

**INTERIM REPORT OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Status of Child Day Care Automation

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 5

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
2001**



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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

September 28, 2000

TO: The General Assembly of Virginia

The Department of Social Services (Department) was charged by the 2000 Appropriations Act, Item 387, paragraph L, to report by October 15 of each year on the status of efforts to develop and implement an automated system for the child day care assistance programs. Because of events outlined below, the Department will not be submitting a formal report this year.

The General Assembly's request for this report is a continuation of its interest in child day care assistance programs automation. The 1998 Appropriations Act, item 402 N, directed the Department of Social Services to report on a plan for automating the child day care assistance programs. A report was submitted to the Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Finance Committee on October 15, 1998. It concluded that integrating the child day care program into the existing "On-line Automated Services Information System" (OASIS) was the most beneficial of the alternatives considered by the Department. The report gave the end of calendar year 1999 as the target date for full implementation of child day care assistance programs automation.

In 1999, the co-chairmen of the House Appropriations Committee requested the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) to complete a special review of OASIS. JLARC'S report was issued on February 1, 2000. It strongly recommended that any effort to develop an automated information system for child day care assistance programs be delayed pending:

- 1) A comprehensive redesign of the adoption and foster care, and child protective services components of OASIS,
- 2) Pilot tests of the redesigned components, and
- 3) Local agency staff receiving training in the use of the redesigned components.

Responding to user complaints and the JLARC recommendation, the Department delayed development of the child day care component of OASIS and focused available resources on modifying the overall OASIS system. Key to this effort was the formation of an OASIS Steering Committee consisting of local agency directors and staff who have helped shape the focus and direction of OASIS development.

The Department, working with the Virginia League for Social Service Executives, and under the guidance of the OASIS Steering Committee, formed subject matter expert panels for the adoption, foster care, child protective services, and child day care programs. One subject matter expert panel dealt with both adoption and foster care. A second panel dealt with child protective services. These two panels have largely completed the redesign of their respective OASIS components.

The recommendations of these two expert panels resulted in three sets of OASIS enhancements. One set of enhancements was released in March 2000. The next set is being field tested in pilot agencies and will be released statewide by the end of October 2000. The final set of enhancements will be released in April 2001. In addition to the system enhancements, the Department increased OASIS training for local department of social services staff, instituted new-worker training for newly hired workers, and developed improved OASIS operator guides and manuals.

The subject matter expert panel for child day care conducted a thorough review of OASIS and made recommendations on how child day care services could be incorporated into it. These recommendations are being studied by the Department and will be the basis of a detailed plan for automation of child day

care assistance programs, which will be developed in cooperation with the OASIS Steering Committee.

The Department will convey to the General Assembly its plan for automating child day care assistance programs when the OASIS Steering Committee, the child day care expert panel, and the administration have finalized this work plan.

The report cost the Commonwealth of Virginia an estimated \$3,000 and 200 staff hours to complete. This estimate includes the cost of child day care program staff and information systems staff to write the report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sonia Rivero". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sonia Rivero
Commissioner

