

## **CHILDREN'S JUSTICE ACT (CJA) TASK FORCE**

Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES)  
Law Enforcement & Victims Services Division  
**Friday November 30, 2007, 10:00 am - 2:30 pm**  
Marriott Hotel, Sacramento

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Harry Elias, Cathy Stephenson, Robin Allen, David Casey, Donald Cohon, Jan Dunn, Stephanie George, Michael Grogan, Carol O'Callaghan, Patty O'Ran, Jay Smith, Amy Ann Taylor (for Michelle LaPena), Deanne Tilton, Tina Williams, and Wendy Wright.

**Members Absent:** Baljit Atwal, Nora Baladerian, Teresa Contreras, Michelle LaPena, Jo A. McCormack, and Dale Wilson.

**OES Staff Present:** Gillsa Miller, Leigh Bills, Avis Donahue, Dennis Hall, and Barbara Tanner.

**Guest:** None

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Harry Elias, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

Individuals present introduced themselves; new member Jay Smith was welcomed.

#### **II. OES ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES**

The Task Force members reviewed upcoming meeting dates. Leigh Bills, OES Criminal Justice Specialist, informed members lodging for the March 7, 2008 joint Sexual Assault Advisory Committee (SAC)/CJA Task Force meeting in Los Angeles is not finalized. OES is working on it and information will be sent via e-mail shortly.

Leigh Bills reviewed the Travel Expense Claim's instructions and encouraged members to include their private vehicle license plate number when claiming mileage and/or parking.

Leigh Bills informed members of the CJA 2007 award increase of \$79,461. The Task Force discussed the budget and noted a discrepancy in the draft version. Gillsa Miller, Children's Section Chief, found the correct information and later informed the Task Force. Leigh Bills will send the final budget to members upon return to the office.

The changes to the budget are; increase the Child Abduction Training Program by \$22,500 from \$22,522 to \$45,022, fund the Child Abduction Task Force in the amount

of \$7,500, increase Administrative Support by \$47,375 from \$165,730 to \$224,925, and increase the support for the Task Force by \$2,086 from \$10,000 to \$12,086.

Leigh Bills explained funds allocated for administrative support in 2006 were inadequate to cover actual expenses, necessitating the use of the 2007 additional funds be used as described above.

### **III. MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 28, 2007 MEETING**

The Task Force members reviewed the minutes, cited need for minor edits, and approved them.

### **IV. PROGRAM SPECIFIC UPDATES**

Barbara Tanner, OES Program Specialist provided the Task Force with a status report on the Antelope Valley Extended Forensic Evaluation Program. Areas of concern were addressed and discussed by the Task Force.

Leigh Bills provided the Task Force with a brief status report of the Tribal Court Appointed Special Advocate Program, informing members there may be some unspent funds do to significant staffing issues. Project Staff are working closely with OES to get the program back on track.

Leigh Bills also informed the Task Force six proposals were received for the Tribal Resource Specialist Program, the selection process had concluded, and the funding recommendation and notification letters are at the executive level awaiting approval and signature.

### **V. CJA 2008 – Three-Year Report Timeline**

The Task Force reviewed each recommendation from the previous Three-Year Report and developed a status response for each.

After discussion the Task Force determined that to be included in the Legislation section of the Three-Year report, the legislation must be discussed in the body of the report. Leigh Bills will pull out all references and add those cited to the Legislation section.

For planning purposes and to fulfill a requirement of the Three-Year Report, the Task Force developed the following recommendations.

- **RECOMMENDATION #1:** In recognition of personnel turnover, the CJA Task Force recommends creating a vehicle for redistribution and ongoing training of the Minimum Standards Protocol for the Investigation of Child Abuse and Neglect Cases (developed in 1998).

- **RECOMMENDATION #2:** Given the increased awareness that many children are being seen by health care providers for non-abuse related issues but are unrecognized child abuse victims, the CJA Task Force recommends educating health care providers, using existing curriculum approved by the CJA Task Force, and which is clearly identified in the Request for Proposals and Program Guidelines.
- **RECOMMENDATION #3:** In order to achieve good outcomes and ensure effective quality representation, the CJA Task Force recommends identifying or creating vehicles to improve attorney advocacy in child abuse and neglect cases.
- **RECOMMENDATION #4:** Due to the increased awareness of human trafficking in California, the CJA Task Force recommends looking into education and training for law enforcement and other first responders.
- **RECOMMENDATION #5:** Multi-Disciplinary Interview Centers/teams continue to operate without any stable funding through legislation or otherwise. Therefore, the CJA Task Force recommends working to encourage the California Legislature to enact legislation establishing a stable funding source for the establishment and maintenance of statewide multi-disciplinary centers for the handling of child abuse and neglect cases.

The Task Force decided to dedicate the September meeting each year to the review and documentation of progress toward each recommendation with the goal of having complete information for the next Three-Year Report (2008-2010).

## **VI. CJA 2008 AVAILABLE FUNDS**

Leigh Bills informed the Task Force five programs will be ending this fiscal year (2007/08) freeing up \$542,522 to be allocated to programs for fiscal year (2008/09). The idea of calling for concept papers was discussed. Due to time constraints, the Task Force decided to develop programs based on the recommendation stated above. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

## **VII. MEETING SUMMARY AND ACTION ITEMS**

The Task Force members scheduled meeting dates for:

- Friday, January 18, 2008, Sacramento
- Friday, March 7, 2008, Los Angeles

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.