



Client Alert



Contact Attorney Regarding
This Matter:

Hedy S. Rubinger
404.873.8724 - direct
404.873.8725 - fax
hedy.rubinger@agg.com

Arnall Golden Gregory LLP
Attorneys at Law
171 17th Street NW
Suite 2100
Atlanta, GA 30363-1031
404.873.8500
www.agg.com

July 1 Marks Shift in Georgia Agencies Regulating Health Care Licensees

On July 1, 2009, the Georgia Department of Human Resources ("DHR") became known as the Georgia Department of Human Services ("DHS"). Simultaneously, certain services that had been provided by DHR, such as the licensure of Georgia health care facilities, shifted to the Georgia Department of Community Health ("DCH").

DCH already serves as the lead agency for health care planning in Georgia and is also designated as the single state agency for Medicaid. To further complement these services, DCH will now also perform licensure-related duties. The newly created division of DCH that governs health care facility regulation is known as the "Health Care Facility Regulation Division." It is divided as follows:

- Complaint/Intake Section which is overseen by Deputy Chief Leslie Poole and is further divided into two sections: (1) Operations and (2) Investigations and Complaints.
- Survey/Certification Section which is overseen by Deputy Chief Sharon King and is further divided into the following sections: (1) Long-Term Care, (2) Health Care, (3) Waivers, (4) Home Health, and (5) Personal Care.

Doug Colburn serves as the Division Chief of the Healthcare Facility Regulation Division and the Commissioner of DCH remains Rhonda Medows, M.D. Please [click here](#) for biographical information on Doug Colburn, Leslee Pool, and Sharon King.

DHS, as its new name suggests, provides human services such as economic assistance programs, child and adult protective services, enforcement for child support, and foster care programs. Divisions within DHS include the Division of Family and Children Services, the Division of Aging Services, the Office of Child Support Services, the Office of Residential Child Care, and additional support offices. To view the organizational chart reflecting the new structure of DHS, which reflects that the Commissioner remains B.J. Walker, please [click here](#).

Effective July 1, 2009, Georgia also has a new agency, the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities ("DBHDD"). DBHDD provides treatment and support services to people with mental illnesses and addictive diseases as well as support for those with mental retardation and related developmental disabilities. The Office of Prevention Services and Programs, which had been a part of DHR and was for a short time located in the Division of Public Health, is now part of DBHDD. The website for the new agency went live on July 1, 2009 and is www.dbhdd.georgia.gov.

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