



## COLORADO

Office of Children,  
Youth & Families

Department of Human Services

Minna Castillo Cohen, Director

### Colorado Department of Human Services Domestic Violence and Child Welfare Task Group

## Task Group Values Statement Regarding Parental Alienation and False Allegations of Domestic Violence and Child Abuse

### Task Group Purpose

The purpose of the Domestic Violence and Child Welfare Task Group is to develop recommendations for the Colorado Department of Human Services that address the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child maltreatment. We, the facilitators, take this purpose very seriously and intend to make the Task Group's work entirely focused on the purpose. Toward this end, we wish to set clear limits on the Task Group's engagement with the concepts of parental alienation and false allegations of abuse.

### Task Group Values

As Task Group facilitators, we must ensure the Task Group upholds the values in the [Colorado Department of Human Services Strategic Plan](#). We believe children are harmed when one parent undermines the other parent's relationship with their child. We believe all parents have a profound responsibility to protect their children from harm. We believe parents whose children are abused or who are themselves experiencing abuse engage in efforts to protect their children from harm and yet are often discredited and unfairly labeled as alienating. We believe it is in our best interests as stewards of the public trust that we take parents seriously when they make claims of abuse, and to do otherwise would erode our work in supporting families who struggle with violence and abuse.

### Task Group Conduct Expectations

During the September meeting, several participants used the Task Group meeting space to put forth arguments regarding the concepts of parental alienation and false allegations of abuse. Clearly, participants have a lot of knowledge, interest, and energy on these topics. The mentions of parental alienation and false allegations of abuse were not aligned with the meeting agenda, and at times were perceived by the facilitators as disrespectful of differing points of view.

After considerable discussion among the facilitators, reviewing information available on these issues, and speaking with several individuals who reached out to the facilitators after the September meeting, **the facilitators have determined that parental alienation and false allegations of abuse will not be the dominant themes of the Task Group. They distract us from our purpose. Moving forward, individuals who choose to use the meeting space to make statements or post information about parental alienation and/or false allegations of abuse that are deemed off-topic by the facilitators will be warned once and may be removed from the meeting if necessary.**

### Action Steps

As facilitators and stewards of the public trust, we do recognize that people have personal experiences that speak to these issues and those experiences are important to the work of the Task Group. During the October meeting, we will announce several opportunities for the Task Group to gather information about these personal experiences.

In the meantime, Brooke Ely-Milen will be hosting office hours for Task Group participants who want to reach out to discuss this statement or any issues pertinent to the Task Group scope. The office hours will be held on October 20th from 2:00pm - 4:00pm. Anyone interested in participating in the office hours will need to email Brooke at: [Brooke.ElyMilen@state.co.us](mailto:Brooke.ElyMilen@state.co.us). Office hour participants will be given a ten-minute window on a first-come, first-serve basis.

