COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-2766
PHONE: (213) 974-8301 FAX: (213) 626-5427

J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

October 27, 2005

TO: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **ROSEMARY CHILDREN'S SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT REVIEW**

We have completed a contract compliance review of Rosemary Children's Services Foster Family Agency (Rosemary), a Foster Family Agency service provider. The review was conducted by the Auditor-Controller's Countywide Contract Monitoring Division.

Background

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) contracts with Rosemary, a private, non-profit, community-based organization to recruit, train, and certify foster care parents for the supervision of children placed in foster care by DCFS. Once the Agency places a child, it is required to monitor the placement until the child is discharged from the program.

Rosemary is required to hire qualified social workers to provide case management and act as a liaison between DCFS and foster parents. Rosemary has offices in South Pasadena and Riverside. We reviewed the South Pasadena office which oversees a total of 47 certified foster homes where 90 DCFS children were placed. Rosemary's South Pasadena office is located in the Fifth District.

DCFS pays Rosemary a negotiated monthly rate, per child placement, established by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Funding and Rate Bureau. Based on the child's age, Rosemary receives between $1,589 and $1,865 per month, per child. Out of these amounts, Rosemary pays the foster parents between $624 and $790 per

month, per child. For Fiscal Year 2004-05, DCFS paid Rosemary approximately $2,700,000.

Purpose/Methodology

The purpose of the review was to determine whether Rosemary was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement and County contract. We also evaluated Rosemary's ability to achieve planned staffing levels. Our monitoring visit included verifying whether Rosemary received the appropriate reimbursement rate for each child and whether the certified foster parents received their portion of the reimbursement rate in a timely manner. We reviewed certified foster parent files, children's case files, personnel files, and interviewed Rosemary's staff, the children and the foster parents. We also visited a sample of certified foster homes.

Results of Review

Generally, Rosemary provided the services required by the County contract. The foster parents stated that the services they received from the Agency met their expectations, and the children indicated that they enjoyed living with their foster parents. Rosemary also maintained documentation to support the services billed to DCFS and employed qualified staff to perform those services.

Rosemary needs to ensure that current court authorizations for children using psychotropic medication are maintained and that foster parents complete the required number of hours of training as required by the County contract. Rosemary also needs to ensure that the Needs and Services Plans include all information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations and that written approvals are obtained from children's DCFS social workers prior to implementing the Needs and Services Plans.

The details of our review, along with recommendations for corrective action, are attached.

Review of Report

On October 17, 2005, we discussed our report with Rosemary who agreed with the findings. In their attached response, Rosemary indicates the actions the Agency has taken to implement the recommendations contained in the report. We also notified DCFS of the results of our review.

We thank Rosemary for their cooperation and assistance during this review. Please call me if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Don Chadwick at (626) 293-1102.

JTM:MMO:DC

Attachment
c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, Department of Children and Family Services
Greg Wessels, Executive Director, Rosemary Children's Services
Althea Bassett, Director, Rosemary Foster Family Agency
Colleen Anderson, Community Care Licensing
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

COUNTYWIDE CONTRACT MONITORING DIVISION
FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY PROGRAM
FISCAL YEAR 2005-2006
ROSEMARY CHILDREN'S SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY

PROGRAM SERVICES

Objective

Determine whether Rosemary Children's Services Foster Family Agency (Rosemary or Agency) provided program services in accordance with their County contract and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Title 22 Regulations.

Verification

We visited five of the 47 Los Angeles County certified foster homes that Rosemary billed DCFS for in December 2004 and January 2005 and interviewed seven of the 10 foster parents and eight of the 12 children placed in the five homes. We also reviewed the documentation in their case files for the 10 foster parents and 12 children. In addition, we reviewed the Agency's monitoring activity.

Results

Generally, Rosemary provided the services required by its County contract and Title 22 regulations. The foster parents stated that the services they received from the Agency met their expectations and the children indicated that they enjoyed living with their foster parents.

Rosemary needs to ensure that current court authorizations for children using psychotropic medication are maintained and that foster parents complete the required number of hours of training as required by the County contract. In addition, the Agency needs to ensure that all required reports contain all information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations. We specifically noted the following:

Foster Home Visitations

- For one (20%) of five homes visited, the foster parents were adding a room. The construction was in process and as a result there was approximately an eighteen inch drop between the dining room and the concrete living room with no railing or other means of preventing a child from falling from the upper to lower level room. Subsequent to our review, the foster parents installed a railing to prevent potential falls.

Medical Services

- Five (38%) of 13 children on psychotropic medication did not have a current court authorization for the administration of their medication in their case files as required by the County contract. Subsequent to our review, Rosemary obtained four authorizations and was in the process of obtaining the other authorization from the Juvenile Court.

Home Certification

- One (10%) of 10 foster parents did not complete 15 hours of yearly on-going training prior to being recertified as required by the County contract. Subsequent to the completion of our review, the foster parent received their remaining five hours of training.

Reporting Requirements

- 12 (100%) of 12 children's Needs and Services Plans did not contain short-term and long-term goals that were specific, measurable or time-limited. The County contract requires Agencies to develop Needs and Services Plans that contain both short-term and long-term goals that are specific, measurable and time-limited. In addition, five (42%) of the 12 Needs and Services Plans did not have the written approval of the children's DCFS social workers as required by the County contract. In all five instances, the Agency forwarded the plans to the DCFS social worker for approval but did not follow-up with the social worker when the required approvals were not received.

- Seven (58%) of 12 children's case files did not contain documentation that the DCFS social workers were updated by telephone on a monthly basis concerning the children's progress as required by the County contract.

Rosemary needs to ensure that current court authorizations for children using psychotropic medication are maintained in their case files and that foster parents complete the required number of yearly training hours specified in the County contract prior to re-certification. Rosemary also needs to ensure that the Needs and Services Plans include all information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations and that written approvals are obtained from children's DCFS social workers prior to implementing the plans. In addition, Rosemary needs to ensure that staff contact the children's DCFS social workers on a monthly basis to discuss the children's progress.

Recommendations

Rosemary management:

1. **Ensure that current court authorizations for children using psychotropic medication are maintained.**

2. **Ensure that foster parents complete the required number of training hours specified in the County contract prior to re-certification.**

3. **Ensure that the Needs and Services Plans include all information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations and that written approvals are obtained from children's DCFS social workers prior to implementing the Needs and Services Plans.**

4. **Ensure that staff contact the DCFS social workers on a monthly basis to discuss the children's progress.**

CLIENT VERIFICATION

Objective

To determine whether the program participants actually received the services for which Rosemary billed DCFS.

Verification

We interviewed eight children and seven foster parents to confirm the services Rosemary billed to DCFS.

Results

The program participants interviewed stated that the services they received from Rosemary met their expectations and their assigned social workers or other alternative staff were available to them at all times. They also stated that the Agency's social workers were supportive and visited them regularly.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

STAFFING/CASELOAD LEVELS

Objective

Determine whether Rosemary's social workers' caseloads did not exceed 15 placements and whether the supervising social worker did not supervise more than six social workers, as required by the County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations.

Verification

We interviewed Rosemary's director and supervising social worker. We also reviewed caseload statistics and payroll records for December 2004 and January 2005.

Results

Rosemary's seven social workers each maintained an average caseload of 13 cases. In addition, the two supervising social workers each supervised an average of four social workers.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

STAFFING QUALIFICATIONS

Objective

Determine whether Rosemary's staff possessed the education and work experience qualifications required by their County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations. In addition, determine whether Rosemary conducted hiring clearances prior to hiring their staff and provided ongoing training to staff.

Verification

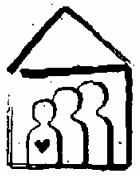
We interviewed Rosemary's director and personnel assistant. In addition, we reviewed each staff's personnel file for documentation to confirm their education and work experience qualifications, hiring clearances and ongoing training.

Results

Rosemary's program director, supervisors and social workers possessed the required education and work experience required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations. In addition, Rosemary appropriately completed hiring clearances and provided ongoing training to staff assigned to the County contract.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.



Rosemary Children's Services
CARING FOR THE CHILD
TEACHING THE TEEN
FOSTERING THE FAMILY

CORPORATE OFFICES
36 S. Kinnelon Ave., Suite 200
Pasadena, California 91107
P 626.844.3033
F 626.844.3034

FOSTER CARE OFFICES
2022-A-Mission St.
South Pasadena, CA 91030
P 626.403.2277
F 626.409.2278

2002 Iowa Ave., Suite B-107
Riverside, CA 92507
P 951.300.1620
F 951.300.1629

ROSEMARY
NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL
36 S. Kinnelon Ave., Suite 110
Pasadena, California 91107
P 626.844.3033
F 626.844.3039

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
36 S. Kinnelon Ave.
Pasadena, California 91107
P 626.844.3033
F 626.844.3034

RESIDENTIAL OFFICE
3244 E. Green St.
Pasadena, CA 91187
P 626.795.7218
F 626.449.9128

ACCREDITED BY:
California Alliance of Child and Family Services

MEMBER OF:
Association of Community Human Service Agencies
California Association of Private Specialized Education and Services
Child Welfare League of America
Foster Family-Based Treatment Association
Learning Disabilities Association United Way

www.rosemarychildren.org

October 18, 2005

County of Los Angeles
Department of Auditor Controller
County Contract Monitoring Division
1000 South Fremont Avenue
Building A-9, First Floor
Alhambra, Ca 91803
Attn: J. Tyler McCauley

From: Althea Bassett
Foster Care Program Director
Rosemary Children's Services

Subject: **Rosemary Children's Services Foster Family Agency Contract Review**

Rosemary Children's Services Foster Family Agency has received findings from the Auditor Controller's review in March, 2005 and is in agreement with the recommendations.

Each recommendation shall be addressed in the order of the Report Findings

Program Services

1. The agency became aware that the step down situation in home of the foster homes was in need of a railing to avoid a possible injury. The foster home had the railing installed and inspected by the agency within two weeks of the audit findings. The agency forwarded photos of the railing to the County April 8, 2005

2. Since the findings of the audit, FFA has reviewed and retrained all Foster Care Social Workers on the protocols of psychotropic medication with foster youth and obtaining court authorizations in April and August FFA Staff Meetings. Additionally, the agency providing training for foster parents in July, 2005 to review the protocols. Certificates of completion are now on file for all foster homes.

   It should be noted that there were two current court authorizations (of the five missing) that had not yet been faxed to the agency at the time of the audit. The agency will work with staff at continued proactively obtaining the court authorizations in agency records. Four court authorizations were given to the auditor at the time of the exit interview and the fifth was sent to the county in April.

3. One foster parent was missing training hours. This was due to a data entry error. Since the time of the audit, all staff has been trained to complete and have current in the foster parent file a record log of trainings attended. This is to be reviewed on an ongoing basis and to be checked with agency database to avoid error.

4. A new report template is now is used at the agency that specifically addresses two areas: Needs and Service Case Plans and CSW contact.

    a. The Needs and Service case Plans have Short and Long Terms Goals so that the children in care measurable progress and problem areas for treatment can be noted.
    b. Staff will notify Supervising County Social Worker if after two attempts, one by mail and one by telephone and documented as such, of any missing CSW signature to implement Needs and Services Case Plans.
    c. In order to improve Foster Care Social Worker documentation of CSW contact to discuss children's cases, a section of the report to the County now contains this information. Agency supervisor's approval of the report will be obtained only if the information is included in the report before mailing the report to the County.

Rosemary Children's Services appreciates the opportunity to work with Los Angeles County in finding a home for children while in Out of Home Care. Feedback and Program improvement is a continued process in order that the children are provided with whatever is needed during a time of trauma in their lives.

Yours truly,

Althea Bassett

Althea Bassett
Foster Care Program Director
Rosemary Children's Services