


CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

P.O. Box 419064, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9064

SUPERSEDED BY CSSI 22-05

October 01, 2002

CSS LETTER NO. 02-19

TO: ALL IV-D DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: OMBUDSPERSON SERVING AS PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

Reason for this Transmittal

- State Law or Regulation Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order or Settlement Change
- Clarification requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by DCSS

LCSA Letter No. 02-04 dated February 20, 2002 required each local child support agency (LCSA) to designate a Public Information Officer. The letter stated, "selecting a Public Information Officer does not necessarily mean creation of a new position. The Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) will defer to the judgment of each Director to determine how they want to handle this role."

Although LCSA Letter No. 02-04 gives the Director discretion on how to handle this role, it has come to the attention of DCSS that in some LCSAs the Ombudsperson is also serving as the Public Information Officer. This may create a perception that the Ombudsperson has a predetermined position about the LCSA's actions, as the Public Information Officers tend to promote the position of the LCSA. Therefore, with the exception of the small LCSAs (less than 10,000 cases) where one or two staff perform the majority of the child support functions, DCSS has determined that the Ombudsperson should not also serve as the Public Information Officer.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Francine Woods at (916) 464-5377 or francine.woods@dcss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

PATRIC B. ASHBY
 Deputy Director
 Child Support Services Division

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