

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 22, 2017

MEDIA CONTACT:

Jonathan Starkey

Cell: (302) 256-8364

Jonathan.Starkey@state.de.us



Delaware Governor John Carney

**Governor Carney Announces Family Services Cabinet Council
Summer Initiative**

*The Summer Initiative will coordinate delivery of state services for families in
Wilmington*

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney on Thursday announced the Family Services Cabinet Council’s Summer Initiative, an interagency effort to improve the coordination of state services to better meet the needs of families in the city of Wilmington.

The FSCC Summer Initiative will bring together front-line staff from across Delaware’s state agencies to better coordinate state services for Wilmington families – including programs that offer job training, early childhood education, substance abuse treatment, and quality, affordable housing.

“Too many Wilmington children and families deal with the effects of poverty, the trauma of violence in their neighborhoods and the challenges associated with navigating an economy in transition,” said **Governor Carney**. “These issues permeate homes and classrooms every day, and it’s our duty to stand up for these families. The Family Services Cabinet Council’s Summer Initiative will make sure that government agencies are working together more efficiently and effectively on behalf of families in the city of Wilmington.”

Agency staff gathered for an orientation and training at the Department of Health and Social Services in Wilmington on Thursday. Training will ensure that state employees, especially those serving families in Wilmington, understand and are aware of the wide range of state services available to their clients. Wilmington representatives also attended Thursday’s training to improve coordination of city and state services.

“Sometimes, families in Wilmington who are in need of support have too many people knocking on their doors offering help. Through Governor Carney’s leadership of the Family Services Cabinet Council, we want to change that so those supports are better integrated and better coordinated,” said **Dr. Kara Odom Walker, Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services**. “Starting this summer, state outreach staff will call families, listen to their needs, and suggest services across state government that can help to meet those needs. Most importantly, they will coordinate with the state agencies so those services are delivered.”

“Children who grow up in positive and healthy environments with nurturing families and mentors are much more likely to develop into caring adults who value their communities,” said **Josette Manning, Secretary of the Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families**. “We recognize there are significant

societal challenges in Wilmington and the well-being of our families is at stake. We stand ready with our fellow state agencies and the City to share resources and expertise, develop more creative programming, and work with the community to help prepare our families for a bright future.”

“I am proud to serve on the Council with the other members. We look forward to the opportunity to improve the coordination and delivery of services to those who need it most,” said **Robert Coupe, Secretary of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security**.

“We must do our part to break this cycle,” said **Dr. Patrice Gilliam-Johnson, Secretary of the Department of Labor**. “Our team at the Delaware Department of Labor is pleased to be a part of this vital initiative and looks forward to coordinating the delivery of these valuable resources to deserving families.”

Governor Carney reestablished the Family Services Cabinet Council as one of his first official acts as Governor, signaling the importance of coordinating crucial public and private services for youth and families in Wilmington and across Delaware.

The Council includes eight members of Governor Carney’s Cabinet – the Secretary of the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families; the Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services; the Secretary of the Department of Education; the Secretary of the Department of Labor; the Secretary of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security; the Director of the Delaware State Housing Authority; the Director of the Office of Management and Budget; and the Commissioner of the Department of Correction.

Governor Carney tasked the Council with implementing innovative tools and strategies for addressing a series of specific issues, including: breaking the school-to-prison pipeline; improving access to early childhood education; increasing the availability of affordable housing; improving access to substance abuse treatment; reducing recidivism in Delaware’s correctional system; expanding job training opportunities; and reducing violence in Delaware’s neighborhoods.

###