



Office of the Governor

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## **Senate confirms Teresa Casados as secretary of Children, Youth and Families Department**

*Bipartisan support shows willingness from lawmakers to work with newly named secretary*

**SANTA FE** – Today, the New Mexico Senate confirmed Teresa Casados as the Cabinet Secretary for the New Mexico Children, Youth, and Families Department with a vote of (32-8).

“This is an agency and a system that needs a leader who can get things done,” said **Gov. Lujan Grisham**. “Secretary Casados is the right person for this job, and I thank the Legislature for recognizing that. We are already seeing meaningful changes at the Department, and that momentum will continue under Secretary Casados – New Mexico children and families deserve no less.”

“You’re probably not going to find a person in state government that has the vast knowledge and experience to get things done,” said **Senate Majority Whip Michael Padilla** who sponsored Secretary Casados. “This department requires real time and thoughtful action for the future and I think that we’re going to be in very good hands with Secretary Casados.”

“I look forward to collaborating with lawmakers and advocates to find solutions-focused ideas that support a strong future for CYFD,” said **Sec. Teresa Casados**. “There is a lot of work to do cooperatively, with everyone at the table focused on what is best for the children and families in New Mexico. I look forward continuing our work in partnership with the determined, hardworking, and dedicated CYFD staff.”

Before Secretary Casados began leading CYFD in May 2023, she most recently served as Chief Operating Officer for Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham’s administration. While there, Casados was the operational partner to the governor including creating the comprehensive state response to COVID-19, mobilizing disaster relief for wildfires, and bringing to life the Early Childhood Education and Care Department – the first of its kind in the nation.

Since May 2023, Secretary Casados has accomplished the following:

- Reorganization of CYFD prioritizing the three pillars: Family Services, Juvenile Justice and Protective Services supported by five foundational principles.
- Creation of the Family Services Division from programs living within CYFD becoming the “front door” for the agency focused on preventive and proactive resources.

- Instated rapid hires. August's rapid hire event, in Albuquerque, brought in 573 in-person candidates. Roswell's event filled 73% of vacant positions. The agency has hired 280+ new employees since May 2023.
- Launch of Togetherwethrive.org, a website focused on agency transparency to ensure clear communication of the agency. This was the first immediate action set in place.

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