

EXECUTIVE ORDER 96-03

Strengthening Out-of-Home Care Licensing

WHEREAS, the health and safety of children placed by the state in out-of-home care is of paramount importance, and

WHEREAS, licensing is the primary means employed by the state to protect the health and safety of children in out-of-home care and should always be accompanied by vigilant monitoring and strong enforcement measures, and

WHEREAS, national child welfare organizations recognize that separation of the state's licensing and placement activities provides better protection for the health and safety of children in out-of-home care, and

WHEREAS, separation of the licensing and placement functions that are now located in the Department of Social and Health Service's Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) will eliminate the conflicting pressures of insuring children's health and safety and locating scarce placements for abused or neglected children.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mike Lowry, Governor of the State of Washington, direct the Department of Social and Health Services to form a separate division of licensing within the Children's Administration. This division shall have a separate director who shall report directly to the Assistant Secretary for the Children's Administration.

1. The new DCFS licensing division shall be responsible for licensing, recruitment and enforcement responsibilities including but not limited to licensing denials, suspension, and revocation. The functions of licensing of potential and existing placements and the placement of children in out-of-home care are to be clearly separate.
2. The types of licenses to be handled by the new division shall include the following categories of care: foster home; group home; crisis residential center; respite care; overnight youth shelter; child placing agency; adoption agency, and; other categories of care that may be established by rule.
3. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the State of Washington to be affixed at Olympia this 11th day of January A.D., Nineteen hundred and ninety-six.

Mike Lowry
Governor of Washington

BY THE GOVERNOR:

Secretary of State
