



MISSOURI JUVENILE JUSTICE ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 1332, Jefferson City, MO 65102-1332

573-616-1058, FAX 573-616-2771 www.mjja.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 24, 2017

Contact: Marcia Hazelhorst
(573) 616-1058

MISSOURI JUVENILE JUSTICE ASSOCIATION ENDORSES MISSOURI JUVENILE OFFICER PERFORMANCE STANDARDS (2017) APPROVED BY SUPREME COURT OF MISSOURI AND ADOPTED BY STATE COURTS ADMINISTRATOR

JEFFERSON CITY, MO. – The Missouri Juvenile Justice Association, as a leading advocacy organization dedicated to promoting justice for children, youth, and families is pleased to endorse the Missouri Juvenile Officer Performance Standards (2017) which were approved by the Supreme Court of Missouri on December 23, 2016 and adopted by the State Courts Administrator to become effective on July 1, 2017.

The Revised Missouri Court Performance Standards for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (2004) remained unchanged for more than a decade before Missouri's Chief Juvenile Officers, concerned about inconsistent practice throughout the state, requested the State Courts Administrator allow for a comprehensive review of the standards. This groundbreaking work provides Missouri Chief Juvenile Officers functional guidelines in critical areas, including:

- Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities
- Potential Conflicts of Interest
- Code of Professional Ethics
- Requirements for Written Policy and Procedures
- Training Requirements
- Performance Reviews
- Independent Decision Making
- Record Management
- Objective Decision Making Tools
- Anti-Discrimination
- Solitary Confinement
- Shackling

- Trauma Responsive Practices
- Family and Community Engagement
- Stakeholder collaboration
- Increased Due Process protections
- Improved practice in protecting children from abuse and neglect
- Innovative alternatives to secure detention
- Crossover Youth
- Enhanced attention to Victims' Rights
- Transparency and Information Sharing
- Timeliness of Processes
- Monitoring of juvenile sex offenders
- School to Prison Pipeline
- Measuring Outcomes through enhanced data collection
- Community Safety
- Safety for Children
- Concerns regarding organizational structure
- Commitment to adopting best practices
- Centralized oversight process

The creation of the Standards involved the participation and commitment of numerous stakeholders, including representatives from the Missouri Public Defender's Office, Missouri Children's Division, Missouri Division of Youth Services, Missouri Office of Child Advocate, Missouri CASA, and Missouri Kid's First, as well as legal counsel for indigent parents, legal counsel for the Juvenile Office, and Guardians ad Litem.

These standards address many of the juvenile justice reform efforts which MJJA has been working on for the past several years. For example, beginning July 1, 2017, a juvenile cannot be shackled in a juvenile or family court proceeding absent a demonstrated safety risk the juvenile poses to him or herself or others and approval of

the court; further the use of solitary confinement of juveniles is prohibited and room restriction and seclusion is restricted to short-term emergency circumstances only.

In a Memorandum to Missouri's Chief Juvenile Officers, Chief Justice Breckenridge and State Courts Administrator Kathy Lloyd stated, "the Missouri Juvenile Officer Performance Standards represent clearly defined and communicated operational standards for the juvenile officer, a framework for greater consistency in practice throughout the state" and "represent the commitment to promoting fair and equitable treatment for all persons".

Missouri children, youth and families will benefit from the adoption of these standards and the Missouri Juvenile Justice System improved.

###