**Seeking Public Comments on the Agency of Human Services (AHS)**

**& the Department for Children and Families (DCF)**

The Governor's Council on Pathways from Poverty, in collaboration with the AHS Secretary and DCF Commissioner Dave Yacovone, is seeking public comments on ways the Agency of Human Services can improve the delivery of services to families with children served by the Department for Children and Families.

There are three ways to provide your comments:

1. Attend a Public Hearing:

Hearings will be held on two dates: *August 28, 2014 at 6:00 PM* and *September 5, 2014 at 2PM*. You can attend at any of the 13 Vermont Interactive Television sites located around the state. For a complete list of VIT sites go to <http://www.vitlink.org/location> or call (802) 728-1455.

1. Mail your comments:

You can mail your comments to the following address through *September 30, 2014*: Agency of Human Services, AHS Secretary, 208 Hurricane Lane, Suite 103, Williston, VT 05495.

1. Complete an online survey:

Complete the survey (anonymously if you wish) at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/L3J2T56>. The survey has the same key questions discussed below as well as space for additional comments.

**Key Questions to Consider:**

These questions are only intended to stimulate discussion. Feel free to raise your own questions and provide any suggestions.

1. How can DCF better serve Vermont families with children?
2. How can AHS and DCF avoid duplication of administrative functions and fragmentation of services for individuals and families?
3. Do AHS and DCF have the resources needed to be most effective? Are existing resources allocated properly? How could resources be better employed?
4. What is the most efficient use of state resources in serving families? For example, should divisions and/or functions be separate or integrated? How can communication within DCF be improved to better serve families?
5. How can DCF build stronger relationships between the families it serves and staff working with those families? For example, should enforcement capability be separated from day-to-day case management (that is, should sanction or removal powers be exercised by different people within the department)? Would that help or hinder the department?
6. Are there particular laws, rules, or policies that should be changed to improve outcomes for families? If so, what are they?
7. What is the agency or department doing well; are there existing areas of success the agency can and should build on?

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*The Governor’s Council on Pathways from Poverty is a 30-member advisory body. It is made up exclusively of volunteers, including advocates, direct service providers, housing and development experts and low-income Vermonters.*

*The Agency of Human Services includes several departments that work with low-income and vulnerable Vermonters including the Department for Children and Families*.