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February 2, 2016

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
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From: Philip L. Browning
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UPDATED RESPONSE TO THE JUNE 9, 2015 BOARD MOTION (ITEM NO. 8) INTRODUCED BY SUPERVISORS SHEILA KUEHL AND MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS ON SUPPORTING RELATIVE CAREGIVERS AND SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDATION ON SEPTEMBER 29, 2015

Executive Summary

This is in response to your Board's motion on June 9, 2015, instructing the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in consultation with the Interim Chief Executive Officer, the Office of Child Protection, and the Departments of Public Social Services (DPSS) and Community and Senior Services (DCSS), to report back on all of the following in time for inclusion in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015-16 Supplemental Changes to the budget:

1) The programs and services (including DPSS and DCSS programs) provided to relative caregivers, as well as, an analysis of the gaps where additional support is needed from both countywide and Regional perspectives.

2) Using the solicitation process for the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project as a model, DCFS shall issue a Request for Information to partner with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to develop Kinship Support programs, and allocate up to $1.25M annually from its existing budget to contract with qualified CBOs.

3) The volume and types of calls received by the DCFS Ombudsman in calendar year 2014.

4) The feasibility of establishing a 24/7 Caregiver Call Center within its existing budget to support the needs of relative and foster caregivers or birth parents.

On September 29, 2015, a supplemental recommendation by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas directed DCFS to report back in 30 days and include the following:

5) Ensure all social workers, particularly those in the Kinship Support Division, and relative caregivers are informed of the range of services provided by DCFS (including Kinship Support Centers), DCSS, DPSS (including the Approved Relative Caregiver Program), to relative caregivers and report back with a plan to disseminate the information to social workers and caregivers and a timeline for completion of the plan and outreach efforts.

The report was continued to provide the Board with additional details, including the outcome of having facilitated another Kinship Stakeholder Conference.

ITEM NUMBER 1 RESPONSE:

DCFS offers services to all relative and non-related family members caring for a DCFS supervised child with either an open or closed case; relative caregivers who have obtained legal guardianship through Los Angeles County Probate Court; and relative caregivers who are caring for a relative child informally. Kinship services are provided at the Department's two Kinship centers, located in Los Angeles and West Covina and six community centers throughout the county. The services include:

- Support Groups in English and Spanish to relatives caring for their kinship children;
- Foster/Kinship Care Education classes at 19 local community colleges;
- Department of Mental Health liaison referrals for mental health services for children in relative care at the Kinship Resource Center in Los Angeles;
- DPSS liaisons assist relative caregivers with applying for CalWORKS funding as a non-needy caregiver;
- Tutoring services are provided once per week;
- Assistance filing WIC 388 petitions to change guardianship status, request placement of kinshipship children, and/or to request visits;
- Limited, one-time financial assistance up to $2,000 per household;
- DCFS Kinship social workers to consult on case issues, participate in Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings, and to provide referrals to community resources; and
- Arrange recreational activities, educational programs and special events.

In addition, DCFS offers the Approved Relative Caregiver (ARC) Program to caregivers who are not currently eligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care (AFDC-FC). The ARC program provides approved relative caregivers, with whom an eligible child is placed, the opportunity to receive payments equal to the basic foster care rate.

The Departments of Community and Senior Services (DCSS) and Public Social Services (DPSS) were consulted and provided input to this report as well. DCSS offers services to relative caregivers in Los Angeles County through the Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP). FCSP is available to relatives aged 55 and older who are raising a child(ren) aged 18 or younger. FCSP provides assistance in accessing services; caregiver assessment, support groups, counseling; respite services; and assistive devices for caregiving, home adaptations and emergency cash/material aid. DCSS is able to utilize a maximum of $144,932 of FCSP to support caregivers.

DPSS and DCFS provide additional support to relative caregivers through the Linkages program. Linkages is a service coordination partnership between DPSS and DCFS to address the common barriers that limit the caregiver's ability to work and keep the children safely at home. Through Linkages, caregivers are provided the following services:

- Potential eligibility to DPSS benefits and services including CalWORKS/GAIN, General Relief, CalFresh, and/or Medi-Cal benefits;
- DPSS' GAIN Services Workers (GSWs), who are co-located in DCFS offices, participate in or contribute their expertise to Child and Family Team meetings. The GSWs navigate and access DPSS services for relative caregivers when children are placed in their care by DCFS;
- DPSS also provides services coordination for CalWORKS families with the DCFS Family Preservation plan by integrating DPSS expertise into DCFS' Family Preservation Multi-Disciplinary Case Planning meetings and activities.

In mid-August 2015, DCFS sent a one-page Relative Caregiver Needs Assessment Survey (Survey) to all 5,706 relative caregivers approved with approximately 9,000 child placements. By September 30, 2015, a total of 1,213 Survey responses were received and tabulated on the attached chart entitled: Relative Caregiver Survey Results – Supervisorial District. The Survey return percentage for relative caregivers in each Supervisorial District and Out-of-County ranged between 19% to 24%; averaging about 21% overall. However, not every question was responded to by every caregiver.

Key Survey Results:

- 58% of relative caregivers in the past year have never met/spoken with a Kinship Care Liaison, nor visited or called a DCFS Kinship Support Center. The next largest response group was 17% of relative caregivers in the past year having one contact with the Kinship Support Services staff.
- By decade, the most prevalent age group for relative caregivers was the 51-60 years of age (33%) followed by the 41-50 years of age (25%) and then 61-70 years of age (18%).

- The average total number of children residing in a household, including the caregivers' own children, is 3.9 children per household. The average number of DCFS placed children is 2.3 children per household.
- Grandsons and granddaughters make-up 53% of the children placed with relative caregivers.
- 31% of children placed with relative caregivers are under five (5) years old, 65% are ten (10) years old or under.
- Spanish is the primary language spoken in 22% of relative caregiver households.
- The most important kinship support identified by relative caregivers (in order of importance) are:

1.	Advocacy (help with child education, legal, adoption/guardianship issues)	12%
2.	Basic Emergency Needs (shelter costs, food, clothing, furnishings)	12%
3.	Child Caregiver Activities/Recreational Events	12%
4.	Child Behavioral Intervention/Counseling	11%
5.	Child Tutoring	10%
6.	Caregiver Support Groups	8%
7.	Respite Care, Child/Nanny caregiver	8%
8.	Youth Mentorship	6%
9.	Transportation	6%
10.	Caregiver/Parenting Classes	5%
11.	Conferences/Workshops (caregiver networking, current kinship issues)	5%
12.	DPSS Liaison (public assistance cases)	4%
13.	Other	1%

Survey Results

The total number of children under relative care is about 9,000, with an average of 1.6 children per relative caregiver household. Survey respondents have a higher than average of 2.3 dependent children per household and likely encounter a greater proportion of challenges in their caregiver role.

The profile of the 50-70 year old relative caregiver indicates fixed incomes and limited accommodations for an expanded household. Foster care requirements of beds/cribs and other furnishings, diapers, clothing, special diets may present immediate fiscal challenges until the foster payments are received and the child's own clothing/furnishings can be transferred. The Survey informs that these basic emergency needs were at or near the top of the most important support services to relative caregivers in each Supervisorial District. Kinship Resource Center staff use an Emergency Needs Assessment Form to determine needs in providing limited emergency assistance resources to relative caregivers. The calculated shortfall, or portion of shortfall, may be supplemented by up to a total of $2,000 per household. During FY 2013-14, $61,583.05 was expended from the budgeted $77,000, which seemingly indicates basic emergency needs were being met. However, this finding is

inconsistent with Survey results and the Los Angeles County Blue Ribbon Commission for Children's Protection (BRCCP) focus group interviews that indicate basic emergency assistance as an important, unmet need.

The BRCCP Final Report also concluded that medical/dental health services were among the top priorities of relative caregivers. Survey results indicate substantial transportation needs of relative caregivers and would likely play a role in facilitating medical/dental appointments.

Kinship Support Services Gap

For those relative caregivers that have unmet service needs, a brief analysis of each of the following assertions arising from the survey results can be made:

- **Relative caregiver community does not have or have enough of the needed services.**

  DCFS Kinship Resource Centers provide both direct and referral support services; however, some services may not be available in all geographical areas. County agencies along with the dozens of DCFS non-profit contract agencies provide many of the services identified as important by relative caregivers. There are both County and non-County contracted agencies that provide services in the community. For example, if looking for youth mentorship programs, a web search quickly shows the California Mentor Foundation having 126 agencies with mentorship programs in Los Angeles County.

- **Relative caregivers cannot get to where the services are located.**

  This assertion has merit in light of the Survey profile of the 50-70 year old relative caregivers, and notation that Transportation is a top ten need. Further complicating access to services are the limited locations for the DCFS Kinship Resource Centers. Increasing the number of Kinship Resource Centers through County contracting, as instructed by the June 9, 2015 Board Motion, and ensuring adequate transportation services to relative caregivers could mitigate the service gap.

- **Relative caregivers do not know where the specific services they desire/ need are located.**

  This assertion invites examination of kinship support services navigation and relative caregiver outreach services. In the current kinship design, services are accessed after the relative caregivers reach out to the Kinship Resource Centers. However, Survey results showed that 58% of caregivers had no contact during the past year with the Kinship Resource Centers.

Kinship support services navigation has been an identified need in BRCCP relative caregiver focus groups and comments to DCFS Kinship Resource Center staff. It is reasonable to expect those providing kinship support services to know where support services in the community may be found. Interestingly, comments at recent Stakeholder Conferences have not consistently shown that community agencies know which other service providers are in their communities. Contracted Kinship Support Center agencies will be expected to create and maintain a network of service agencies to best support and navigate for their relative caregiver clientele.

ITEM NUMBER 2 RESPONSE:

The Department has proceeded with the development of a Demonstration Project entitled: Relative Support Services (RSS) to partner with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to develop Kinship Support programs and allocate up to $1.25 million from DCFS' current budget to contract with qualified CBOs. In late August 2015, DCFS submitted a request to the State of California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to utilize the Procurement by Negotiation contract process in lieu of a competitive contract solicitation process for Relative Home Assessment Services and Relative Support Services; both of which are inclusive of this Demonstration Project. DCFS has been provided verbal authority to proceed with written confirmation expected within the next 60 days.

DCFS has conducted five public Stakeholder Conferences covering each of the Supervisoral Districts. Conferences were held in the Cities of Marina Del Rey, Newhall and La Mirada, Carson and East Los Angeles. The purpose of these Stakeholder Conferences has been to gauge the interest of CBOs in providing Kinship Support program services through contracts, to listen to what they believe are the challenges of supporting relative caregivers, and to learn what services CBOs are able to provide, as well as what services they believe are needed in light of services DCFS proposes to be contracted. In the last three Stakeholder Conferences, the Department provided a list of post child placement approval Relative Caregiver Kinship Support Services that included all of those services delineated in the June 9, 2015 Board Motion plus two additional administrative responsibilities and Permanency Counseling services that are consistent with programmatic goals. At the East Los Angeles Stakeholder Conference, the Department also informed participants about its plan to integrate the Resource Family Approval (RFA) Program through contracts in advance of the Statewide RFA Program implementation in 2017.

Following the Stakeholder Conferences, and with Board approval, the Department plans to release a RSS Request for Statement of Information/Interest (RFSI) in February 2016 with a due date of April 22, 2016. DCFS' negotiations with qualified CBOs in April/May 2016 will result in the selection of prospective contractors. DCFS will request Board approval of the RSS contract(s) to commence in July 2016.

Relative Support Services (RSS) Demonstration Project

Post-Placement Approval Relative Caregiver Kinship Support Services

RSS Contractors must maintain an office in the contract service area to provide Kinship Support Services. RSS Contractors are not expected to directly provide all Kinship Support Services, nor would this be desirable. RSS Contractors will be expected to develop and provide the relative caregiver navigation of the network of kinship support services. Based on the Survey results, to ensure relative caregiver's most important needs are met, excluding basic emergency needs that must be initiated at the visit following child placement to be effective, the Department will consider requiring RSS Contractors to directly provide the top three needs: Advocacy (help with child education, legal, adoption/guardianship issues), Child/Caregiver Activities/Recreational Events and Child Behavioral Intervention/Counseling. For the remaining kinship support service relative caregiver needs, RSS Contractors must ensure development and coordination of a comprehensive network for their contract service area. This strategy is in alignment with the kinship support services to be provided by contracted CBOs identified in the June 9, 2015 Board Motion, which include:

- Respite and child care linkages*
- Systems navigation and collaboration with local agencies (e.g.: courts/schools/ County Depts.)*
- Visitation accommodations at agency providers*
- Support groups and training*
- Educational advocacy, guidance and referrals for tutoring*
- Legal assistance*
- ASFA home assessment support*
- Health/mental health services and other social services referrals*
- Assistance with eligibility for governmental benefits (e.g.: ARC, AB 12, CalFresh, Section 8, etc.)*
- Family support services, activities to support economic stability/social connection with caregivers*
- Ongoing periodic outreach to relative caregivers to offer kinship support services
- Ongoing reporting to CSW regarding relative caregiver receipt/offer of kinship services
- Permanency (Legal Guardianship, Adoption) Counseling

**Services identified in the Board Motion*

RSS Identified Clients

- Relative caregivers
- Non-Related Extended Family Members
- Non-DCFS Relative Caregivers

RSS Contract Service Providers

The County will seek CBOs that demonstrate experience in prevention, aftercare and visitation services to provide RSS. CBOs should have a community presence in the service area. CBO staff shall be qualified to provide RSS in the primary household language or arrange for translation services to facilitate services. RSS contractors will be required to integrate current/former relative caregiver input, including but not limited to advisory roles or hired positions.

RSS Contract Service Area

There is consideration being given to contract RSS by Service Plannning Area (SPA) boundaries instead of by Supervisorial boundaries as this enhances the County's abilities to cross-reference data based by SPAs. Some SPAs may justify multiple contractors due to high number of relative caregivers in the SPA.

RSS Demonstration Project Collaboration

Throughout the RSS Demonstration Project, DCFS will consult and utilize input from County Departments including the Chief Executive Officer, Office of Child Protection, DPSS, and DCSS. Stakeholder Conferences will play a large role in determining what services may be immediately provided and what services need more CBO development.

RSS Contract Funding

The Department will include contract funding in the DCFS FY 2016-17 Proposed Budget and in its Proposed Budget for subsequent Fiscal Years.

RSS Demonstration Project, RSS Contract Timeline

Seek CDSS approval for Procurement by Negotiation	August 2015-January 2016
Stakeholder Conferences	October/December 2015
Release of Request for Statement of Interest/Information (RFSI)	February 2016
Receive and Review Statements of Interest/Information	April 2016
Negotiate with qualified prospective service providers	April/May 2016
Agendize Board Letter to approve Contracts, train/prepare Contractors	June 2016
RSS Contracts start date	July 2016

Proposed Expansion of the RSS Demonstration Project to include Relative Home Assessment Services (RHAS)

Current Relative Caregiver Assessment/Approval Process

Under California AB 1695 (2002) relative care must be approved under the same standards as those in foster care. The State mandates that all existing relative placements be re-assessed annually according to California Code Regulation Title 22 Division 6, Chapter 9.5 Article 3 (Title 22) standards.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) goals per the Urban Institute Center for the Study of Social Policy, Intentions and Results are:

- Enable children to move promptly to permanent families:
- Ensure safety is paramount:
- Elevate well-being as a third focus of the Child Welfare System: and
- Improve innovation and accountability.

In 2005, DCFS created the ASFA Division to conduct initial assessments of relative caregiver homes in which DCFS placed or is considering placing children under their care.

ASFA Children's Social Worker (CSW) Assessment Components include:

1. Relative Caregiver Home Site Inspection
2. Review of Relative Caregiver's Qualifications
3. Review of Children's Personal Rights
4. Provision of Relative Caregiver Orientation
5. Analysis of Background Check (CWS/CMS) and Criminal Clearances
6. Placement Approval/Denial in Relative's Home based on Assessment Components 1-5.

Current ASFA CSW Workflow

In order to safely place a child in the home of relatives at the time of detention, the Emergency Response (ER) CSW, prior to ASFA CSW Assessment, completes both CLETS and CWS/CMS clearances to complete the criminal background check. Live Scan is initiated for the relative caregiver and a referral is then made to the ASFA Division. Within five (5) days after receiving the referral, the ASFA CSW makes contact with the relative caregiver for a home site appointment to address Assessment Components 1–4. The ASFA CSW revisits the relative caregiver as needed to confirm and photograph any corrective actions/alternative living plans to document compliance with Title 22 regulations. The ASFA CSW searches and reviews CWS/CMS for any prior relative caregiver abuse records and/or abuse records of other adults who will

have substantial contact with the child. The background checks/criminal record reviews and home site assessment leads to the determination of whether the relative caregiver's home should be approved for continued child placement. Relative caregiver homes are reassessed annually.

Transitioning to the Resource Family Approval (RFA) Program

Welfare and Institutions Code Section 16519.5 requires CDSS, in consultation with county child welfare agencies, foster parent associations, and other interested community parties, to implement a unified, family friendly, and child-centered resource family approval process to replace the existing multiple processes for licensing foster family homes and approving relatives and Non-Relative Extended Family Member (NREFM) as foster care providers, guardians and approving adoptive families. For the relative/NREFM caregiver population, the Department is working with CDSS to implement the RFA Program in advance of the Statewide 2017 implementation through an expansion of the RSS Demonstration Project to include RHAS contracts with CBOs in the summer of 2016.

Under the RFA Program, a comprehensive assessment includes the following activities:

(A) Home Environment Assessment
(B) Background Checks
(C) Permanency and Psychosocial Assessments
(D) Pre-Approval Training

Relative Home Assessment Services Contract

The Department proposes RHAS contract services include the RFA Program Assessment Component A (Home Environment Assessment) that includes providing a caregiver orientation and a kinship support services assessment at the time of the initial relative caregiver home site visit by the CBO Contractor. Subsequent procurement of services/supplies will be done on an as needed basis to comply with RFA Program standards and scheduling/completion of RFA Program Assessment Component D (Pre-Approval Training) would follow. CBO Contractors may directly provide the pre-approval training or sub-contract this service to another CBO approved by the Department. The Department will specify the pre-approval training program to be administered by the CBO. After a child is detained for an emergency placement with a relative caregiver, the ER CSWs will transfer the case to a Regional CSW and notify the RHAS CBO Contractor. Within five (5) days the CBO Contractor will contact and visit the relative caregiver home and initiate RHAS services.

Because only governmental agencies such as DCFS may view criminal records and access the CWS/CMS database, RFA Program assessment Activity B (Background Checks), may not be contracted to CBOs and the Department is electing to conduct RFA Program Assessment Activity C (Permanency and Psychosocial Assessment) for relative caregivers. The CBO Contractor will focus on the home environment

assessment, pre-approval training, caregiver orientation and matters ensuring or bringing the relative caregiver home to RFA standards. CBO Contractors will have authority and budgeted resources to provide immediate basic needs such as special foods, furnishings, supplies, smoke/CO_2 alarms, car seats, etc., needed for relative caregivers to comply with RFA standards. Further they will document compliance and communicate their findings to the Regional CSW. With input from the CBOs caregiver home environment assessment and pre-approval training, the Department will be responsible for the approval or denial of the ongoing child placement with the relative caregiver. The CBO Contractor will also initiate a kinship support services assessment and relay this information to the Regional CSW and RSS Contractor.

Advantages of Contracting RHAS

Faster Relative Home Approval Process

Currently, the ASFA Division completes about 84% of relative caregiver assessments within the 30 day goal. This is important because placement approval initiates foster care payments to the relative caregiver. Currently, in addition to delays due to staffing shortages and the assessment of criminal background checks, a major factor is timeliness due to the procurement of supplies and furnishings ordered through the County's procurement process. The County is obligated to use approved Agreement Vendors for specific categorical items. CBO Contractors will be budgeted to utilize their own procurement process resulting in significant time savings when obtaining emergency basic needs for relative caregivers to comply with RFA Program standards. This will enable the Regional CSW to focus on the criminal clearance and psychosocial assessment aspects of the placement approval process and achieve higher assessment completion rates.

Proactive Kinship Support Services

Because the RHAS CBO Contractor will conduct a kinship support services assessment for each relative caregiver at the first visit, information regarding kinship support needs may be relayed quickly to the RSS Contractor to initiate services. Survey results indicate the current DCFS Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP) design is not sufficient, as over 75% of relative caregiver Survey respondents had one or no contact with KSSP staff during the past year. The newly appointed ASFA Division Chief will be working with CBOs to develop new outreach methodologies directed at relative caregivers.

Continuity of Kinship Support Services

It is likely that not all relative caregivers will want or need Kinship Support Services. However, a system that utilizes CBOs referring to other CBOs for services is more likely to engage relative caregivers and encourage seeking services when needed versus a County administered program.

Reassignment of CSWs to Regional Operations

RHAS contracting will allow as many as 64 budgeted ASFA CSW positions to be reassigned to Regional Operations. DCFS management met with the Union in 2015 and will continue the discussions. In August 2015, the Department's Fiscal Operations Division determined that the estimated avoidable cost at about $432,000 per year when paraprofessional staff are contracted to perform the Assessment Components 1-4 and ASFA CSWs absorbed in other DCFS operations. The paraprofessional staff level was identified as able to perform the Assessment Components 1-4. This concept is modeled after the Illinois State DCFS contracts for Relative Placement Assessments for the same duties before contracting the remaining Assessment Components 5 and 6. RHAS contract services under the RFA Program standards are comparable to the current Assessment Components 1-4. When these services are performed by paraprofessionals instead of the current DCFS CSW staff, costs savings are anticipated.

In May 2007, the Los Angeles County Auditor-Controller reported that "Based on the information provided by DCFS and the Association of Community Human Service Agencies (ACHSA) it was not cost effective to contract the ASFA functions." However, when this option to contract the relative home and grounds inspection was considered, DCFS indicated it would not reduce the number of ASFA CSWs, and therefore, the result was no avoidable cost. As DCFS now intends to reduce/reassign ASFA CSW staff, the resulting difference in the cost of CSW staff versus paraprofessional staff provides avoidable costs.

Note that RHAS contracts include a kinship support services assessment process for each relative caregiver. This will entail more time and hence a higher cost. Additionally, the RFA Program pre-approval training activity, whether directly provided by CBO or sub-contracted to another CBO will entail additional costs. Prospective CBO Contractors will have an opportunity to share their cost estimates for providing RHAS to the County through the RFSI process.

RFA Program Opportunities for CBOs

Instead of initially using Title 22 standards and then transitioning to RFA Program standards, CBOs will start contracts using the RFA Program standards. CDSS has expressed interest in the County's contract approach for RHAS and has extended a standing invitation for the CBOs identified by DCFS likely to be contracted for RHAS to participate in the programmatic discussions/meetings attended by FFA and Group Homes. RHAS contracts provide the best opportunity for non-FFA/Group Home to participate in the RFA process for relative caregivers.

Disadvantages to Contracting RHAS

Reduction of CSW Staff Expertise

While it is true that one less CSW will be involved in a dependency case, the RHAS combined with RSS are designed to build a community support network around the relative caregiver. Apprehension that safety issues may be missed because an ASFA CSW is no longer involved may be underestimating the observation abilities of a well-trained, experienced paraprofessional who is also a mandated reporter. Clinical CSW skills may be compensated by the information acquired through developed rapport between the paraprofessional and relative caregiver. Other child welfare jurisdictions such as New Jersey, Philadelphia and Illinois have successfully incorporated paraprofessional contract expertise to work with relative caregivers.

Foster Family Agency (FFA) CBOs may not put full efforts to assist relative caregivers compliance with RFA Program Standards

There may be concern that an FFA CBO contracted to perform RHAS would provide less than full efforts to bring a relative caregiver into compliance with RFA Program standards so that instead, a child placement may be offered by their FFA. While the Department is confident in the integrity of the 46 FFAs contracted by the County, the RHAS process would nonetheless contain safeguards against this occurrence.

- No RHAS Contractor, FFA CBO or non-FFA CBO has any authority to place children. This is the purview of DCFS through its line operations and the County Juvenile Courts. Should RHAS contracts commence, DCFS line operations staff and management will receive new RHAS program policy that prohibits placement of a child with the FFA that was assigned the home assessment with the relative caregiver.
- RHAS contracts will include language that prohibits RHAS Contractors from making placement recommendations should the relative caregiver be denied for the child placement.
- RHAS contracts like all County performance based contracts will be monitored. Performance anomalies such as a high denial rate of relative caregivers whose home assessments were performed a CBO would merit review as to the cause.

RHAS Contractors have no access to CWS/CMS

CDSS has not allowed any Contractors, including FFAs and Group Homes, access to CWS/CMS. Checking data from CWS/CMS prior to initial placement with a relative caregiver is currently the responsibility of the ER CSW. The ASFA CSW also reviews CWS/CMS data on the relative caregiver and adults who have regular contact with the child in placement. The Regional CSW has the ongoing responsibility to access and input into CWS/CMS. Should there be any concerns identified as a result of a CWS/CMS check of the relative caregiver, the Regional CSW will be responsible to communicate as appropriate with the RHAS CBO Contractor.

Stakeholder Reaction to RHAS

At Stakeholder Conferences in Marina del Rey, Newhall, La Mirada, Carson and East Los Angeles, attendees were given the list of Kinship Support Services, now comprising RSS, to be provided by contracted CBOs identified in the June 9, 2015 Board Motion. Stakeholders were also given the following list of services that would comprise an RHAS contract as the In-Home Relative Caregiver Services. At the East Los Angeles Stakeholder Conference, the Department amended its intent for RHAS contract services to replace Title 22 regulations with RFA Program standards. The RFA Program home environment assessment areas were addressed.

Stakeholders were told that these In Home Relative Caregiver Services could be considered and discussed as a separate group of services from the list of Kinship Support Services to be offered through the CBO office sites in the contract areas. Stakeholders were not concerned with their capacity to perform RHAS in addition to RSS. Their strongest concerns involved the communication/documentation between CBO and DCFS of the relative caregiver home inspection findings, the resources available to procure emergency needs items for relative caregivers to comply with Title 22 regulations/RFA Program standard and what kinship support services would the CBOs be required to directly provide versus services it may refer to other CBOs. At the East Los Angeles Stakeholder Conference, participants expressed a desire to provide psychosocial assessments as a contract service.

In-Home Relative Caregiver Services to be provided within 5 Days of Initial Placement

- Relative home-site inspection
- Emergency needs assessment/support (such as food, transportation, emergency need vouchers*)
- Caregiver orientation/review of caregiver and minor's rights
- Procurement of supplies/services for Corrective Action Plan/Documented Alternative Plan (CAP/DAP) to comply with Title 22 **
- Kinship services needs assessment
- Documentation of relative home-site visits and communications with the CSW, adding to other CSW information needed to make ongoing child placement decision within 30 days of initial placement

*Services identified in the June 9, 2015 Board Motion.
**Participants at the East Los Angeles Stakeholder Conference were asked to consider the RFA environment assessment areas instead of the Title 22 regulations: 1) Home and Grounds; 2) Outdoor Activity Space; 3) Storage Requirements; 4) Fire Clearances, 5) Emergency Procedures; 6) Reporting Requirements; 7) Records for Children and Non-minor Dependents; 8) Personal Rights; 9) Telephones; 10) Transportation;

11) Food and Nutrition; 12) Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard; 13) Responsibility for Providing Care and Supervision; 14) Extracurricular, Enrichment and Social Activities; and 15) Cooperation and Compliance.

CBO Contractor Options

The Department proposes that the RSS Demonstration Project be expanded to include RHAS and allow qualified CBOs responding to an RFSI to indicate their interest in contracting with the County in one of three ways:

- Option A: Relative Support Services only
- Option B: Relative Home Assessment Services only
- Option C: Both Relative Support Services and Relative Home Assessment Services

Timeline and Funding

Expansion of the RSS Demonstration Project to incorporate RHAS and implementing the RFA Program standards for relative caregivers will extend the RHAS contract timeline beyond the RSS contract timeline by approximately two months due to more complex contract negotiation and Contractor training processes. The anticipated RHAS Contracts start date would be September 1, 2016. RSS contracts for kinship support services would remain on an independent contract timeline. Funding for an expanded RSS Demonstration Project with RHAS contracts would be included in the Department's FY 2016-17 Proposed Budget and in its Proposed Budget for subsequent Fiscal Years.

ITEM NUMBER 3 RESPONSE:

For calendar year 2014, there were 25 inquiries received from the State Ombudsman's office with 44% consisting of relative caregivers and Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFM). The breakdown is as follows:

- 11 Relative caregivers/NREFM
  - Four were related to placement issues
  - Two were related to services (visits/daycare)
  - Five were related to payment issues
- Two Adoptive parents
- Two Legal guardians
- Seven biological parents
- Three youth

The DCFS Ombudsman also receives inquiries from relative caregivers (informal and formal) and NREFMs on the same issues via the following manner: direct calls to the Helpline, through the Public Inquiry lines or email address, as transferred calls from the Director's Office, and walk in appointments. There is no breakdown data for the public

inquiry calls due to the large volume of calls received on a monthly basis. The inquiries, calls, and requests are handled by providing referrals or linkages to current resources such, as the Revenue Enhancement Foster Care Hotline, Kinship Support Services Division, and Regional Office management. Going forward, the Kinship Services Section will establish a tracking system to identify the callers and the types of reasons for their calls.

ITEM NUMBER 4 RESPONSE:

DCFS will establish a toll-free number that will include Adoption and Foster Recruitment, Kinship Services, Foster Care Payment Hotline, and the option to be transferred to the Child Protection Hotline.

After considering the volume of calls received during business hours and the messages received after business hours, it was determined that the Warm Line hours of operation will be from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. During regular business hours, the calls will be connected to the selected DCFS sections and answered by staff as usual. Between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m., Warm Line staff will answer the calls and provide the requested assistance. Between the hours of 11:01 p.m. and 7:59 a.m., callers can select one of five options and leave a message; however, for immediate assistance, calls will be connected to the Child Protection Hotline. In addition, Warm Line staff will have information on foster parent training and recruitment events.

DCFS' Revenue Enhancement Division has identified an Eligibility Supervisor (ES) and four Eligibility Worker (EW) positions for the operation, and requested an additional ES, four EWs, and two clerks for the on-going operation.

Several DCFS Divisions have begun developing training materials for staff, including a website which allows staff to provide information, schedule Foster Care/Adoption orientation meeting appointments, access court dates and court orders.

DCFS is planning a robust promotional campaign to announce the Warm Line that includes, but is not limited to the following: posting signage in DCFS offices, Kinship Support Centers, Juvenile Court, DPSS offices, and a mailer to foster and relative caregivers.

The anticipated start date of the Warm Line is May 1, 2016.

ITEM NUMBER 5 RESPONSE:

DCFS has provided ARC brochures to ASFA and Kinship staff to distribute to potential and existing relative caregivers in the course of their duties. In addition, an all staff in-service training was completed on January 12, 2016 to reinforce and ensure that caregivers receive the most current and accurate information regarding ARC and other services designed to support relative caregivers.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please call me or your staff may contact Aldo Marin, Board Liaison, at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:DI:RRS:NP
BD:WC:lj

Attachments

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Acting Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Department of Public Social Services
Department of Community and Senior Services

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES (DCFS)
RELATIVE CAREGIVER NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Welcome Relative Caregiver,

The following brief Survey is designed to better identify needs you may have in your role as a Relative Caregiver for a child/children. This Survey is voluntary, anonymous and will only be used to improve future Relative Caregiver services through our Kinship Support Program.

1) During the past year, I have met/spoken with a Kinship Care Liaison, visited or called a Kinship Resource Center. Please check the appropriate number.

[ ] 6 or more times [ ] 2-5 times [ ] Once [ ] Never

2) What is your age (please check one)?
Under 30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61-70 Over 70

3) Please circle the number of boys and girls living in your household.

Boys: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 or more Girls: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 or more

4) Please circle the number of boys and girls living with you who are placed with you by DCFS.

Boys: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Girls: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

5) How are the children related to you?

Granddaughter Grandson Niece Nephew Non-related extended family member Other(explain)_____

6) What are the ages of the children (how many in each category)?

Under age 5_____ ages 5-7____ ages 8-10_____ ages 11-13_____ ages 14-16_____ age 17 and older_____

7) Please indicate the primary language spoken in the household.

[ ] English [ ] Spanish [ ] Other _____
(Please Specify)

8) Please check six (6) of the most important Kinship Support Services that may be provided to you and/or the child/children under your care. It is important you select only six (6).

[ ] Basic Emergency Needs (Shelter costs, food, clothing, furnishings)

[ ] Caregiver Support Groups

[ ] Youth Mentorship

[ ] Conferences/Workshops (Caregiver networking, current kinship issues)

[ ] Youth Mentorship

[ ] Respite Care, Child/Nanny Care

[ ] DPSS Liaison (Public assistance cases)

[ ] Advocacy (Help with child education, legal, adoption/guardianship issues)

[ ] Caregiver/Parenting Classes

[ ] Child Tutoring

[ ] Child/Caregiver Activities/Recreational Events

[ ] Child Behavioral Intervention/Counseling

[ ] Transportation

[ ] Other: _____

Thank you for completing this Survey. Through its results, DCFS can better direct resources to meet the needs of Relative Caregivers and the children placed with them. Your care for these children is key to their ongoing success during difficult life transitions. Please place this Survey into the prepaid addressed envelope and into the mail.

DCFS Kinship Support Program

Attachment

Relative Caregiver Survey Results - Supervisorial District

		Dist. 1		Dist. 2		Dist. 3		Dist. 4		Dist. 5		All Districts		Out of County		ALL	
	Total Caregivers	880		1350		470		934		1133		4767		939		5706	
	Total Surveys Returned	172		263		93		200		269		997		216		1213	
1	Times contacted a Kinship Care Liaison, visited or called a Kinship Resource Center.	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
	6+	14	10%	13	8%	2	2%	23	11%	17	7%	69	8%	25	12%	94	8%
	2-5	26	19%	51	21%	10	12%	29	14%	40	16%	156	17%	27	13%	183	16%
	Once	13	9%	44	18%	18	21%	32	16%	51	20%	158	17%	37	18%	195	17%
	Never	85	62%	134	55%	54	64%	119	59%	141	57%	533	58%	116	57%	649	58%
	Total	138		242		84		203		249		916		205		1121	
2	What is your age?																
	-30	9	6%	20	8%	7	8%	16	8%	10	4%	62	4%	13	6%	75	4%
	31-40	9	6%	20	8%	11	12%	22	11%	40	16%	102	7%	37	18%	139	8%
	41-50	38	27%	70	27%	24	26%	51	26%	53	21%	236	16%	53	25%	289	17%
	51-60	50	35%	81	31%	30	32%	67	34%	80	32%	308	21%	67	32%	375	22%
	61-70	28	20%	47	18%	16	17%	28	14%	53	21%	708	48%	32	15%	740	44%
	70+	7	5%	20	8%	5	5%	11	6%	16	6%	67	5%	8	4%	75	4%
	Total	141		258		93		195		252		1483		210		1693	
3	Number of boys and girls living in your household.																
	Boys																
	1	47	31%	32	13%	32	33%	69	34%	90	51%	270	31%	80	32%	350	31%
	2	58	38%	106	43%	30	31%	80	39%	49	28%	323	37%	75	30%	398	35%
	3	34	22%	56	22%	21	22%	36	18%	27	15%	173	20%	59	24%	232	21%
	4	9	6%	36	14%	12	13%	20	10%	9	5%	86	10%	28	11%	114	10%
	5	5	3%	20	8%	1	1%	0	0%	2	1%	28	3%	5	2%	33	3%
	6	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%
	7	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%
	8+	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	Total	154		249		96		205		178		882		247		1129	

	Girls																
	1	60	36%	95	37%	39	39%	85	49%	89	48%	368	42%	67	34%	435	40%
	2	72	43%	101	39%	29	29%	47	27%	66	36%	315	36%	76	38%	391	36%
	3	19	11%	42	16%	14	14%	20	12%	17	9%	112	13%	31	16%	143	13%
	4	10	6%	21	8%	12	12%	15	9%	9	5%	67	8%	17	9%	84	8%
	5	5	3%	0	0%	5	5%	5	3%	2	1%	17	2%	6	3%	23	2%
	6	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%	1	1%	2	0%
	7	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%
	8+	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	Total	166		259		99		172		185		881		198		1079	
4	Number of boys & girls living with you who are placed by DCFS.																
	Boys																
	1	45	42%	111	47%	34	46%	94	61%	109	70%	393	54%	91	54%	484	56%
	2	46	43%	79	33%	27	36%	39	25%	28	18%	219	30%	58	34%	277	31%
	3	10	9%	34	14%	13	18%	14	9%	12	8%	83	11%	17	10%	100	11%
	4	0	0%	12	5%	0	0%	2	1%	4	3%	18	2%	4	2%	22	2%
	5	5	5%	0	0%	0	0%	5	3%	2	1%	12	2%	0	0%	12	1%
	6	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%
	7	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%
	8+	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	Total	107		236		74		154		156		727		170		897	
	Girls																
	1	62	52%	101	51%	48	69%	86	62%	119	70%	416	60%	84	57%	500	59%
	2	44	37%	61	31%	15	21%	38	27%	39	23%	197	28%	56	38%	253	30%
	3	5	4%	27	14%	7	10%	6	4%	8	5%	53	8%	8	5%	61	7%
	4	4	3%	9	5%	0	0%	9	6%	2	1%	24	3%	0	0%	24	3%
	5	5	4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	1%	7	1%	0	0%	7	1%
	6	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	7	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	8+	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	Total	120		198		70		139		170		697		148		845	
5	How are the children related to you.																
	Granddaughter	49	30%	93	27%	31	26%	57	22%	83	26%	313	26%	50	19%	363	25%
	Grandson	51	31%	96	28%	34	29%	72	28%	88	27%	341	28%	64	25%	405	28%
	Niece	27	16%	37	11%	19	16%	34	13%	38	12%	155	13%	47	18%	202	14%
	Nephew	15	9%	46	13%	16	13%	33	13%	35	11%	145	12%	36	14%	181	12%
	Non-Related	10	6%	37	11%	9	8%	33	13%	51	16%	140	12%	33	13%	173	12%
	Other	14	8%	32	9%	10	8%	26	10%	27	8%	109	9%	28	11%	137	9%
	Total	166		341		119		255		322		1203		258		1461	

6	What are the ages of the children (how many in each category).																
	-5	94	27%	176	34%	60	34%	134	36%	129	29%	593	32%	143	30%	736	31%
	5-7	54	15%	95	18%	33	19%	60	16%	79	18%	321	17%	67	14%	388	17%
	8-10	71	20%	112	21%	31	17%	48	13%	64	15%	326	17%	79	17%	405	17%
	11-13	57	16%	38	7%	16	9%	52	14%	67	15%	230	12%	62	13%	292	12%
	14-16	59	17%	56	11%	24	13%	38	10%	63	14%	240	13%	75	16%	315	13%
	17+	18	5%	45	9%	14	8%	42	11%	38	9%	157	8%	48	10%	205	9%
	Total	353		522		178		374		440		1867		474		2341	
7	Indicate the primary language spoken in the household.																
	English	94	61%	193	71%	58	59%	166	83%	222	84%	733	74%	193	89%	926	77%
	Spanish	58	38%	78	29%	39	40%	29	14%	37	14%	241	24%	25	11%	266	22%
	Other	2	1%	2	1%	1	1%	6	3%	4	2%	15	2%	0	0%	15	1%
	Total	154		273		98		201		263		989		218		1207	
8	Six most important Kinship Support Services that may be provided.																
A	Basic Emergency Needs	77	12%	128	11%	44	11%	95	11%	136	12%	480	12%	132	13%	612	12%
B	Advocacy (Help with education, adoption/guardianship issues)	80	13%	117	10%	42	11%	113	13%	141	13%	493	12%	126	13%	619	12%
C	Caregiver Support Groups	49	8%	110	9%	30	8%	66	8%	72	6%	327	8%	78	8%	405	8%
D	Caregiver Parenting Classes	39	6%	56	5%	24	6%	43	5%	46	4%	208	5%	54	5%	262	5%
E	Youth Mentorship	30	5%	81	7%	17	4%	50	6%	78	7%	256	6%	61	6%	317	6%
F	Child Tutoring	63	10%	127	11%	37	9%	91	10%	120	11%	438	11%	99	10%	537	10%
G	Conferences/Workshops (Caregiver networking.	34	5%	58	5%	18	5%	46	5%	52	5%	208	5%	45	5%	253	5%
H	Child/Caregiver Activities	73	12%	130	11%	48	12%	110	13%	138	12%	499	12%	99	10%	598	12%
I	Child Behavioral Intervention	63	10%	124	11%	48	12%	91	10%	127	11%	453	11%	106	11%	559	11%
J	Respite Care, Child Care	41	7%	86	7%	31	8%	57	7%	89	8%	304	7%	83	8%	387	8%
K	Transportation	30	5%	84	7%	29	7%	49	6%	68	6%	260	6%	44	4%	304	6%
L	DPSS	28	5%	45	4%	15	4%	36	4%	32	3%	156	4%	39	4%	195	4%
M	Other:	13	2%	21	2%	9	2%	23	3%	19	2%	85	2%	21	2%	106	2%
	Total	620		1167		392		870		1118		4167		987		5154	