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## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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### **Department statement on allegations against Anchorage woman**

ANCHORAGE — The Department of Health and Social Services and the Office of Children's Services are cooperating with law enforcement in the full investigation and prosecution of the charges filed against Anya James today.

"The children are safe now and their physical and emotional needs are being closely monitored," said Christy Lawton, director of the Office of Children Services. "We are deeply disturbed by the events that led to these charges. The allegations raise some serious questions and we will be working with Anchorage Police to investigate this fully."

The department shares the concerns of the public and the media, but the Office of Children's Services is unable to answer specific questions about the case at this time because the investigation is ongoing.

Department employees in several units, including Certification & Licensing, Office of Children's Services and Adult Protective Services, work to protect vulnerable Alaskans. Employees conduct regular and unannounced inspections of facilities licensed by the state, and prioritize quick responses to reports of possible harm.

To report a suspicion of child abuse or neglect, please call 1-800-478-4444. After hours or weekends, if you believe a child is in immediate danger, please contact your local law enforcement agency.

Please keep in mind that you may not hear updates back from the Office of Children's Services after making a report, but all reports of concern received are documented. Reports that meet criteria for an initial assessment or investigation are then prioritized, with the most apparently urgent reports investigated first.