



**EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 19-03**

**ESTABLISHING AN OVERSIGHT BOARD TO ADDRESS THE CRISIS IN  
OREGON'S CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM**

Whereas, Oregon's child welfare system serves the state's most vulnerable children and families; and

Whereas, every single child must be safe in order for Oregon to move forward together as a state; and

Whereas, by the time children enter the child welfare system, several other systems and prevention measures have already failed them; and

Whereas, the Child Welfare Program is significantly understaffed and does not have enough caseworkers to adequately meet the needs of children; and

Whereas, more than 80 of the highest-needs children in the foster care system have been sent to facilities outside of Oregon, with insufficient oversight by the State; and

Whereas, there are not enough foster families, therapeutic foster homes, and other facilities to house foster children in Oregon.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY DIRECTED AND ORDERED:**

1. The Governor shall exercise authority over and direct the Oregon Department of Human Services ("DHS") in the following respects:
  - a. A Child Welfare Oversight Board shall be constituted, which shall be advisory to the Governor with respect to the Child Welfare Program of DHS. Led by the Governor, the Child Welfare Oversight Board shall convene at least bi-weekly with meetings attended by the Director of DHS and the Director of the Child Welfare Program.
  - b. The Governor will procure a crisis management team to implement her directives, based on the Board's recommendations, to the Director of DHS and the Child Welfare Director. The Governor will appoint a member of her staff to be embedded within DHS to ensure directives are implemented.





**EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 19-03**  
**PAGE TWO**

- c. The Governor's Oversight Board and crisis team will make and implement recommendations at DHS related to:
    - i. Out-of-state foster child placements;
    - ii. Compliance with the Oregon Public Records Law;
    - iii. Implementation of laws prescribing the Critical Incident Response Team ("CIRT");
    - iv. Hiring and human resources practices generally;
    - v. Building capacity for therapeutic and general foster care, as well as for a continuum of care in behavioral health services for foster children and youth that is accessible, trauma-informed and family and child-focused;
    - vi. Development of adequate in-home capacity for children and youth of color, youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and LGBTQ+ youth;
    - vii. Development of recommendations to address workforce challenges in provision of services to foster youth;
    - viii. Ensuring that accurate and timely data is available to improve operations and processes; and
    - ix. Other operational challenges.
  - d. The Governor shall exercise all additional authority over DHS as deemed advisable and necessary.
2. It is determined that strict compliance with certain Oregon Administrative Rules and agency policies are hindering or delaying responses to challenges in the Child Welfare system. DHS and the Child Welfare Program are directed to take all reasonable and lawful steps to avoid, suspend, or amend temporarily rules and policies relating to hiring, procurement, and facilities, among other things, that inhibit rapid and effective responses to the challenges identified in this Order. Specifically, DHS and the Child Welfare Program shall utilize, where appropriate, DAS Policy 40.010.02(4)(b) (Direct Appointments), OAR



EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 19-03  
PAGE THREE

125-247-0280 (Emergency Procurements), OAR 407-001-0005 (Adoption or Suspension of Temporary Rules), among other mechanisms, to lawfully avoid, suspend, or amend temporarily rules and policies as warranted.

3. This Executive Order shall be effective for 180 days, at which time it shall expire unless extended by the Governor.

Done at Salem, Oregon, this 18<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2019.



Handwritten signature of Kate Brown in blue ink.

Kate Brown  
GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

Handwritten signature of Beverly Clarno in blue ink.

Beverly Clarno  
SECRETARY OF STATE