



## JOINT PROCLAMATION

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### TO ADVANCE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN CHILD WELFARE OUTCOMES

**WHEREAS**, the State of Missouri and the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, share a steadfast commitment to ensuring the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, youth, and families; and

**WHEREAS**, the Fostering the Future executive order signed by President Donald J. Trump and First Lady Melania Trump represents a transformative, whole-of-government approach to strengthening child welfare systems, centering prevention, stability, and long-term positive outcomes for children and families; and

**WHEREAS**, under the executive order, reducing unnecessary administrative burden, streamlining reporting requirements, and aligning federal processes are essential to enabling child welfare agencies and frontline professionals to focus their time, expertise, and resources on serving children and families effectively; and

**WHEREAS**, the principles of federalism affirm that states are the primary drivers of child welfare policy, practice, and innovation, and that federal partnership is most effective when it supports, empowers, and removes barriers to state-led solutions that reflect local needs, strengths, and priorities; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Missouri has made significant and measurable improvements to its child welfare system, including enhanced safety practices, stronger family engagement, expanded prevention services, improved permanency outcomes, and a demonstrated commitment to continuous quality improvement; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Missouri and ACF recognize that lasting system change is achieved through collaboration, transparency, and a shared commitment to learning, innovation, and excellence;

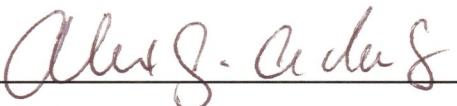
**NOW, THEREFORE**, the State of Missouri and the Administration for Children and Families hereby issue this Joint Proclamation to memorialize their shared intent to enter into a new Program Improvement Plan (PIP).

Through this proclamation, Missouri and ACF affirm their mutual commitment to:

- Strengthening child safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes;
- Promoting innovation and cross-system collaboration; and
- Sustaining a child welfare system that ensures every child has the opportunity to grow up in a safe, stable, and loving home – A Home for Every Child.

This proclamation reflects a shared vision for the future of child welfare—one that builds on progress to date, embraces bold and thoughtful innovation, and remains unwavering in its commitment to children, youth, and families.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the undersigned have set their hands to this Joint Proclamation on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.



Alex J. Adams  
Assistant Secretary  
Administration for Children & Families



Mike Kehoe  
Governor  
State of Missouri

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,  
Administration for Children & Families,  
February 12, 2026

