



**Colorado Department of Human Services**

*people who help people*

# Administrative Review Division

## Coordinators' Survey Report

**2008**



## **Administrative Review Coordinator Survey Report - 2008**

### **Executive Summary**

In October 2008, the Administrative Review Division (ARD) conducted its eighth Coordinator Satisfaction Survey. The survey's purpose is to gather information from Administrative Review Coordinators to help identify strengths and weaknesses in the processes of review scheduling and delivery of reviewer findings, with the goal of making the case review system as efficient and effective as possible. In addition to the county coordinators, in 2002 the survey's distribution was expanded to include coordinators of the Division of Youth Corrections (DYC) Regions. Thus, this year's survey was once again distributed to coordinators representing 64 counties and four DYC offices (Central, Northeast, Southern, and Western).

This year's report compares the past 3 years of survey results. The survey consists of six items asking about the ARD's performance and one general question seeking suggestions for improving the scheduling process. Overall performance increased on four of the six items this year. The first increase is found on Item One, which asked respondents about whether the review findings were provided to them on the same day the reviews were conducted. The responses indicate review findings were provided timely 98% of the time compared to 84% in 2007. This is a 14% increase over the 2007 results, which had seen a 10% drop in performance the previous year. The second area of improvement is noted in Item Three, which asked respondents about receiving available days for scheduling reviews by the last day of the month. Performance in this area increased by 7%, from 89% in 2007 to 96% this year. The third area of improvement, and probably the most remarkable, is noted on Item Four. This question asked "Are you getting the number of days that you need to keep current with reviews in your county/region?" The ARD saw an increase of 12%. In 2007, 86% of the coordinators indicated that they were receiving the number of days needed, and in 2008, 98% of the coordinators responded that they were receiving the number of days needed to remain current. It is important to note that some of the comments indicated that the coordinators had not received the number of slots needed but the reviewer was trying hard. Item Five, "Does the reviewer respond to your questions and concerns?" increased 2% to 95% from 2007 results.

Conversely, a decreased performance of 2% was indicated for Item Two, which asks if there are findings that they have not received. Item Six, which asks if the ARD State Office is responsive to questions and concerns, also dropped 6% to 94%.

Item Seven asked the coordinators to make recommendations for improving the ARD scheduling process. In this year's survey, only 72% of the overall respondents included an answer to this question. This included 32 coordinators who simply wrote, "None" or "NA." There were also numerous positive comments complimenting both the reviewers and the review process. There were four responses suggesting improvements with the invitation/letters in Trails; three of the responses involved substantive issues with the invitation letter and one response suggested eliminating the letter in Trails. One respondent suggested fewer children be placed in out-of-home care.

Survey responses suggest that the majority of coordinators are satisfied with the scheduling process and the reviewers. The ARD greatly appreciates the coordinators' continuing efforts to make the review process efficient and effective. The ARD is also grateful for the feedback provided by coordinators and will continue to utilize that feedback to improve performance and processes.

In summary, four items showed improvements over previous years. Although two items showed a decrease in performance past years, overall responses about ARD performance indicate that the ARD maintains quality service to the counties, regions and their coordinators.

## **Overview**

In eight of the last nine years, ARD has surveyed the administrative review coordinators in Colorado's 64 counties. In addition, coordinators for the DYC Regions have been included since 2002. The ARD is committed to gathering information to aid in evaluating strengths and weaknesses in the scheduling process with the goal of making the review scheduling process as efficient and effective as possible.

In October of 2008, the ARD was privileged to once again host a Coordinator's Conference. Coordinators attending the conference were provided with the survey. The remaining coordinators received, and were asked to return, their survey via email. This year's survey addressed the receipt of review findings, timeliness of receiving review findings, if they are receiving enough review days, if they are receiving the review days timely, and responsiveness of the reviewers and the ARD state office. This report summarizes results from the 2008 survey and compares them to results from the three prior years' surveys.

The ARD staff cannot fulfill their mission without the help and support of the Administrative Review Coordinators statewide. In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2008, the coordinators scheduled 9,984 Reviews; 9,419 Child Welfare and 565 DYC Reviews. Refer to Appendix B for a complete list of the number of reviews held per county/region. We want to thank the coordinators for all their hard work and support throughout the year.

## **Methodology**

The ARD surveyed the Administrative Review Coordinators in all 64 counties and four (4) DYC Offices. Two county coordinators represented two counties each. Hence, a total of 64 surveys were distributed to the (4) DYC coordinators and 60 county coordinators. Two coordinators are responsible for two counties each as follows: Rio Grande/Mineral and Montezuma/Dolores. The surveys were presented to the coordinators at the Coordinator's Conference or emailed to them if they did not attend the conference. If a response was not received by the last business day of October 2008, the survey was e-mailed again. The survey (shown in Appendix A) consisted of seven questions that were quantitative as well as qualitative. The results of the previous three (3) years' surveys are reported for comparison and to provide baseline data information.

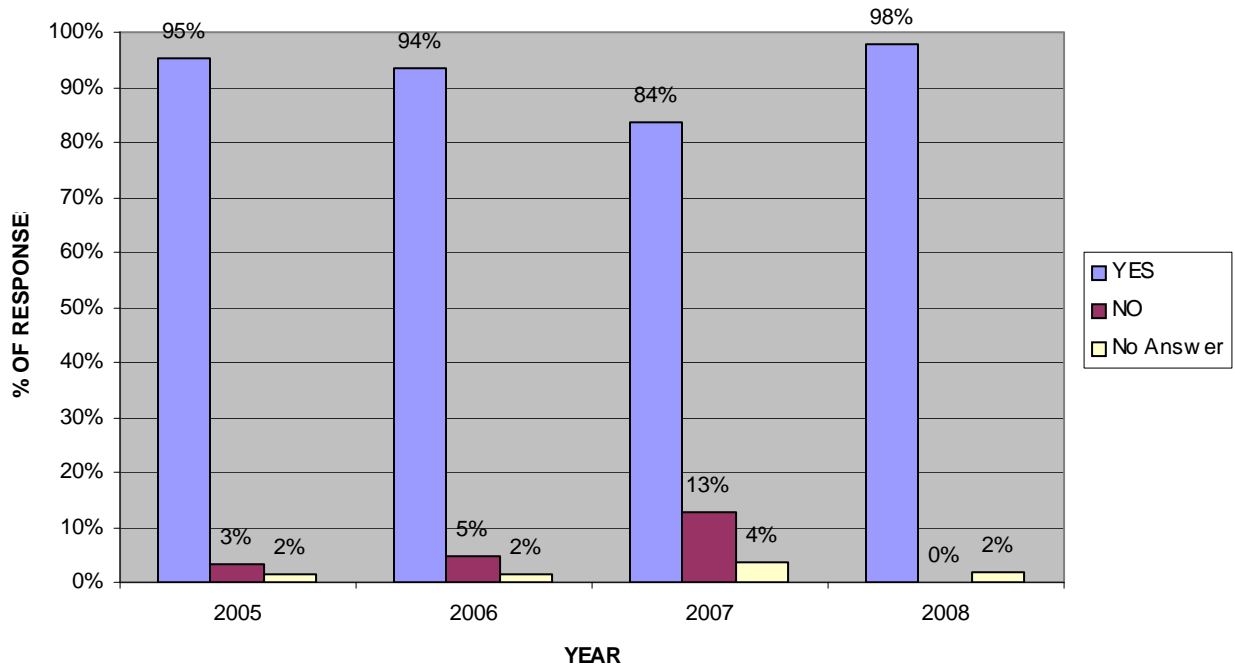
## **Sample**

Of the 64 surveys distributed, all four (4) DYC Regions completed surveys and 51 County Coordinators responded for 54 counties. The counties whose coordinators did not return completed surveys were Archuleta, Clear Creek, Fremont, Kiowa, La Plata, Las Animas, Ouray, Pitkin, San Juan, and San Miguel. This year's return rate of 81% was 3% lower than the previous year. Last year's report showed a return rate of 89%. However, it appears that the 2007 report failed to include the four DYC Regional Offices responses in the calculation. Including the four DYC Regional Office's responses would have resulted in a return rate of 84% for 2007.

## **Survey Results**

The following section displays the results for all of the questions on the survey. Percentages were rounded off to whole numbers and as such, may total to slightly over 100%. In the comment section, the term "reviewer" was substituted for specific reviewer names.

**Question 1: Are the review findings provided to you (or the person designated in your office) on the same day that the reviews are conducted?**

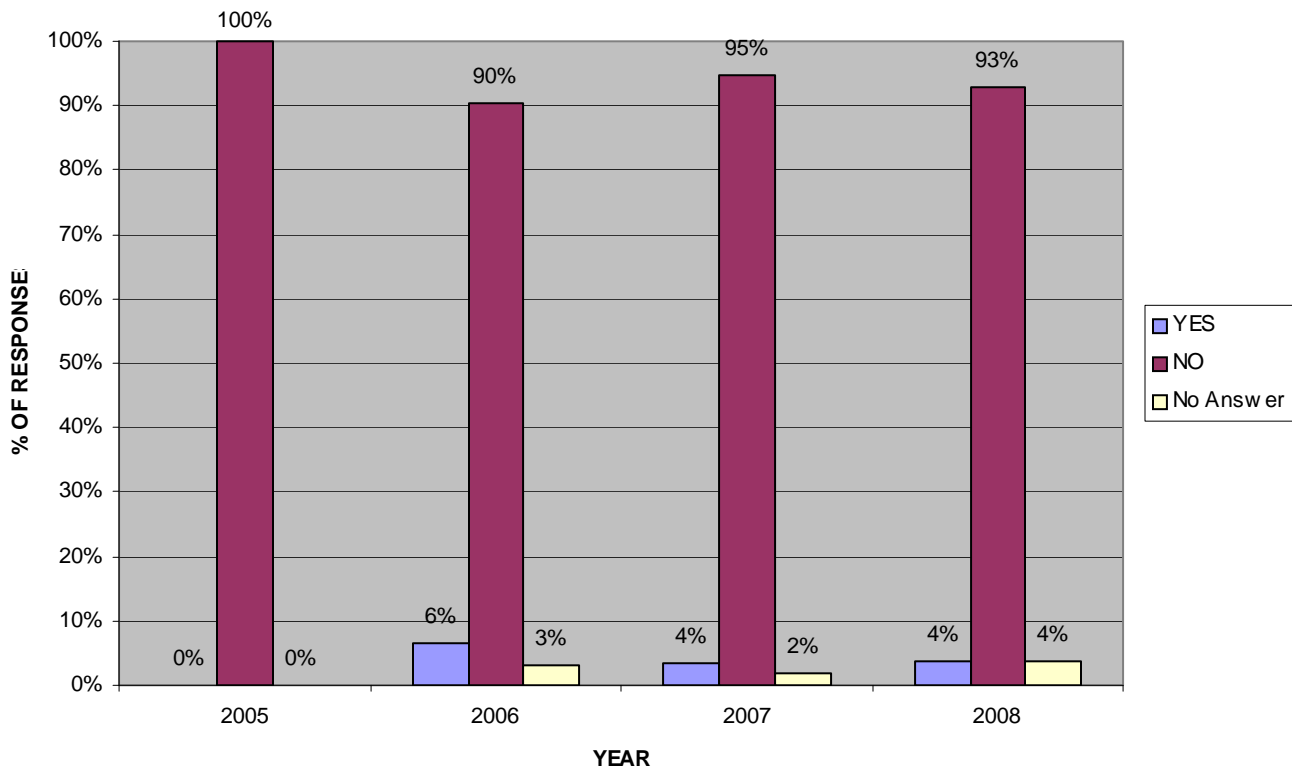


This year, 98% of the respondents reported that review findings were provided on the same day the review was conducted. One county (2%) did not provide a “Yes” or “No” answer to the question, but provided the following comment;

- *“I do not receive them and I do not know if they are given to the designed person in a timely manner.”*

Compared to the 2007 survey results, this year’s results for Item One exhibited a 14% increase in the percentage of surveyed respondents that received review findings on the same day the review was conducted. This score is up from last year’s score of 84%, and is 3% up from the previous highest scoring year of 2005. This question was a primary focus for ARD this past year, and subsequently showed a dramatic increase in timely submission of review findings.

**Question 2: Are there findings that you have not received?**



Survey respondents were asked if there were ARD findings they had not yet received. This question changed this year. In previous years, the ARD asked the Coordinators if they received the findings on the same day of review. We subsequently realized by the coordinators’ comments that many counties have satellite offices and the findings were not provided directly to the coordinator but left with a designated person in the satellite office, or mailed to the county coordinator.

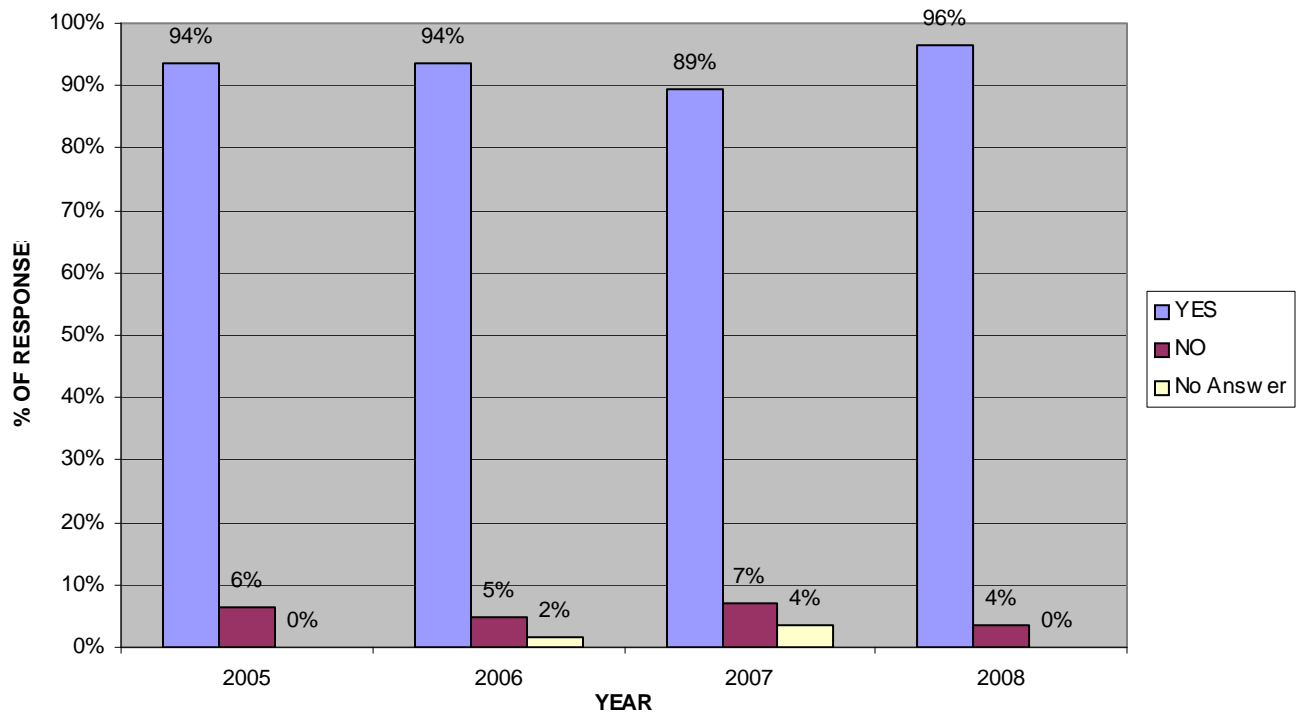
In 2008, the survey indicated that 93% of the respondents answered “No” indicating that they had received all findings for their counties/regions. This reflected a 2% decline from 2007 (which was at 95%), although it is still higher (3%) than what was achieved in 2006.

There were two (2) coordinators who answered, “yes” to this question. Both of the coordinators were interviewed to correct the problem. One (1) out of the two coordinators provided this comment when interviewed:

- *The findings go directly to the client manager and therefore the coordinator did not know if they receive them timely. She had misunderstood the question.*

Considering this, actual performance on this item would be 96% “No” and 4% “No Answer”.

**Question 3: Do you receive available days for scheduling reviews by the last workday of the month?**



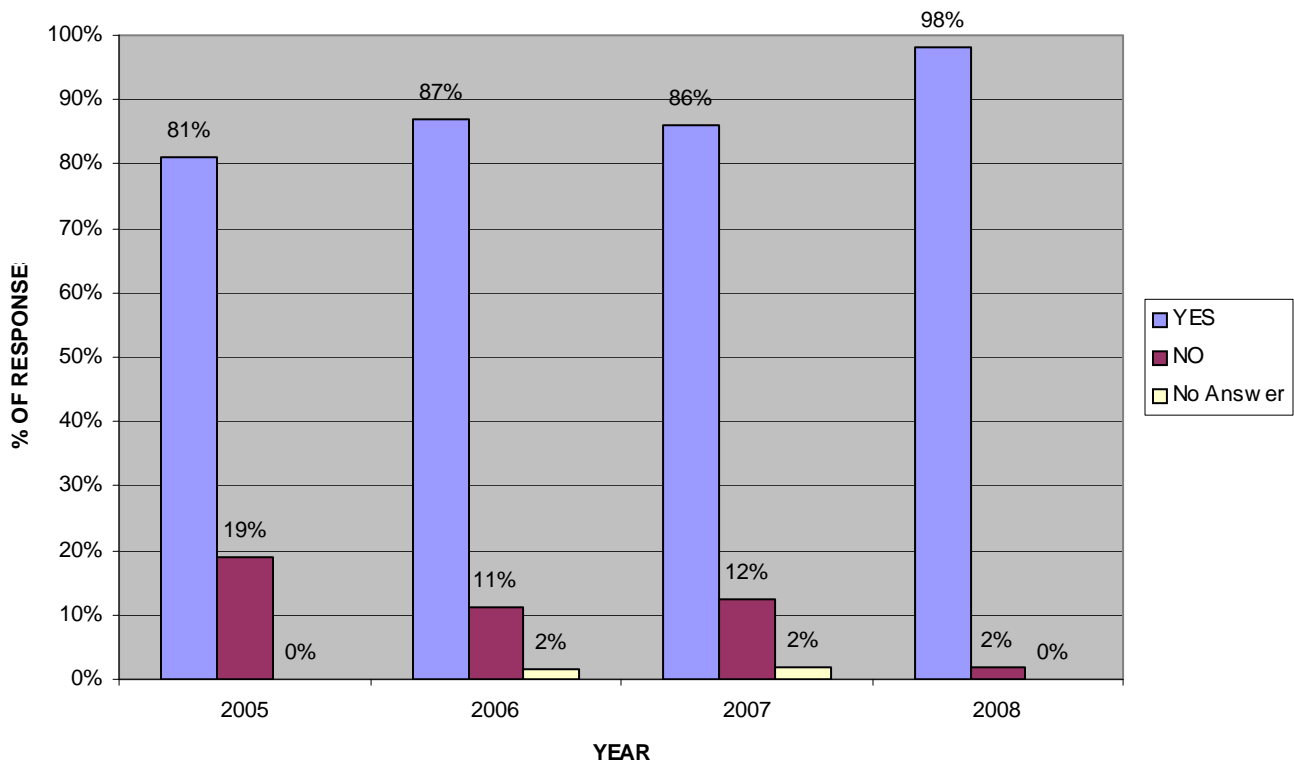
ARD policy requires that reviewers provide their review schedule to coordinators at least 30 days before the first day of the month being scheduled. Fifty-three (96%) of this year’s respondents said that they were receiving available days for scheduling reviews by the last workday of the prior month and two (4%) said they did not. The ARD saw the positive response to this question increase 7% over last year’s responses.

Of the two coordinators who answered “no” to this question, these comments were provided:

- *Usually our reviewers try to schedule a couple months out while attempting to honor all the schedules involved.*
- *We receive quarterly reviews and dates are set at the close of foregoing review*

Considering these explanatory comments, the actual performance on this item is 100% “Yes”.

**Question 4: Are you getting the number of days that you need to keep current with reviews in your county/region?**



Ninety-eight percent of respondents said that they were getting the number of days needed to remain current, a twelve percent (12%) increase over last year’s responses. One coordinator (2%) who answered both “Yes” and “No”, had the following comment:

- *Depending on the month – sometimes we just have too many cases.*

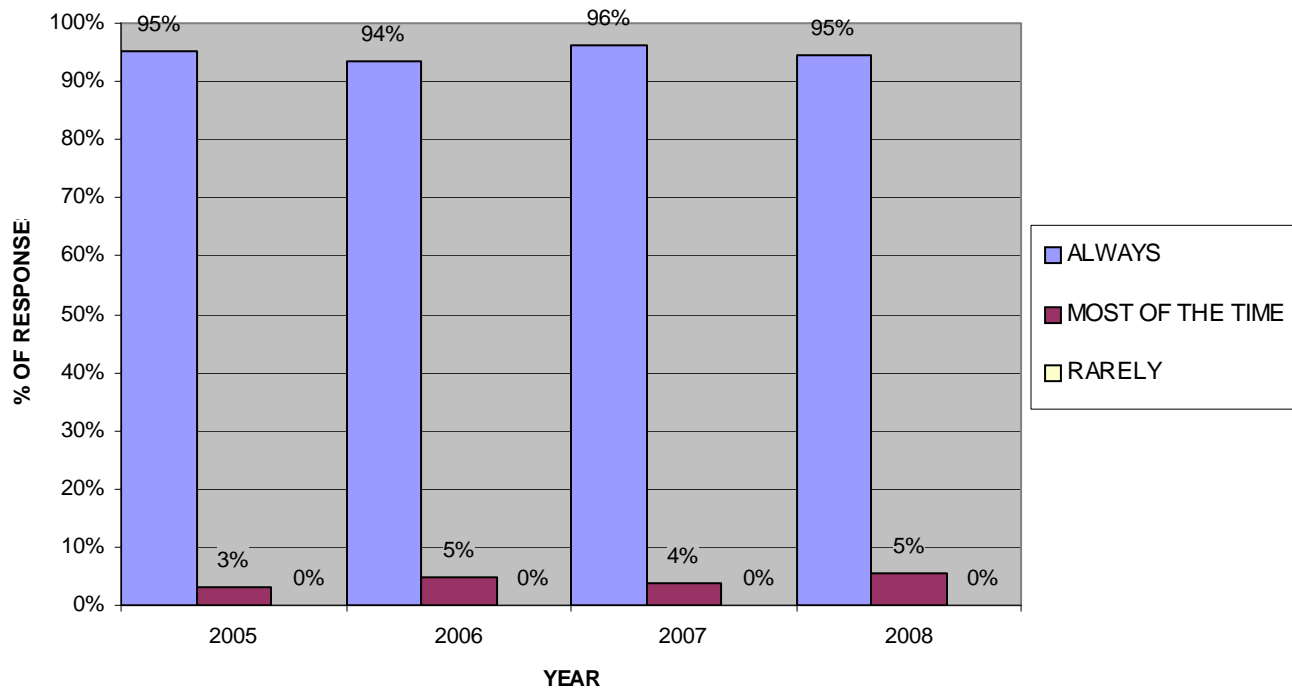
Coordinators who answered, “Yes” to this question provided the following comments:

- *Almost always could use an extra day in Oct. & Nov., but usually have plenty of time.*
- *We do not always receive enough days to stay current – we have experienced cancellations on the part of the State review staff occasionally and on the part of the county, we have issue of incorrect or untimely Trails data entry coding often times resulting in canceled or not needed reviews.*
- *Almost all the time*
- *Most months*
- *Most of the time*

The ARD remains committed to implementing various strategies on how best to absorb the additional workload created by the staffing cuts in SFY 2003. The continued increase in positive responses is heartening based on the efforts to improve this critical area of the ARD’s performance.

This data combined with other ARD data and the associated comments indicate that although some counties are not receiving enough days from reviewers to maintain currency, the coordinators recognize that efforts are being made to provide as many review days as possible.

## Question 5: Does the reviewer respond to your questions and concerns?



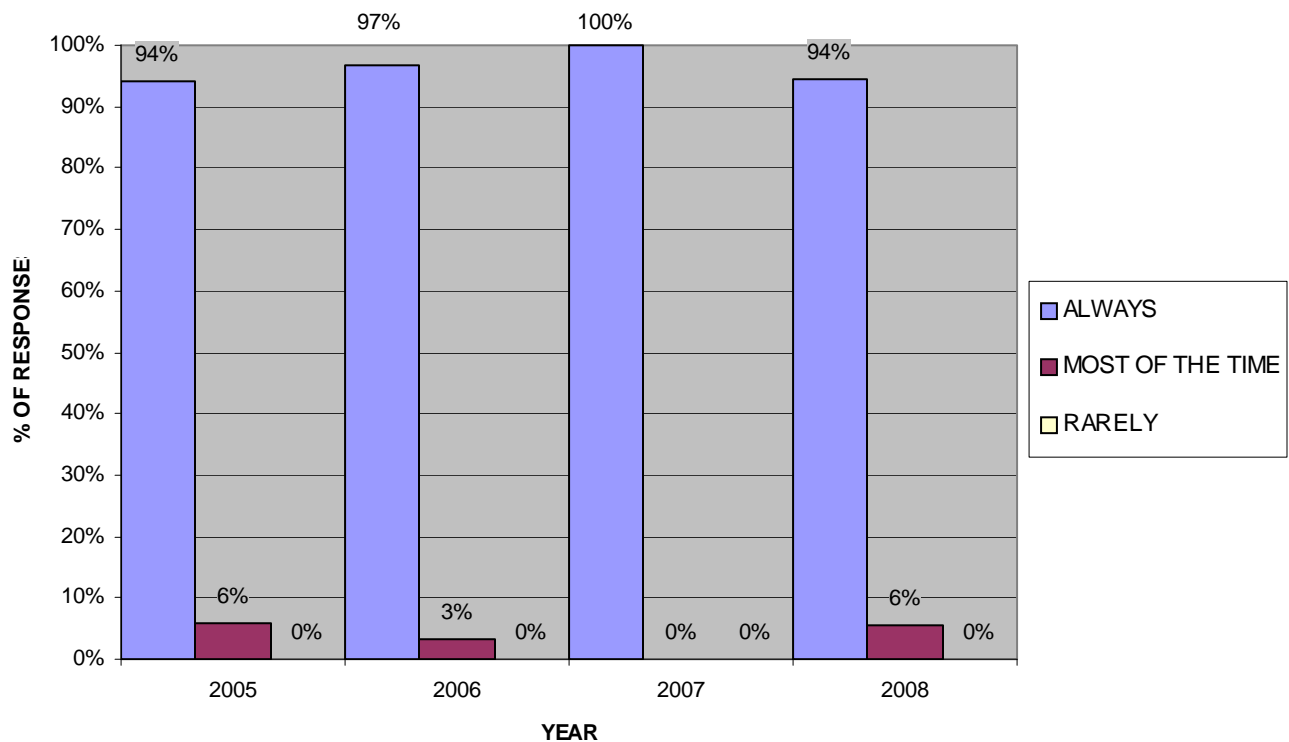
The survey asked respondents to report whether the reviewer “*always*”, “*most of the time*”, or “*rarely*” responded to their questions and concerns. This year, 95% of respondents said the reviewer “*always*” responded to their questions or concerns. While there was an increase in 2007, there was a 1% decrease in 2008. Only three of the respondents (5%) reported that the reviewer responded to their questions or concerns “*most of the time*”. No one reported that his or her questions or concerns were responded to “*rarely*”, and all respondents answered this question.

Comments provided by some of these respondents are as follows:

- *Reviewers are a delight to work with and have been extremely valuable in learning the review process, understanding the review universe and learning the rules and regulations.*
- *Reviewer is very knowledgeable and appreciates all the information that reviewer provides to our county.*
- *Reviewer is very good about responding to questions and issues we need answers for.*
- *Reviewer is very good about answering any questions or making calls to find answers if he doesn't have them and then getting back to us.*
- *Reviewer is great regarding responses to e-mails.*
- *Reviewers are always helpful and informative.*
- *Our meeting with ARD are very helpful. We are still struggling to get more involvement from Child Welfare staff at these meetings.*



**Question 6: Is the ARD state office (management) responsive to your questions and concerns?**



Question six asked coordinators about their experiences with the ARD’s state office management staff and their responsiveness to county needs and concerns. In 2001, this question yielded only a 76% performance in the “*always*” category, and at that time, prompted concern about the way ARD state office management was responding to the county offices. Upon receiving those results, the management team at the ARD made their responsiveness to county issues a priority in their annual strategic planning process and have continued to stress responsiveness as a main concern and management skill to which all managers are held accountable. The ARD is pleased with the continued steady progress made in this area and will continue to prioritize management responsiveness to county needs as a basic requirement of their management skill set.

Nineteen coordinators indicated that they had not called the ARD’s main office and, therefore, did not answer the question. Of the 36 coordinators who did answer the question, 94% (34 coordinators) said that the ARD’s main office was “*always*” responsive to their concerns and 6% (2 coordinators) responded “*most of the time*”. Performance on this item showed a (6%) decrease from last year. Due to the decrease on this factor during 2008, ARD responsiveness will be revisited and stressed through Performance Management.

Comments from respondents who selected “*always*”, follow:

- *I have not worked directly with too many State employees over the past year, but have had positive experiences when I have*
- *Absolutely.*
- *Excellent*
- *Always have a positive response – if answer is not available I get a returned call. You guys are awesome*

One of the two respondents who responded “*most of the time*” commented:

- *There have been a lot of changes in county staff in the last year.*

There was one coordinator response who did not answer this question but added the following comment:

- *Reviewer answers all of my questions.*

**Question 7: What suggestions do you have that could make the review scheduling process easier and more efficient?**

Twenty-three of the coordinators responded to this question. Fourteen other coordinators wrote “None” or otherwise indicated that they had no suggestions to make the scheduling process easier or more efficient. Eighteen other respondents provided no response.

Several comments indicated that there were no problems or that the process was running smoothly. The comments were:

- *I feel that the process goes smoothly.*
- *I find the process very efficient.*
- *None-Things are working out just fine.*
- *We feel very fortunate with the scheduling process. We do not have any concerns or suggestions.*
- *The new Trails report is a big help and will shorten the review scheduling process.*
- *Currently it is easy & efficient.*
- *Everything is going great.*
- *Working fine with me.*
- *ARD staff has been most helpful in educating, responding, and in helping new staff become more effective.*
- *We enjoy the ARD process and the insight and suggestions our reviewers offer.*

In addition, several coordinators had specific comments about individual reviewers:

- *Current reviewer is very comfortable to work with. She has assisted in making the process quite painless, we appreciate her style.*
- *Reviewer is doing a great job and is always accommodating.*
- *Reviewer is easy to schedule with and we have not had any problems.*
- *Reviewer has been very accommodating in scheduling reviews for the county. I feel that the reviewer and I work well together.*
- *Reviewer is doing a great job! She catches everything – so that keeps us on our toes!*
- *Reviewer is awesome to work with! Reviewer is always so positive and fun! Always responds to questions ASAP. Always flexible with scheduling and changes that occur. Considerate of other happenings in our office.*
- *Reviewers are able to give insight into a case which is often over looked by Child Welfare because it is difficult to remove oneself from a case. Thanks.*
- *Reviewer is thorough and helpful. She is educated on all the latest rules and regulations.*
- *Reviewer communicates with me on a regular basis, knowledgeable concerning the Administrative Review process and scheduling. Always available to answer any questions and concerns. It is a pleasure working with reviewer.*
- *Our reviewer is amazing. Reviewer does a great job and gives us information to help us do a better job. Always very courteous and handles less than friendly families and their questions very well. We are very happy to have our reviewer.*
- *Reviewer has been very helpful to my workers and goes above and beyond to help them understand where they need to improve.*

Finally, several coordinators took the opportunity to offer suggestions to improve the process:

- *We have just begun the automated scheduling process through CAT with the October review-scheduling period. I am hoping that this process will make scheduling more efficient as we work the bugs out and get the supervisors and caseworkers on board with the program and properly trained.*
- *Place fewer children in OOH care.*
- *If Trails letters looked a bit more professional we would use them, but choose to use our own.  
Also c/o letters still print out on 2 pages. It should only be 1 page.*
- *Make it mandatory that all counties abide by the same scheduling priorities – I don't like it that we will be penalized for lack of follow thru with other counties.*
- *Trails invitation letters - Need additional headers to add more i.e. Doc# etc.*
- *To receive one set schedule each month, (although it is appreciated that the additional slots given are in an attempt to assist our county with our clean up list.)*
- *Trails letter – Date sent that could be made to default to current date or something. Sometimes we do need to add more invitees if therapists/placement changed etc.*
- *No reviews scheduled the first week of the month.*
- *Get rid of the online letters! They are awful.*

## Conclusions

The response rate for this year's survey was 81%, a decrease of 3% from the 2007 response rate.

Regarding individual items, the proportion of coordinators responding positively increased over prior years for four of the six performance-related items. These items involved whether review findings were provided timely; days for scheduling were received by the last workday of the month; the appropriate number of days were received from reviewers to keep current; and that reviewers respond to questions and concerns.

The two items that showed a decline in performance addressed whether review findings were being received in the county/regions and the responsiveness from the State ARD Office on county/regions questions and concerns. The focus for improvement will be on identifying the specific problems in the declining areas. This will enhance ARD's ability to provide accurate data. ARD believes in providing the highest excellence in customer service to our counties/regions and will take the necessary steps to improve in this area.

Overall, the 2008 survey results are very positive and consistent with previous years. The results indicate that most coordinators are satisfied with the scheduling process and the reviewers. ARD greatly appreciates the coordinator's continuing efforts to make the review process efficient and effective, and welcomes suggestions for improvement throughout the year.

## **Appendix A**

### **Coordinator's Survey – 2008**

# STATE OF COLORADO



Colorado Department of Human Services

people who help people

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT  
Sheila Aderman, Manager

## ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW DIVISION

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Gayle Ziska Stack  
Director



Bill Owens  
Governor

Marva Livingston Hammons  
Executive Director

May 18, 2007

«First\_Name» «Last\_Name»  
«County» «DSS»  
«Address»  
«City\_State» «Zip»

The Administrative Review Division (ARD) is again asking you to assist us in improving our processes. Please answer the following questions based on your experiences as the Administrative Review Coordinator **during this past year**. Return your answers to us in the enclosed envelope.

1. Are the review findings provided to you (*or the person designated in your office*) on the same day that the reviews are conducted?

Yes

No-

If No, are the findings provided by the Friday of that same week?

Yes

No

2. Are there findings that you have not received?

Yes

No

3. Do you receive available days for scheduling reviews by the last workday of the month?

Yes

No –

If No, please comment:

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Are you getting the number of days that you need to keep current with reviews in your county/region?

Yes

No-

If No, please estimate the backlog of overdue reviews: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please comment:** \_\_\_\_\_

4. Does the reviewer respond to your questions and concerns? (Please circle the answer that best represents your view)

Always

Most of the time

Rarely

**Please comment:**

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Is the ARD state office (management) responsive to your questions and concerns?

Always

Most of the Time

Rarely

NA- Have not attempted to contact the state office.

**Please comment:**

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What suggestions do you have that could make the review scheduling process easier and more efficient?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you have other comments or concerns that you would like to address with one of the ARD management staff?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
County/Region

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address

Thank you for your time and effort. If you have questions, please call the ARD office at 303-866-7160. If you have other comments or concerns please forward them to us, as we continually strive to improve our customer service.

Sincerely,

Gayle Ziska Stack  
Division Director



## Appendix B

### Number of Reviews Held Per County in SFY 2008

Ten Large Counties		Middle Sized Counties		Balance of State		DYC Regions	
<i>County</i>	<i># Reviews</i>	<i>County</i>	<i># Reviews</i>	<i>County</i>	<i># Reviews</i>	<i>County</i>	<i># Reviews</i>
Adams	928	Alamosa	70	Archuleta	12	Central	292
Arapahoe	892	Broomfield	65	Baca	4	Northeast	100
Boulder	293	Chaffee	23	Bent	19	Southern	117
Denver	1976	Conejos	10	Cheyenne	3	Western	56
El Paso	958	Delta	91	Clear Creek	9	<b>DYC Total</b>	<b>565</b>
Jefferson	727	Douglas	68	Costilla	2		
Larimer	412	Eagle	19	Crowley	20		
Mesa	478	Fremont	224	Custer	1		
Pueblo	590	Garfield	57	Dolores	3		
Weld	618	Huerfano	37	Elbert	42		
<b>TLC</b>	<b>7872</b>	La Plata	53	Gilpin			
		Las Animas	44	Grand/Jackson	20		
		Logan	55	Gunnison	12		
		Moffat	41	Hinsdale			
		Montezuma	55	Kiowa			
		Montrose	74	Kit Carson	15		
		Morgan	111	Lake	23		
		Otero	78	Lincoln	36		
		Prowers	21	Park	4		
		Rio Grande	29	Phillips	4		
		Saguache	8	Pitkin			
		Teller	21	Rio Blanco	11		
		<b>MSC</b>	<b>1254</b>	Routt	1		
				San Miguel	2		
				Sedgewick	4		
				Summit	6		
				Washington	13		
				Yuma	27		
				<b>BSC</b>	<b>293</b>		