

State of Oklahoma

Department of Human Services

Director

The State of Oklahoma/Region

Oklahoma is located in the South Central region of the United States, and at 69,916 square miles is the 20th largest state based on land area. With an estimated population of nearly 3.8 million, Oklahoma is also the 28th most populous of the 50 states. The state's name is derived from the Choctaw words *okla* and *humma* meaning "red people," and is also known informally by its nickname, *the Sooner State*. It was formed by the combination of Oklahoma Territory and Indian Territory on November 16, 1907, and Oklahoma was the 46th state to enter the union. The state is a major producer of natural gas, oil, and agriculture, and ranks 2nd in the nation for production of natural gas, is the 27th most agriculturally productive state, and 5th in production of wheat. Oklahoma relies on an economic base of aviation, energy, telecommunications, and biotechnology. It has one of the fastest growing economies in the nation; ranking among the top states in per capita income growth and gross domestic product growth. The state is considered to be one of the most business-friendly states in the nation with the 7th lowest tax burden.

The State capital and largest city, Oklahoma City, has received several acknowledgments from numerous publications and national organizations. Some of the recognitions include a ranking as #6 in a Top Ten publication of the *Wall Street Journal* for "Best Cities for Business (12/13/11);" #3 of the Top Ten Best Cities for Manufacturing Jobs in an edition of *Forbes* (12/15/11); #1 For Economic Security for its diverse economy including government, universities, energy and high tech firms in an edition of *Metro Trends* (12/24/11); #3 for the "Greatest 5-year Gain in Real-estate" in *Inman News/Zillow* (9/2/11); "Top Ten Cities for Real-estate Appreciation Potential" with *Forbes* (1/11/12); "Top Twenty Most Secure Large Metros" by Farmers Insurance report of Most Secure Places to Live in US (12/15/11); among the "Top Ten Best Places to Live" by Relocate America (8/5/11); and the "Third Happiest City to Work In" by CareerBliss.com (1/17/12).

Oklahoma has an impressive array of arts, cultural resources, indoor and outdoor sports, professional and collegiate sports teams. Numerous educational opportunities, colleges, universities, airport, rail and other transportation, and a variety of medical and healthcare organizations are available throughout the state. A detailed listing of local and state-wide resources can be provided upon request.

Oklahoma is a constitutional republic with a government modeled after the Federal Government of the United States, with Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches. The state has 77 counties with jurisdiction over most government functions within each respective domain and five congressional districts. The Legislature consists of the Senate (48 members) and the House of Representatives (101 members). The Judicial branch consists of the Oklahoma Supreme Court, Court of Criminal Appeals, and 77 District Courts that each serve one county. The Executive branch consists of the Governor, their staff, and other elected officials. The Governor is the principal head of government and the chief executive of the Executive branch. The state budget for 2013 is approximately \$6.6 billion with a staff /employee allocation of about 69,000. Mary Fallin was elected as the 27th Governor for the State of Oklahoma in November, 2010, and is the first female Governor elected by the state.

The Department and Director of Human Services

The Director of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) is responsible for the leadership of the largest agency in the state with an annual budget exceeding \$2 billion and a staff of more than 7,000 employees. OKDHS is responsible for Human Services Centers and other locations throughout Oklahoma's 77 counties, nine divisions in the central office and five institutions. The Director is, currently accountable to the Governor and Human Services Commission.

Established in 1936 under Article XXV of the Oklahoma constitution, the Oklahoma Human Service Commission is a nine-member governing board for OKDHS. Its members are appointed by the Governor to staggered nine-year terms, with one membership expiring each August. The Commission appoints the Director of Human Services, approves program budgets, funding, and policies and procedures that direct the Department's program and service delivery. OKDHS Commissioner Wes Lane was appointed in July, 2012 as the current Chairman of the Commission. Preston Doerflinger (Oklahoma Secretary of Finance & Revenue and State Finance Director) was appointed interim Director of OKDHS in March, 2012 pending recruitment and selection of a new OKDHS Director.

Legislation passed this Spring created a state referendum to repeal sections of the state constitution relating to the Oklahoma Public Welfare Commission and Director of Public Welfare. If the referendum passes in the early November 2012 election, another piece of legislation will take effect that will grant the Governor the authority to hire the OKDHS Director with confirmation by the Oklahoma Senate. If the referendum passes, the current OKDHS Commission will also be eliminated and four new citizen advisory panels will replace the Commission. The governing authority currently held by the Commission will pass to the Director who will receive recommendations from the four advisory panels.

Major service components and key executive staff of the Department of Human Services reporting to the Department Director include the Chief Administrative Officer for Administrative Services, the General Counsel, the Chief Information Officer for the Information Services Divisions, the Chief Operating Officer for the Human Services Centers, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Chief Coordinating Officer for the Vertically Integrated Services. Also reporting to the Director of Human Services is an Executive Assistant.

- *Administrative Services* (Support Services Division, Human Resources Management Division, Office of Communications, Office of Volunteerism, Office of Information and Referral, Office of Intergovernmental Relations and Policy)
- *Legal Division* (General Counsel)
- *Information Services Divisions* (Office of Planning, Research and Statistics, Data Services Division, and Information Security)
- *Human Services Centers* (Child Welfare Services, Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, and Adult and Family Services with five Regional Directors and numerous County Directors);
- *Finance Division* (Chief Financial Officer)
- *Vertically Integrated Services* (Aging Services, Oklahoma Child Care Services, Oklahoma Child Support Services, and Developmental Disabilities Division)

The Department also contains the Office of Child Advocacy, Office of the Inspector General, and the Office of Civil Rights.

The Director of the Department of Human Services and the Oklahoma Commission for Human Services, also work closely with the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council, Oklahoma Child Care Advisory Committee, and the State Council on Aging.

OKDHS programs have received top national rankings/acknowledgements for efficient services, records and quality standards. Some of these include a March 2012 ranking by the National Association of Child Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) as the top state in the nation for small family child care home standards and oversight practices. The OKDHS Family Support Services Division won the 2011 USDA Southwest Region Director's Award for its administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (the fifth consecutive year that OKDHS has been recognized with this prestigious award). The National Child Support Enforcement Association awarded the Oklahoma Child Support Services with its Outstanding Program of the Year Award for 2011. OKDHS was also recognized in 2012 as a Computerworld Honors Laureate by Information Builders for its use of business intelligence (BI) technology in the Human Services Category for innovative use of information technology to help caseworkers provide better family services.

In general, the OKDHS Director is responsible for planning, directing, organizing and controlling the activities of OKDHS through his/her management team and other key staff while under general administrative direction of the Governor and the Human Services Commission.

Typical duties and responsibilities of the position include:

- Plans OKDHS operations, including both strategic and operational objectives in accordance with the Department's mission; directs chief officers, division directors, and others in planning, developing, and implementing methods of operation in agency programs and administrative support functions; ensures coordination of activities between the various divisions and offices.
- Makes recommendations and provides input for decision making to the Commission for Human Services; ensures that action approved by the Commission is carried out.

- Develops and maintains cooperative relationships with the Governor's Office, Legislature, and other officials, both federal and state, to assure the fulfillment of the OKDHS mission; represents the Department at various meetings; reviews and makes decisions on sensitive issues and situations.
- Acquires, administers, and allocates resources necessary to support program implementation; approves plans that are developed in response to service needs; monitors plan implementation and evaluates effectiveness; participates in the budget process with the Chief Financial Officer, chief officers, division directors and Commissioners.
- Directs the development and implementation of goals, policies and procedures for both programs and administrative support areas of OKDHS through subordinate personnel; reviews policy implementation and results to ensure that programs and policies are being implemented and adjusted as necessary and that appropriate results are achieved.
- Selects staff capable of carrying out OKDHS mission; delegates authority to complete duties assigned and oversees the accomplishment of those assigned responsibilities.
- Promotes the OKDHS mission through continuous quality improvement, best practices, good staff training and support, and clear communications.
- Assumes other duties and responsibilities as assigned

Issues, Challenges and Opportunities

A few issues, challenges and opportunities for the Department of Human Services and its Director include:

- Monitor and prepare for the potential of a major change in the governance structure for OKDHS. Legislation passed this Spring created a state referendum to repeal sections of the state constitution relating to the Oklahoma Public Welfare Commission and Director of Public Welfare. If the referendum passes in the early November 2012 election, another piece of legislation will take effect that will grant the Governor the authority to hire the OKDHS Director with confirmation by the Oklahoma Senate. If the referendum passes, the current OKDHS Commission will also be eliminated and four new citizen advisory panels will replace the Commission. The governing authority currently held by the Commission will pass to the Director who will receive recommendations from the four advisory panels.
- Continue efforts to improve OKDHS organizational structure including overseeing the implementation of vertical integration of program divisions, child welfare services, and adult and family services divisions.
- Follow-up and implementation of the Oklahoma Pinnacle Plan. This plan is in response to an agreement reached in January 2012 to address class action litigation for children in OKDHS custody. The plan includes a five year improvement strategy for child welfare services that begins in 2012. A copy of the plan, various drafts and other history is available on the OKDHS website.

- Following through on other recent areas of major state legislative reform including state statute changes regarding the disclosure of child welfare histories to federally recognized tribes and the disclosure of child welfare histories to the media when allowable with federal law.
- Facilitate the evaluation of aging existing facilities/institutions serving the developmentally disabled.
- Continue to build/improve on service and community engagement, credibility, and partnerships.

The Candidate

Education and Experience

- Possession of a four-year college or university undergraduate degree. Master's degree preferred. Additional preference may be given for a Master's degree in public administration, social work, health/social/behavioral science or a Ph.D. in a similar or related field or Juris Doctorate.
- Ten (10) years of experience in executive and leadership positions, including five (5) years in managing and supervising organizations of significant size and complexity. Experience in managing large human services, other public service or business organizations is required.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

The successful candidate should have progressive, responsible executive management experience, strong leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills as well as solid presentation and organizational abilities. This person should also have demonstrated knowledge and skills in:

- The principles and practices of public administration
- Legislative process and policy decision making including working with elected officials, local, state and federal agencies, business/service community and the general public
- A hands-on understanding of city/county/state/federal government or other organizations such as education, public/not-for-profit, private business sectors or organizations of similar complexity
- Current and best public management practices including finance, human resources, planning, community relations, organization management, business process improvement, communications, and human services
- Budget preparation and control, and leveraging resources for maximum efficiency
- The ability to develop and sustain strong networks with local, state and national leaders

In addition, he/she should be able to:

- Work effectively in an environment with diverse ethnicity and interests
- Contribute and provide leadership in the maintaining of a positive, respectful, and productive work and service environment
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with a wide variety of people, including members of the public, staff and colleagues, elected and appointed officials in local, regional, national and international venues
- Be an innovative leader who will enhance the current mission and services of the State of Oklahoma and the Department of Human Services

Management Style and Personal Traits

The successful candidate will be someone who enjoys a challenge, is articulate, and a strong yet inclusive leader. She/he should also be credible with staff and the community, be politically astute, approachable, and comfortable in a diverse, complex organization. He/she should also be able to interact well, and in a professional and collegial manner with Board/Commission members, colleagues, a broad range of elected and appointed stakeholders and community including the Legislature, Judiciary, and a large variety of associations and organizations concerned with vulnerable citizens and human services.

The person should be forward-thinking, a good strategic planner who is people-friendly, communicates well, in both verbal and written form, and is comfortable in expressing his or her opinion, and providing professional advice when needed. He/she should be confident, “street smart” and self-assured with good comprehension of financial, operational and quality management. He/she should have a strong customer service orientation. is able to engage employees and the community, and should have a high comfort level with public speaking.

The selected individual must also have a high degree of integrity, be a good listener, good facilitator, open-minded, and believe in the mission and goals of the State of Oklahoma, the Department of Human Services, good government and quality public services, as well as transparency in government. She/he should be open and flexible, be firm when needed, able to lead, direct, and delegate effectively, seek innovation, be a positive change agent, and champion good ideas. He/she should also have good motivational, problem-solving and analytical ability, be a strong decision-maker, negotiator and consensus/team builder.

Finally, the person selected should truly enjoy the complexities of working in large, complex organizations and in a public sector environment. She/he should be an advocate for quality service and accountability, not be risk averse, provide good follow-through, build strong relationships/partnerships and be able to approach challenges and situations with professionalism, confidence, flexibility, energy and a positive outlook. Direct experience and/or a commitment (heart for) human services, such as Child Welfare, Developmental Disabilities, Child Support Services, Family Support and Assistance, Child Care Licensing, and Aging Services is also important.

Compensation

The salary for this position will be dependent upon experience and qualifications. The current salary range is \$155,000 to \$185,000 annually. The most recent OKDHS Director retired after serving for over 12 years. The State of Oklahoma also offers an excellent fringe benefits package. Details will be available upon request.

How to Apply

If you are interested in this outstanding opportunity, please submit a detailed resume as soon as possible to:

Robert Neher, FACHE, President or
Lawrence Davenport, EdD, Executive Vice President

Neher & Associates

3790 Millerton Place

Suite 100

West Sacramento, CA 95691

Telephone: (916) 443-2421

Facsimile: (916) 443-5949

Applications are preferred electronically at: robertneher@executivesearchneher.com

Should you have any questions with regard to your own interest, or a recommendation of a colleague, please contact us at the numbers above. The position will be open until filled; however leading candidate applications will likely be reviewed with OKDHS in mid August and early September, 2012.

The State of Oklahoma is an Equal Opportunity/ADA Employer; female, minority and disabled candidates are encouraged to apply.