, to be submitted to the County Legislature and Clerk of the Legislature on a monthly basis, that documents each specific instance in which a Child Protective Services Investigations Bureau and/or Child Protective and Preventative Services Bureau caseworker is assigned a caseload in excess of 15 cases at any given time; and be it further

6th **RESOLVED**, that the Department of Social Services shall notify the Chair of the Education and Human Services Committee of the County Legislature each time a Family and Children's Services Caseworker retires or otherwise leaves service in the bureau; and be it further

7th **RESOLVED**, that this Legislature, being the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) lead agency, hereby finds and determines that this resolution constitutes a Type II action pursuant to Section 617.5(c)(26) of Title 6 of the NEW YORK CODE OF RULES AND REGULATIONS (6 NYCRR) and within the meaning of Section 8-0109(2) of the NEW YORK ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW as routine or continuing administration and management not including new programs or major reordering of priorities that may affect the environment, and the Suffolk County Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is hereby directed to circulate any appropriate SEQRA notices of determination of non-applicability or non-significance in accordance with this resolution.

DATED: March 5, 2019

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Dennis M. Cohen
Chief Deputy County Executive of Suffolk County

Date: March 7, 2019