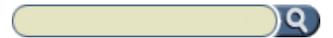


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Press Release



For Immediate Release

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Contact:

Communications Office
(603)271-2121

Governor and Council Approve DCYF Contract for 24-Hour, Seven-Day a Week Responses

CONCORD - As part of ongoing efforts to improve child safety, Governor Maggie Hassan and the Executive Council today approved a contract to allow for 24-hour, seven-day a week responses to reports of child abuse at the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF).

"Protecting our children and ensuring that every child has the opportunity to live and grow in a safe environment is the fundamental responsibility of our society," Governor Hassan said. "Any missed opportunity to save a child's life, or to save a child from harm, is a tragedy, and providing 24-hour, seven-day a week responses to reports of child abuse at DCYF is critical to helping prevent such tragedies and ensuring the safety and well-being of our children."

Approved in a unanimous, bipartisan vote, the contract will provide a response to reports of alleged child abuse and neglect 24-hours, seven-days a week and holidays; assist with emergency placements for at-risk children; ensure after-hours access for hospitals to obtain consent for medical treatment; and provide screening reports and referrals needed for responses. In addition, [an independent review that was ordered by Governor Hassan of the child protective services at DCYF was released earlier this week.](#)

"The approval of this contract is an important part of our ongoing efforts to improve child safety as the State responds to the independent review and works to ensure that New Hampshire has the staff, policies and laws in place necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of our children," Governor Hassan said.

[Governor Hassan signed several bipartisan bills this year as part of her efforts to protect New Hampshire's children](#), including Senate Bill 515, which strengthens the Child Protection Act regarding potential opioid abuse of a parent or guardian; Senate Bill 536, relative to emergency interim relief under the child protection act; Senate Bill 538, relative to children taken into custody under the child protection act and relative to the commission to review child abuse fatalities, and Senate Bill 539, relative to access to records under the child protection act. The Department of Justice has also partnered with DCYF to provide training so that case workers can better identify potential crimes when evaluating cases of abuse and neglect.

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