

F O R I M M E D I A T E R E L E A S E

March 24, 2016

Statement from AHCCCS Director Tom Betlach on Signing of Jacob's Law

PHOENIX – “Today, we applaud Governor Ducey’s commitment to supporting foster families by signing HB 2442, better known as Jacob’s Law. It is appropriate that we refer to this important legislation by a child’s name. These are Arizona’s children.

Under Governor Ducey’s leadership, AHCCCS stands at the ready to simplify accessing needed behavioral health care services for our children in foster care. We also want foster, adoptive and kinship families to know that there is support for them too.

With the Governor’s support, AHCCCS has taken the first of many steps to help us in this effort, such as:

- Requiring all of the Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (RBHAs) and Children’s Rehabilitative Services (CRS) to have a designated point of contact for all families involved in the DCS system;
- Clarifying families can contact RBHAs, CRS or AHCCCS directly anytime for help scheduling an appointment or navigating the healthcare system;
- Issuing a statement signed by me and DCS Director McKay to clarify that foster parents can consent to behavioral health services for foster children in their care;
- Requiring the RBHAs and CRS to form committees within their own organizations designed to create a pathway for regular communication and feedback from foster, adoptive and kinship families;
- Enforcing greater access to care and encouraging families to report providers who place them on waiting lists; and
- Holding the beginning of many ongoing meetings to ensure we hear from this important community.

Foster parents have a voice. We join Governor Ducey in honoring their commitment to Arizona’s children and make our own pledge to foster families that services will be there when they need them.”

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For more information, contact the AHCCCS press office at (602) 417-4534 or go to the AHCCCS website at <https://azahcccs.gov/shared/news.html>.