ADMINISTRATOR’S MEMO TO COUNTIES

MEMO # 17-01

DATE: January 17, 2017

TO: County Departments of Human/Social Services Directors

FROM: John D. Paquin, Administrator
Shelby A. B. McCulley, Assistant Administrator

SUBJECT: COMPAS-Youth Assessment Tool and DOC-County MOUs

This memo is a reminder that the County COMPAS MOU renewal process is coming up in February. A DOC representative will be in touch with counties that use one or more COMPAS assessment tools to facilitate the MOU renewal process.

The Department of Corrections strongly values our partnerships with counties. We are in communication with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) regarding their commitment to moving towards a single risk/need assessment for justice-involved youth and will collaborate with DCF on this transition as needed. There are a number of steps in this process, however, and it is expected to take some time. In the meantime, DOC will continue to make the COMPAS applications available at no cost to the agencies that wish to use them. Best practice supports continued use of a risk/needs assessment, and counties that wish to continue using COMPAS must complete the MOU renewal process.

Furthermore, we are excited about some upcoming developments for counties using the COMPAS-Youth Assessment. In response to your feedback regarding youth adjudication rates and the COMPAS risk models, scale sets for the Youth assessment are being adjusted. Beginning with the next COMPAS release, a sample group of youth assessments will be collected by our vendor, NorthPointe. This sample set will be used to norm the assessment on Wisconsin’s youth, and any Wisconsin-specific characteristics these youth might have would be reflected in potential changes to the scales’ cut points (for example, lower number of adjudications). Additionally, COMPAS will continue to offer multiple versions of the youth assessment, including the detention screener, a short risk screener, and of course the full COMPAS-Youth assessment.

As always, the Department encourages the use of validated risk/need assessment to inform decisions for all justice-involved youth. We support this evidence-based practice regardless of the specific tool chosen to do so.
Cc: Jon E. Litscher, Secretary, DOC
Cathy A. Jess, Deputy Secretary, DOC
Eloise Anderson, Secretary, DCF
Ron Hunt, Deputy Secretary, DCF
Sara Buschman, Assistant Deputy Secretary, DCF
Linda Seeymeyer, Secretary, DHS
Tom Engels, Deputy Secretary, DHS
Jenny Malcore, Assistant Deputy Secretary, DHS
Fredi-Ellen Bove, Administrator, DCF/DSP
Ron Hermes, Director, Bureau of Permanence and Out of Home, DCF/DSP
Wendy Henderson, Director, Bureau of Youth Services, DCF/DSP
Emily Toft, Section Chief, Bureau of Youth Services, DCF/DSP
John Tuohy, Director, Bureau of Regional Operations, DCF/DES
David Sorenson, Section Chief, Child Welfare Licensing Section, DCF/DSP
Greg Van Rybroek, Director, DHS/MJTC
DCF Area Administrators
DCF Human Service Area Coordinators
DOC/DJC Management staff
County Youth Aids contacts
Court-attached juvenile court intake offices