



COUNTY OF ERIE

MARK C. POLONCARZ
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

March 11, 2014

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

**Re: Department of Social Services Personal Services
Part-Time Child Protective Worker Positions**

Dear Honorable Members:

The Department of Social Services (DSS) is seeking approval of a resolution creating six (6) part-time Child Protective Worker positions. These jobs will be temporary and filled by qualified retired workers. There is a significant backlog in CPS cases that needs to be reduced in order to ensure timely service and to maintain CPS's high standard of practice. These positions will be funded with anticipated savings in the DSS Other Expenses account.

Should your honorable body require further information, I encourage you to contact Carol Dankert-Maurer at the Department of Social Services. Thank you for your immediate consideration on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark C. Poloncarz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "M" and "P".

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

MCP/bb
Enclosure

cc: Carol Dankert-Maurer, Commissioner, Department of Social Services

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
From: Department of Social Services
Re: Personal Services - Part-Time Child Protection Worker Positions
Date: March 11, 2014

SUMMARY

This proposed resolution authorizes the Department of Social Services to create six (6) part-time Child Protective Worker positions. These positions will be temporary to reduce the high caseloads

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Budget neutral. The positions are reimbursed at 53% federal and state share. There are available funds in the Other Expenses account budget line.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Erie County child protection workers currently have caseloads well above the recommended levels. Hiring qualified retired child protection workers, who left the County in good standing, to return temporarily as part-time employees, will reduce the current caseloads. Currently, there are no part-time positions budgeted. This resolution will create those positions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Erie County CPS has been focused on improving its practice after a November 2013 audit by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services ("OCFS") noted areas in need of improvement. The improvement process has resulted in an increase in caseloads. In February 2014, the OCFS issued a subsequent audit lauding the improved standard of practice of Erie County CPS, but noting the need for it to reduce its backlog of cases. In an effort to reduce caseloads, Erie County has come to an agreement with Civil Service Employees Association Local 815 to allow qualified retired child protection workers, who left the County in good standing, to return temporarily as part-time employees.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

Erie County CPS would have difficulty reducing its caseloads. As a result, investigations will take longer than needed.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

Erie County would offer temporary jobs to qualified retired child protection workers.

**A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY:
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

RE: Personal Services - Part-Time Child Protective Worker Positions

WHEREAS, Erie County child protective services (“CPS”) investigates reports alleging child abuse or neglect; and

WHEREAS, Erie County CPS has been focused on improving its practice after a November 2013 audit by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (“OCFS”) noted areas in need of improvement; and

WHEREAS, the improvement process has resulted in an increase in caseloads; and

WHEREAS, in February 2014, the OCFS issued an audit lauding the improved standard of practice of Erie County CPS, but noting the need to reduce its backlog of cases; and

WHEREAS, Erie County has implemented numerous initiatives to reduce CPS caseloads, such as increasing access to overtime, transferring positions from other divisions within the Department of Social Services to CPS, and providing child protection workers with additional supports; and

WHEREAS, Erie County has come to an agreement with Civil Service Employees Association Local 815 to allow qualified retired child protection workers, who left the County in good standing, to return temporarily as part-time employees for the purpose of reducing the current caseloads; and

WHEREAS, this arrangement will allow Erie County to have adequate manpower to reduce its caseloads while maintaining a high standard of practice; and

WHEREAS, this arrangement is expected to be temporary; and

WHEREAS, after a survey of qualified retired child protection workers, there is a great deal of enthusiasm among qualified persons to return caseloads to an adequate level.

WHEREAS, Erie County Department of Social Services has excess funds in the Other Expenses budget line earmarked for expenses it will no longer incur.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the following budget amendments are hereby authorized in the 2014 Adopted Budget in order to create six (6) positions of Part-Time Child Protective Worker (JG8-E) in the Department of Social Services:

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES, FUND 110, DEPARTMENT 120

ACCOUNT	DESCRIPTION	INCREASE
500010	Part Time - Wages	\$ 83,987
502000	Fringe Benefits	\$ 8,886
530000	Other Expenses	<u>(\$43,734)</u>
	Total Appropriations	<u>\$49,139</u>
407540	State Aid - Social Service Administration	\$34,159
411540	Federal Aid - Social Service Administration	<u>\$14,980</u>
	Total Revenues	<u>\$49,139</u>

RESOLVED, that six (6) Part-Time Child Protective Worker positions are created within the Department of Social Services effective April 1, 2014; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the County Executive, the Commissioner of Social Services, the Erie County Comptroller, the Director of the Division of Budget and Management, the Personnel Director and the Director of Labor Relations.