

## New York State Office of Children and Family Services

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## NYS OFFICE OF CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES AND VOICE/CSEA COMMENCE NEGOTIATIONS OF CHILD CARE PROVIDER REPRESENTATION AGREEMENT

NYS Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS) Commissioner Gladys Carrión, Esq. and Civil Services Employees Association (CSEA) President Danny Donohue announced that the agency and union met this past weekend to discuss child care issues in New York State in advance of negotiating a representation agreement for providers.

"Recognizing home-based child care workers as professionals is critical to raising the quality of child care across the state," said Commissioner Carrión.

CSEA President Danny Donohue added: "Quality child care helps us raise happy and healthy children and provides parents the peace of mind necessary to be productive at their jobs."

Governor Eliot Spitzer in May 2007 signed Executive Order No. 12 that gave approximately 51,000 legal home-based child care providers throughout the state the right to seek representation.

The OCFS Division of Child Care Services provided the union's leadership with a comprehensive briefing on OCFS and its regional offices, child care funding and regulations. They also reviewed state legislative and budget oversight requirements for the oversight of child care programs.

"This first session established a foundation of trust upon which we look forward to forging an agreement that will benefit children, parents, and child care providers in the very near future," said Donohue.

The next session between OCFS and CSEA is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 23, 2008.

The Office of Children and Family Services' mission is to promote the well-being, safety, and permanency of New York's children and families by setting and enforcing policies, building partnerships, and funding and providing high-quality services. The agency is responsible for foster care, adoption, adoption assistance, child protective services (including operating the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment), preventive services for children and families, services for pregnant adolescents, child care licensing and funding, and operating the state juvenile justice programs. The agency also is responsible for programs for vulnerable adults, including adult protective services and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped.

VOICE/CSEA is Local 100A of the Civil Service Employees Association. VOICE/CSEA is a union of 7,500 registered family and licensed group family child care providers from across New York State. Since 2002, VOICE/CSEA providers have brought awareness to the need for change in the child care field through active participation in public hearings, community coalitions, and involvement with New York state government. VOICE/CSEA members have been advocating for more respect for the profession, delivery of on-time payments from counties, and fair and consistent child care regulations and enforcement. VOICE/CSEA is working to solve problems that providers face and to improve the overall quality of care for children by focusing on changes which improve accessibility and affordability of child care for parents in New York.

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