

# Director of the Office of Children, Youth, & Families for Allegheny County, PA

Allegheny County (core city, Pittsburgh) is seeking a person of experience, integrity and good judgment to fill the position of Director of Children Youth and Families (CYF). This Director is responsible for increasing children's safety and wellbeing in a county of 230,000 children by leading the office responsible for child protective services and collaborating with other partners in child welfare, including Courts, schools, and community agencies.

We are a solid, quality system that has shown willingness to make large-scale changes when needed. We are seeking a Director to further solidify quality practice and chart the course for the next decade of system improvements.

This position reports to the Director of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) and is a member of the department's 9-person executive team. The incumbent will oversee several direct staff, including three Assistant Directors and 540 indirect-report staff. Compensation is in the \$140,000-\$150,000 range. The deadline for applications is **February 15, 2024**. Please submit your Resume, a Cover Letter that explains why you are a great candidate, including specific examples from your experience, and up to 3 References: [Allegheny County Director CYF Deadline 2-15-24](#)

Allegheny County DHS is known throughout the country for taking bold actions to improve the child welfare system. This includes:

- Recognizing that a child and family's involvement with child protective services is traumatic—and therefore we need to change the system to minimize entry into child protective services to just those who need protection. (CYF has reduced the rate of children accepted for service from all investigations to 13%.)
- Changing the pathways to our family services and supports so that families can get services and tangible supports without becoming involved with CYF; and building a strong set of community-based prevention programs.
- Minimizing out-of-home placements (CYF has managed to a steady reduction in placements over the past decade); and, when placement is necessary, placing the majority of children with kin (67% of placements are with kin).
- Creating peer-support for children in care (e.g., Youth Support Partners, where young adults who've been in the system are coaching teens who are CYF-involved); and offering that same support to parents in the system.
- Investing in family services even when federal and state policies make it hard to do so. (CYF invests in high quality legal representation of children and parents;

and has increased investments in conflict counsel so that both Mothers and Fathers get the support they should be entitled to.)

- Providing CYF staff with information and tools that help them make sound decisions (e.g., tools to identify risk level at the Investigations stage; and tools to identify inequities at each stage of the child protective services system).

CYF is part of DHS, which is responsible for many health and social services. These include family support and prevention, child care, and housing and homeless services (Office of Community Services), developmental supports (Office of Developmental Supports), early intervention, mental health, and drug and alcohol services (Office of Behavioral Health), and services for older adults (Aging Services). This means that the CYF Director can expect and enjoy working on big problems with other best-in-class professionals.

## **Ideal Candidate**

We are looking for a leader in child welfare who has successfully administered large-scale programs or agencies and readily embraces the responsibility for leading a large system. This candidate envisions a system that is effective in protecting children and supporting families, seeks to minimize entry into the system, reduces inequities—and has the experience and skills needed to make such a vision possible. They have a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and wish to seize the opportunity to address the social and structural differences that are deeply embedded in society and impact families' abilities and willingness to engage in services.

The ideal candidate is a great communicator. They ask questions, want to understand other points of view, and actively listen. Their clear mind and caring heart make them the kind of leader people want to follow.

## **Job responsibilities**

The Director of CYF:

- Envisions, leads and shapes a system of care that is effective in protecting children, respectful of families and seeks to minimize entry into the system.
- Establishes the operational structure, culture, and standards of practice that allow CYF to meet goals and key performance indicators; and ensures staff and providers understand the organization's purpose and goals and are motivated to work together toward the mission.
- Directs and manages staff, programs, and operations in an organized, professional and clear manner, demonstrating a high degree of respect for staff.

- Collaborates with other offices within DHS, the Courts, and the County to align in meeting goals for child safety and wellbeing and reducing inequities in the system.
- Builds and leverages partnerships with community organizations that have the trust of clients and families.
- Communicates a strategic vision through frequent public presentations, listening sessions and presentations with staff and providers; and by cultivating relationships.
- Remains current on local, state and national affairs, policies, and legislation that impact the system; and is highly knowledgeable about the parameters of funding sources.
- Represents DHS and builds relationships with governmental entities, including those at the state and federal levels.
- Ensures the Office applies a consistent framework for continuous improvement.

## Qualifications

### *Preferred:*

- Leadership experience and aptitude, with strong knowledge of child welfare
- Ability to understand and synthesize information
- Experience in professionally operating a large system or programs (operations/management expertise)
- Integrity
- Values that include:
  - Using their abilities and position to reduce disparities in child welfare system and practice
  - Placing priority on engaging with families, communities, staff and providers to understand how the system is working; and how to improve it
  - Openness to hearing criticism and using this to improve their own work and the system they lead
- Experience in managing a large number of contracts that are critical to delivering services and support to families that achieve the performance we expect.

### *Minimum qualifications:*

- Education: Baccalaureate degree
- Experience: Six years of experience at a leadership level.