

# Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion 2023 Annual Report

AGENCY: OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

YEAR: 2023

2023  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Plan Goal 1: Access & Success

**Recruit and retain a diverse and competent workforce.**

**Objective 1**

The Office of Children's Services management team has completed all Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Human Resource Management training related to the recruitment and retention of a diverse and competent workforce.

**Objective 2**

The Office of Children's Services staff has completed training on practices and approaches to ensuring diverse and representative interview panels.

Plan Goal 2: Welcoming & Respectful Culture

**Create and sustain an agency culture that affirms and respects diversity and employs inclusive practices throughout agency operations.**

**Objective 1**

The Office of Children's Services has incorporated the tenets of Inclusive Excellence into its newly developed code of Ethics and Values.

**Objective 2**

The Office of Children's Services has integrated the principles of Inclusive Excellence into all staff and management Employee Work Profiles

**Objective 3**

The Office of Children's Services staff completed a full day of on-site conflict resolution training, which included the identification and examination of conflict resolution styles and discussion on the Lenski Conflict Pivots.

Plan Goal 3: State Agency DOI Infrastructure & Training

**Create and sustain an agency and team infrastructure that effectively supports progress and accountability in achieving diversity goals.**

**Objective 1**

The Office of Children's Services staff has participated in over 15 conference and training opportunities outside of those provided by the agency and Commonwealth of Virginia's Learning Center.

**Objective 2**

The Office of Children's Services featured seven (7) Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion-related breakout sessions at their Annual Children's Services Act Conference.

Agency Goal 1: Access & Success

**Ensure accessibility, usability, and inclusion of all Office of Children’s Services/Children’s Services Act resources for diverse needs and abilities to include language access, digital access, and ability access.**

Agency Goal 2: Welcoming & Respectful Culture

**Preserve an agency culture that celebrates diversity in thought, action, and person.**

Agency Goal 3: State Agency DOI Infrastructure & Training

**Maintain an agency infrastructure that promotes growth and accountability in achieving the agency’s mission, vision, and the Commonwealth’s DOI goals.**



Diversity Opportunity and  
Inclusion Plan  
Office of Children's Services  
FY2024



Office of  
Children's Services

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## **Background**

On January 19, 2022, Governor Youngkin signed Executive Order 10, which provided a concrete plan to further strengthen and focus the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and to include the promotion and expansion of equal opportunity for all Virginians in the Office's work. The inclusion of Opportunity is a critical factor in making Virginia the best place to live, work, and raise a family.

The Commonwealth's focus in 2023 and beyond is to continue to increase opportunities for all Virginians. The goals and objectives in this Diversity Opportunity and Inclusion plan for the Office of Children's Services are built upon the Commonwealth's plan and the promise of Executive Order 10. The Office of Children's Service's (OCS) goals continue our focus on creating a culture of inclusion, where all OCS employees are recognized for their contributions and are afforded the opportunity for growth within their positions and the opportunity to make meaningful contributions to the mission and vision of the Children's Services Act (CSA).

### **Overview: The Children's Services Act and the Office of Children's Services**

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) is the executive branch agency responsible for statewide management and oversight of the Children's Services Act, established through §2.2-5200 et seq of the Code of Virginia. OCS is situated within the Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Resources. The specific duties and responsibilities of OCS are found in §2.2-2649 of the Code. OCS additionally operates under the direction of the State Executive Council for Children's Services (§2.2-2648), a 21-member supervisory board.

The Children's Services Act (CSA) is a statewide program established initially in 1993 that provides funding, services, and support to children and families across the Commonwealth who meet the eligibility criteria established in the Code of Virginia. CSA is a state-supervised, locally administered program. Local CSA programs in each city and county provide day-to-day operation of the program under state and federal law and policies of the State Executive Council.

Operating under our Mission Statement of "Empowering Communities to Serve Youth," OCS provides services and support to local CSA programs, including:

- training and technical assistance;
- a robust audit program to ensure compliance and lawful use of state funds;
- fiscal support, including the processing of over \$400 million in annual reimbursements;
- information technology systems to support programmatic and fiscal reporting; and
- research and evaluation functions.

# Vision, Mission, and Values of the Office of Children’s Services

## OCS Vision:

A collaborative, child-centered, family-focused, community-based system of care that effectively meets the needs of youth and their families in the Commonwealth.

## OCS Mission:

Empowering Communities to Serve Youth

## OCS Values:

- **System of Care:** Promote policies, uniform guidelines, services and practices that support systems of care in communities that can be tailored to meet the unique strengths, resources, and needs of youth, families, and communities.
- **Child-Centered, Family-Focused:** Promote working in partnership with families to ensure that the assessment, design, delivery, and management of service is family driven.
- **Continuum of Care:** Provide access to a continuum of assessment, early intervention, treatment, and transition services and supports in communities.
- **Integrate Services across Agencies:** Integrate services and funding for youth and their families with designated care management to ensure multiple services are coordinated across agencies and evolve over time to meet the changing strengths and needs of children and their families.
- **Collaboration:** Support open communication, active participation, and collaboration among CSA stakeholders across all sectors and at all levels on program and fiscal policy development and service development, delivery, and management.
- **Fiscal Accountability:** Ensure fiscal accountability in that funds are spent effectively, efficiently, and equitably, maximizing the use of all local, state, federal and private funding streams.
- **Inclusive Excellence:** Foster a culture of inclusion, diversity, equity, opportunities, and mutual respect for all Virginians.

# Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan

## Goal 1: Access & Success

*Recruit and retain a diverse and competent workforce that embraces the mission and vision of the Children's Services Act.*

### Objective 1

Continue to improve the OCS Management Team's skillset in recruiting and retaining a diverse and competent workforce.

- a) The OCS Management Team will continue to complete all Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Human Resource Management training related to the recruitment and retention of a diverse and competent workforce.
- b) The OCS Management Team will network with colleagues in other agencies with a specific focus on gleaning techniques that have been successful in the recruitment and retention of a diverse and competent workforce.
- c) The OCS Management Team will discuss workforce retention strategies at monthly leadership meetings.

### Objective 2

The OCS staff will continue to seek out and complete training related to the practices and approaches to ensure diverse and representative interview panels.

- a) The OCS Management Team will review previous interviewing strategies and evaluate their effectiveness in securing diverse team members who possess the skills and commitment necessary to fulfill the requirements of the position.
- b) The OCS Management Team will seek out training opportunities related to maximizing the interviewing process.
- c) During the interview process and again during onboarding, management will ensure that new employees are made aware of all aspects of the position, including inclusive practices and the sensitive nature of the children and families the CSA serves.

*Ensure the accessibility, usability, and inclusion of all Office of Children's Services/Children's Services Act resources for diverse needs and abilities, including language access, digital access, and ability access.*

### Objective 1

Evaluate all OCS front-facing resources and guidance specific to comprehensive access related to language, digital, and ability access.

- a) The OCS Executive Director will designate a member of the OCS Management Team to lead a systematic review of OCS front-facing resources.

- b) The designated member of the OCS Management Team will complete training on accessibility, including topics such as plain language accessibility and disability awareness in technology.
- c) The OCS, in partnership with the State and Local Advisory Team, will poll stakeholders to gather information related to the local accessibility of OCS/CSA resources.

## **Goal 2: Welcoming & Respectful Culture**

*Create and sustain an agency culture that affirms and respects diversity and employs inclusive practices throughout agency operations.*

### **Objective 1**

The OCS will create a workplace climate that values collegial support, varied world views, and integrates diverse perspectives into internal and external agency operations.

- a) The OCS will continue to incorporate the tenets of Inclusive Excellence into its Code of Ethics and Values.
- b) The OCS will be mindful of the differing abilities and intentionally provide measures to allow for accessibility.
- c) The OCS will champion collaboration at the state and local levels.
- d) The OCS will embrace diversity of thought in all activities of the agency.
- e) The OCS will continue to integrate the principles of Inclusive Excellence into all staff and management Employee Work Profiles.

### **Objective 2**

The OCS will foster an environment that allows for safe communication where employees can openly discuss concerns, conflicts, and complaints.

- a) The OCS staff will complete training on dispute resolution, facilitating difficult discussions, and communication styles.
- b) The OCS Management Team will support staff members in addressing workplace disputes and difficult discussions.
- c) The OCS leadership will intentionally plan teambuilding activities among the OCS staff.

## **Goal 3: State Agency DOI Infrastructure & Training**

*Create and sustain an agency and team infrastructure that effectively supports progress and accountability in achieving diversity goals.*

### **Objective 1**

The OCS will continue to foster the growth of staff in the area of Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion.

- a) The OCS staff will participate in conference and training opportunities outside of those provided by the agency and Commonwealth of Virginia's Learning Center.
- b) The OCS will share DOI-related resources with their colleagues at agency meetings and events.

### **Objective 2**

The OCS will seek to advance the goals of the Commonwealth's DOI plan with its agency partners.

- a) The OCS will share DOI-related information with the State Executive Council for Children's Services and the State and Local Advisory Committee.
- b) The OCS will seek out training sessions related to Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion at their Annual Children's Services Act Conference.
- c) The OCS will openly share DOI resources with state and local agency partners.