

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

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**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
STRENGTHENS RULES, TRAINING AND OVERSIGHT TO PROTECT
RESIDENTS FROM ABUSE****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Sacramento, March 13, 2012 -- The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) announced new measures today that will improve safety and strengthen protections for residents of the state's developmental centers. These measures include independent oversight by a nationally recognized law enforcement specialist, new protocols for first responders to the scenes of possible abuse, new rules for investigations and additional training requirements for DDS peace officers.

These measures include actions recommended by Disability Rights California (DRC), which conducted an independent review of the department's effectiveness in responding to incidents of possible abuse. The new reforms and measures will be outlined at a legislative hearing today.

"Our department has zero tolerance for abuse. Several serious events in the past made review and revision a high priority for this administration. Just over a year ago, I engaged a consortium of experts to improve law enforcement protocols and training for responding to and investigating incidents, especially those involving possible abuse. We are moving forward to immediately implement the consortium's recommendations," said DDS Director Terri Delgadillo.

To oversee the implementation, Health and Human Services Secretary Diana Dooley has retained the expertise of Mr. Joseph Brann, a nationally recognized law enforcement specialist.

"I'm pleased that Mr. Brann has agreed to oversee the implementation of new policies and protocols at our state developmental centers," said CHHS Secretary, Diana Dooley. "His extensive knowledge and experience in law enforcement will help our peace officers better protect the residents we serve at these facilities."

Mr. Brann has 43 years of direct law enforcement and consulting experience in policing. He was appointed by President Bill Clinton as the founding Director of the Office of Community Oriented Policy Services (COPS) in the U.S. Department of Justice. He also served as the Police Chief in Hayward, a Federal Court appointed

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Special Master to provide oversight and monitoring of the Cincinnati, Ohio Police Department, and as a special consultant for the California Attorney General in monitoring reforms in the Riverside and Maywood Police Departments. Mr. Brann is the founder and President of Joseph Brann & Associates (JBA), a firm specializing in public safety consulting services. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from California State University, Fullerton and a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Southern California. He is also a graduate of the FBI National Academy.

"I'm honored and grateful for this opportunity. As the father of a special needs son who resides at a developmental center, this is not only a civic responsibility for me - it is also a personal responsibility," said Mr. Brann. "I intend to work closely with the leadership at the Department of Developmental Services to ensure that we aggressively and effectively implement the needed changes."

The new protocols developed by the consortium of experts will help the DDS:

1. Define the roles and responsibilities of police officers and investigators in responding to incidents.
2. Standardize investigations, including the collection and preservation of evidence.
3. Establish uniform reporting requirements and procedures.
4. Improve interviewing techniques, especially those used with residents with developmental disabilities.

The consortium is also finalizing new training curriculum. All DDS law enforcement staff will be trained within 90 days by experienced law enforcement officials.

DDS will restructure its internal investigative unit, the Office of Protective Service, as recommended by the consortium, to require the unit to report directly to the Chief and not to the commanders at each facility.

The DDS will also implement additional recommendations provided by Disability Rights California (DRC). These include:

1. Developing consistent protocols for reporting, investigating, documenting, and analyzing serious resident-related incidents.
2. Expanding reporting to DRC to include certain unexpected or suspicious cases.
3. Ensuring that developmental center medical staff receives specialized training in conducting forensic examinations.

DDS is also contracting for an automated-incident-tracking system for developmental centers that will provide prompt access to information for first responders, investigators,

developmental center administrators and DDS headquarters. The system addresses concerns identified by the consortium and DRC, and it is expected to be operational this year.

DDS provides services to approximately 250,000 individuals with developmental disabilities under the Lanterman Act. Ninety-nine percent of DDS consumers reside in the community and receive services through 21 Regional Centers. DDS operates five licensed 24-hour health care facilities, including four developmental centers, where approximately 1,800 individuals have been placed by the courts due to their significant medical and/or behavioral needs. Services in the facilities are provided by licensed medical staff including doctors, nurses, psychologists and psychiatric technicians. With the emphasis on community integration, the use of developmental centers is rapidly declining. New admissions are limited to individuals involved with the criminal justice system and those who are a serious danger to themselves or others.

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