



# NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: BRENDA DURAN  
[BDURAN@BOS.LACOUNTY.GOV](mailto:BDURAN@BOS.LACOUNTY.GOV)  
213.974.1746

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 14, 2022

### **Board of Supervisors Appoint New Department of Children and Family Services Director**

#### ***Brandon T. Nichols set to take on new role July 1st***

LOS ANGELES - Following a six-month nationwide search process, Brandon T. Nichols has been selected to serve as the new director of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors appointed Mr. Nichols to the role of director during the June 14 Board meeting, with a start date of July 1. Director Nichols will lead a workforce of nearly 9,000 staff members in 20 regional offices who provide family-centered and child-focused protective services to more than 29,000 children.

“We are at a pivotal time when it comes to how the largest child welfare system in the country serves families,” said Hilda L. Solis, Supervisor to the First District. “Our focus must shift to one of preventing abuse and neglect, ensuring older youth have stable housing and creating a system that improves the lives of those it serves. That is why I am so pleased Brandon Nichols will lead the Department of Children & Family Services in this new chapter. Brandon has a proven track record of cutting through red tape for families, working closely with advocates and residents with lived experience, and supporting the Department’s employees. I look forward to seeing Brandon take on the many challenges biological parents, children, and caregivers navigate daily – they are our North Star.”

“Only with dedicated and consistent leadership will LA County be able to create a system of prevention designed to lift families and address deeply rooted challenges like general neglect and implicit and structural bias. I look forward to partnering with Mr. Nichols to do the hard work of right sizing our child welfare system so that it heals families and protects vulnerable children,” said Chair Holly J. Mitchell, Supervisor to the Second District.

“Brandon Nichols is one of our County’s most capable senior leaders. He’s a great collaborator, has a track record for successfully implementing ongoing and new programs, is receptive to new ideas, and knows this complicated County like the back of his hand. We are extremely fortunate in this difficult time to have him at the helm of our child welfare system,” said Sheila Kuehl, Supervisor to the Third District.

“The Department of Children and Family Services faces big challenges. As Acting Director, Brandon Nichols has already brought stability and leadership to this department, and I am hopeful that as the new Department Head, he will be able to implement an expansive vision that helps us meet the needs of children, youth, and families,” said Janice Hahn, Supervisor to the Fourth District.



# NEWS RELEASE

“I’m pleased that our Board has quickly filled the top position of one of our most important County departments. Director Nichols possesses a combination of boots on the ground experience and executive management skills, along with remarkable compassion and dedication to improving outcomes for our most vulnerable children and youth served by the Department of Children and Family Services. I look forward to partnering with him as we continue to work to keep our County’s children safe and thriving,” said Kathryn Barger, Supervisor to the Fifth District.

Director Nichols, who had been serving in the role of interim director since April, indicated that his primary areas of focus at the outset of his tenure will be ensuring child safety, advancing race equity efforts, and providing accessible, quality support to families.

“DCFS is charged with keeping children safe and making families strong,” said Director Nichols, who has a background in child welfare, foster care, adoptions, and mental health. “As Director, I want to help my staff to make the best decisions they can, I want to work with communities to support families where they live, and I want to make sure we are confronting the problems of bias and racial disproportionality that have plagued child welfare programs.”

A Los Angeles County employee for more than 25 years, Director Nichols has worked for several departments, including DCFS where he previously served as chief deputy director for three years. During that time, he led the county’s implementation of Continuum of Care Reform, a multi-year, state-wide change designed to reduce the use of congregate care and ensure children live in family-like settings when they are unable to safely remain with their parents. Additionally, Director Nichols advocated on behalf of children at legislative hearings with local, state, and federal agencies and worked closely with a diverse network of community partners.

Director Nichols began his County career with the Office of the Counsel, where he represented the County in cases involving child abuse and neglect in the juvenile courts. He also has worked for the Probation Department and, most recently, the Chief Executive Office.

In his last position, as the Executive Director of the County’s Jail Closure Implementation Team, he played a significant role in efforts to develop mental health services and other supports for people incarcerated in County jails as part of Los Angeles County’s commitment to decarcerating and closing the Men’s Central Jail.

Director Nichols holds a bachelor’s degree in Law and Society from the University of California at Santa Barbara and a Juris Doctor Degree from the California Western School of Law in San Diego.

– end –