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Media Release

Alameda County Social Services Agency's Department of Children and Family Services ("Department") Reaffirms Commitment to Action Following State Audit Findings in Report No. 2024-108 ("Report")

Oakland, CA. - The Alameda County Social Services Agency (ACSSA), which includes the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), takes seriously the findings of the California State Auditor's Report No. 2024-108 released on September 23, 2025, as well as the concerns voiced by community advocates, elected leaders, and members of the public in recent days. ACSSA shares its sense of urgency and is moving forward with determination to implement every recommendation and strengthen the system that protects children and supports families.

The Agency acknowledges the serious concerns raised in the Report and views this moment as an opportunity and obligation to strengthen how Alameda County protects children, supports families, and builds public trust.

The Report reviewed various aspects of the Department's performance from fiscal years 2019-2020 through 2023-2024 and issued ten (10) recommendations to improve timeliness, documentation, staffing, and service delivery by October 2026. Many of these actions are already underway.

The Department has taken the following actions corresponding with the Report's recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Timely Completion of Investigations

Agency Actions:

- Time set aside each day for Child Welfare Workers to close referrals.
- Support to assist supervisors in closing referrals.
- Work group of staff to provide suggestions for new strategies to address impediments.

Recommendation 2: Recruitment and Retention of Staff

Agency Actions:

- Ongoing recruitment for bachelor's and master's level staff.
- Surveyed all staff for [National Partnership Child Safety](#), a national collaborative of state, county, and tribal child welfare agencies working together to strengthen child and family safety by applying safety science, sharing data, and learning from critical incidents.

Recommendation 3: Documentation of Referrals and Services

Agency Actions:

- Updating the court report template to better document when service referrals occur and for the timely delivery of services.
- All service contacts will be entered into the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS).

Recommendation 4: Improved Information Collection from Partner Agencies

Agency Actions:

- Revision of the Interagency Leadership Team (ILT) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has begun, and it is expected to incorporate timeliness measures for service delivery.

Recommendation 5: Improving Family Finding and Relative Notification

Agency Actions:

- The Relative Notification Process was implemented on September 29, 2025.
- A Request for Proposals for Family Finding Services has been released.

Recommendation 6: Sibling Engagement and Relationship Maintenance

Agency Actions:

- Updating System Improvement Plan (SIP) to ensure foster youth have placement or visitation with siblings whenever possible; this item will be presented to the Board of Supervisors for approval on December 9, 2025.

Recommendation 7: Transitional Shelter Care Facility Overstay Policies and Procedures

Agency Actions:

- Build upon existing tracking processes to analyze and minimize overstays with a monthly report submitted to Community Care Licensing and Alameda County.
- Improve documentation and written protocols for all current shelter procedures.
- Provide a quarterly report of intake and overstay data to the Alameda County Steering Committee and Assessment Center Board.

Recommendation 8: Improved Evaluation, Policy, and Process Prior to New Transition Shelter Opening

Agency Actions:

- Create a policy that reflects current practices for reviewing all serious, critical, and/or unusual incidents that occur at the facility to monitor trends.
- Report quarterly to the Assessment Center Steering Committee, Assessment Center Board, and Agency Director, including any trends, strategies, deficiencies, corrective action plans, and recommendations for practice and policy changes.

Recommendation 9: Tracking of Required Staff Training

Agency Actions:

- Created an accountability system to track staff completion of required training and enforcement of training completion.

Recommendation 10: Contract RBA Measures for Service Provision and Timeliness

Agency Actions:

- By July 2026, all DCFS contracts will include Results-Based Accountability (RBA) measures to monitor the timeliness of service delivery upon renewal.

“We’re not waiting for progress; we are committed to driving it,” said Michelle Love, Assistant Agency Director for DCFS. “The changes we are implementing don’t happen in isolation. We’re working side-by-side with our partners and using every tool available to us to rebuild trust and deliver results. Our focus is simple: safer children, stronger families, and a system that learns, improves, and acts with urgency.”

ACSSA and DCFS are coordinating closely with the Alameda County Board of Supervisors and community partners to implement reforms. The Department remains committed to an ongoing, transparent response process. It will provide progress updates to the California State Auditor at 60 days, six months, and one year following receipt of the Report. Additionally, the Department will begin providing monthly progress updates to the Board and community.

“We know that transparency and accountability aren’t just words on a page; they must show up in what we do every single day,” added Love. “That’s the standard we are setting as we work urgently to protect children, protect families, and rebuild trust in this system. Alameda County’s children and families deserve nothing less.”

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