



**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

Matthew G. Bevin
Governor

Division of Communications
275 E. Main Street, 5C-A
Frankfort, KY 40621
(502) 564-6786
Fax: (502) 564-0274
www.chfs.ky.gov

Vickie Yates Brown Glisson
Secretary

Statewide News Release

Media Contact: Doug Hogan, 502-564-6786, ext. 3467;
or Anya Armes Weber, ext. 3104

State Hotline Gives Parents Free Legal Help for Custody and Visitation Issues

FRANKFORT, Ky. (May 1, 2017) – A new telephone hotline gives qualifying parents free legal assistance related to their custody and visitation concerns. The toll-free Custody and Visitation Hotline number is 1-844-673-3470. Phone lines are open Monday-Friday: 9 a.m.-noon and 1-3 p.m. Eastern time.

The Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) Office of Child Support Enforcement (CSE) has an agreement with the Legal Aid Society (LAS) to operate the “Custody and Visitation” Hotline. The statewide service is for eligible parents, on an income-based scale, who have concerns regarding custody and visitation issues with their children.

Steve Veno, Commissioner of the CHFS Department for Income Services, which oversees the CSE, said an LAS attorney will handle all hotline calls and provide legal advice or assistance to callers such as how to file a motion, how to file or change a child custody or visitation order in the appropriate court and how to work through visitation and custody issues.

“We have heard from many parents who ask about access to legal help, so we know the need is there,” Veno said. “Our agency isn’t able to address these issues, but now there is a resource for parents with simple legal questions or deeper concerns. We anticipate a lot of parents will take advantage of this new resource.”

LAS attorneys cannot file legal pleadings, appear in court or address child support issues.

Funding for the hotline comes from a grant from the federal Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration for Children and Families and provides for initial operation of the service through June 2018. CSE and LAS staff will meet regularly to evaluate the program, address challenges and ensure progress.

“Helping parents with their custody and visitation questions will give them more peace of mind,” concluded CHFS Secretary Vickie Yates Brown Glisson. “In turn, this will help children. The connection between parents having a relationship with their children and financially supporting their children is strong. Collection of court-ordered child support payments is another integral part of the Office of Child Support Enforcement’s mission.”

While this partnership deals specifically with custody and visitation issues, a number of separate resources are also available for parents dealing with child support issues.

The Child Support Enforcement Hotline - 800-248-1163 - is available from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern time. The Child Support Interactive Voice Response Payment Line - 800-443-1576 – is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Kentucky Child Support Interactive website - <https://csws.chfs.ky.gov/csws/> - is available for parents to access information about their cases and to make payments.

For more information about Kentucky Child Support Enforcement, log on to <http://chfs.ky.gov/dis/cse.htm>.

-30-

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services, the Department for Public Health, and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.