



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMISSIONER DAVID A. HANSELL ANNOUNCES NEW HEIGHTENED OVERSIGHT PROTOCOL FOR CRITICAL CASES

The new protocol is implemented on investigations where the maltreated child is 3-years-old or younger and the report is a fatality, serious injury, and/or sexual abuse related

New York, NY – The New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Commissioner David A. Hansell today announced a new **Heightened Oversight Protocol** (HOP) for critical and serious child abuse investigations, a two-step process combining the expertise of ACS' Investigative Consultant Supervisors, who are retired NYPD Detective Supervisors, and ACS' Child Protective Specialists.

This new protocol is underlined by procedures that ensure thorough review of our most critical cases where the maltreated child is 3-years-old or younger, and the report is a fatality report, or alleges serious injury and/or sexual abuse.

- Initially, the Investigative Consultant Supervisors and the Child Protection Managers/Supervisors conduct a joint pre-investigative conference to guide the Child Protective Specialists prior to initiating an investigation on a State Central Report.
- After 30 days, the Investigative Consultants and the Child Protection Managers meet again to jointly review the investigation, to assess and synthesize the information gathered by front line workers and determine if any additional investigative steps are needed to ensure the safety of the child.
- This assessment from both the Investigative Consultants and the Child Protection Managers provide the ACS front line workers with the most concrete and up to date information about the case to develop the most appropriate service plan

“Protecting children is the core of our mission. This new, heightened protocol will bring more investigative expertise into our highest-risk cases—throughout the course of the investigation,” said **ACS Commissioner David A. Hansell**. “Over the last nine months, we’ve instituted reforms across this agency based on evidence, data, and best practices in child protection – and combining child-protective and law-enforcement investigative expertise in our most serious cases is a key component of this. We’ve increased the number of retired NYPD detectives on our

staff by 26%, to 173, we've coordinated with the NYPD on training for our frontline Child Protection staff at the Police Academy to deepen their investigative skills, and we're working with NYPD's Neighborhood Coordination Officers across the city."

Since July, more than 750 investigations have been conducted under this new, heightened protocol, which will now become a permanent part of ACS's work in critical investigations. Feedback received during the pilot phase indicates that both the Investigative Consultants and Child Protective Specialists have embraced the increased collaboration. The new protocol calls for relationship building, ongoing discussion, critical thinking and decision making.

The CPS teams continue to express that receiving the criminal clearances and the domestic violence clearances before meeting the family is extremely helpful, as the CPS workers are better prepared when they initially meet the family to assess the concerns.

The new HOP protocol requires a special focus on the highest risk cases by applying a dual lens (Prior Law Enforcement and Child Protection expertise) approach from the start of the investigation and onward. Under the new protocol, criminal and domestic violence clearances are prioritized to inform the pre-conference team discussing any critical and high-profile investigation.

Key findings from the [Federal Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities](#) say that children who die from abuse and neglect are overwhelmingly young; approximately one-half are less than 1-year-old and 75 percent are under 3 years of age. ACS wanted a heightened focus on the most at risk children when implementing this new protocol.

ACS' Investigative Consultant Supervisors are former NYPD detective supervisors working with ACS Child Protective Specialists (CPS) in supporting their abuse and neglect investigations. They contribute to child welfare work through review of sensitive cases alongside child welfare staff, medical experts, and current law enforcement officials. They conduct criminal and domestic violence background check to help inform child safety.

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About the New York City Administration for Children's Services:

The Administration for Children's Services (ACS) protects and promotes safety and well-being of New York City's children and families by providing child welfare, juvenile justice, and early care and education services. In child welfare, ACS contracts with private nonprofit organizations to support and stabilize families at risk of a crisis through preventive services, and provides foster care services for children not able to safely remain at home. ACS is aggressively implementing a [Foster Care Strategic Blueprint](#) to improve outcomes for children in foster care. The overall number of children in foster care continued to decline, among other significant progress made to improve case practice and outcomes for children and families in the foster care system. In juvenile justice, ACS manages and funds services including detention and placement, intensive community-based alternatives for youth, and support services for families. In early care and education, ACS coordinates and funds programs and vouchers for close to 100,000 children eligible for subsidized care.

For more information about NYC ACS, please visit www.nyc.gov/acs

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