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Date: April 18, 2014
To: Executive Directors
From: Benita Miller, Deputy Commissioner, Family Permanency Services
Alan W. Sputz, Deputy Commissioner, Family Court Legal Services
Re: Supervisory Review and Approval of Court Reports

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "B. Miller", written over the "From:" line of the header.

Family Court judges frequently request updated reports on the status of families before them in addition to the required permanency hearing reports. These reports provide the Family Court with crucial information, necessary to make the best possible decision regarding the safety, permanency and well-being of the child. Therefore, it is critical that the reports provide timely and thorough information about parents' and children's progress in services and visiting.

The information contained in these reports is relied upon heavily by the Court in determining permanency plans, visitation orders, orders to engage in services, and other important decisions on a case. Further, the report contains important information about the safety and well-being of the child. As such, the reports must be reviewed and approved by the case planner's supervisor. This requirement will strengthen practice and ensure the most experienced members of our child welfare community are reviewing these impactful reports about our most vulnerable children and families. The supervisor's signature should be included at the end of the report to indicate that the report has been reviewed and approved.

All reports, other than permanency hearing reports, should be sent to the Family Court Legal Services attorney three days in advance of the court hearing for review prior to the submission to the Court and parties.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact FCLS Associate Commissioner Nancy Thomson at nancy.thomson@dfa.state.ny.us or FPS Associate Commissioner Jackie Roth at Jackie.roth@dfa.state.ny.us.