

"The Advocate"

OFFICE OF OMBUDSMAN AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW (OAR)
KENTUCKY CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES (CHFS)



CHFS News!!

REMEMBER: LOGO CONTEST!

Looking for a creative artist to design a logo for the Office of Ombudsman and Administrative Review". Submit entries to Executive Director: smulder@ky.gov

Exciting News!!

The Hearing Officers of the Families and Children’s Administrative Hearings Branch have seen an increase in appeal requests. However, the SNAP team has maintained over a 90% timeliness rate even with a 30% increase in appeal requests. The non-SNAP team has increase their timeliness significantly over last year. While working at home, the F&C Branch has maintained high productivity levels!

Very Important

**SUBMISSION TO THE
OAR NEWSLETTER
(ARTICLES AND STAFF
RECOGNITIONS) CAN BE
EMAILED BY THE 15TH OF
THE MONTH TO MS.
CAROLYN VOSE AT**

Carolyn.Vose@ky.gov



COVID Responses

Governor Andy Beshear declared by executive order a “state of emergency” on March 6, 2020 due to COVID-19. By the end of March, most staff within state government were telecommuting and working from home. As the COVID-19 became a medical pandemic across the world, the Cabinet made several changes in the way we provide services to Kentuckians. Dr. Ursula Mullins joined the Office of the Secretary to gather data and document those changes across the Cabinet as we will be considering how some of those changes will help us better serve after the state of emergency ends. Dr. Mullins provided an outline some of following changes (see document):

- Telehealth mental health services
- Presumptive Eligibility for Medicaid benefits
- Online Staff meetings using MS Teams
- New phone system to receive live calls from home
- Suspension of in-person interviews and hearings
- Increase SNAP benefits
- Increase in meals to KY elderly and children
- New vision for CHFS (more info forthcoming)



Farewell and Congratulations!

Laken Albrink, the Executive Advisor for Constituent Services in CHFS-OOAR will be leaving CHFS at the end of the month to take a position as Assistant Professor of Legal Studies at Morehead State University. This is the same undergraduate program from which she graduated. Laken began her career in private practice in Maysville, KY after obtaining her Juris Doctorate from the University of

Kentucky. Laken has done an excellent job as the liaison between CHFS and the KY legislators and Governor’s Office, especially during the uptick of COVID-19 contacts. Just recently, she received the following comment from a Kentucky citizen in desperate need of help: “Thank you again, Laken, for being so nice and just for listening! I appreciate it a lot!” We wish her the best!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Bob Blackburn has an MBA from the University of Kentucky and has been with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services for 22 years. In addition to being the administrator of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for over 20 years, Bob serves as the Small Business Ombudsman, responds to questions from CHFS Listens inbox, and serves on the CHFS Regulations and Legislative Committee. Bob works hard each day with a smile on his face and is a joy to work alongside.

Welcome new staff Imelda “Emy” Pastrano! She has a background in biology and medicine as is an Integrative Nutrition Health Coach. Her professional background includes adjunct professor at National College (Microbiology), Disability Adjudicator, Trainer and Medical Consultant Supervisor at the Department of Disability Determinations. She has almost twenty years of experience with the CHFS under DDS. She lives in Lexington with husband, Rennel and her daughters, Briana and Kayla.



WORD OF THE MONTH

Impartial - not partial or biased: treating or affecting all equally. Synonym- Equitable; Antonym-Prejudice. www.merriam-webster.com