

Strategic Plan SFY 2014-2015

Oklahoma Department of Human Services



Office of Client Advocacy

GROWING in a NEW DIRECTION

SFY 2014-2015 Strategy Map

OUR MISSION

We improve the quality of life of vulnerable Oklahomans by increasing people's ability to lead safer, healthier, more independent and productive lives.

OUR VISION

DHS provides help and offers hope to vulnerable Oklahomans through stronger practices, involved communities and a caring and engaged workforce.

OUR VALUES

Compassion • Respect • Safety • Quality • Innovation



<p>Oklahomans lead safer, healthier, more independent and productive lives.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the incidence of abuse, neglect and exploitation in Oklahoma • Reduce participation barriers for Oklahomans who are eligible to receive DHS services • Improve the well-being of Oklahomans 	<p>Our workforce is informed, supported and engaged.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and maintain a healthy work environment built on trust, respect and effective communication • Increase our work-related skills and knowledge • Provide opportunities to improve our physical, emotional and financial health 	<p>We are engaged with communities to meet the needs of vulnerable Oklahomans.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve communications with community partners and key stakeholders • Build and strengthen community partnerships to provide clients greater access to resources 	<p>We have a culture of continuous improvement.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of systematic process improvement projects, across the department, designed to improve and promote excellent service delivery and client satisfaction • Maintain a culture of accountability, including fiscal integrity, at all levels of the department • Increase the understanding and application of outcome-focused performance and evidence-based practices
---	---	---	---

Figure 1. SFY 2014-2015 Strategy Map



A Letter from the Advocate General

The Office of Client Advocacy (OCA) is excited to join Director Ed Lake and our other agency partners as we collectively move forward with implementation of our strategic plan, “Growing in a New Direction.”

Change is never easy, but it is through change that we have the opportunity to realize our full potential. After taking a critical look at ourselves, OCA has set ambitious goals: to improve customer service and accessibility to the grievance, advocacy and investigation services we provide; to revamp our policies and procedures to benefit both our consumers and our workforce; to implement a person-centered, safety-based model in our investigations; to create a foster care ombudsman position to better assist foster parents and resource families; and to increase awareness of our special advocacy program in order to provide issue-based advocacy for children and vulnerable adults.

We recognize that to accomplish these goals, our employees need to feel valued and engaged. To ensure that objective is met, we are establishing onboarding and retention objectives, which include both mentorship and leadership opportunities. We also know that we do not operate in isolation, and that the decisions made by OCA impact others: our agency partners; provider agencies; foster and resource parents; residential facilities; and, most importantly, consumers of services provided by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

**Kathryn
Boyl Brewer**
Advocate General
Office of Client Advocacy

OCA recognizes that we have been entrusted with the critical responsibility of ensuring the safety of clients, the protection of rights, and the delivery of DHS services in a fair and professional manner. We welcome the opportunity to improve our service for the benefit of those we serve.

OUTCOME 1: Oklahomans lead safer, healthier, more independent and productive lives.

Goal 1: We will reduce the incidence of abuse, neglect and exploitation in Oklahoma.

Objective 1: We will conduct quality investigations and strengthen relationships with partners in order to ensure the safety of clients beginning July 2014.

Action Plan:

Beginning July 2014, we will educate our partners, providers and customers on reporting, as well as early signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and track patterns of abuse or neglect in the populations we serve. When patterns of abuse or neglect are identified within provider agencies or facilities, we will ensure steps are taken to address the concerns.

Beginning July 2014, we will develop a culture of continuous quality improvement.

Beginning January 2015, we will ensure feedback loops exist for the work we do to ensure the quality of our work and that consumer concerns have been addressed when dispositions involve other agency partners.

By June 2015, we will develop a trend identification tool for local grievance coordinators to increase awareness of grievances as a preventative measure against abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Important Results:

- The number of referrals, allegations, confirmations, registry hearings and workers added to the community services worker registry
- Increased awareness of duty to report by public, agency partners and service providers
- The increased percentage of satisfactory results on quality assurance reviews of our investigations
- Improved tracking of our abuse and neglect data jointly validated by Office of Client Advocacy and Office of Management and Enterprise Services – Information Security Division

OUTCOME 1: Oklahomans lead safer, healthier, more independent and productive lives.

Goal 2: We will reduce participation barriers for Oklahomans who are eligible to receive DHS services.

Objective 1: We will increase client, public and partner awareness of the Office of Client Advocacy's processes, purposes and services beginning January 2015.

Action Plan:

Beginning July 2014, we will partner with the Office of Communications to disseminate a clear understanding of the functions of our office to the public and our agency partners.

Beginning July 2014, we will ensure our intake unit appropriately dispositions referrals and ensures positive, proactive customer service by assisting callers who fall outside our service area by linking them with the appropriate entity who can meet their needs.

Beginning January 2015, we will update our internal and external Web pages to better communicate how we serve the public and increase accessibility to our services by adding links to our grievance and intake forms.

By June 2015, we will review, revise and simplify our investigation, advocacy and grievance policies to make them more accessible and understandable.

Important Results:

- The percentage of policy revised
- Partners will report an increased knowledge and understanding of Office of Client Advocacy policy
- The increased use of online forms
- Improved tracking of Office of Client Advocacy referrals to other entities when the client's issue is outside of our service area

OUTCOME 1: Oklahomans lead safer, healthier, more independent and productive lives.

Goal 3: We will improve the well-being of Oklahomans.

Objective 1: We will improve the effectiveness of the Office of Client Advocacy's services and responsiveness to client's needs beginning January 2015.

Action Plan:

Beginning July 2014, we will conduct thorough service reviews for our vulnerable adult clients and ensure issues are resolved in a timely manner.

Beginning July 2014, we will increase the use of special advocacy for children and vulnerable adults receiving developmental disabilities services.

Beginning July 2014, we will establish protocols for priority response and ensure all of our vulnerable adult investigations are initiated within five days.

Beginning July 2014, we will move from an administrative investigative model to a person-centered, safety-based model.

By January 2015, we will establish a means of prioritizing and categorizing informal problem resolution efforts.

Important Results:

- The percentage of service reviews completed within required timeframe
- The number of issues identified for informal problem resolution and percentage resolved within required timeframe
- The increased number of investigations initiated within five days
- The increased number of investigations completed within required timeframes

OUTCOME 2: Our workforce is informed, supported and engaged.

Goal 1: We will create and maintain a healthy work environment built on trust, respect and effective communication.

Objective 1: We will increase our employee retention by 5 percent over the next two years.

Action Plan:

Beginning July 2014, we will conduct exit interviews with our employees who voluntarily exit the department to gain feedback and insight into any concerns within the work environment in order to make improvements.

Beginning July 2014, we will continue to evaluate our organizational structure to ensure opportunities for career progression exists for all our employees.

Beginning July 2014, we will ensure supervisors use the performance management process to assist employees with skill development and measure employee engagement and satisfaction.

Beginning January 2015, we will explore use of alternative work plans (i.e. alternative workweek and telework) to better meet business needs and increase employee satisfaction.

Beginning January 2015, we will partner with Human Resources Management on employee engagement, recognition and retention efforts.

Beginning January 2015, we will develop surveys to measure employee engagement, satisfaction and identify opportunities to improve our work environments.

Important Results:

- Improved employee retention rates
- The increased percentage of employees who report they are satisfied with their jobs
- The percentage of staff who report they are satisfied with their work environment
- The percentage of employees who report being very engaged at work
- The percentage of employees who report personal development is encouraged by supervisors
- The percentage of employees who report they have a path for career progression at the Office of Client Advocacy

OUTCOME 2: Our workforce is informed, supported and engaged.

Goal 2: We will increase our work-related skills and knowledge.

Objective 1: We will increase the core skills and knowledge of employees in our advocacy, grievance/intake, and investigative units beginning July 2014.

Action Plan:

Beginning July 2014, we will increase comprehensive leadership training opportunities for our managers and administrators.

Beginning July 2014, we will revise our performance management tools to ensure they give clear direction regarding work expectations, duties and contributions.

Beginning January 2015, we will develop a new employee orientation and onboarding program that incorporates all facets of the Office of Client Advocacy's services.

Beginning January 2015, we will ensure employees are cross-trained where appropriate.

Beginning January 2015, we will ensure each branch of the Office of Client Advocacy has a clear, comprehensive and consistent employee-training program.

By July 2015, we will reduce the use of administrative directives by ensuring our instructions to staff are comprehensive, accurately reflect the duties of staff and are useful tools to employees.

Important Results:

- The percentage of employees who report a greater understanding of various functions of the Office of Client Advocacy
- The number and percentage of employees who have completed their training programs
- The number of leadership trainings provided to management
- The number of administrative directives repealed and incorporated into policy and instructions to staff
- The percentage of performance management tools that give clear direction regarding work expectations, duties and contributions

OUTCOME 2: Our workforce is informed, supported and engaged.

Goal 3: We will provide opportunities to improve our physical, emotional and financial health.

Objective 1: We will strive to improve our employee's physical, emotional and financial wellness beginning July 2014.

Action Plan:

Beginning July 2014, we will increase awareness of and encourage participation in the OKHealth, DHS Wellness Program and Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Beginning July 2014, we will inform employees of available physical, emotional and financial wellness opportunities and resources provided both within and outside the department.

Beginning January 2015, we will participate in data collection to identify what trainings, workshops, services or programs employees currently use or would consider using that are aimed at improving physical, emotional and financial health.

Important Results:

- The number of opportunities and resources identified annually to assist employees with improved health
- The number of employees reporting an increased awareness of services provided through OKHealth, DHS Wellness Program, and Employee Assistance Program

OUTCOME 3: We are engaged with communities to meet the needs of vulnerable Oklahomans.

Goals 1 & 2:

1 : We will improve communications with community partners and key stakeholders.

2 : We will build and strengthen community partnerships to provide clients greater access to resources.

Objective 1: We will increase the opportunities for partnership, maximize the value of partner relationships, and strengthen a network of community partnerships that ensures greater access to resources beginning July 2014.

Action Plan:

Beginning July 2014, we will meet regularly with key partners including Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth (OCCY), Oklahoma Child Care Services (OCCS), APS, Child Welfare, Developmental Disabilities Services, community providers, and advocacy groups to discuss service needs.

Beginning July 2014, we will increase joint responses with agency partners on investigations.

Beginning July 2014, we will ensure feedback loops are utilized when coordinating work with other divisions to ensure appropriate responsiveness and follow-up.

Beginning July 2014, we will develop a Foster Care Ombudsman position that will serve as an independent advocate for foster parents to act as a liaison between Child Welfare Services or other agency staff and the foster parents.

Beginning January 2015, we will inform our customers of available resources by updating our Web page to provide helpful links to other divisions, community partners and providers.

Important Results:

- The number of customers who report an increased awareness of available avenues for issue resolution
- The number of meetings that occur with key partners
- The number of investigations with joint response
- The number of links added to our Web page
- Improved capacity to act on behalf of foster parents

OUTCOME 4: We have a culture of continuous improvement.

Goal 1: We will continue to promote systematic process improvement initiatives designed to improve and promote DHS service delivery excellence and client satisfaction.

Objective 1: We will continually improve our business processes to ensure service excellence and client satisfaction beginning July 2014.

Action Plan:

Beginning July 2014, we will partner with Office of Business Quality to evaluate effectiveness and potentially revise current business processes.

Beginning July 2014, we will encourage employee participation in process improvement trainings such as Lean Six Sigma.

Beginning July 2014, we will develop a quality assurance review process to ensure integrity of our investigations.

Beginning July 2014, we will revise our policy and instructions to staff to incorporate all of our administrative directives and guidelines.

Beginning July 2014, we will explore ways for managers to collaborate and audit each other's work to standardize processes and ensure consistency between units.

Beginning January 2015, we will survey staff regarding clarity of current business processes.

Important Results:

- The number of staff who have attended process improvement training
- The number of staff who have attended advanced levels of process improvement training
- The number and percentage of administrative directives and guidelines that are incorporated into policy and instructions to staff, and then revoked
- The number of issues identified in quality assurance reviews of investigations
- The number of discrepancies between units reported by management

OUTCOME 4: We have a culture of continuous improvement.

Goal 2: We will maintain a culture of accountability, including fiscal integrity, at all levels of the organization.

Objective 1: We will improve accountability amongst all Office of Client Advocacy employees beginning July 2014.

Action Plan:

Beginning July 2014, we will ensure our performance management process is measurable and specific.

Beginning July 2014, we will minimize travel expenses by assigning cases geographically, ensuring employees prioritize/consolidate work, and ensuring employees use the cheapest available method of travel.

Beginning July 2014, we will ensure a feedback loop exists for quality assurance investigation reviews.

Beginning January 2015, we will utilize local grievance coordinator evaluations to increase accountability.

Important Results:

- The ability to hold employees accountable through clear, measureable and specific performance objectives when there are performance issues
- Decreased travel expenses
- Reduced investigation errors
- Reduced investigation trends
- Increased consistency of application of grievance processes by local grievance coordinators
- Reduction in number of investigative findings reversed and remanded by our quality assurance reviews

OUTCOME 4: We have a culture of continuous improvement.

Goal 3: We will increase the understanding and application of outcome-focused performance and evidence-based practices at all levels of the department.

Objective 1: We will increase the performance awareness of the Office of Client Advocacy and ensure our goals and objectives are aligned with the department-level strategic plan.

Action Plan:

Beginning July 2014, we will involve all of our managers in strategic planning.

Beginning July 2014, we will create new, key measures to describe the division.

Beginning January 2015, we will ensure all of our managers attend outcome-based performance training.

By June 2015, the language used on reports and in communication with staff will distinctly connect the division's outputs and outcomes.

Important Results:

- The number and percentage of managers and administrators who have attended outcome-based performance trainings
- The percentage of programs with revised/updated performance evaluations
- The increased number of meetings that incorporate all of our management versus one specific program
- The number of new outcomes measures created and implemented



Office of Client Advocacy

