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STATE COMPTROLLER



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February 10, 1999

Mr. John A. Johnson  
Commissioner  
NYS Office of Children and Family Services  
52 Washington Street  
Rensselaer, NY 12144-2735

Re: Report 99-Y-1

Dear Mr. Johnson:

To assist in your oversight of your agency's Year 2000 compliance progress, we reviewed selected steps being taken by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), as of January 8, 1999, to make the Child Care Review System (System) Year 2000 compliant. This System has been designated a "mission critical" system by New York State's Office For Technology, which is responsible for overseeing the State's Year 2000 readiness. The System maintains case management information for child welfare services, cumulative case actions, information relating to required case actions, and other information such as the reason for foster care placement and length of stay. The steps we selected for review pertained to Year 2000 project planning and management, Year 2000 System testing, identification and correction of System data exchanges, and the establishment of contingency plans for continuing important business and service functions in the event of a Year 2000-related failure.

The objective of our review was to assess whether the OCFS appears to be taking the necessary steps to address Year 2000 problems related to the System. To complete our review we interviewed OCFS personnel and we reviewed OCFS documents. In addition, we obtained and analyzed OCFS responses to a Year 2000 assessment questionnaire that we designed (see attached Table). Unlike an audit, a review does not include testing or verification of information and records provided by OCFS and does not include a review of internal controls. Therefore, we cannot conclude whether the System will be Year 2000 compliant in a timely manner.

The results of our review, show that OCFS is taking many of the steps necessary to address Year 2000 problems related to the System. For example:

- Efforts to correct the System are covered by a written Year 2000 schedule and OCFS

management monitors the schedule.

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- There is a plan for testing the System and guidance is available for completing testing. Users are involved in System testing and they sign-off upon the completion of testing.
- All data exchanges with the System have been identified and appropriate correction of data exchanges are being made.

However, OCFS has not yet taken the necessary steps to prepare a contingency plan to ensure the continuance of business and service functions, which are dependent upon the System. Therefore, should the System experience a Year 2000-related failure, OCFS may not be prepared to provide for such functions. We encourage OCFS to expedite its contingency planning process.

Major contributors to this review were Brian Reilly, James Brunt, and Michael Farrar.

Your comments to this review are welcomed. We wish to express our appreciation to the management and staff of the Office of Children and Family Services for the courtesies and cooperation extended to our auditors during this review, and hope that it is helpful to your Year 2000 monitoring and oversight responsibilities.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William P. Challice".

William P. Challice  
Audit Director

cc: Igor Koroluk, Human Services Automation Service Center  
Gary Davis, Office for Technology

**OFFICE OF CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES  
YEAR 2000 ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

**TABLE**

YEAR 2000 STEPS	STATUS	COMMENTS
<b>A. PROJECT PLANNING &amp; MANAGEMENT</b>		
A1. Is there a written Year 2000 Project Plan and does it include/identify steps needed to correct the System in question?	Yes	A Project Plan has been prepared and a project management system is used to monitor progress.
A2. Does the Plan (or any other available record) define what is meant by "compliance" when describing systems at the agency which are Year 2000 ready?	Yes	A new, more comprehensive definition has been provided to project managers. Year 2000 compliance activities must now include internal and external interfaces to other systems and include successful testing using future dates.
A3. Is there a written schedule covering the time frame for achieving compliance for the System in question?	Yes	Schedules are in place.
A4. Is progress toward completion of the schedule for the System in question being monitored?	Yes	Progress is adequately measured through weekly and monthly management reports.
A5. Is the System in question meeting the schedule (no significant slippage being reported)?	Yes	While some slippage has occurred, it does not appear to be significant.
<b>B. TEST PLANS</b>		
B1. Is there a documented test plan and does it include/identify steps needed to ensure that the System in question will process as expected after it has been corrected to comply with Year 2000?	Yes	Test guidance materials that define policies, methodologies and strategies relevant to testing are provided to project managers. A test environment that simulates the change of century is in place. There is user involvement and sign-off.

YEAR 2000 STEPS	STATUS	COMMENTS
<b>C. DATA EXCHANGES</b>		
C1. Have all data exchange partners/interfaces for the System in question been identified and included on a written inventory record?	Yes	Data exchanges between the System and the Welfare Management System and Benefits Issuance and Control System are implemented. Data exchanges between the System and the Adoption Monitor System are being remediated and testing should be completed by the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 1999. No external data exchanges were identified.
C2. Have data exchange interfaces been considered in the overall Year 2000 Project Plan and the test plan covering the System in question?	Yes	OCFS is awaiting remediation of other systems in order to test interfaces.
<b>D. CONTINGENCY PLANS</b>		
D1. Is there a written business contingency plan in place for the System in question and does the plan specify steps for completing vital business functions if the System in question is noncompliant or inoperable for Year 2000 purposes?	No	OCFS is awaiting guidance from the State Office For Technology (OFT) on a contingency planning framework. OFT will be conducting a session on contingency planning at the Y2K Project Managers meeting on February 3, 1999.