

Press Contact:

Edward Borges

edward.borges@ocfs.state.ny.us

Public Information Office

(518) 473-7793

Erie County Adult Protection Workers Recognized for Outstanding Service

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) today (Oct. 15) awarded Certificates of Recognition For Excellence in Providing Protective Services for Adults (PSA) to the supervisors and caseworkers of the Erie County Protective Services for Adults Team.

The certificates were presented by OCFS Associate Commissioner Kirk Maurer and Paula Vielkind of the OCFS Bureau of Adult Services. Erie County Commissioner of Senior Services Brenda Ward and Acting Commissioner of Social Services Carol Dankert also participated. Both departments are represented on the PSA Team.

OCFS Commissioner Gladys Carrión, Esq., said: "Protective Services for Adults workers are on the front lines in responding to referrals of adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation. They are the ones who act to protect vulnerable adults with impairments, who have no one else willing and able to assist them. With these Certificates of Recognition we proudly acknowledge and celebrate superlative work by PSA workers."

This honor recognizes the PSA Team's great success in collaborating with other providers and systems to protect vulnerable adults from harm. Workers need to assist clients who are often physically or mentally impaired through complex and difficult transitions occurring when a client leaves his/her home; or is discharged from the hospital; or when home care determines that it can no longer safely serve the client.

Often these cases raise difficult issues that require consultation and cooperation with a number of other providers such as mental health providers, public health officials, local code enforcement, developmental disabilities services providers, and the county attorney, among others. The case workers' dedication, commitment to service, integrity, and collaborative efforts have been key to the successful outcomes of many of these difficult cases.

In nominating this team for consideration, Commissioners Ward and Dankert cited a steady increase in the number of substantiated allegations of mistreatment and growing caseload, yet continued excellence in employing a variety of strategies. They cited the team's creativity, dedication, and diligence in delivering services in the least restrictive manner to at-risk adults.

Adults, 18 or older, may need protective services for a variety of reasons. Erie County residents can obtain help and information by calling (716) 858-6877 or visiting www.erie.gov/depts/seniorservices or www.erie.gov/depts/socialservices/cfa_services_ap.asp

For the telephone number of other counties' adult protective services, call 1-800-342-3009 (press option 6). For more information, visit the website of OCFS, which oversees adult protective services: www.ocfs.state.ny.us.

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New York State Office of Children and Family Services · 52 Washington Street · Rensselaer, New York 12144-2834

