



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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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: **HATHAWAY CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY
AGENCY CONTRACT REVIEW**

We have completed a contract compliance review of Hathaway Children and Family Services Foster Family Agency (Hathaway), 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 Hathaway, 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.

Hathaway is required to hire qualified social workers to provide case management and act as a liaison between DCFS and foster parents. During our review, Hathaway oversaw a total of 27 certified foster homes in which 53 DCFS children were placed. Hathaway is located in the Third District.

DCFS pays Hathaway 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, Hathaway receives between \$1,589 and \$1,865 per month, per child.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Out of these amounts, Hathaway pays the foster parents between \$700 and \$800 per month, per child. For Fiscal Year 2004-05, DCFS paid Hathaway approximately \$1,060,000.

Purpose/Methodology

The purpose of the review was to determine whether Hathaway was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement and County contract. We also evaluated Hathaway's ability to achieve planned staffing levels. Our monitoring visit included verifying whether Hathaway 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 Hathaway's staff, the children and the foster parents. We also visited a sample of certified foster homes.

Results of Review

Generally, Hathaway provided the services outlined in its 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. Hathaway also maintained documentation to support the services billed to DCFS and employed qualified staff to perform those services.

Hathaway needs to ensure that foster parents complete the required number of training hours specified in the County contract prior to foster parents' annual recertification. Hathaway also needs to ensure that Needs and Services Plans and Quarterly Reports include all the information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations. In addition, the Agency needs to obtain written approvals from the children's DCFS social worker 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 September 19, 2005, we discussed our report with Hathaway who agreed with the findings. In their attached response, Hathaway management indicated the actions taken to implement the recommendations contained in this report. We also notified DCFS of the results of our review.

Board of Supervisors

October 27, 2005

Page 3

We thank Hathaway 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
Muriel Gaudin, Director, Hathaway Children and Family Services 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
HATHAWAY CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY**

PROGRAM SERVICES

Objective

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

Verification

We visited four of the 27 Los Angeles County certified foster homes that Hathaway billed DCFS for in February and March 2005 and interviewed five of the seven foster parents and three of the eight children placed in the four homes. We also reviewed the documentation in the case files of the seven foster parents and the eight children. In addition, we reviewed the Agency's monitoring activity.

Results

Generally, Hathaway 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. In addition, the Agency's foster homes were clean and well maintained.

Although Hathaway provided most of the services required by the County contract, the Agency needs to ensure that foster parents complete the required number of training hours prior to their annual recertification. The Agency also needs to ensure that Needs and Services Plans and Quarterly Reports contain all information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations. We specifically noted the following:

Home Certification

- Two (29%) of seven foster parents were recertified without completing 15 hours of their yearly training as required by the County contract.

Reporting Requirements

- Eight (100%) of eight goals in the children's Needs and Services Plans did not contain one or more of the elements required by the County contract. Children's goals need to be specific, measurable, time limited and attainable. In addition, three

(38%) of the eight Needs and Services Plans were not approved by the children's DCFS social worker as required by the County contract.

- Seven (100%) of seven children's Quarterly Reports did not contain all the reporting elements required by the County contract. For example, the reports did not document whether the children had any unmet needs.

Hathaway needs to ensure that foster parents complete the required number of training hours specified in the County contract. Hathaway also needs to ensure that Needs and Services Plans and Quarterly Reports include all information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations. In addition, the Agency needs to obtain written approval from the child's DCFS social worker prior to implementing the Needs and Services Plan.

Recommendations

Hathaway management:

- 1. Ensure that foster parents complete the required number of training hours specified in the County contract prior to recertification.**
- 2. Ensure that Needs and Services Plans and Quarterly Reports include all information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations.**
- 3. Obtain written approval from the child's DCFS social worker prior to implementing Needs and Services Plan.**

CLIENT VERIFICATION

Objective

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

Verification

We interviewed three children and five foster parents to confirm the services Hathaway billed to DCFS.

Results

The foster parents and children interviewed stated that the services they received from Hathaway met their expectations and their assigned social workers were supportive and visited them regularly.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

STAFFING/CASELOAD LEVELS

Objective

Determine whether Hathaway's social workers' case loads 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 Hathaway's director and five social workers. We also reviewed case load statistics and payroll records for February and March 2005.

Results

Hathaway's five social workers maintained an average of 12 cases. In addition, the director and the supervising social worker each supervised an average of three social workers.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.

STAFFING QUALIFICATIONS

Objective

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

Verification

We interviewed Hathaway's director and staff. 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

Hathaway's director, supervising social worker and foster care social workers possess the required education and work experience required by the County contract and Title

22 regulations. In addition, Hathaway appropriately conducted hiring clearances and provided ongoing training to staff assigned to the County contract.

Recommendation

There are no recommendations for this section.



HATHAWAY
CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY

September 20, 2005

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

FROM: Muriel Gaudin, LMFT
FFA Program Director

After reviewing the report from the Department of Auditor-Controller, Hathaway Children and Family Services is in general agreement with the findings and appreciate the following recommendations:

Recommendation One: Ensure that foster parents complete the required number of training hours specified in the County contract prior to recertification.

Recommendation Two: Ensure that Needs and Services Plans and Quarterly Reports include all information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations.

Recommendation Three: Obtain written approval from the child's DCFS social worker prior to implementing Needs and Services Plans.

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN:

A Corrective Action Plan was implemented immediately.

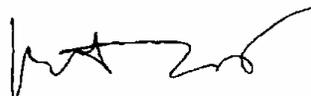
1. Foster Parents training hours will be monitored quarterly. The Recruiter-Trainer has been counseled on the importance of sending early announcements and reminders of Hathaway in-service training, referring to online continuing education sites and available courses in the community. FFASW will participate in monitoring training hours for the families in their care.
2. Social Workers' supervisors will carefully review treatment plans ensuring that the goals stated are specific, measurable, time limited and attainable and that none of these elements are missing.

A section has been added to the quarterly reports addressing the child's unmet needs.

3. FFASW have been asked to document each effort made to get the last page of the Needs and Services Plan returned signed by CSW. If the last page of the Quarterly report is not returned signed within two weeks, a fax request will be sent.

Hathaway Children and Family Services appreciates the Auditor-Controller's recommendations as we always strive to improve our performance and the quality of our services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Muriel Gaudin', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Muriel Gaudin, LMFT
FFA Program Director