



Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

DFPS News Release

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Patrick Crimmins
Office: (512) 438-3112
Cell: (512) 787-5090

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, Sept. 16, 2016

New Child Protective Services Directors Named *New Leaders for Central Texas, Gulf Coast, Rio Grande Valley*

The newest regional directors for Child Protective Services (CPS) were announced today by Henry "Hank" Whitman, Commissioner of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).

"Each of these veteran CPS managers began as a caseworker, working with our families in their communities. Each has a solid reputation in those communities, and each has indicated readiness for leadership in this critical time for CPS," Whitman said. "The protection of children and services to families in more than 60 Texas counties are now their responsibility."

Leshia Fisher is the new Regional Director for the 12 counties surrounding (but not including) Harris County. Ms. Fisher joined CPS in 1996 as a caseworker, and worked her way through several positions of increased responsibility, most recently program administrator. She was awarded the Region 6 Child Welfare Board Employee of the Year in 2011 and 2014, Texas Council on Child Welfare Board Employee of the Year in 2014, National Award for Angel of Adoption in 2015 and Sam Houston State University (SHSU) Recognition Award in 2016. Ms. Fisher has a Bachelor's of Science degree in Criminal Justice from SHSU.

Marta Talbert is the new Regional Director for the 30 counties in Central Texas, including the Austin metropolitan area, Waco/Temple (including Fort Hood), and Bryan/College Station. She began as an intern with CPS in 1996, and has been an investigator, child safety specialist, supervisor and program administrator. Ms. Talbert has a Bachelor's degree in Social Work from Tarleton State University.

Tara O'Connell is the new Regional Director for the Corpus Christi region south to the Rio Grande Valley and west to Laredo. She also started her career in 1996, as a caseworker, and has worked as a foster parent trainer, supervisor, and program administrator. She has a Bachelor's of Science in Education degree from State University of New York and a Master's degree in Social Work from University of Houston.

They begin their new duties Monday, Sept. 19. One CPS regional director position, for the region from Wichita Falls to Abilene, remains vacant but an announcement is expected soon.