



**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN YOUTH AND FAMILIES**

To: Mr. Marco Schiappa, Chairman, State Properties Committee
From: Misty Delgado, Chief of Staff, Department of Children, Youth and Families
Date: July 24, 2025
Sent Via: Valerio, Danyeli (DCAMM) Danyeli.Valerio@doa.ri.gov

Re: SPC 7/22/25 Meeting - Agenda Item H – Requested Materials

Dear Chairman Schiappa,

As you know the Department of Children, Youth and Families (“DCYF”) appeared before the State Properties Committee (“SPC”) on July 22, 2025, seeking the approval and execution of a 10-year lease extension agreement between DCYF and Provident Property, LLC. This property houses the headquarters of DCYF at 101 Friendship Street in the City of Providence.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (“NIOSH”) report remains the most recent evaluation of its type. Immediately upon receiving NIOSH’s recommendations in 2019, the Department implemented all eight recommendations. We continue to work closely with the landlord, who manages the property, to maintain our current systems, address any issues that arise, and take preventative actions to prevent reoccurrence, thereby demonstrating our continued due diligence in managing our occupied spaces. Below is a summary of our efforts related to these recommendations at the 101 Friendship Street location.

- 1. NIOSH Recommendation: Maintain a communication system with employees for when building-related issues arise. Make sure to provide information on response actions to all employees, including posting exposure and environmental assessment reports. If not already formed, consider starting a health and safety committee that consists of employees, management, and maintenance. This can help increase communication between employees and management and help alleviate concerns.**

DCYF Action Steps:

The Department established a robust communication system for building-related issues and has formed a health and safety committee.

- Implemented email distribution list for real-time updates on building issues (e.g., HVAC outages, plumbing leaks, air quality alerts).
- Regularly posted environmental assessment reports and response actions on designated bulletin boards.
- Formed a Health and Safety Committee composed of representatives from employees, management, and facilities, which meets monthly to discuss concerns and review safety protocols.

2. **NIOSH Recommendation: Evaluate your existing housekeeping program with attention to keeping horizontal surfaces dust-free and carpet cleanliness. a. Vacuum the carpet regularly with a vacuum equipped with a HEPA filter. Ensure HEPA vacuums are well maintained, and the HEPA filters are changed according to the manufacturer's recommendations. b. Use a damp cloth or mop on nonporous surfaces rather than dry materials to clean up dust. This prevents dust from becoming airborne and resettling.**

DCYF Action Steps:

The Department evaluated and enhanced its housekeeping program to prioritize dust control and carpet cleanliness.

- Replaced previous cleaning vendor with commercial janitorial services company.
- Revised cleaning schedules to include daily vacuuming of carpeted areas using HEPA-filter equipped vacuums.
- Engage additional janitorial services when needed to address area specific issues.

3. **NIOSH Recommendation: Follow the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedules for the HVAC system, including replacing air filters, checking drip pans, ensuring thermostats are in working order, and checking and cleaning ventilation system dampers to ensure proper functioning.**

DCYF Action Steps:

The services provided by the HVAC company exceed the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedules for the HVAC system.

- Established a preventative maintenance contract with a certified HVAC company, ensuring quarterly inspections and servicing.
- Encourage employees to cease the use of portable heaters and air conditioners to minimize risk to safety and eliminate the adverse effect these devices have to temperature settings.

4. **NIOSH Recommendation: Maintain indoor temperature and relative humidity levels according to the guidelines discussed.**

DCYF Action Steps:

The Department actively monitors and maintains indoor temperature and relative humidity within recommended guidelines.

- Programmed the HVAC system to automatically adjust to maintain target ranges (e.g., 68-75°F and 30-60% relative humidity).
- Purchased thermostat covers to prevent adjustment of zone temperature.
- Provided employees with a feedback mechanism to report comfort issues, which are then addressed by facilities management.

5. **NIOSH Recommendation: Routinely inspect the building for water intrusion and damage and correct these upon discovery. During and after heavy rains, walk through the building and check for water incursion. a. Identify any potential sources of dampness or mold through visual inspection and make proper repairs to prevent further problems from occurring. b. If dampness or mold is not identified during visual inspections but is suspected because of musty odors or continued health complaints, consider other methods (e.g., infrared camera or borescope) to look for hidden problems. c. Monitor repaired areas to ensure repairs and remedial actions are effective. d. Keep a record of when and where mold or water-damaged materials are discovered and what has been done to promptly fix the underlying problem leading to the water damage.**

DCYF Action Steps:

The Department has implemented a proactive program for water intrusion and mold prevention and remediation.

- Facilities staff are on site daily and conduct visual inspections for all common areas and employee workspaces, with a focus on potential water entry points.
- For any instances of reported water damage or mold discovery, the Department has taken all necessary steps to assess and address any issue.

6. **NIOSH Recommendation: Evaluate the content or enforcement of current rules or policies surrounding personal workspaces that could be contributing to indoor environmental quality concerns, including a. Acceptable locations for employee food preparation, storage, and consumption, including personal refrigerators and microwaves b. Employee fish tanks c. Fragrances in the workplace**

DCYF Action Steps:

The Department is undergoing a comprehensive review of all policies regarding personal workspaces to mitigate indoor environmental quality concerns.

- **Action Steps:**

- Issued clear guidelines on acceptable food preparation, storage, and consumption areas, designating specific breakrooms and discouraging food accumulation in personal workspaces.
- Implemented a policy restricting personal mini-refrigerators and microwaves to designated kitchenettes to prevent mold and pest issues.
- Exploring a "fragrance-free" policy for all shared workspaces to accommodate employees with sensitivities and allergies.
- Communicated all policy updates clearly to affected staff.

7. **NIOSH Recommendation: Establish an individualized management plan to relocate employees (such as at home or a remote site) who are still suffering from health implications even after response actions have been taken.**

DCYF Action Steps:

The Department is unaware of any employee who has health implications that have been medically determined to be a result of or related to the building condition at 101 Friendship Street. The Department continues to work closely with the Disability Management Unit to accommodate any employee who is experiencing health issues

- Created a tiered response plan, including options for temporary relocation to alternative workspaces within the building, remote work, or telecommuting arrangements, based on medical necessity and job function.
- Established a confidential process for employees to report ongoing symptoms and request accommodation.

8. NIOSH Recommendation: Encourage employees to report new, persistent, or worsening symptoms, particularly those with a work-related pattern, to their healthcare providers and, as instructed by their employer, to a designated individual at their workplace.

DCYF Action Steps:

The Department actively encourages and facilitates the reporting of work-related symptoms.

- Communicated clear instructions to all employees on how and to whom to report new, persistent, or worsening symptoms that may be work-related (e.g., direct supervisor, HR, or the Health and Safety Committee).
- Provided information on the importance of consulting personal healthcare providers for all health concerns.
- Ensured that all reported symptoms are documented and, where appropriate, investigated in conjunction with the Health and Safety Committee.

We're pleased to report that DCYF currently has no corrective action plans as we remain in full compliance with all building codes and occupational health and safety standards. There are no outstanding issues requiring immediate correction. During the three-year look back period, we have no active cases on file for this property with any regulatory body overseeing building code, health, or safety.

Additionally, indoor air quality tests performed in 2020 and 2023 found no cause for concern as it relates to levels of particles, chemicals, carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide and temperature or relative humidity.

Our commitment to maintaining a healthy and safe environment is ongoing, with our current maintenance schedule including monthly pest control, quarterly HVAC service and filter changes, and daily janitorial services. We contract with National Security for equipment and monitoring of the fire alarm system. In addition to a security guard on-site daily, there is an armed Capital Police Officer post Monday through Friday from 8-6 and Saturday from 8-4. We continue to work diligently to ensure the property is maintained to the highest standards and will promptly address any concerns that may arise.

Looking ahead, we're excited to announce that DCYF will be onboarding a new Director of Operations in the coming weeks. This individual brings valuable training and experience, further strengthening our ability to ensure ongoing compliance with all applicable laws and standards.

In anticipation of the upcoming lease finalization and planned renovations, Director Ashley Deckert proactively requested a pre- and post-renovation air quality evaluation. We're pleased to confirm that this air quality testing commenced on July 23, 2025. Thank you for your continued attention to this matter. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

/s/ Misty Delgado, Esq.

Chief of Staff

Department of Children, Youth & Families

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Enclosures.

Documents Provided to R Rebello on 7.21.23 with index

Provident Properties Response to NIOSH report

Regan Response to NIOSH reports

Indoor Air Quality Testing – 8.14.2023, 8.5.2020, 8.12.2020

Preventative Maintenance/Emergency Service Contract – HVAC

Air Change Letter from Regan Heating and Air – 11.15.21

Agreement – National Security Fire Alarm System

Agreement/Most Recent Invoice – Pest Control

Cc:

Director Ashley Deckert, DCYF

Adam Boudreaux, DCAMM

File

INDEX:

Date Sent	Document	Attachment(s)
7.21.25	7.21.25 email chain subject: TIME SENSITIVE - State Properties Commission/580	None
7.21.25	6.20.19 email chain subject: Air Quality - Floors 1 - 5 at 101 Friendship Street, Providence	G-11306 – Denied Health and Safety Grievance 1 st Floor – Zone Configuration OSHA Certification for Pamela J. Leary ¹
	8.11.2020 email chain subject: Indoor Air Quality - 101 Friendship Street	OSHA Publication: Indoor Air Quality in Commercial and Institutional Buildings
	8.11.2020 email subject: Documents for Potential Step 1 Grievance G11861 (mice and mold)	6.7.2017 email subject: 101 Friendship Street – Pest Control 7.17.17 – Indoor Air Quality Reports 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th Floors 4.21.17,5.23.17,6.21.17 – Big Blue Bug Inspection Reports 6.28.17 Grievance SEIU 580/DCYF – Health and Safety ²
	Timeline 2015 - March 21, 2025	None
	7.21.25 Email to R. Rebello	None
	3.4.25 email chain subject: Air Quality	8.14.23 Metcalf ³ Building IAQ preliminary findings
	3.30.21 email chain subject: Concerns regarding 101 Friendship Street	Four (4) screenshots of Health and Safety Response Form 10.8.92, 1.13.93, 6.12.19 NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation 6.12.19 NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation w notes
	6.30.23 email chain subject: 2 projects at 101 Friendship over the next couple of weeks - for your situational awareness	None
	3.12.23 email chain subject: Scheduling Internal DCYF L580 meeting	None

¹ Pamela J. Leary lead facilities and operations at DCYF from 2016- March 2025.

² No Decision has been rendered

³ 101 Friendship Street is also known as the Jesse Metcalf Building