



OFFICE OF FAMILY
REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY
Improving lives through outstanding advocacy

OVERSIGHT COMMISSION POLICY STATEMENT
APPROVED NOVEMBER, 2023

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy (OFRA) will require all employed and contract attorneys to provide high-quality legal representation and advocacy in a professional and skilled manner in accordance with the New Mexico Children’s Code; the Rules of Professional Conduct; applicable case law and rules; OFRA Performance Standards; and OFRA policies and procedures.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will represent children and parents in abuse and neglect cases and youth involved in Fostering Connections cases.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will, to the extent legislative funding permits, establish five regional offices and increase the number of staff attorneys, accordingly. Staff attorneys should be or become highly specialized in child and family welfare legal law and practice.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will have supervisory attorneys who will provide monitoring, quality control and direct supervision for employed attorneys. Contract oversight will be in place for contract attorneys, to include monitoring and quality control.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will, to the extent legislative funding permits, provide Interdisciplinary Legal Team services.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will provide support, training, oversight, and accountability for staff and contractors to promote high-quality legal representation and advocacy.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will ensure there is no conflict of interest in representation of parties.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will employ continuous quality improvement and rigorous program evaluation to assess OFRA’s success in achieving its goals and to drive programmatic improvements.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will provide regular updates on key evaluation metrics to the Oversight Commission.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will implement human resources (personnel) policies, practices, and rules that conform to the NM State Personnel Office’s rules and requirements.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will comply with the New Mexico procurement Code.



The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will create and foster an inclusive organizational culture and practices that value and promote diversity and equity and allow inclusion.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will create and foster the opportunity for a safe and welcoming culture. This culture will celebrate the differences and recognize that each child and family is valued, respected, supported, and is able to reach his, her, and their full potential.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will commit to encouraging, fostering, and maintaining cultural connections.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will provide language access services in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Executive Order #13166, and the New Mexico Limited English Access to State Programs Act.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will adopt formal performance standards consistent with best practices.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will assure conformance with the Rules of Professional Conduct, the Professional Standards or Codes of Ethics related to social worker licensure and peer support worker certification, and the performance standards of the Office. OFRA will also assure conformance with the New Mexico State Personnel Office policy.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will provide all employees and applicants equal employment opportunity. All personnel actions including hiring, recruitment, discipline, layoff, dismissal, benefits, compensation, promotion, transfers, training and working conditions will be conducted in a professional and nondiscriminatory manner.

The Office of Family Representation is committed to an equitable and inclusive work environment for all candidates and employees and provides equal opportunities in all employment practices without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or childbirth, age, disability, or veteran status. This policy is in compliance with: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended; the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA); and the New Mexico Human Rights Act; and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA).

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will provide a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity, free of prejudice, discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and retaliation.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will implement policy and procedures to address discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and retaliation complaints from or about employees, applicants, student interns, volunteers, contractors, clients, and all others within OFRA workplaces.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will create and implement grievance and complaint policy and procedures.

The Office of Family Representation and Advocacy will implement Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) for employees and contractors, including the use of mediation and, as appropriate, other forms of ADR as a means of resolving disputes, including claims of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and retaliation.

