



CHILD PROTECTION
OMBUDSMAN
of COLORADO

Office of the Child Protection Ombudsman

Fiscal Year 2016-2017

Quarter One Performance Evaluation

October 01, 2016

Stephanie Villafuerte, Ombudsman

Quarter One Performance Evaluation

Strategic Policy Initiatives

The Office of Colorado’s Child Protection Ombudsman (CPO) created its strategic policy initiatives after a thorough analysis by the Ombudsman revealed areas where the CPO needs to improve by utilizing impactful strategies. Those strategies include four goals comprised of broad, long-term strategies to make the CPO a more efficient and effective agency. Each of those goals encompass specific strategies that will drive the CPO forward. In order to ensure it is working toward achieving those strategies, the CPO has set specific performance measures to track and analyze its progress. On September 14, 2016 all of the CPO staff met to discuss its strategic policy initiatives and any progress or setbacks in achieving those initiatives.

A complete report of the CPO’s strategic policy initiatives may be found in its [2016-2017 Performance Plan](#). Below is an update on which performance measures the CPO has completed for Fiscal Year 2016-2017. The updates reflect data as of October 1, 2016.

Goal One: Establish an efficient office to ensure seamless delivery of services to the public.

STRATEGY ONE: Build physical infrastructure of the CPO	
Performance Measure – Develop a safe and appropriate work space with allotment for future growth.	
Key Metrics	Status: COMPLETED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with contractors, architects, space planners and the Colorado State Judicial Branch (judicial department) to complete permanent office space. • Move into new office space and assess future needs. 	The CPO’s new office space was completed at the end of July 2016 and staff moved into the space on August 2. Since moving operations into the space, the CPO has assessed the space and any needs. Currently, the space will accommodate two additional staff members and two interns.
Performance Measure – Secure necessary hardware and software for business operations.	
Key Metrics	Status: COMPLETED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase and set up new equipment and furniture. 	The CPO’s furniture was purchased and installed prior to staff moving into the space. Necessary electronic equipment, such as phones and monitor adaptors were purchased to support the functionality of the CPO. Additional programming and materials necessary for CPO operations were also secured, such as hard copies of the revised Colorado Children’s Code.

Performance Measure – Contract with IT vendors for services, set up and ongoing maintenance.	
Key Metrics	Status: COMPLETED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure contracts for phones, internet, computer and server maintenance and support. Assess ongoing IT needs. 	Prior to moving into the new space, the CPO entered into a contract with Computer Crews for internet, computer and server maintenance. The contract included the necessary assistance to move the CPO into its new space.

STRATEGY TWO: Build operating infrastructure	
Performance Measure – Develop internal financial policies and processes to ensure proper use of public funds.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn judicial department policies and operating systems – including procurement, travel, accounting and administrative fiscal rules – and implement them. Develop and monitor the operating budget. Create CPO fiscal rules and develop internal financial controls. 	CPO staff have learned the necessary policies and operating systems. A notebook with relevant information on these policies and systems has been created and is available to staff as a reference. The CPO has also started the practice of reviewing its operating budget on a monthly basis. Currently, the CPO is working with the Attorney General’s office to finalize a draft of its fiscal rules and internal financial controls.
Performance Measure – Develop necessary internal human resource systems.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn judicial department’s human resource system. Create and implement HR systems, including employee time-off management program, personnel rules for staff and Ombudsman, re-evaluate job descriptions and align with newly created evaluations for staff and Ombudsman. 	CPO staff have learned the judicial department’s human resource system and have implemented a time-off management program. A final draft of the CPO’s personnel rules is being finalized and has been reviewed by the Attorney General’s office. The Ombudsman has reviewed the available job descriptions and is in the process of drafting new descriptions and evaluations for staff.

STRATEGY THREE: Establish Board structure and operating policies	
Performance Measure – Work with the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government to fill Board vacancies through appointments.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill vacancies and implement communication strategy with executive, judicial and legislative branches. 	All but one position on the Ombudsman Board has been filled and the board is operational. The CPO is still awaiting an appointment by the House Minority Leader. The CPO is working to

	develop consistent communication methods with the executive, judicial and legislative branches to ensure seats are filled as quickly as possible.
Performance Measure – Support Board in creating by-laws.	
Key Metrics	Status: NOT YET STARTED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and implement by-laws that address the Board’s attendance, emergency session rules, filling vacancies and other needs. 	The Board will begin working with the Attorney General’s office in the future to create by-laws. The CPO will provide support as requested by either the Board or the Attorney General’s office.
Performance Measure – Provide the Board support through scheduling monthly meetings, providing minutes and supplying CPO reports.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine Board members’ needs and develop policies to provide support. 	Each month all board members are provided an Executive Director’s Report, a copy of the updated budget, minutes from the previous meeting, any reports published during the previous month and a legislative update. Legal counsel is provided to the Board when requested.
Performance Measure – Provide support to the Board so it can develop a grievance and evaluation process for the Ombudsman as required by statute.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and implement processes. 	During the September board meeting discussions were initiated between board members and the Attorney General’s office to create an evaluation process for the Ombudsman. The Board and Attorney General’s office are discussing what metrics they will use during the Ombudsman first evaluation in December 2016.
Performance Measure – Develop fiscal rules for Board travel and expenses.	
Key Metrics	Status: COMPLETED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and implement rules. 	The CPO adopted and implemented the travel and fiscal rules created by the judicial department. A re-imbusement form for board members was created and implemented by the CPO.
Performance Measure – Organize and schedule the required annual rural Board meeting.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select meeting location and secure necessary space and accommodations. 	Selecting a location for the annual rural Board meeting has been set as an agenda item for the board meeting on October 8, 2016.

Performance Measure – Create Board training program and manual.	
Key Metrics	Status: NOT YET STARTED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create new manual and deliver it to all Board members. • Work with chairman to provide training to new members. 	The Board will work with the Attorney General's office in the future to create a new manual and provide training to members.

Goal Two: Create transparent and accountable operating policies that promote the CPO's accessibility and responsiveness to the public.

STRATEGY ONE: Create a general operations manual for handling inquiries from the public

Performance Measure – Develop policies for how the CPO receives complaints.

Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and implement policies. 	Written policies for how the CPO receives complaints are in the final revision phase. Those policies will be published in the CPO's Operation Manual in January 2017.

Performance Measure – Develop policies for the review and investigation of complaints.

	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and implement policies. 	Written policies for the review and investigation of complaints have been finalized. The CPO has created a "Process Flow Chart" to demonstrate how it handles complaints. The chart has been used in several of the CPO's published reports and is available on the CPO's website. The policies will be published in the CPO's Operations Manual in January 2017.

Performance Measure – Develop policies for determining and disclosing case dispositions and investigation findings.

Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and implement policies. 	Currently the CPO is evaluating and researching what information is appropriate and useful for the public and stakeholders. The CPO is considering what formats and platforms are best to present data and information on a routine basis. The policies will be completed and published in the CPO's Operations Manual in January 2017.

Performance Measure – Identify the most effective mechanisms to implement and track CPO recommendations.

Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the supervising agency for each complaint. Research effective procedures and policies to issue recommendations. Follow-up with agencies to determine how, if at all, they will address CPO recommendations. 	<p>In completing its 2015-2016 Annual Report, the CPO reviewed 206 recommendations and developed a way to track and analyze the types of recommendations it makes.</p> <p>Currently, the CPO is conducting outreach to develop the best methods in which to deliver information about recommendations to the</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess how to report agencies' compliance or non-compliance with citizens and stakeholders. 	public and how to track whether agencies address recommendations.
---	---

STRATEGY TWO: Create communication policies in accordance with state law

Performance Measure – Develop procedures to effectively respond to Colorado Open Records Act Requests and educate the staff on compliance with CORA.

Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and implement procedures. Collaborate with the Colorado Attorney General's office to ensure the CPO's policies meet statutory requirements and align with best practice. Develop online information (CORA) request form for citizens and media outlets. Train CPO staff on CORA and office policies. 	The CPO has started working with the Attorney General's office to ensure its policies align with statute. A draft of the CPO's policies for responding to CORA requests is being finalized. Information about the CPO's procedures in handling information requests have been posted to the CPO's website. Staff have received training on how to handle information requests. A formal online request form will also be created and posted to the website. The policies will be completed and published in the CPO's Operations Manual in January 2017.

Performance Measure – Develop procedures for document retention for internal records and confidential case records.

Key Metrics	Status: NOT YET STARTED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and implement procedures. Collaborate with the Colorado Attorney General's office to ensure that the CPO's policies meet statutory requirements and align with best practice. 	

Performance Measure – Develop procedures to comply with Colorado Open Meeting Laws (OML).

Key Metrics	Status: COMPLETED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and implement procedures. Collaborate with the Colorado Attorney General's office to ensure the CPO's policies meet statutory requirements. Educate the Board on compliance with OML. 	Following additional appointments during the summer of 2016, the Board is now operational. During the September meeting, board members met with the Attorney General's office and were provided materials on OML. CPO staff was also provided the necessary literature on OML. Written policies are being finalized.

Goal Three: Institute outreach and communication plans to educate and advise the public and stakeholders on trends and recommendations to improve the child protection system.

STRATEGY ONE: Develop a public policy strategy	
Performance Measure – Create a short-term public policy plan.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify systemic policy concerns and prioritize any necessary investigations. Create a strategy and calendar for the 2017 legislative session to provide education to legislators when requested to do so. Create a strategy and calendar for speaking at relevant conferences. 	<p>The CPO has identified eight systemic policy issues within the child protection system. Those issues were prioritized and the Ombudsman has assigned appropriate staff members to handle specific reviews. Since the start of the current fiscal year, the Ombudsman has presented at five conferences. In August, the CPO completed a day-long outreach initiative in the Seventh Judicial District. Currently, the CPO staff are planning a reception for legislators. As the 2017 legislative session approaches, CPO will continue to assess how to best serve as a resource for lawmakers and stakeholders.</p>
Performance Measure – Create a long-term public policy plan.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and select an annual systemic policy initiative for the CPO to address. Identify key opportunities to educate legislators on child protection issues. Identify key engagement opportunities with the executive and judicial branches. 	<p>CPO staff have started collecting information on multiple systemic complaints, including issues within the Colorado Division of Youth Corrections, the Foster Care Bill of Rights and adoption subsidies. The Ombudsman has presented four information sessions to judicial officers since the start of the fiscal year. Moving forward, the CPO will continue to assess how to best engage and serve the executive, legislative and judicial branches.</p>
Performance Measure – Utilize new database to quantify and examine complaints with the goal of identifying trends.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch new database. Determine what trends and other information can be identified and how to best utilize it. 	<p>The CPO will launch its new database on October 3, 2016. Onsite staff training will be provided once the database is launched.</p>

Performance Measure – Using data collected by the CPO, educate and advise stakeholders and lawmakers on developing trends and citizens’ concerns about the child protection system.	
Key Metrics	Status: NOT YET STARTED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice and education on child protection issues. • Serve as subject matter experts as requested. • Track and monitor relevant child protection legislation. 	Efforts to complete this measure will begin in January 2017 in coordinate with the start of the legislative session.
Performance Measure – Redesign CPO website to serve as an information portal for citizens and stakeholders on real-time child protection issues with CPO initiatives.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure contract to develop a website that is informative, transparent and accountable. 	A website redesign launched during Fiscal Year 2015-2016 is nearly completed. Currently, the CPO is evaluating what information it will post on its website and what format that information should be presented in.

STRATEGY TWO: Establish outreach strategy to help expand utilization of the CPO’s services	
Performance Measure – Develop bi-lingual initiative to better connect with non-English speaking customers.	
Key Metrics	Status: NOT YET STARTED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create pamphlets and other literature in Spanish and develop a strategy on how to best distribute them. • Increase the number of contacts the CPO has with non-English speaking customers. 	Due to the demands on staff and additional printing costs, efforts to complete this measure will be largely dependent on whether additional funding requests are granted by the Joint Budget Committee.
Performance Measure – Increase contacts with five key groups: foster and adoptive families, children, mandatory reporters, kin and the child protection legal community.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue tracking call data and other information while creating targeted outreach plans for these groups. 	Since the start of Fiscal Year 2016-2017, the CPO has drastically increased its engagement with the child protection community through outreach and speaking engagements. Collectively, the Ombudsman has presented to roughly 400 members of the child protection community. The CPO has continued tracking its call data to assess whether complaints are being received from one of the five key groups. Also, once the new database has launched the CPO will determine how best to utilize additional information to shape outreach initiatives.

Performance Measure – Integrate the CPO into the broader child protection community in an effort to share and gain information to improve service delivery to children and families.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect with judicial officers, the Colorado State Judicial Court Improvement Project, educators, law enforcement and treatment providers across the state to begin developing strategies to reach more families and children. 	Since the start of Fiscal Year 2016-2017, the CPO has engaged and started working with judicial officers, the Colorado State Judicial Court Improvement Project and other members of the legal community. The CPO will continue working to engage law enforcement, educators and treatment providers by assessing and improving its outreach efforts.
Performance Measure – Secure speaking engagements at key stakeholder conferences and meetings.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule speaking engagements for at least five conferences. Increase participation on key stakeholder meetings. 	The Ombudsman presented informational sessions at five conferences during September 2016. The CPO has continued its participation on key stakeholder groups, including the Child Fatality Review Team, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment’s Child Prevention System State Review Team and Denver Mayor Michael Hancock’s Child Safety Net Impact Team. In an effort to ensure attendance and efficiency, CPO Child Protection System Analyst Melissa Vigil will start attending CFRT meetings. The Ombudsman will continue to attend Child Welfare Executive Council meetings and was recently appointed to the Task Force on the Collection and Security of Digital Images of Evidence of Child Abuse or Neglect. The CPO will also continue to meet with the CDHS on a monthly basis.

STRATEGY THREE: Improve communication with the public and stakeholders	
Performance Measure – Develop protocols for communicating data related to citizen complaints.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create policies for what materials will be posted. Identify and secure the necessary technology to post information in real time on the CPO’s website. 	On September 14, 2016, the CPO staff met and discussed what information is most useful to the public and what materials should be posted on its website. The CPO has also started assessing what information is shared by ombudsman offices across the country and how that information is presented. Training for staff on updating and running the website will be scheduled during the next quarter.

Performance Measure – Develop quarterly report for citizens, stakeholders and media.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design a quarterly report to highlight reviews, investigations and other initiatives of the CPO. • Create a distribution list that will include citizens, stakeholders and media outlets. 	<p>On September 14, 2016, CPO staff members discussed the format and information that would be most useful in its quarterly reports. Together the staff created a rough design of what the quarterly reports will look like and issues it should highlight. In addition to designing and writing its first quarterly report, the CPO is working to create a comprehensive distribution list.</p>
Performance Measure – Develop policies and strategies to proactively and reactively respond to media outlets on high-profile child abuse cases and investigations.	
Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research relevant statute to ensure the CPO is in compliance with confidentiality laws. • Write and implement communications policies. • Train CPO staff on procedures for responding to media inquiries. 	<p>The CPO is in the process of drafting communications policies and is continuing to work with the Attorney General’s office on this issue. CPO staff has received informal training on receiving and handling media inquiries. The policies will be completed and published in the CPO’s Operations Manual in January 2017.</p>

Goal Four: Increase staff to meet the growing demand for services.

STRATEGY ONE: Analyze the CPO’s needs to meet the demand for outreach and education and comply with statutory mandates

Performance Measure – Assess any additional funding that may be needed to bolster the part-time position of Communications and Policy Director.

Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the need for a full-time Communications and Policy Director by monitoring responses to outreach efforts and requests from citizens and stakeholders for information. • If necessary, present funding request to the Joint Budget Committee. 	<p>Since joining the CPO in July, the Communications and Policy Director has helped complete the annual report, all reports required under the SMART Act, handled multiple media requests as well as prepared staff members for interviews and provided support and outreach at five conferences. The CPO, however, is currently assessing the additional funds and hours needed to complete additional tasks, such as the CPO’s first quarterly report, assisting in systemic reviews and drafting policies for the CPO Operations Manual.</p>

STRATEGY TWO: Monitor increasing call demand and analyze ways to create investigative capacity for systemic complaints.

Performance Measure – Analyze how additional funding may be used to create a second full-time investigator position.

Key Metrics	Status: ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the need for a second investigator by monitoring caseload numbers and complexity. • If necessary, present funding request to the Joint Budget Committee. 	<p>The CPO is assessing the workload of its current Investigator to help determine the need for additional staff. The number of complaints the CPO is receiving continues to increase, which in turn is increasing the caseload of its investigator. Also, since the start of Fiscal Year 2016-2017, the CPO has received complaints or identified eight systemic issues that need addressing. Currently, the CPO does not have enough staff to review and or investigate these issues in a timely manner. In addition to reviewing complaints and working on investigations, the current investigator has played a key role in launching the CPO’s new database.</p>