



**Marion County**  
OREGON

**For immediate release:** January 14, 2008  
**Contact:** Walt Beglau, District Attorney or  
Sarah Morris, Deputy District Attorney 503-588-5222

**Department of Justice Grant to Help Marion County District Attorney's Office  
Enhance Services to Families**

The Marion County Board of Commissioners approved an intergovernmental agreement with the Department of Justice in the amount of \$205,075.85 to assist the Marion County district attorney in juvenile dependency proceedings.

Dependency proceedings in the juvenile court determine whether it is in the best interest of the child to be removed from the parent or guardian either temporarily or permanently. Children have the right to permanency with a safe family, to be free from physical, sexual or emotional abuse or exploitation, and freedom from substantial neglect of basic needs. The juvenile court strives to protect the rights and interests of children and determines whether the best interest of a child requires they be temporarily or permanently removed from their parents or guardian.

“This will enhance our capacity to focus on drug endangered families and it gives us an opportunity to ensure that follow-up services are provided to vulnerable families as designated by the court,” explained Marion County District Attorney Walt Beglau.

Beglau explained that the funding will help the County hire two full time employees to enhance the juvenile dependency petition process. Marion County averages about 1000 juvenile dependency petitions per year.

“This funding will greatly help children in dependency court receive follow-up attention and get linked into community services,” he explained. “We will now have an enhanced district attorney presence in court hearings so that we can ensure follow-up. This is a win-win for Marion County and our partners in child welfare,” he said.

Sarah Morris, deputy district attorney and drug-endangered children prosecutor will now be assigned to the juvenile dependency team.

# # #

