County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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November 12, 2013

To: Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

NIÑOS LATINOS UNIDOS FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a review of Niños Latinos Unidos Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in June 2013. The FFA has three licensed offices; two offices located in the First and Fifth Supervisorial Districts and one office in Riverside County and provides services to County of Los Angeles DCFS foster children and youth. According to the FFA's program statement, its mission is "to recruit, train, certify, and provide support for Latino homes. Provide bilingual (English/Spanish) and bicultural staff to work with certified foster parents, potential foster parents, Children's Social Workers, and foster children. Provide culturally sensitive supervision to the foster homes and ensure that quality culturally sensitive foster care is provided. Provide Latino children culturally sensitive foster care services and foster homes to enable them to reunify with biological family whenever possible. If reunification is not an option, a more permanent plan such as adoption or emancipation services will be pursued. During this time, all efforts will be made to provide consistency for the children by keeping them with the same certified foster home."

At the time of the review, the FFA supervised 197 DCFS placed children in 103 certified foster homes. The placed children's average length of placement was ten months, and their average age was nine.

SUMMARY

During OHCMD's review, the interviewed children generally reported: feeling safe at the FFA; having been provided with good care and appropriate services; being comfortable in their environment and treated with respect and dignity. The certified foster parents reported they were supported by the FFA staff in their efforts to provide care, supervision and service delivery to the children placed in their homes.

The FFA was in full compliance with 4 of 11 sections of our Contract compliance review: Health and Medical Needs, Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being, Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being; and Discharged Children.

OHCMD noted deficiencies in the areas of Licensure/Contract Requirements, related to Community Care Licensing (CCL) citations as a result of deficiencies and findings during CCL investigations of complaints

regarding the FFA's failure to follow procedures by placing more than two children in a certified foster home prior to 12 months of certification; Certified Foster Homes, related to one home study not having been dated; therefore, we were unable to determine its timeliness, one certified foster parent did not complete required training prior to recertification and their CPR and First-Aid training was completed three months late, and lack of documentation of annual vehicle maintenance for certified foster parents; Facility and Environment, related to a certified foster home's exterior and common grounds not being well-maintained; Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery, related to children's Initial and Updated Needs and Services Plans (NSPs), as children were not participating in the development of the NSPs, children were not meeting their NSP goals, children's goals were not specific and measurable, and certified foster parents were not familiar with the children's goals; Educational and Workforce Readiness, related to a youth not being provided with tutoring to meet educational goals and improve academic performance; Psychotropic Medication, related to logs not being maintained for children on prescribed psychotropic medication; Personnel Records, related to the FFA social workers not having the required annual hours of training, not having the declaration of part-time employment for two part-time FFA social workers, and a FFA Administrator exceeding the number of cases allowed by Title 22 Regulations.

Attached are the details of our review.

REVIEW OF REPORT

On June 25, 2013, the DCFS OHCMD Monitor, Darío Villamarín, held an Exit Conference with the FFA representatives, Fahir Milián, Executive Director, Gurith T. Milián, Director of Public Affairs, Pedro Travieso, Program Director, and Yvette Cucuta and Alejandro Cisneros, Supervising Social Workers. The FFA's representatives: agreed with the review findings and recommendations; were receptive to implementing systemic changes to improve their compliance with regulatory standards; and agreed to address the noted deficiencies in a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

A copy of this compliance report has been sent to the Auditor-Controller and Community Care Licensing.

The FFA provided the attached approved CAP and addendum addressing the recommendations noted in this compliance report.

OHCMD will confirm that these recommendations have been implemented during our next monitoring review.

If you have any questions, your staff may contact me or Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:EM:KR
RDS:NF:dv

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy L. Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Fahir Milián, Executive Director, Niños Latinos Unidos FFA
Angelica López, Acting Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

NIÑOS LATINOS UNIDOS FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW SUMMARY

9246 Alondra Boulevard
Bellflower, CA 90706
License Number: 197803061

2060 Chicago Avenue, St. A23
Riverside, CA 92507
License Number: 336423451

38424 10th Street East
Palmdale, CA 91722
License Number: 197805210

	Contract Compliance Monitoring Review	Findings: June 2013
I	**Licensure/Contract Requirements** (7 Elements)	
	1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation	1. Full Compliance
	2. Serious Incident Report Documentation and Cross Reporting	2. Full Compliance
	3. Runaway Procedures in Accordance with the Contract	3. Full Compliance
	4. Are there CCL Citations/OHCMD Safety Reports	4. Improvement Needed
	5. If Applicable, FFA Ensures Complete Required Whole Foster Family Homes (WFFH) Training	5. Not Applicable
	6. FFA Pays Certified Foster Parents (CFP) WFFH Required Payments	6. Not Applicable
	7. FFA Conducts an Assessment of CFP Prior to Placement of Two (2) or More Children	7. Improvement Needed
II	**Certified Foster Homes (CFHs)** (12 Elements)	
	1. Home Study and Safety Inspection Conducted Prior to Certification	1. Improvement Needed
	2. Agency's Inquiry with OHCMD for Historical Information Prior to Certification	2. Full Compliance
	3. Timely Criminal Clearances (DOJ, FBI, CACI) Prior to Certification	3. Full Compliance
	4. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement	4. Full Compliance
	5. Health Screening & TB Test Prior to Certification	5. Full Compliance
	6. All Required Training Prior to Certification	6. Full Compliance
	7. Certificate of Approval on File/Including Capacity	7. Full Compliance
	8. Safety Inspection Completed At Least Every Six Months or Per Approved Program Statement	8. Full Compliance
	9. Completed Annual Training Hours for Re-certification and Current CPR/First-Aid/Water Safety Certificates	9. Improvement Needed
	10. Current CDL/Auto Insurance/Annual Vehicle Maintenance Documentation for CFPs and Designated Drivers, if Applicable Car Seat(s)	10. Improvement Needed
	11. Criminal Clearances and Health Screening/CDL/CPR DOJ/FBI/CACI/Auto Insurance for Other Adults in the Home	11. Full Compliance
	12. FFA Assists CFPs in Providing Transportation Needs	12. Full Compliance

III	**Facility and Environment** (7 Elements)	
	1. Exterior/Grounds Well Maintained	1. Improvement Needed
	2. Common Areas/Interior Well Maintained	2. Improvement Needed
	3. Children's Bedrooms/Interior Well Maintained	3. Full Compliance
	4. Sufficient and Appropriate Educational Resources	4. Full Compliance
	5. Adequate Perishable and Non-Perishable Food	5. Full Compliance
	6. CFP Conduct Disaster Drills and Documentation Maintained	6. Full Compliance
	7. Money and Clothing Allowance Logs Maintained	7. Full Compliance
IV	**Maintenance of Required Documentation/Service Delivery** (10 Elements)	
	1. FFA Obtains or Documents Efforts to Obtain County Children's Social Worker's (CSW) Authorization to Implement NSPs	1. Full Compliance
	2. CFPs Participated in Development of NSPs	2. Improvement Needed
	3. Children Progressing Towards Meeting NSP Goals	3. Improvement Needed
	4. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive Initial NSP with Child's Participation	4. Improvement Needed
	5. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive Updated NSPs with Child's Participation	5. Improvement Needed
	6. Therapeutic Services Received	6. Full Compliance
	7. Recommended Assessments/Evaluations Implemented	7. Full Compliance
	8. County Children's Social Workers Monthly Contacts Documented in Child's Case File	8. Full Compliance
	9. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive Quarterly Reports	9. Full Compliance
	10. FFA Social Workers Conduct Required Visits	10. Full Compliance
V	**Education and Workforce Readiness** (5 Elements)	
	1. Children Enrolled in School Within Three School Days	1. Full Compliance
	2. Children Attend School as Required and FFA Facilitates in Meeting Children's Educational Goals	2. Improvement Needed
	3. Current Children's Report Cards/Progress Reports Maintained	3. Full Compliance
	4. Children's Academic Performance and/or Attendance Increased	4. Full Compliance
	5. FFA Facilitates Child's Participation in YDS or Equivalent Services and Vocational Programs	5. Full Compliance

VI	**Health and Medical Needs** (4 Elements) 1. Initial Medical Exams Conducted Timely 2. Follow-Up Medical Exams Conducted Timely 3. Initial Dental Exams Conducted Timely 4. Follow-Up Dental Exams Conducted Timely	Full Compliance (ALL)
VII	**Psychotropic Medications** (2 Elements) 1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication 2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review	1. Improvement Needed 2. Full Compliance
VIII	**Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being** (10 Elements) 1. Children Informed of Agency's Policies and Procedures 2. Children Feel Safe in the CFP Home 3. CFPs' Efforts to Provide Nutritious Meals and Snacks 4. CFPs Treat Children with Respect and Dignity 5. Children Allowed Private Visits, Calls and to Receive Correspondence 6. Children Free to Attend or Not Attend Religious Services/Activities of Their Choice 7. Children's Chores Reasonable 8. Children Informed About Their Medication and Right to Refuse Medication 9. Children Aware of Right to Refuse or Receive Medical, Dental and Psychiatric Care 10. Children Given Opportunities to Participate in Extra-Curricular Activities, Enrichment and Social Activities	Full Compliance (ALL)

IX	**Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being** (7 Elements) 1. $50 Clothing Allowance in Accordance with FFA Program Statement 2. Ongoing Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quantity and Quality 3. Children's Involvement in Selection of Their Clothing 4. Provision of Sufficient Supply of Clean Towels and Personal Care Items Meeting Ethnic Needs 5. Minimum Weekly Monetary Allowances 6. Management of Allowance/Earnings 7. Encouragement/Assistance with Life Book/Photo Album	Full Compliance (ALL)
X	**Discharged Children** (3 Elements) 1. Completed Discharge Summary 2. Attempts to Stabilize Children's Placement 3. Child Completed High School (if applicable)	Full Compliance (ALL)
XI	**Personnel Records** (9 Elements) 1. Criminal Clearances (DOJ, FBI, CACI) Signed and Submitted Timely 2. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement 3. FFA Social Workers Met Education/Experience Requirements 4. Timely Employee Health Screening/TB Clearances 5. Valid CDL and Auto Insurance 6. FFA Employees Signed Copies of FFA Policies and Procedures 7. FFA Employees Completed All Required Training and Documentation Maintained 8. FFA Social Workers Have Appropriate Caseload Ratio 9. FFA Maintained Written Declarations for Part-Time Contracted FFA Social Workers Caseloads Not To Exceed Total of 15 Children	1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Improvement Needed 8. Improvement Needed 9. Improvement Needed

NIÑOS LATINOS UNIDOS FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW
FISCAL YEAR 2012-2013

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The following report is based on a "point in time" monitoring visit. This compliance report addresses findings noted during the June 2013 monitoring review. The purpose of this review was to assess Niños Latinos Unidos Foster Family Agency's (the FFA's) compliance with the County contract and State regulations and included a review of the FFA's program statement, as well as administrative internal policies and procedures. The monitoring review covered the following 11 areas:

- Licensure/Contract Requirements,
- Certified Foster Homes,
- Facility and Environment,
- Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery,
- Educational and Workforce Readiness,
- Health and Medical Needs,
- Psychotropic Medication,
- Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being,
- Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being,
- Discharged Children, and
- Personnel Records.

For purposes of this review, 12 children were selected for the sample. Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) interviewed nine children. Two children were not interviewed due their young age and one had been replaced. During the home visits, one child was observed to be comfortable in the certified foster homes and the certified parents were observed to be attuned to the needs of the child. OHCMD reviewed all 12 case files to assess the care and services they received. Additionally, four discharged children's files were reviewed to assess the FFA's compliance with permanency efforts. At the time of the review, 12 placed children were prescribed psychotropic medication. We reviewed 10 case files to assess for timeliness of Psychotropic Medication Authorizations and to confirm the required documentation of psychiatric monitoring.

OHCMD reviewed four certified foster parent files and five staff files for compliance with Title 22 Regulations and County contract requirements. Interviews were conducted with four certified foster parents to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to children.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

OHCMD found the following five areas to be out of compliance.

Licensure/Contract Requirements

- Community Care Licensing (CCL) cited the FFA's Palmdale office as a result of deficiencies and findings during the investigation of a CCL complaint. According to the complaint report dated January 14, 2013, CCL cited the FFA for failing to notify CCL within 30 days that a certified foster parent moved to a new residence. The FFA submitted a Plan of Correction (POC) to CCL, which was approved.

- According to a CCL complaint report dated August 1, 2012, CCL cited the FFA's Palmdale office for Health Related Services violations. During a visit to a certified foster home, CCL noted that the FFA Certificate of Approval had expired one-and-one half months prior to the visit. The first aid kit was incomplete; additionally, the certified foster parents were unable to provide a copy of the foster children's placement Admission Agreement; and there was no proof of documentation indicating that the placed children were provided with a written copy of their personal rights. Additionally, the home had several windows, which provide direct access to the pool area, including one in the foster children's bedroom and there was no fence separating the wall/windows from the pool. CCL assessed the FFA with an immediate civil penalty and a POC was requested. The FFA submitted a POC to CCL, which was approved.

- In addition, the Out-of-Home Care Investigation Section (OHCIS) received a referral dated July 25, 2012, for allegations of emotional abuse by the certified foster parents mentioned above. The allegations were that the certified foster father took a camera away and never returned it; the certified foster parents grandchildren would break foster children's belongings and the items were not replaced; the certified foster parents' grandchild told classmates that the children were foster children, which resulted in negative banter against the foster children; and certified foster father forced the children to clean the house including the bathroom when the certified foster mother had a broken leg. The allegations were substantiated by the ER CSW and OHCIS. The FFA submitted a CAP, which included decertification of the foster home and all placed children were removed. OHCIS placed the certified foster home on Indefinite Hold. This home will no longer be used as a placement resource for County of Los Angeles DCFS children.

- According to a CCL complaint report dated July 18, 2012, CCL cited the FFA's Palmdale office for Care and Supervision and Personal Rights violations. CCL noted that a certified foster parent left a one year old, a two year old, and a three-year-old foster child under the care of the certified foster mother's biological children, ages 13 and 14 years old. Additionally, the foster children were found to be dirty and unkempt. The FFA was assessed with a civil penalty. The FFA submitted a CAP, which included decertification of the foster home, which was approved by CCL. This referral was also substantiated by the ER CSW and OHCIS. OHCIS placed the certified foster home on Indefinite Hold and this home will no longer be used as a placement resource for County of Los Angeles DCFS children. There are currently no children in the home.

- According to a CCL investigation report dated June 1, 2012, CCL noted that certified foster parents from the FFA's Palmdale office disclosed not having knowledge as to how to apply

the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard. CCL informed the FFA's Administrator that certified foster parents should be informed/trained on Title 22 Regulations, Section 89377. The FFA provided training to their certified foster parents regarding the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard.

- The FFA failed to follow contractual requirements by not ensuring that a newly certified foster parent had 12 months experience prior to placing more than two children in the home. OHCMD noticed that the FFA placed four siblings with a newly certified foster parent that had been certified for only two days, and there was no documentation of a justification or assessment of the certified foster parent's ability to care for four children. Additionally, the certified foster parent stated that caring for four foster children was very difficult for someone without experience. It should also be noted that this certified foster parent is a licensed daycare provider, and has two biological children under the age of 18 years old in the home.

Recommendations

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

1. The FFA is in full compliance with Title 22 Regulations, free of CCL's citations.

2. Prior to placing more than two children in a certified foster home, the foster parents have at least 12 months experience according to the County contract and documentation maintained in the certified foster parents' files.

Certified Foster Homes

- For one certified foster home, although the home study was completed and on file, the home study was not dated; therefore, OHCMD could not determine its timeliness.

- For the same certified foster home, the certified foster parent was short 19.5 hours of annual recertification training and First-Aid/CPR training was completed three months late.

- The four certified foster parents' files reviewed did not contain documentation of annual vehicle maintenance, prior to certification and/or re-certification. OHCMD brought this issue to the attention of the FFA representative and requested documentation that the certified foster parents received annual vehicle maintenance. Subsequently, during home visits to the certified foster homes, OHCMD instructed the certified foster parents to have an annual vehicle maintenance check.

During the Exit Conference, the FFA representatives stated that the home study issue was an oversight on their part, and that the FFA social worker who conducted the home study is no longer associated with the FFA. The FFA representatives stated that the issues of the certified foster parent being recertified without the required annual hours of training and CPR/First-Aid training was an oversight. The FFA representatives provided documentation of annual vehicle maintenance for one vehicle; however, the FFA did not provide any documentation for the other three certified foster parents.

Recommendations

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

3. Home studies contain the date of completion to determine timeliness.

4. Certified foster parents are provided with the required annual hours of training prior to recertification.

5. Annual vehicle maintenance documentation prior to certification and/or at recertification is kept in the certified foster parents' files.

Facility and Environment

- The swimming pool gate of one certified foster home was off the hinges and the latch did not fasten. Additionally, the certified foster home is a two-story dwelling and there was no emergency escape ladder. The certified foster parent admitted to being instructed to obtain an escape ladder. OHCMD immediately brought these deficiencies to the attention of the FFA. The FFA conducted a follow up visit and provided documentation to OHCMD, which included pictures, that the deficiencies were corrected.

Recommendations

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

6. Exterior and grounds are well maintained.

7. Common areas are free of safety hazards.

Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery

- One certified foster parent stated that she was not aware of a child's NSP goals because she was unable to keep track of all of the goals for the children in the home.

- For one child, the updated Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) did not indicate whether the child was making progress toward meeting the NSP goals.

- One age appropriate child did not participate in the development of their Initial NSP.

- For one child, the Updated NSP was not comprehensive as the goals were not specific and measurable. Additionally, the child did not sign the NSP confirming participation in its development.

During the Exit Conference, the FFA representatives stated that certified foster parents are expected to know the children's NSP goals and that the FFA would retrain the certified foster parents in this area. Furthermore, the FFA representatives indicated that the FFA Social Workers

discuss NSP goals with the children and this information is incorporated into Initial and Updated NSPs.

It should be noted that the FFA representatives attended the OHCMD NSP Training for providers on January 27, 2012 and were made aware of the NSP requirements. The NSPs reviewed were developed subsequent to the NSP Training. No representative from the FFA attended the NSP/Quarterly Report Training provided by OHCMD on August 1, 2013.

Recommendations

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

8. Certified foster parents are aware of the children's NSP goals.

9. Children are progressing toward meeting their NSP goals.

10. FFA social workers develop comprehensive Initial NSPs, which include goals that are specific and measurable and age appropriate children participate in the development of their NSPs.

11. FFA social workers develop comprehensive Updated NSPs which include goals that are specific and measurable and age appropriate children participate in the development of their NSPs.

Education and Workforce Readiness

- The FFA was not facilitating tutoring services to meet educational goals and improve academic performance for one child and there was no documentation on file indicating that the child was being provided services.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

12. The FFA shall facilitate meeting the educational goals of children, including tutoring.

Psychotropic Medication

- One certified foster parent did not have a log recording the administration of psychotropic medication for a child prescribed psychotropic medication.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

13. Certified foster parents maintain a log to record the administration of psychiatric medication.

Personnel Records

- One FFA Social Worker only completed two of the twelve annual required training hours for the past three years.

- The files of two part-time FFA Social Workers did not have the written declaration that as a part-time employee the caseload will not exceed a total of 15 children.

- The FFA's Palmdale office did not have a supervising social worker employed. The FFA Administrator was providing direct supervision to the FFA social workers and carried a caseload of 15 children, which exceeded the maximum allowed under Title 22 Regulations.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

14. Social Workers are provided the required annual hours of training.

15. Written declarations for part-time contract Social Workers are on file and that their caseload will not exceed 15 children.

16. FFA Administrators do not carry a caseload beyond that of what is allowed by Title 22 Regulations.

PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP FROM DCFS OHCMD's FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

The OHCMD's last compliance report dated November 16, 2012, identified 10 recommendations.

Results

Based on OHCMD follow-up, the FFA fully implemented 6 of 10 previous recommendations for which they were to ensure that:

- Dining sets have sufficient seating to accommodate all people residing in the certified foster homes and that kitchen knives are stored under lock and key as is required by Title 22 Regulations.

- Placed children have access to computers, when there is one in the certified foster home.

- Updated NSPs are developed timely.

- Children are treated with respect and dignity and that certified foster parents are involved in the lives of the foster children and treat them as their own.

- Children are provided with clothing allowances in accordance with their program statement.

- Provisions of personal care items such as an adequate amount of towels and sheets are provided to all children.

Based on OHCMD follow-up, the FFA did not fully implement 4 of 10 previous recommendations for which they were to ensure that:

- All two story dwellings have an emergency ladder as required by Title 22 Regulations; and that the FFA staff be made aware of the requirements and routinely inspect the homes to ensure on-going compliance.

- Initial NSPs are comprehensive and all the fields/sections are completed.

- Updated NSPs are comprehensive and all fields/sections are completed.

- Social Workers maintain the required caseload in accordance with the contract, CCL and Title 22 regulations and that the additional Social Workers are hired if the number of cases exceeds the maximum number.

Recommendations

The FFA administration shall ensure that:

17. The outstanding recommendations for the November 16, 2012 monitoring report, which are noted in this report as Recommendations 7, 11, 12 and 17 are fully implemented.

At the Exit Conference, the FFA Administration expressed their desire to remain in compliance with all Title 22 Regulations and Contract requirements. In an effort to ensure all certified foster homes are in compliance with Title 22 Regulations the FFA provided training to their staff. Additionally, in efforts to develop comprehensive Initial and Updated NSPs, the FFA re-trained their social worker staff. Lastly, in efforts to ensure that the FFA Administrators do not carry a caseload beyond what is allowed by Title 22 regulations, the FFA Director of Programs and Operations will be held responsible with the task of ensuring that cases are never held or transferred to an FFA administrator.

MOST RECENT FISCAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER (A-C)

A fiscal review of Niňos Latinos Unidos FFA has not been posted by the A-C.

NIÑOS LATINOS UNIDOS®

FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY

9246 ALONDRA BLVD. BELLFLOWER, CA 90706

TEL.: (562) 925-7473 ♦ FAX: (562) 925-5039

June 5, 2013

Department of Children and Family Services
Out of Home Care Management Division
Dario Villamarin, CSA I
9320 Telstar Avenue, Suite 216
El Monte, CA 91731

Dear Mr. Villamarín:

While the circumstances of the incident that prompted the herein CAP were such that it created confusion in the part of Niños Latinos Unidos' (NLU) Palmdale Administrator as to the need to call the Child Protective Hotline (CPHL), once having established communication with the CSW of the youth in question, it is recognized here that a CPHL report should have been made, as contractually required, and that NLU failed to make that call. As a matter of corrective action, the NLU Administration has made a special reminder to all agency Administrators, Foster Care Social Work Supervisors and Foster Care Social Workers, that after-hours AWOL's have to be called in to the CPHL, in all cases. Further training on reporting responsibilities and deadlines will be emphasized during our general staff meetings in June.

Niños Latinos Unidos has long worked hand in hand with DCFS' CSW's to ensure that whenever the transfer of a minor is necessary that it is done in a manner that is least disruptive to the minor or minors in question, while accounting also for the stability of the home intending the discharge. That said, all steps included in the "Notice of Intent to Discharge" procedure have not always been followed at NLU as specifically prescribed in the Statement of Work. NLU has, as a result of the herein CAP, made it a point to review Exhibit A, Statement of Work, Section 3.5 of our Contract with DCFS and further made all agency FCSWs holding LA County cases aware of this requirement. Added, specific tools are being developed to assist FCSWs in their compliance with this requirement. Further training on this reporting protocol will also be done during our general staff meetings in June.

While recognizing the importance in keeping with its contractual obligations with the County of Los Angeles, NLU intends to make all necessary efforts to ensure that it moves to make the necessary internal corrections associated with the herein corrective action plan.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding our corrective action plan intended to move our agency toward contractual compliance, please let me know at your earliest convenience.

Respectfully,

Pedro V Travieso, MSW, MBA
Director of Programs & Operations

NIÑOS LATINOS UNIDOS®

FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY

9246 ALONDRA BLVD. BELLFLOWER, CA 90706

TEL.: (562) 925-7473 ♦ FAX: (562) 925-5039

August 12, 2013

Department of Children and Family Services
Out-of-Home Care Management Division
Nestor Figueroa, MSW, Manager, CSAII
9320 Telstar Avenue, Suite 216
El Monte, CA 91731

Dear Nestor:

The purpose of the following is to address the matter of a call I had today from Dario Villamarin, CSAI on account of cribs and cars seats that were recently identified by Lorena Barron, Accountant/ Auditor of the LA County Auditor Controller as being non-compliant, outdated, or outright illegal to have in use by our foster children. Further, Mr. Villamarin asked for NLU to specifically address how NLU uses these cribs and car seats in relation to the children.

LA County Accountant/ Auditor Ms. Barron did in fact recently relate to NLU that she had, in an agency walk-through at our Bellflower Offices, found cribs in storage that did not meet current standards for safety, saying that she knew this because she had recently had a baby. There were in fact three (3) disassembled cribs in one storage area and another fourteen (14) cribs that had been gifted to the agency, stored in a separate area. All of these cribs were quickly removed and or disposed.

Ms. Barron also stated that there were several car seats that she had found in storage that looked dirty and appeared not to meet the required six-point harness. And to this I can only say that all car seats that are presently in use at NLU have been recently purchased from Wal-Mart and/ or one of the other big-box stores, and all meet the required regulatory standards.

While there are currently no cribs out on loan at NLU, in the past the agency has lent these out to recently certified foster parents, for instance, upon the placement of a sibling set that required the use of a crib, or upon the placement of twin babies. In the case of car seats, while there have been instances where these have gone out on-loan to our certified foster parents, car seats are mainly used by our NLU Foster Care Social Workers for the purpose of executing placements.

If there is anything else that I may clarify at this time, please call me at (562) 682-9667 at your earliest convenience.

Regards,

Pedro V Travieso, MSW, MBA
Director of Programs & Operations

NIÑOS LATINOS UNIDOS®

FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY

9246 ALONDRA BLVD. BELLFLOWER, CA 90706

TEL.: (562) 925-7473 ♦ FAX: (562) 925-5039

July 24, 2013

County of Los Angeles
Department of Children and Family Services
Out-of-Home Care Management Division
Dario Villamarin, CSAI
9320 Telstar Avenue, Suite 216
El Monte, CA 91731

Dear Mr. Villamarin:

The purpose of the following is to address the matter of the CAP that is being requested of Niños Latinos Unidos (NLU) on account of the recently completed agency Compliance Review. To that end, below we have provided a response to each of the areas where deficiencies have been identified:

Licensure/ Contract Requirements

1. *The FFA is free of CCL's complaints on safety and physical plan deficiencies issues.*

NLU RESPONSE:

The agency FCSW's will receive training on how to conduct a once-a-month exterior and interior walk-through, on each other their assigned foster homes, to be performed on the same day as their monthly unannounced visit. This is to be done in addition to the current weekly safety assessment that all FCSW's perform on their homes.

2. *Prior to placing more than two children in a certified foster home, the foster parents have at least 12 months experience as per the County contract, and documentation maintained in the certified foster parents' files.*

NLU RESPONSE:

While NLU does follow Section 3.1.2 of the LA County DCFS Foster Family Agency Contract which states in part that, "The experience requirement in Item (3) above may be less than 12 months to accommodate sibling groups or teenagers as long as all of the requirements in Items (1) and (2) are met," it is also understood that item (1) requires for the certified foster parents to be, "...providing quality care for the currently placed children," and otherwise, (2) "have at least 12 months of experience in caring for foster children." The Home Assessment required for the placement of more than two children in a home that has been certified for less than one year will now require

signature approval from the Administrator or Supervising Foster Care Social Worker (SFCSW) to a home, prior to actual placement completion.

Certified Foster Homes

3. *Home studies are signed to determine their timeliness.*

NLU RESPONSE:

While it is agency practice to have all Home Studies signed and dated upon their submission to the NLU Adoptions Department, moving forward the Adoptions Director has been instructed to thoroughly check and sign off on all Home Studies, prior to considering these complete and ready to file.

4. *Certified foster parents are provided with the required training hours for recertification.*

NLU RESPONSE:

NLU will not recertify any home, without prior completion of all required training hours. In the event that a certified foster home has not completed their hours upon their recertification date, all foster children in the home will be removed and the home will be placed on an internal hold, until such time as the required training hours have been completed.

5. *All required vehicle maintenance documentation is maintained in the certified foster parents' files.*

NLU RESPONSE:

As of this writing the agency has implemented an "Annual Vehicle Inspection" requirement, whereby all Certified Foster Parents are required to have their vehicles inspected by a certified mechanic who is to determine that these are safe and in good condition. This rule applies to any vehicle in the home that is available or may be used to transport foster children. All certified foster parents have been required to provide documentation of these vehicle inspections, no later than July 25, 2013.

Facility and Environment

6. *Exterior and Grounds are well maintained.*
7. *Common areas are free of safety hazards.*

NLU RESPONSE:

The answers to recommendations #6 and #7 above lie in the response to recommendation #1. Namely, that while conducting a once-a-month exterior and

interior walk-through on each of their assigned certified foster homes, on the same day as their monthly unannounced visit, FCSW's will be able to determine how the exterior and interior of these homes is being kept, and whether or not there are any safety hazards or general non-compliance issues that need to be addressed.

8. *FFA's social workers follow up on recommendations/ issues in certified foster homes.*

NLU RESPONSE:

When identifying areas of deficiency FCSW's will establish an appropriate time deadline for recommendations to be completed. FCSW's will further document any deficiencies on the foster parent files and require a sign-off by the certified foster parent. The FCSW will then follow-up on the recommendation(s) and assure that a resolution has been reached, by the deadline.

Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery

9. *Children are progressing toward meeting their NSP goals.*

NLU RESPONSE:

Emphasis will be made by FCSW's to document in their weekly notes their discussions with foster children and certified foster parents regarding progress or else any barriers that may be in place toward meeting NSP goals, on a monthly basis. This will be done by re-training FCSW's on the topic of NSP development and on documentation. SFCSW's will monitor for FCSW's completion of this documentation.

10. *FFA social workers develop comprehensive initial NSPs to include specific and measurable goals.*
11. *FFA social workers develop comprehensive updated NSPs to include specific and measurable goals.*

NLU RESPONSE:

As detailed on #9 above, NLU has and will continue to provide training on the development of initial and updated NSP's. Upcoming NSP trainings however will provide emphasis on the area of developing Specific and Measurable goals.

12. *Age appropriate children are made aware of what NSP's are.*

NLU RESPONSE:

Prior to the development of the NSP the FCSW will explain the purpose of the NSP to the child, when age appropriate, while collaborating with him/ her and with the certified foster parent in the drafting of meaningful and clear goals that meet the child's

verbalized needs, and holding to the SMART Goals standard. This issue will be addressed during the upcoming re-training of FCSW's on the topic of NSP development and documentation.

Education and Workforce Readiness

13. Children are provided with tutoring.

NLU RESPONSE:

All FCSW's have been called upon to identify any available generic community resources for the foster children in their caseload, while responding to their specific needs, including the availability of tutoring services and how to best access these services. Whenever needed services --including those of tutoring-- are not found to be readily available in the community, FCSW's will communicate with CSW's to determine if there are any alternative resources to tap in order to meet the child's individual need.

Psychotropic Mediation

14. Certified foster parents have a log recording the medication for children on psychotropic medication.

NLU RESPONSE:

Although all certified foster parents are provided with a medication log by their assigned FCSW's on a monthly basis, re-training on this topic has been provided to foster parents.

Personnel Records

15. Social Workers are provided with the required annual hours of training.

NLU RESPONSE:

NLU will assure that all FCSW's are provided with the required annual hours of training, and that certificates are provided --and filed-- at all trainings.

16. Social Workers have on their files a written declaration of part-time employment.

NLU RESPONSE:

NLU will assure that all part-time FCSW's, all of whom were previously categorized as "Contract Social Workers," now sign a Declaration of Part-time Employment. A declaration form has been developed and will be made available for their signature upon their next office day.

17. *Administrators do not carry a caseload beyond of what is allowed by Title 22 regulations.*

NLU RESPONSE:

NLU hereby declares that no Administrator will carry a caseload beyond what is allowed by Title 22 regulations.

If you have any questions with regard to this matter or would otherwise like to have further clarification, please call me at your earliest convenience at (562) 925-7473.

Respectfully,

Pedro V. Travieso, MSW, MBA
Administrator
Director of Programs & Operations