



OFFICE OF FAMILY  
REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY  
Improving lives through outstanding advocacy

## INTRODUCTION

The NM Legislature created the Office of Family Representation and Advocacy (OFRA) as a new state agency in 2022 to improve outcomes for children and families in child abuse and neglect cases. OFRA began providing legal representation for children and parents statewide on July 1, 2023. Legal representation is statutorily required in the Children’s Code.

Interdisciplinary Legal Teams, along with Cornerstone Advocacy, are the two core components of OFRA’s best practice model. Interdisciplinary Legal Teams (attorneys, social workers, and family peer support navigators) use multiple tools to address the issues contributing to the family’s involvement in the legal case, as well as issues that limit successful resolution of the legal case. Legal advocacy, social work supports, and peer mentoring connect clients to appropriate and targeted services. Legal Teams focus their advocacy on four Cornerstones to enhance child safety and reduce trauma: placement, visitation, services, and out of court meetings.

Interdisciplinary Legal Team services are being provided on a limited basis in the Bernalillo region as of November 2023. When OFRA is fully funded in 3-5 years, there will be five regional offices and Interdisciplinary Legal Team services for all parent-clients who choose to participate. OFRA will then expand Interdisciplinary Legal Team services to its child-clients.

This document outlines our strategy to accomplish the outcomes and impact for which OFRA was created. It is presented as a logic model based upon OFRA’s theory of change. All aspects of this logic model will be executed consistent with OFRA’s [Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles](#), as well as in conformity with the policies adopted by the OFRA Oversight Commission.

## OFRA’S THEORY OF CHANGE

The planning and implementation of the Office of Family Representation and Advocacy represents the work of numerous stakeholders collaborating as the Family Representation Commission, the OFRA Oversight Commission, and the Executive Team of OFRA itself. As individuals and groups, considerable research and deliberation has gone into crafting the following Theory of Change. We are confident that with adequate funding, we can make this theory a reality. Please see the following page.



## We provide

### Cornerstone Advocacy

Intensive advocacy focuses on placement, family time, targeted & timely services, and participatory case planning conferences.

### Litigation Supports

As needed, OFRA provides interpreters, investigators, experts, and more, along with a robust case management system.

### Interdisciplinary Legal Teams

Teams include a lawyer, family peer support navigator, and/or a social worker.

## So that

Children are placed with relatives/kin whenever resources exist, and have frequent family time (visitation) in the most natural and least restrictive setting.

Case plans and services are individualized to client needs and strengths and specifically targeted to improving the conditions that brought the family into the system.

Clients feel supported, better understand the process, identify the changes they need to reach their goals, and engage in services earlier with greater effort and efficacy.

Attorneys can focus on protecting clients' legal rights, meeting with clients frequently, obtaining relevant and robust evidence, filing motions, and overall advocating more effectively in and out of court.

Social workers and family peer support navigators can focus on supporting and coaching clients, assisting them in securing the services and supports needed to pursue reunification and to resolve the legal issues in the case.

Courts can get more timely and better information so they can make more informed decisions and move cases more quickly to resolution and permanency.

## And thus

Safety concerns are mitigated

Children spend fewer days in foster care & permanency is achieved more quickly

Reunifications increase & repeat maltreatment decreases

Cost savings accrue to the state

# OFRA LOGIC MODEL



## INPUTS

- Personnel
- Funding and financing
- Infrastructure
- Practice model and procedures

*See following pages for more detail on activities, outputs, and outcomes for each input are*



## ACTIVITIES

- Recruit, train, support and retain high quality staff and contractors
- Provide practice and litigation supports, manageable workloads & fair compensation
- Develop budgets and solicit funding from the legislature; develop grants; and maximize Title IVE
- Develop systems for human resources, case management, quality assurance, and evaluation.
- Develop a policy and rules framework
- Develop practices and procedures for interdisciplinary legal team services & cornerstone advocacy.



## OUTPUT

- Sufficient number of staff and contractors trained in the practice model
- Budgets, grants, Title IV-E funding in place
- Offices open: process, fidelity, outcome, and impact measures operationalized; policies and rules adopted
- Practice manual adopted and all staff trained therein



## OUTCOMES

- Improved legal advocacy; staff and contractors satisfied and retained
- Adequate funding to provide interdisciplinary legal services to all eligible clients; adequate compensation; reasonable workloads
- Systems in place; LegalServer fully functional; policies and rules adopted
- Interdisciplinary services provided; clients supported and engaged in their case plans; clients, staff, contractors, and stakeholders report high satisfaction



## IMPACT

- Fewer days in foster care
- Higher rates of reunification at 12 and 24 months
- Increase in relative/kin placements
- Fewer placement changes
- Lower rates of repeat maltreatment
- Reduction in overall costs to the state

## INPUT: PERSONNEL

Activities →	Outputs →	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit, hire, and retain staff consistent with achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) objectives</li> <li>• Engage in educational and recruitment activities; implement a plan for pipelining law and social work students; secure funding for paid internships.</li> <li>• Engage in an attorney input process regarding contract provisions and the contracting process</li> <li>• Provide training in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion and practicing cultural humility</li> <li>• Provide training in trauma-informed and trauma-responsive practices</li> <li>• Provide training on the OFRA Interdisciplinary &amp; Cornerstone Advocacy Practice Model</li> <li>• Formalize performance standards for attorneys, social workers, and family peer support navigators</li> <li>• Develop standards-based performance evaluations for employed staff and for quality monitoring of contractors</li> <li>• Work with staff to create a healthy workplace and a culture of trust, transparency, and fairness; provide opportunities and supports for employee well-being and self-care</li> <li>• Create and implement a retention plan that includes, coaching and mentoring, pathways to advancement, continuous professional development opportunities, and wellness supports</li> <li>• Create policies and procedures for identifying, securing, and funding investigators, experts, paralegals, interpreters, translators, and clerical supports</li> <li>• Create manageable attorney, social worker, and family peer support navigator workloads and fair compensation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of attorneys, social workers, and family peer navigators hired</li> <li>• Number of attorneys contracted</li> <li>• Higher ratio of staff to contract attorneys</li> <li>• Number of attorneys, social workers, and family peer navigators trained in Cornerstone Advocacy &amp; Interdisciplinary Legal Teams</li> <li>• Number of attorneys, social workers, and family peer navigators trained in advancing DEI and cultural humility</li> <li>• Number of attorneys, social workers, and family peer navigators trained in trauma informed and trauma-responsive practices</li> <li>• Number of attorneys trained to represent both children and parents</li> <li>• Number of support staff hired or contracted by type (experts, investigators, paralegals, interpreters translators, administrative and clerical supports)</li> <li>• Number of support staff trained in Cornerstone Advocacy &amp; Interdisciplinary Legal Teams</li> <li>• Performance standards adopted for attorneys, social workers, and family peer support navigators</li> <li>• Performance evaluations developed and validated</li> <li>• Contract monitoring system developed and validated</li> <li>• Manageable workloads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved legal advocacy, better protection of clients' due process rights, leading to better outcomes for children and families</li> <li>• Positive employee satisfaction survey results</li> <li>• Positive contractor satisfaction survey results</li> <li>• Positive performance evaluation results</li> <li>• Positive contract monitoring results</li> <li>• Positive client survey results</li> <li>• Positive stakeholder survey results</li> </ul>

**INPUT: FUNDING AND FINANCES**

Activities →	Outputs →	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare budget requests and advocate for appropriations that support quality legal representation</li> <li>• Request adequate funding appropriations from the legislature</li> <li>• Research and apply for grants and contracts that support quality legal representation</li> <li>• Maximize Title IV-E reimbursements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budgets produced</li> <li>• Number and amounts of appropriations requested</li> <li>• Number of grant proposals submitted</li> <li>• Number of other financial solicitations</li> <li>• Number and amounts of grant proposals accepted</li> <li>• Number and amounts of other financial solicitations</li> <li>• Amount of IV-E reimbursements</li> <li>• Total funding received</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources available to hire and contract with enough managers, staff, and contractors to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide adequate compensation</li> <li>○ Maintain reasonable workloads</li> <li>○ Represent all eligible clients in the practice model (Interdisciplinary Legal Teams with Cornerstone Advocacy)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## INPUT: INFRASTRUCTURE

Activities →	Outputs →	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find, open, and equip office space that accommodates staff and provides appropriate &amp; safe spaces for clients.</li> <li>• Develop and implement a human resources management function consistent with State Personnel Office policies and requirements</li> <li>• Develop and implement a financial management system consistent with DFA, GSD, and other State policies and requirements</li> <li>• Develop and implement an evaluation, quality monitoring, and continuous quality improvement (CQI) system               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify process and fidelity measures for monitoring and require as part of regular reporting by staff and contractors.</li> <li>○ Develop enhancements and maximize the efficiency of LegalServer for:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ evaluation, quality monitoring, CQI and standardized reporting of process, fidelity, outcome, and impact measures, and</li> <li>▪ case management, initial conflict checking, record keeping, and management reporting.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Enter data sharing agreements with CYFD and the AOC; expand record keeping and/or LegalServer case management system to incorporate shared data.</li> <li>○ Develop, field test, and implement client and other satisfaction surveys.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offices opened and reasonable accommodations provided</li> <li>• Process and fidelity measures identified and adopted</li> <li>• Outcome and impact measures identified and adopted</li> <li>• Data sharing agreements signed</li> <li>• Client, staff, contractor, and stakeholder satisfaction surveys designed and field tested</li> <li>• Staff and contractors trained in LegalServer</li> <li>• Strategic plan adopted</li> <li>• Policies written and adopted</li> <li>• Rules developed and adopted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systems in place to manage human resources</li> <li>• Financial controls in place</li> <li>• Systems in place for other administrative and management functions</li> <li>• Systems in place for evaluation, quality monitoring, and CQI</li> <li>• LegalServer is capable of recording and regularly reporting evaluation, quality monitoring, CQI to include process, fidelity, outcome, and impact measures</li> <li>• LegalServer is sufficient for case assignment, case management, initial conflict checking, record keeping, and management reporting</li> <li>• Evaluation strategy incorporates data from CYFD and AOC</li> <li>• Client, staff, contractor, and stakeholder satisfaction surveys regularly conducted and reported               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Internal and external complaints, grievances and other issues are rapidly and fairly resolved</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Refine the case assignment and data-base case management system to accommodate non-attorney members of interdisciplinary teams.</li> <li>○ Train staff and contractors to use the LegalServer case management system.</li> <li>○ Develop a strategic plan and review with Oversight Commission; create complimentary action plans.</li> <li>● Develop a strategic plan and review with Oversight Commission; create complimentary action plans.</li> <li>● Develop policies consistent with Oversight Commission Policy Statements including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of OFRA hiring, policies, practices and evaluation</li> <li>○ Complaints and grievances regarding allegations of misconduct of any of staff and contractors from clients, judges, and other participants</li> <li>○ Complaints and grievances regarding allegations of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and retaliation</li> <li>○ Mediation and other alternative dispute resolution practices</li> <li>○ Human resources including employee well-being, self-care, &amp; workplace culture</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
--	--	--

## INPUT: PRACTICE MODEL AND PROCEDURES

Activities →	Outputs →	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an interdisciplinary legal team practice model and formalize in the OFRA Practice Manual. Processes and procedures follow.</li> <li>Develop processes and procedures for client engagement, obtaining informed consent and releases of information, ensuring confidentiality and attorney client privilege, and securing non-disclosure agreements.</li> <li>Develop processes and procedures for referral, prioritization, case assignment, and conflict checks for all members of the Interdisciplinary Legal Services Team.</li> <li>Develop practice tools/job aids to support advocacy for placement, visitation, services and participation in meetings and conferences (the four Cornerstones)</li> <li>Develop practices and procedures that operationalize diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies</li> <li>Develop practice tools/job aids to support case-specific and system-change advocacy that addresses racial disproportionality, disparate treatment, and disparate impacts based on race, ethnicity, or political status.</li> <li>Develop practices and procedures that incorporate trauma-informed and trauma-responsive practices.</li> <li>Develop practices and procedures that provide for client and staff access (e.g., language services and other communication access; mobility, vision, and hearing accommodations; other reasonable accommodations; office and parking access; etc.)</li> <li>Hire a client access coordinator</li> <li>Engage interpreters and translators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice Manual adopted</li> <li>Practice Manual includes all processes and procedures outlined in Activities</li> <li>Certain processes and procedures outlined in Activities are selected for Fidelity Monitoring and tool is developed (including indicators of four cornerstones)</li> <li>Client access plan adopted</li> <li>Client access coordinator hired</li> <li>Interpreters and translators under contract</li> <li>Reasonable accommodations policies in place</li> <li>Client Satisfaction Survey is designed and field tested</li> <li>LegalServer includes data on the delivery of Interdisciplinary services</li> <li>Training is provided to all Interdisciplinary Legal Team members on the Practice Model and Practice Manual</li> <li>Training is provided on trauma informed and trauma-responsive practice</li> <li>Monthly webinars are being provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legal Teams are providing interdisciplinary services to an increasing number and percent of eligible clients <i>{could breakdown parameters you will be tracking in LegalServer}</i></li> <li>Clients engaged in their case plans</li> <li>Clients understand court and case processes</li> <li>Clients supported and empowered</li> <li>All clients who are not proficient in English are provided language and communication services.</li> <li>All clients with disabilities are accessing OFRA services with reasonable accommodations provided as needed</li> <li>90% of clients report satisfaction as outlined in the evaluation plan and client survey</li> <li>90% of staff report satisfaction as outlined in the evaluation plan and staff survey</li> <li>90% of contractors report satisfaction as outlined in the evaluation plan and contractor survey</li> <li>90% of judges and other stakeholders report satisfaction as outlined in the evaluation plan and stakeholder survey</li> <li>Fidelity Monitoring results demonstrate at least 90% conformance on all measures</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Incorporate client information and case data on interdisciplinary services into record keeping and the LegalServer case management system</li><li>• Provide training on the OFRA Interdisciplinary &amp; Cornerstone Advocacy Practice Model and the use of the Practice Manual.</li><li>• Provide training on trauma-informed and trauma responsive practice</li></ul>		
---	--	--