

**Office of Children's Services Safety and Support Enhancements**

**FY2019 Request: \$1,239,352**  
**Reference No: 32446**

**AP/AL:** Appropriation

**Project Type:** Equipment

**Category:** Health/Human Services

**Location:** Statewide

**House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)

**Impact House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)

**Contact:** Michael Frawley

**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2023

**Contact Phone:** (907)465-1624

**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

The Office of Children's Services continues to take steps to promote the safety of its employees through assessment of the agency's current practices as well as the best practices utilized by other child protective services and home visiting organizations. Child protective services employees in Alaska are increasingly subjected to threats of death, harm, verbal abuse and in extreme cases, physically assaulted by Office of Children's Services clients. It is the duty of the Office of Children's Services to protect its employees and ensure safe and responsible individuals, families and communities.

<b>Funding:</b>	<u>FY2019</u>	<u>FY2020</u>	<u>FY2021</u>	<u>FY2022</u>	<u>FY2023</u>	<u>FY2024</u>	<u>Total</u>
1002 Fed Rcpts	\$350,800						\$350,800
1003 G/F Match	\$888,552						\$888,552
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,239,352</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,239,352</b>

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

**Operating & Maintenance Costs:**

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Prior Funding History / Additional Information:**

Sec30 Ch38 SLA2015 P45 L31 SB26 \$462,900  
 Sec1 Ch18 SLA2014 P53 L30 SB119 \$94,800  
 Sec1 Ch15 SLA2009 P16 L13 SB75 \$1,115,750  
 Sec13 Ch29 SLA2008 P149 L32 SB221 \$837,800  
 Sec4 Ch30 SLA2007 P95 L30 SB53 \$382,100  
 Sec1 Ch82 SLA2006 P74 L5 SB231 \$500,000  
 Sec1 Ch159 SLA2004 P27 L10 SB283 \$480,200  
 Sec1 Ch82 SLA2003 P29 L8 SB100 \$395,000  
 Sec1 Ch1 SLA2002 P40 L26 SB2006 \$1,114,200  
 Sec1 Ch61 SLA2001 P19 L11 SB29 \$2,531,000  
 Sec1 Ch135 SLA2000 P14 L21 SB192 \$202,100

**Project Description/Justification:**

The Office of Children's Services continues to take steps to promote the safety of its employees through assessment of the agency's current practices as well as the best practices utilized by other child protective services and home visiting organizations. Cost estimates for the enhancement of the safety of Office of Children's Services employees through training and skill enhancement, technology improvements, office and building improvements, office moves into safer locations, and policy revisions continue to be implemented and proposed.

**Office and Building Safety**

The following field offices will likely be moving to new locations, King Salmon, Wasilla, Kodiak, Kenai and Bethel. These moves are in response to safety related issues associated with threats of harm to protective services workers, necessary dedicated space for volatile clients within the field offices and reasonable separation for staff from common spaces such as hallways where escalated clients may have access. These office moves will require a re-evaluation and installation of safety features common of all field offices that includes bullet proof glass in the reception area, key card activated locking doors, sufficient lighting in the parking lots, security cameras, associated signage and panic buttons to law enforcement. In Wasilla, initial assessment staff will be collocated with the Children's Advocacy Center and Public Safety to ensure fast and efficient processing and analysis of child abuse cases in an environment where perpetrators can be evaluated on site, simultaneously with an investigation of child maltreatment. The Office of Children's Services centralized intake unit awaits for the Wasilla/Mat-Su region to upgrade its telephone system to the General Communications Incorporated platform. This full system upgrade will fully integrate Office of Children's Services most active child protection region into the statewide centralized intake system, allowing for a faster response time for the processing of reports of child maltreatment in a call center, staffed 24 hours a day.

**Safety in the Field**

Mobile devices, such as smart phones, tablets, dictation equipment and laptops offer new ways to support the child protection workforce. These platforms can improve timeliness and accuracy of documentation, as well as ensure access to critical information in the field. Child welfare professionals make important decisions about children and their families every day. Even a decision that might seem simple at first glance, such as whether to visit a particular home on a certain day, can have significant safety implications to a caseworker and the impacted children. Child protection workers need fast access to client details, a photo, the location, any special cautions for the client, relationships and names of people related to the client, current and completed outcome places. With increased federal demand for child welfare system accountability, and a pending Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) upgrade to the existing On-line Resources for the Children of Alaska (ORCA) system, the reliance on technology for data collection and reporting is large. Mobile equipment will aid workers for all work related to safety plans, documenting family visits, searching for family members, investigating community resources and essentially improves worker efficiency to allow for further child protection and permanency.

The Office of Children's Services will move forward with security enhancements in some offices, but not all. While not all offices need the same level of security measures, it is the responsibility of the Office of Children's Services to provide workers reasonable safety enhancements. If the safety in the field request, including the associated technology, is not funded, worker safety, child safety and the ultimate goal of reunification with the child's family or another type of permanency may be delayed.

Contractor Costs	Contracted Service	\$ 1,169,200
Capital Funds Administration	Capital Improvement Project	\$70,152
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,239,352</b>
<b>Total Federal Financial Participation</b>		<b>\$350,800</b>
<b>Total General Funds</b>		<b>\$888,552</b>