



**Supporting the Vision: Mayor’s Plan to Integrate the District of
Columbia’s Social Services Information Systems with the Family
Court of the DC Superior Court**



***PART II – MAYOR’S SPENDING PLAN FOR
APPROPRIATED FUNDS***

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This section of the Report to Congress carries out the requirement of the Appropriations Act that the Mayor submit a spending plan to Congress, the President, and the Comptroller General regarding (a) the spending of \$200,000 appropriated by the Congress for FY02 to support the Mayor's responsibility to develop and present a spending plan for integrated information systems and (b) the spending of \$500,000 appropriated by the Congress for FY02 to support the Mayor's other responsibilities under the Family Court Act. The overall philosophy behind this spending plan will be evident from the earlier sections of the Report:

- The spending plan is guided by the overall goals of the Family Court Act: to ensure that the whole child welfare system works together to promote children's safety and permanence, in the context of a broader and more integrated response from the Court as well as District agencies to the whole range of needs and strengths that characterize children and families.
- Achieving the goals of the Family Court Act requires a sense of urgency on the part of both the Executive Branch of the District government and the Court, so that we do not lose any opportunities on behalf of children, coupled with the ability to plan for the long-term. This in turn requires both short-run and long-run strategies.
- Achieving the goals of the Family Court Act requires collaboration across the Family Court, the agencies most directly involved in safety and permanence for abused and neglected children in the justice system, and a broader range of critically important District government partner agencies, coordinated through the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families, and Elders.

Based on these principles, and in particular on the sense of urgency shared by the District, the Court, and the Congress (for example, in the provisions of the Family Court Act that encourage prompt transfer of cases into the Family Court to enable children to move quickly to permanence), the District acted promptly upon passage of the Family Court Act to make the expenditures required to meet its responsibilities. Our goal was to move quickly to realize the benefits to children and to ensure that collaborative movement forward by the District and the Court was in no way hindered or slowed.

The statutory requirements for approval of this spending plan set out a timetable that would not lead to approval until after the end of FY2002. We believe this result to have been inadvertent, and we are currently discussing with the Congress the possibility of modifications that might more fully reflect the intent of Congress that the resources be available to the District for 2002 expenditures and obligations

incurred as a result of the Family Court Act (because the enactment of the legislation occurred during the FY02 fiscal year and therefore too late for FY02 responsibilities to be included in the District's budget request). In an attempt to resolve the dilemma thus created and to achieve the intent of Congress regarding rapid implementation of the District's as well as the Court's obligations under the Act, we propose through this spending plan to inform the Congress of the expenditures and obligations incurred in FY02 to carry out the District's responsibilities under the Family Court Act; to charge the FY02 expenditures and obligations incurred under the spending plan to the \$700,000 made available by the Congress in the Appropriations Act for this purpose; and to commit to the Congress that the District is prepared to take appropriate remedial actions in response to any Congressional concerns about the expenditures or obligations under the plan.

A further issue currently under discussion with the Congress is the possible carry-over into FY03 of certain planned expenditures within the \$700,000. While the District began immediately to carry out urgent information systems integration planning, service liaison and transition planning, and border agreement activities under the Family Court Act through the use of the funds, the full scope of needed actions has been dependent in part on the completion of the Court's plan on April 8 and the GAO's response to that plan in the following month. Therefore, some activities by necessity have begun later in the year and will require additional support into FY03.

This spending plan represents that the District will incur information system integration plan development costs of approximately \$200,000 in FY02. The District proposes approximately \$475,000 in FY02 expenditures out of the \$500,000 appropriated to support the Mayor's other responsibilities and, which reflects an ambitious timetable dependent in part on steps to be taken by the Court, such as making space available for on-site agency representatives. The ability to carry the funds over into FY03 would allow for a more fully collaborative approach with the Court as well as the expenditure of less than \$475,000 in FY02 and the use of any unspent funds in FY03. Should the FY03 carry-over authority be granted, expenditures from the \$500,000 would continue to be substantially as shown in this plan, although some adjustments might be made based on the longer timetable, the fine-tuning of this plan, and any unforeseen circumstances. If the FY03 carry-over authority is granted, an additional at least \$25,000 of the \$500,000 would be incurred used during FY03 in support of the Mayor's responsibilities for Family Court Service Liaison activities. Some residual amount of the information system integration planning expenditures may also carry-over into FY03. If the FY03 carry-over authority is not granted, we will endeavor to use the entire \$500,000, including the additional \$25,000 for liaison activities, in FY02.

Detailed Spending Plan: Information Systems (\$200,000)

Of the \$700,000 provided in the FY02 Appropriations Act to support the District's additional responsibilities under the Family Court Act, \$200,000 was designated to support the Mayor's responsibility to develop and present a plan for integrated information systems. The appropriation has been divided into two components: \$158,000 for the development of the plan and \$42,000 for implementation planning.

Development of the Plan: \$158,000

The District of Columbia Office of the Chief Technology Officer produced this Plan, Continuing the Vision: Mayor's Report on the District of Columbia's Computerized Integration Efforts to Achieve Better Outcomes for Individuals and Families, in collaboration with the Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families and Elders, and in cooperation with agency leaders, chief information officers and advisors, case workers and policy analysts across the District government. The budget for development of the plan has provided for a project team consisting of District and contracted staff to perform the following activities:

- Summation and integration of District social service policies and operations from multiple sources;
- Collaboration with the project team developing the strategy for Superior Court compliance with the Family Court Act, including planning for the new Integrated Justice Information System;
- Identification of the stakeholders and District agencies affected by the Family Court legislation;
- Interviews with representatives of affected agencies regarding integration with the Family Court;
- Operational "as-is" assessment of affected District agencies accounting for the overall agency mission, IT systems in place, strategic IT plans, specific interactions with the Family Court, and opportunities for integration improvement through technological enablement;
- Functional Best Practice research and interviews targeting national practices in information sharing between courts and social service agencies;
- Completion of a technological gap analysis of District interactions with the Court;
- Identification of integration priorities between District agencies and the Court and the accompanying data confidentiality issues;
- Completion of a high-level risk assessment for the implementation of integrating technologies within the District;

- Analysis of existing District information system integration projects including the Safe Passages Information Suite initiative, the Justice Information System (JUSTIS), and the Administrative Services Modernization Project (ASMP);
- Identification and assessment of available technologies to enhance data integration and collaboration between disparate systems and organizations;
- Development of multiple technical architectures suitable to meet the integration priorities for information sharing between the District and the Court;
- Facilitation towards the selection of a single architecture vision for the Safe Passages Information System to enable integration amongst agencies and with the Court, and subsequent detailing of the selected architecture;
- Assessment of the District infrastructure available to plan and manage large technological implementations;
- Preparation of drafts of the Mayor's Report to Congress;
- Management of stakeholder input to the Mayor's Report to Congress;
- Finalization of the Mayor's Report to Congress.

Implementation Planning (\$42,000)

The budget for implementation planning has been reserved to perform the following activities upon stakeholder approval of the plan for integration:

- Preparation of cost estimates for each of the components outlined in the Mayor's plan for integration;
- Prioritization for the implementation of each of the integration components;
- Development of timeline estimates for implementation based on the results of component prioritization and identification of available funding.

DETAILED SPENDING PLAN: MAYOR'S OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES (\$500,000)

Of the \$700,000 provided in the FY02 Appropriations Act to support the District's additional responsibilities under the Family Court Act, the Act sets aside \$500,000 to support the Mayor's responsibilities other than the plan for integrated information systems. These responsibilities include:

- Liaison activities with the Family Court (including "coordinating the delivery of services provided by the District government with the activities of the Family Court ...providing information to the judges, magistrate judges, and nonjudicial personnel of the Family Court

regarding the services available from the District government...[and providing] on an ongoing basis information to the chief judge of the Superior Court and the presiding judge of the Family Court regarding the services of the District government....");

- On-site coordination of services and information by a range of District agencies; and
- Entering into a border agreement with Maryland and Virginia "to facilitate the timely and safe placement of children in the District of Columbia's welfare system in foster and kinship homes and other facilities in Maryland and Virginia."

The proposed budget for FY02 includes \$290,000 for liaison activities, \$54,000 for on-site coordination of services, and \$131,000 for the border agreement, for a total of \$475,000. These activities are important to enhance the work of CFSA social workers. This amount is substantially affected by the tight FY2002 timeline: for example, many of these activities must be coordinated with the Court's space planning, training, and case transfer activities and therefore the District's ability to make the expenditures in FY2002 rather than FY2003 is depending on many factors outside our control. For that reason, the District is seeking language to allow carry-over of any unspent resources into FY03, to continue the critical work described below, particularly in the Family Court Liaison function.

The Mayor's approach to each of the three areas of responsibility is described briefly below, along with the associated expenditures.

Service Liaison Activities With The Family Court

The statute envisions a wide variety of activities to ensure close liaison between Executive Branch District agencies and the Family Court. Immediately after the enactment of the Family Court legislation, there were special demands including planning and deliberation among agency staff to support the successful transition of cases to the Family Court; sharing of information with the Court; development of the special CFSA-OCC pilot project with the Court, described in the report text; agency participation in training for the newly appointed Magistrate Judges; and other transitional liaison activities. These activities had to be undertaken urgently in order not to delay the Court's transition.

The second phase of the service liaison activities, building on these urgent transitional activities, is the full implementation of the Mayor's Family Court Liaison function, to begin this summer with the appointment of the Family Court Liaison, a Policy Analyst, and a Staff Liaison. The major duties of the Family Court Liaison shall include the following:

- Reviewing a wide variety of information to identify service delivery issues and gaps that are barriers to accomplishing statutory outcomes for children and families served by the Family Court, with a focus on issues and gaps that involve multiple agencies and have a major effect on outcomes. Identifying priority areas for solution based on potential impact and the opportunity for change and providing leadership to agency representatives, judicial and non-judicial personnel, and other key stakeholders in developing solutions.

- Working closely with agency representatives and the judicial leadership to ensure that key information about service delivery strategies is incorporated into judicial training and practice. The Family Court Liaison will also chair a Task Force comprised of representatives of all agencies that are delivering social services and related services to individuals and families served by the Family Court.

- Managing interagency coordination of services and information to ensure that representatives of the appropriate offices of the District government that provide social services and other related services to individuals and families served by the Family Court are available to coordinate the provision of such services and information regarding such services.

- Representing the Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families and Elders on Family Court task forces and initiatives aimed at reducing overlap and clarifying inconsistencies in local statutes, court rules, orders and practices to enhance service coordination.

The budget for service liaison activities totals approximately \$290,000 in FY2002.

- **Transitional Service Liaison Activities**\$247,000 in FY2002
 Staff time for planning and deliberation across agencies for the transition of cases to the Family Court; sharing of information with the Court; development of the CFSA-OCC-Family Court pilot; revisions of CFSA court liaison functions to support new collaborations with the Family Court\$221,000

- Specific computer and associated support work to facilitate the case transfer to the Family Court and the CFSA-OCC-Family Court Pilot\$3,000
- Staff time for preparation and presentation of Magistrate Judge training and upcoming trainings for Family Court personnel\$23,000
- **Full Implementation of Family Court Liaison function**..... \$43,000 in FY2002
 - o FY 2002 Personnel Costs related to full-time Family Court Liaison and support, beginning July 31, 2002, including salaries and fringe benefits for Family Court Liaison, Policy Analyst, and Staff Assistant..... \$36,000
 - o FY 2002 Non-personnel Costs related to Family Court Liaison functions, beginning July 31, 2002, including computers, office supplies, and travel/training..... \$7,000

The annualized cost of full implementation of the Family Court Liaison function in FY03 is anticipated to be approximately \$222,000 in personnel costs and \$8,000 in non-personnel costs.

On-site Coordination of Services and Information:

Once space at the Court is available, agency representatives from CFSA, DHS, DMH, DCPS, OCC, MPD, and DCHA will be available to the Court as envisioned in the Family Court Act to ensure onsite service coordination and information exchange. The Family Liaison will coordinate this on-site role. FY02 costs depend on the availability of space, but assuming that there is sufficient space for one agency representative to move on-site in FY02 and for computer support functions to be put in place in anticipation of further expansion in FY03, the FY02 cost would be \$54,000.

Proposed computer support at the court site \$44,000
 Agency on-site costs for salary and benefits of one staff person, August – September\$10,000

Border Agreement:

To meet the needs of District children for prompt movement into permanent families and to successfully achieve the Border Agreement with Maryland and Virginia envisioned in the Sense of the Congress Resolution in the Family Court Act, the District has moved swiftly to sign (on June 28) an Interim Agreement with Maryland and Prince George's County. The next steps are the full implementation of this Interim Agreement and the signature of a full Agreement that includes Virginia as well. Anticipated FY02 costs total \$131,000.

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| Staff time to negotiate the Interim Agreement | \$41,000 |
| Information systems refinements required to provide data to support negotiations and carry out the Interim Agreement..... | \$45,000 |
| FY02 non-personnel costs of implementing the Interim Agreement, including cost of staff support provided to Prince George's County and licensing activities with Maryland Board of Social Work | \$35,000 |
| Staff time in FY02 to implement the Interim Agreement and expand to a metropolitan border agreement | \$10,000 |