



STATE OF CONNECTICUT



TO: Superintendents of Schools
Connecticut Education Association
American Federation of Teachers - CT

FROM: Vannessa Dorantes, LMSW
Commissioner, Department of Children and Families

Dr. Miguel A. Cardona,
Commissioner, CT State Department of Education

DATE: February 27, 2020

SUBJECT: Education Professional Investigations Unit

In the past year, the executive and leadership teams at the Department of Children and Families (DCF) along with school administrators, teachers and their union representatives, have come together to learn how we can improve our collaborative relationships. Among the many important points of discussion were the impact that Careline reports about education professionals have on the schools, the individual personnel involved, and the overall capacity to educate students.

In response to these concerns, a major change is being made that we are confident will significantly improve the investigation process.

Effective February 28, 2020, DCF is creating a new unit entitled, the Education Professional Investigation Unit (EPIU), which we believe will shorten the time investigations require and create greater consistency in response to allegations. This unit will respond to Careline reports concerning education professionals - in their professional capacity with students - with two dedicated units of Investigations Social Workers. Each unit will have five Investigators and be overseen by a Social Work Supervisor. A Program Supervisor will manage the two units.

The ten Investigators, who will work out of local Department offices across the state, will receive specialized training in school-based investigations and will develop particular expertise and experience. In addition, the protocol for these investigations will be streamlined to reflect the unique nature of school reports.

The EPIU will complete the investigations in a more expedient manner -- a standard of 33 business days compared to 45 days under the existing process. In addition, the centralized supervision and management will lead to more consistent procedures and findings.

The two Supervisors and the Program Supervisor will be located in Central Office of DCF and fall within the structure of the Child Abuse and Neglect Careline. The Program Supervisor is responsible for statewide investigations and each Social Worker Supervisor oversees investigations according to specific regions.

We encourage you to contact the staff identified below if you have questions or are in need of additional information.

The following DCF personnel have been assigned to the EPIU:

Statewide Investigations	Program Supervisor	Gloria Campos	Gloria.Campos@ct.gov	(860) 723-7244
Regions 1,2,3	Social Work Supervisor	James Wright	James.Wright@ct.gov	(860) 550-6439
Regions 4,5,6	Social Work Supervisor	Jacqueline Monahan	Jacqueline.Monahan@ct.gov	(860) 550-6669

Please access this link to determine in which Region your school is located: [DCF Regional Map 2020](#)

An additional change is that the investigations disposition will receive a higher level of oversight. In the event an investigation has a substantiated finding or any programmatic/systems related concerns, the Program Supervisor shall be consulted and must give approval of such dispositions. An Assistant Legal Director will provide additional legal consultation to the EPIU when there is a decision to substantiate the allegations and will be available as needed for case consultation.

Requests for internal reviews should be submitted to DCF.Educationappeals@ct.gov. Internal reviews will be completed by dedicated DCF Central Office staff.

Once the investigation dispositions are approved, an immediate communication shall be sent by DCF to the State Department of Education and Superintendent of the school district where the investigation occurred. A verbal discussion between the Program Supervisor and Superintendent (or designee) may take place as needed.

This change offers greater timeliness and consistency, but also the opportunity to make communication between the Department and the school administration, educators, and their representatives more direct, convenient, and transparent.

Thank you for your collaboration as we continue our valuable partnership.

If you have any follow-up questions about the new units or process/procedures, please contact the Program Supervisor Gloria Campos at Gloria.Campos@ct.gov or (860) 723-7244.