



News Release

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Tri-state Counties Invited To Participate In Instant Notification For Foster Parents

Program will immediately disclose criminal contacts in Hamilton County

CINCINNATI --- Surrounding counties in the tri-state are being invited to participate in the Hamilton County Clerk of Courts instant notification program for foster parents.

Hamilton County Clerk of Courts Greg Hartmann and County Commissioner Pat DeWine sent a letter yesterday offering this service to fellow commissioners and clerks in the eight surrounding counties. The letter encourages counties to provide a confidential list of their foster parents, and other adults living in the home of a foster child, to the Clerk of Courts that will be run against Hamilton County court records. The program would then disclose contacts that these individuals may have had with the Hamilton County justice system.

“Our instant notification program is a service that should not be limited to the borders of Hamilton County. Care for the most vulnerable in our society knows no boundary. Therefore, political borders should not deter us from identifying foster parents with questionable criminal contacts,” said Hartmann.

The instant notification program would provide participating counties daily reports on their foster parents’ contact with the Hamilton County justice system including charges and convictions ranging from rape, murder, and domestic violence to low level drug citations, DUIs, welfare fraud and stalking orders. Hartmann and DeWine are also encouraging each of the tri-state counties to design their own instant notification programs and have offered guidance through all phases of the process.

“When a foster parent has contact with the justice system causing question about their status as a care giver, authorities should know immediately – whether they’re from Hamilton County or not. I urge surrounding counties to create their own programs and share the same information with our foster care system in Hamilton County. This program is a model for statewide and national checks in the future,” said DeWine.

MORE . . .



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A recent initial test of the instant notification program has proven its importance in Hamilton County. The test revealed that among the 517 Hamilton County foster parents and adults living in their homes:

- 57 individuals, or 11 percent, have had contact with the Hamilton County justice system.
- The 57 individuals have been arrested on a total of 82 charges.
- The eligibility of four Hamilton County foster parents is now in question.

“It’s clear that a lack of information sharing has lead to a breakdown in our foster care system. We can fix this problem and there is no reason that we shouldn’t work to implement this program immediately,” said Hartmann.

The tragic death of a three year-old foster child, Marcus Fiesel, at the hands of his foster parents, Liz and David Carroll Jr., spurred Hartmann and DeWine to begin the instant notification program with Hamilton County Job and Family Services.

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Attachment: Hartmann and DeWine letter to tri-state officials