

# The Advocate

## OOAR Springs into Action in Season of Renewal

### FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

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It's Springtime! Can you feel it?

Spring is in the air! And just like the season of Spring, with in the Office of Ombudsman and Administrative Review (OOAR) there is a sense of new life and renewal in the atmosphere. In March, we processed 7,310 inquiries/investigations (4235 COVID Related) for the Cabinet. Though these numbers continue to be higher than typical pre-COVID-19, we are experiencing some relief. COVID-19 Inquiries continue to decline, vaccines are plentiful, and OOAR is strategic in assisting Kentuckians find options across the state to get vaccinated and participate in the pandemic recovery plan. Great job team!

Spring is also a season of renewal; and in that spirit, we are renewing our focus on Racial Equity, which is one of the 5 Pillars of Service for the Cabinet for Health and Family Services: Equity, Health and Well-being, Structural Economic Support, Resilient Individuals and Communities and Operational Excellence. As we revive our efforts around Racial Equity, look forward to more communication and engagement around the subject. Our goal is to **normalize** conversations and considerations of Racial Equity as a lens to assess our services and support in all areas for all people. Here is a link to the video of the 07/27/20 OOAR meeting as a refresher on the focus of our work together: <https://web.microsoftstream.com/video/1bfd7eb-28ef-4640-b295-cf6c11eeecba>

I invite you to embrace and enjoy this new season of renewal in OOAR! Let's Spring Forward together!

### **Upcoming Class**— May 6, 2021 from 2-3 PM Eastern Time

All CHFS employees are invited to attend a **Virtual Discussion: Dehumanization and the Harm of Racial Inequity**. You must (i) obtain approval from your supervisor to attend this class and record your time as 1REG, and (ii) pre-register. To pre-register, please click on the link [here](#).



### **Statewide Announcements:**

**May 2021** - We are striving to get 2.5 Million Kentuckians vaccinated this month so that many COVID restrictions can be relaxed or eliminated.

**May 17, 2021.** Deadline to file your 2020 Individual Kentucky and U.S. Income Taxes.

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### **Special points of interest**

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## Employee spotlight:

### Kimberley Lockhart

Frontline experience definitely matters at the Complaint Review Branch (CRB)! Kimberley worked as a Family Support Specialist for over 15 years before joining the CRB in January, 2015 as a Citizen Assistance Specialist.



She grew up in Michigan and moved to Kentucky in 1995. Kim and husband Rob will celebrate their 20th anniversary this month. They have two children, Joseph and Haley, and two cats and two guinea pigs. She enjoys spending free time with her family, reading and loves listening to all types of music.

Her manager says, “Kim displays compassion and kindness with all she encounters and goes the extra mile to provide the best customer service.”



## Complaint Review Branch: Sherry Carnahan, Branch Manager

The Complaint Review Branch is available to anyone with questions related to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) programs and services. People are often in need of food, utilities, rental assistance, or want to ensure procedures have been followed with their case. During the past year, our Team also volunteered to respond to urgent citizen COVID-related inquiries to ensure that Kentuckians had someone to communicate with during this overwhelming time. We handled an incredible wide range of questions related to COVID testing, unemployment, domestic and international travel restrictions, quarantine, employer and worker issues, weddings and family gatherings and more recently—about the COVID vaccines. The volume of contacts received in our Branch skyrocketed during the pandemic. To fully appreciate how much our case load has increased, please see the charts on the following page. We hope that Kentuckians are now more aware of our Branch and will continue to reach out long after COVID-19 has been defeated.

To find all vaccination sites and free transportation options to and from vaccination appointments, visit [vaccine.ky.gov](http://vaccine.ky.gov). To see a list of vaccination sites that have openings this week, go to the [vaccinemap.ky.gov](http://vaccinemap.ky.gov). If you have questions, you should call the state's COVID-19 Vaccine Hotline, [855-598-2246](tel:855-598-2246) or TTY [855-326-4654](tel:855-326-4654) for deaf or hard-of-hearing Kentuckians.

Our staff can be reached at 502-564-5497 or 800-372-2973. We can also be reached via email at [CHFS.Listens@ky.gov](mailto:CHFS.Listens@ky.gov).

## May— A Month of Remembrance

May is the month we celebrate Mother's Day and Memorial Day—both of which are special days of remembrance.

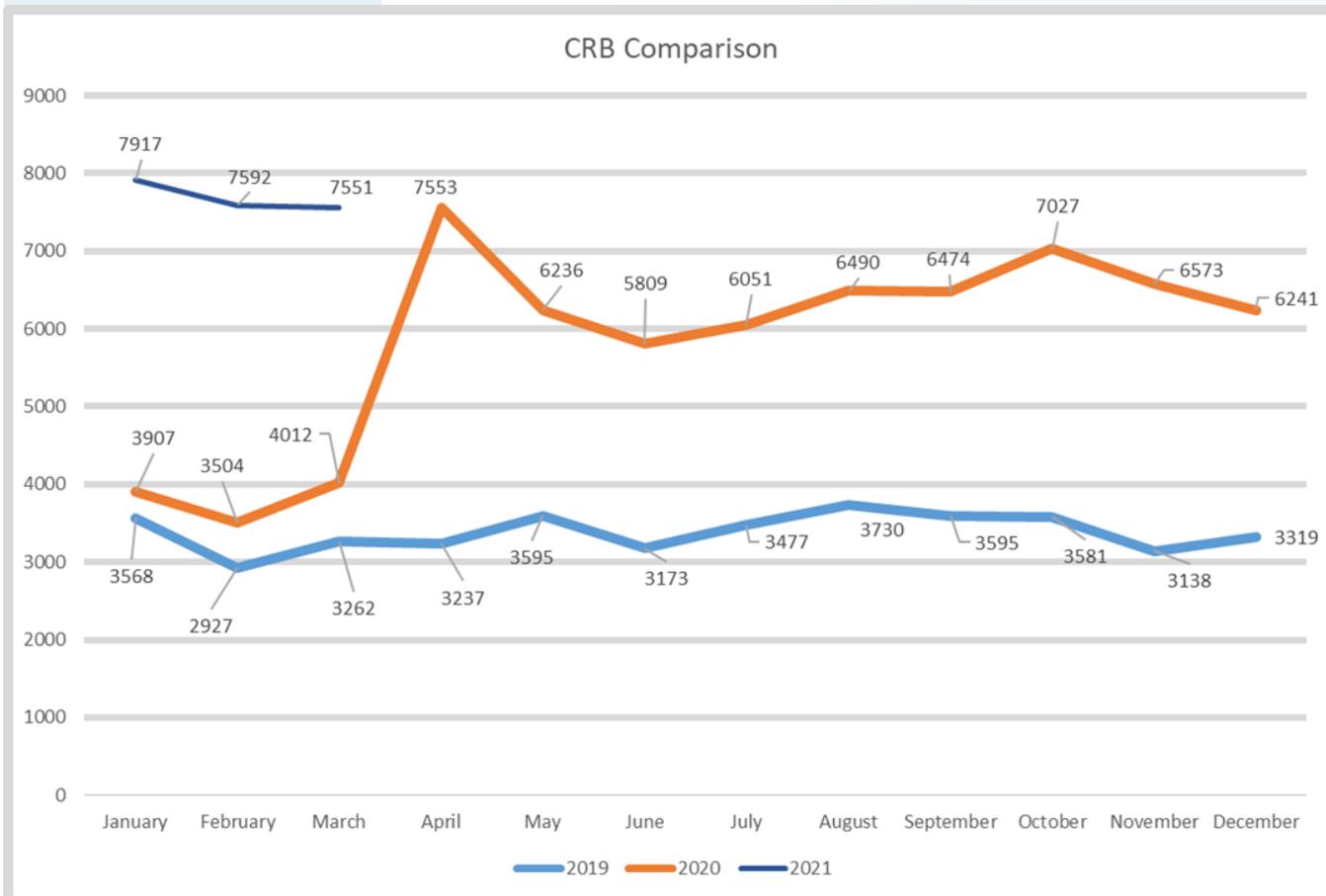
Mother's Day was first celebrated in 1907, when Anna Jarvis held a memorial for her mother at St. Andrew's Methodist Church in Grafton, West Virginia in 1907. Her campaign to make Mother's Day a recognized holiday in the United States began in 1905, the year her mother, Ann Reeves Jarvis died. Ann Jarvis had been a peace activist who cared for wounded soldiers on both sides of the American Civil War, and created Mother's Day Work Clubs to address public health issues.

Memorial Day (which was previously called Decoration Day) is a U.S. holiday for honoring the military men and women who died in service to their country. The holiday is now observed on the last Monday of May. Formerly the holiday was celebrated on May 30 from 1868 to 1970.



## Complaint Review Branch Analysis by Sherry Carnahan

2019-2021



### SUBMISSIONS —



Please email your articles to [carolyn.vose@ky.gov](mailto:carolyn.vose@ky.gov)

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	2019	2020	2021
<b>January</b>	3568	3907	7917
<b>February</b>	2927	3504	7592
<b>March</b>	3262	4012	7551
<b>April</b>	3237	7553	
<b>May</b>	3595	6236	
<b>June</b>	3173	5809	
<b>July</b>	3477	6051	
<b>August</b>	3730	6490	
<b>September</b>	3595	6474	
<b>October</b>	3581	7027	
<b>November</b>	3138	6573	
<b>December</b>	3319	6241	