

PRESS STATEMENT

April 27, 2026

BOSTON – Health Law Advocates’ Executive Director Matt Selig and Board President Joshua Greenberg issued this statement following a joint announcement from Governor Maura Healey, Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell, and Auditor Diana DiZoglio that HLA’s Deputy Director, Marisol Garcia, has been appointed as the next Director of the Commonwealth’s Office of the Child Advocate.

“All of us at Health Law Advocates (HLA) enthusiastically applaud the appointment of Marisol Garcia as the next Director of the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA). Marisol has dedicated more than thirty years to advocating on behalf of children across our Commonwealth. Her experience, coupled with her tenacity and compassion, will be an instrumental force at the OCA, as it has during her time at HLA.

“Marisol joined HLA as one of three attorneys to staff a small pilot program at HLA, which improved children’s lives by diverting them from the juvenile court system and preventing psychiatric hospitalizations through advocacy for better access to mental health care. Equipped with extensive experience in the juvenile courts and expertise navigating complex mental health systems, Marisol soon stepped up as director of the program. Under Marisol’s leadership, the pilot program evolved into HLA’s largest initiative – the Mental Health Advocacy Program (MHAP) for Kids.

“Over the past 10 years, Marisol spearheaded the expansion of MHAP for Kids from three attorneys to a staff of 26 lawyers and paralegals spread across 16 locations throughout the Commonwealth. In 2018, Marisol led a legislative advocacy effort that resulted in new state investment in MHAP for Kids’, which significantly improved children’s mental health and reduced state expenditures. Since then, Marisol has ensured thousands of children and their families received needed help from MHAP for Kids overcoming barriers to mental health services by securing more than \$15 million in funding.

“Building relationships is at the heart of MHAP for Kids’ work, and Marisol has exemplified this in her leadership. Children have benefitted from the program’s unique model in which its attorneys are embedded in and work closely with the staffs of Family Resource Centers throughout Massachusetts. Marisol has also stewarded MHAP for Kids’ partnership with researchers from the Boston University’s School of Public Health who have conducted 10+ years of evaluation of the program that has showed when MHAP for Kids gets involved, there is a proven positive impact in the lives of young people and their families while achieving financial savings for the Commonwealth. This rigorous assessment has laid the groundwork for a data-driven story on the efficacy of MHAP for Kids for years to come.

“We thank Marisol for leading with determination, humor, and grit, and are excited for her to take on this next role. We know that her impact at HLA will be reflected on an even larger scale at the OCA. Congratulations to Marisol, a champion of children’s rights.”

HLA would also like to thank our funders and partners for their ongoing support of MHAP for Kids and our commitment to ensuring young people have access to the mental health care they need to live healthy, fulfilling lives.

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