



Children's Commission.

For Judges Handling Child Protective Services Cases

August 31, 2017

Message from the Department of Family and Protective Services

DFPS has requested that we share this information with judges handling child protective services cases:

As you know the damage and historic flooding along the Texas Coast forced many Texans to relocate or to shelter in place, including foster parents and others caring for children in DFPS conservatorship.

DFPS is currently tracking and following up with the caregivers in the counties affected by Hurricane Harvey to assure their safety. Caregivers of children in conservatorship are required to report to DFPS if they relocate. All who have reported in tell us the children in their care are safe. To date, we know of no child or youth in DFPS conservatorship who has been harmed by this weather event.

In addition to children in foster and kinship care, CPS is also following up with children and youth involved with family-based safety services cases or who have primary medical needs. The agency will continue to address the immediate needs of children and youth as they arise.

At this time, a number of DFPS offices are closed in the affected counties. All offices in DFPS Region 6, which includes Harris and surrounding counties, are closed until after the Labor Day weekend. Depending on the extent of the damage, some of these offices may remain closed for an indefinite period of time. There are also a number of offices in Regions 5 and 8 that are closed. Finally, all offices in Nueces and San Patricio Counties (DFPS Region 11) are closed indefinitely.

Many DFPS staff who live in these areas have also been personally affected by the weather and flooding. DFPS is keeping track of its employees and mobilizing staff in other areas of the state that we will deploy to assist with investigations and other duties. In areas that are still inaccessible, DFPS is coordinating with law enforcement for assistance as needed.

You should also be aware that many of the placements located in Harris and surrounding counties may not be available for a significant period of time. Houston is home to many residential treatment facilities that typically are available to children and youth from other parts of Texas. Therefore, DFPS is seeking to develop capacity elsewhere and is in direct contact with numerous providers and has been contacted by entities that are ready to help.

DFPS remains committed and ready to continue to protect children from abuse and neglect during these challenging times and will provide you more information as it becomes available.

If you have questions or concerns, please email children@txcourts.gov



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