

## **Foster Parents Complain About Moonlighting OCS Worker**

The Ombudsman opened a complaint when foster parents alleged that a regional Office of Children's Services (OCS) office violated its own policy by not placing foster children in their home for adoption after licensing them as foster parents. The foster parents also contended OCS should not allow their employees to "moonlight" for private social service agencies because it was a conflict of interest and it constituted a violation of the Alaska Executive Branch Ethics Act. The foster parents also alleged it was contrary to law for OCS to hire a private social service agency to write home studies for the state while the state also acted as an administrative oversight to that agency's child placement license.

The ombudsman did not find that the OCS staff had intentionally ignored the complainants as a viable foster placement. Investigation found that OCS workers called and left messages for the complainants at least six times during the couple's first year as licensed foster parents inquiring whether the complainants would be able to accept foster children into their home. OCS workers would leave a message on the home answering machine during the day when the children were taken into custody and by the time the complainants were able to return the call at the end of the day, the children had already been placed into another foster home. Other times the complainants said the foster children OCS wanted to place in their home did not meet their adoption criteria.

The investigation also revealed that OCS failed to follow its own adoption screening policy.

The investigation further showed that the OCS worker who completed the complainants' home study for a private social service agency where she worked part-time violated OCS policy because she knew that the complainants were licensed foster parents and prepared the home study based on the complainants' assurances that they were no longer interested in accepting foster placements through OCS.

The investigation did not support the complainants' complaint that the OCS worker had violated the Executive Branch Ethics Act; or that it was a conflict for OCS to rely on a private social service agency to prepare home studies for OCS while at the same time OCS was acting as an oversight in that agency's child placement license.

[Link to Public Report](#)