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March 9, 2016

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
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From: Philip L. Browning
Director

GUARDIANS OF LOVE FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of Guardians of Love Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in June 2015. The FFA has two offices: one located in the Second Supervisorial District and one located in San Bernardino County. The FFA provides services to the County of Los Angeles DCFS placed children and youth. According to the FFA's program statement, its stated mission is, "to provide safe, nurturing, therapeutic certified family homes where children can receive protection from abuse, maltreatment, economic exploitation, malnutrition and/or any form of unsafe environment."

The QAR looked at the status of the placed children's safety, permanency, and well-being during the most recent 30 days and the FFA's practices and services over the most recent 90 days. The FFA scored at or above the minimum acceptable score in 7 of 9 focus areas: Permanency, Placement Stability, Visitation, Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, and Tracking & Adjustment. OHCMD noted opportunities for improved performance in the focus areas of Safety and Teamwork.

The FFA provided the attached approved Quality Improvement Plan addressing the recommendations noted in this report. In October 2015, OHCMD Quality Assurance Reviewer discussed results of the QAR with the FFA and provided the FFA with technical support to address methods for improvement in the areas of Safety and Teamwork.

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

PLB:EM:KR:rds

Attachments

c: Sachi A. Hamai, Chief Executive Officer
John Naimo, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Ralph Butler, CEO, Guardians of Love FFA
Lajuannah Hills, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division
Lenora Scott, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division

GUARDIANS OF LOVE FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW (QAR)
FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of Guardians of Love Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in June 2015. The purpose of the QAR is to assess the FFA's service delivery and to ensure that the FFA is providing children with quality care and services in a safe environment, which includes physical care, social and emotional support, education and workforce readiness, and other services to protect and enhance their growth and development.

The QAR is an in-depth case review and interview process designed to assess how children and their families are benefiting from services received and how well the services are working. The QAR utilizes a six-point rating scale as a *yardstick* for measuring the situation observed in specific focus areas. The QAR assessed the following focus areas:

Status Indicators:

- Safety
- Permanency
- Placement Stability
- Visitation

Practice Indicators:

- Engagement
- Service Needs
- Assessment & Linkages
- Teamwork
- Tracking & Adjustment

For Status Indicators, the reviewer focuses on the child's functioning during the most recent 30 day period and for Practice Indicators, the reviewer focuses on the FFA's service delivery during the most recent 90 day period.

For the purpose of this QAR, interviews were conducted with three focus children, three Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Children's Social Workers (CSWs), three FFA staff, three certified foster parents and two mental health providers.

At the time of the QAR, the placed children's average number of placements was three, their overall average length of placement was nine months and their average age was 15. The focus children were randomly selected. None of the focus children were included as part of the sample for the 2014-2015 Contract Compliance Review.

QAR SCORING

The FFA received a score for each focus area based on information gathered from on-site visits, agency file reviews, DCFS court reports and updated case plans, and interviews with the FFA staff, DCFS CSWs, service providers, and the children. The minimum acceptable score is 6 in the area of Safety and 5 in all remaining areas.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	FFA QAR Score	FFA QAR Rating
Safety - The degree to which the FFA ensures that the child is free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation by others in his/her placement and other settings.	6	5	**Good Safety Status** - The focus children are generally and substantially avoiding behaviors that cause harm to self, others, or the community and are generally free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and/or intimidation in placement. The focus children may have had related history, diagnoses, or behavior presentations in the past but has not presented risk behaviors at any time over the past 30 days.
Permanency - The degree to which the child is living with caregivers, who are likely to remain in this role until the child reaches adulthood, or the child is in the process of returning home or transitioning to a permanent home and the child, the FFA staff, caregivers and DCFS CSW, support the plan.	5	5	**Good Status** - The focus children have substantial permanence. The focus children reside in a family setting that the focus children, FFA staff, caregivers, caseworkers, and team members have confidence will endure lifelong.
Placement Stability - The degree to which the FFA ensures that the child's daily living, learning, and work arrangements are stable and free from risk of disruptions and known risks are being managed to achieve stability and reduce the probability of future disruption.	5	5	**Good Stability** - The focus children have substantial stability in placement and school settings with only planned changes and no more than one disruption in either setting over the last 12 months with none in the past six months. The focus children have established positive relationships with primary caretakers, key adult supporters, and peers in those settings. Any known risks are now well controlled.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	FFA QAR Score	FFA QAR Rating
Visitation - The degree to which the FFA staff support important connections being maintained through appropriate visitation.	5	5	**Substantially Acceptable Maintenance of Visitation & Connections** - Generally, effective family connections are being sought for all significant family/Non-Related Extended Family Members through appropriate visits and other connecting strategies.
Engagement - The degree to which the FFA staff are working with the child, biological family, extended family and other team members for the purpose of building a genuine, trusting and collaborative working relationship with the ability to focus on the child's strengths and needs.	5	6	**Optimal Engagement Efforts** - To an optimal degree, a rapport has been developed, such that the FFA staff, DCFS CSWs, and the focus children feel heard and respected. Reports indicate that excellent efforts are being used by the FFA staff as necessary to find and engage the focus children, caregivers and other key people.
Service Needs - The degree to which the FFA staff involved with the child, work toward ensuring the child's needs are met and identified services are being implemented and supported and are specifically tailored to meet the child's unique needs.	5	5	**Good Supports and Services** - A good and substantial array of supports and services substantially matches intervention strategies identified in the case plan. The services are generally helping the focus children make progress toward planned outcomes.
Assessment & Linkages - The degree to which the FFA staff involved with the child and family understand the child's strengths, needs, preferences, and underlying issues and services are regularly assessed to ensure progress is being made toward case plan goals.	5	5	**Good Assessment and Understanding** - The focus children's functioning and support systems are generally understood. Information necessary to understand the focus children's strengths, needs, and preferences are frequently updated. Present strengths, risks, and underlying needs requiring interventions and supports are substantially recognized and well understood.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	FFA QAR Score	FFA QAR Rating
Teamwork - The degree to which the "right people" for the child and family have formed a working team that meets, talks, and makes plans together.	5	4	**Minimally Adequate to Fair Teamwork** - The team contains some of the important supporters and decision makers in the focus children's lives, including informal supports. The team has formed a minimally adequate to fair working system that meets, talks, and/or plans together; at least one face-to-face family team meeting has been held to develop plans.
Tracking & Adjustment - The degree to which the FFA staff who is involved with the child and family is carefully tracking the progress that the child is making, changing family circumstances, attainment of goals and planned outcomes.	5	5	**Good Tracking and Adjustment Process** - Intervention strategies, supports, and services being provided to the focus children are generally responsive to changing conditions. Frequent monitoring, tracking, and communication of the focus children's status and service results to the team are occurring.

STATUS INDICATORS
(Measured over last 30 days)

What's Working Now (Score/Narrative of Strengths for Focus Area)

Permanency (5 Good Status)

Permanency Overview: The FFA provides good permanency for the focus children. The primary permanency plans and concurrent plans were appropriately developed and processed in a timely manner. The FFA demonstrates efforts to assist the focus children in achieving permanency and ensures that the treatment team is aware of each focus child's permanency plan. The FFA maintains constant contact with the DCFS CSWs and the focus children to ensure permanency plans are being implemented.

The first focus child's permanency plan is Family Reunification and the concurrent plan is Adoption. The Needs and Services Plan (NSP) documented that it is currently unfeasible for the focus child to return to the care of his family of origin, as they have yet to meet the requirements as set forth by the court regarding Family Reunification services. The DCFS CSW reported that although the focus child visits with his birth mother, the focus child wishes to be adopted. The DCFS CSW has referred the focus child to a teen support group through the DCFS Adoption Promotion and Supportive Services program so that he may explore his permanency options. The focus child reported that he likes his current foster home, his certified foster parents and foster siblings. The foster parents referred to the

focus child as their "son". The focus child has remained placed in this current foster home for over 14 months.

The second focus child's permanency plan is Family Reunification and the concurrent plan is Planned Permanent Living Arrangement. The focus child reported that although he likes his foster home and has resided there for approximately six months, he wishes to reunify with his aunt or a relative. Per his DCFS CSW, his aunt's home is being assessed for placement. The focus child understands that before he can be placed with a relative, he must improve his behavior at his certified foster home and at school. The FFA social worker and his certified foster parent continue to address the focus child's negative behavior and have instituted various incentives and appropriate consequences, such as restricting or eliminating free time with friends, television, or video game playing time as a means to address his acting out behavior.

The third focus child's permanency plan is Family Reunification and the concurrent plan is Adoption. The DCFS CSW is recommending Family Reunification Services continue for the focus child. The focus child has been placed in his current certified foster home for seven months. The focus child reported that he is happy, and he wants to continue residing with his current foster family. What makes the focus child especially happy is that his younger brother is placed in the certified foster home with him. The certified foster parent reported that the focus child is a good boy, and she is interested in pursuing legal guardianship. The FFA staff is supportive of the focus child. Many discussions have taken place between the FFA staff, the DCFS CSW, certified foster parents and the focus child regarding Family Reunification plans.

The DCFS CSWs did not report any concerns regarding the FFA's permanency services. The NSPs and the DCFS court reports for each of the focus children reflect that the focus children are working towards their permanency goals with the assistance of the FFA staff, their certified foster parents, and their DCFS CSWs.

Placement Stability (5 Good Stability)

Placement Stability Overview: The FFA is providing good stability for the focus children. The focus children experience positive relationships with the FFA staff. Each of the focus children was able to identify their respective FFA case manager and they have established good relationships with the FFA staff and their certified foster parents. The DCFS CSWs for the focus children reported that the focus children are in stable living environments.

The FFA social worker reported that the first focus child has made steady progress in his current certified foster home and that the focus child has a healthy relationship with his certified foster parents, their biological son, and the other child placed in the home. The FFA staff also reported that the focus child's grades have improved, and he is doing well in school and he participates in school activities. His certified foster parents reported that they have gone on long weekend trips with the focus child and they all have a good time. The focus child shared how he enjoys the many outings he has participated in with his certified foster parents. The DCFS CSW reported that during her routine monthly visits, the focus child appeared to be generally content.

The FFA social worker reported that the second focus child is not adjusting well to his current placement and has been exhibiting acting-out behavior and angers easily. Additionally, the focus child is not doing well academically, and he was recently suspended from school. The focus child

has refused tutoring services, and instead of studying, the focus child spends his time playing basketball and hanging out with friends. During the interview process, the focus child admitted that his behavior was poor and that he wants to improve his behavior so that he can be reunified with his relatives. The certified foster parents and the FFA social worker have consistently addressed the acting-out behavior with the focus child; they reported that the focus child has shown a slight improvement in his behavior.

The FFA social worker reported that the third focus child has formed a very strong attachment to his certified foster mother and her family. The focus child shared that he enjoys spending time with his foster mother, as they enjoy similar activities including working out, shopping and eating. The FFA social worker shared that the focus child has gravitated toward his certified foster mother and sees her as a second mom. His certified foster mother reported that she wanted nothing more than to welcome the focus child into her home and make him feel comfortable.

The FFA social worker reported that they are committed to the focus children. The FFA staff consistently work with the focus children and their family members, the certified foster parents, and the DCFS CSWs to reduce the probability of a placement disruption.

Visitation (5 Substantially Acceptable Maintenance of Visitation & Connections)

Visitation Overview: The FFA is generally effective in maintaining family contact and follows the court visitation orders. The FFA is committed to ensuring the focus children receive their visitation, including providing monitored visits, when necessary. The FFA is in constant communication with the DCFS CSWs and follows each focus child's visitation plan. The DCFS CSWs and the FFA ensure that the visitation plans are adhered to and that the outcomes of the visits are shared among the key players for the focus children. Family members and approved visitors are encouraged to maintain contact with and visit the focus children.

The first focus child has monitored weekly visits with his biological mother and he also communicates with his maternal grandmother via telephone. The certified foster parent provides transportation to and from visits for the focus child and monitors all visits and phone calls. The focus child reported that he enjoys his visits with his family.

The second focus child has monitored visits with his biological mother. However, according to the focus child's DCFS CSW, his mother calls and visits sporadically, approximately three times a year. The focus child also has unmonitored visits with his maternal grandmother and paternal aunt and uncle. His maternal grandmother works full-time, making it difficult for her to schedule visits. The focus child reported that the time he spends with his grandmother is pleasant. His paternal aunt and uncle have expressed having the focus child return to their home once his behavior improves. The focus child reported that he really misses his aunt and uncle and would really like to return to their home.

The third focus child is scheduled to have weekly visits with his biological mother. However, due to his biological mother having challenges, there have been very few visits. Further, his mother schedules visits, but does not show up for the visits. The certified foster mother reported that the focus child becomes distressed when scheduled visits with his mother do not occur. The focus child also has visits with his grandmother. The certified foster parent transports the focus child to and from visits with his grandmother and his DCFS CSW monitors the visits. The focus child had weekly visits

with his grandmother. However, the focus child reported that it was difficult to maintain weekly visits with his grandmother and keep up with his schoolwork, as he was struggling with turning in homework assignments after the visits. Therefore, the DCFS CSW changed the visits to bi-monthly, which appears to be working. The FFA staff will continue to support the focus child and his visitation plan with his family, when appropriate.

What's Not Working Now (Score/Narrative of Strengths for Focus Area)

Safety (5 Good Safety Status)

Safety Overview: The FFA is providing a safe environment for the focus children. Safety of placed children is a key focus of the FFA. The focus children are consistently avoiding behaviors that cause harm to self and others and are free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and/or intimidation in placement. The focus children reported feeling safe at all times while in their current certified foster homes and stated that their certified foster parents always supervise them. The DCFS CSWs reported that the focus children were all in safe living environments.

Although protective strategies were in place for the focus children, the FFA fell below the minimum score of six in safety, as the FFA did not adhere to policies and procedure for reporting Special Incident Reports (SIRs). The FFA submitted 17 SIRs via the I-Track database in the last 30 days. Five SIRs were not submitted timely, nine were not cross-reported to all required parties, and two SIRs did not include all of the required information. One SIR involved the second focus child. The SIR reported that the focus child was suspended from school for using inappropriate language and being disruptive in class. Further, three SIRs reported involved injuries to placed children, which raised concerns regarding supervision of the children involved. Two incidents involved placed children fighting at their certified foster home. The third incident involved a placed child sustaining an injury to his face after tossing a book in the air and the book hitting him in the face. Out-of-Home Care Investigations Section (OHCIS) did not receive or investigate any referrals within the last 30 days.

The first focus child reported that his foster parents are very protective of him, which makes him feel very safe. His certified foster mother reported that she and her husband want to be involved and aware of what the focus child is doing. His certified foster mother stated that she and her husband are always asking the focus child questions, such as, who his friends are and inquire about his after-school activities. The certified foster parents want to be sure that they are not missing anything with the focus child. The certified foster mother also stated that the focus child was very quiet when he was initially placed in their home, but with time, "he has come into himself"; he is not as quiet and is sharing more information about himself.

The second focus child reported that he feels safe because, he has his DCFS CSW's cell phone number, and he can call her anytime. His certified foster parents reported they ensure appropriate supervision of the focus child, as he exhibited some behavior problems.

The third focus child reported that he feels safe because his certified foster mother keeps her eyes on everything. His certified foster mother reported that constant communication with the focus child is essential, because she wants the focus child to know that he could come and talk to her about anything.

The FFA social worker reported that one of the protective strategies that the FFA uses is to conduct monthly home inspections of their certified foster homes to ensure safety for every placed child, which includes ensuring all items that should be kept out of children's reach are properly secured.

PRACTICE INDICATORS

(Measured over last 90 days)

What's Working Now (Score/Narrative of Strengths for Focus Area)

Engagement (5 Good Engagement Efforts)

Engagement Overview: To a strong degree, a rapport has been developed, such that the FFA staff, DCFS CSWs, certified foster parents and the focus children feel heard and respected. The FFA staff uses good, consistent efforts in engaging the focus children, caregivers and other key people. The focus children reported there is at least one person at the FFA who they count on. The DCFS CSWs reported that the FFA staff has been attentive, appropriate and reasonable in developing a good working relationship. Phone contact, fax, or e-mail is usually used for communication among the key parties.

The FFA is accommodating, as to scheduling meetings, corresponding with all the key adult supporters and assisting with visitation for the focus children. The FFA is dedicated to providing the focus children with whatever is needed to assist them in making progress towards their planned outcomes.

The first focus child reported that his voice is important and he truly believes his certified foster parents hear and respect him. An example of good engagement efforts by the certified foster parents is how the certified foster parents have maintained an open line of communication with the focus child's birth mother to arrange and confirm visitation. The FFA social worker reports that she is in contact with the DCFS CSW, the certified foster parents and the focus child. The DCFS CSW reported that the FFA has been reasonable with their engagement efforts.

The FFA social worker for the second focus child has engaged the DCFS CSW and they have been working closely to address concerns regarding the focus child's defiance and lack of progress. The FFA social worker is also engaging with the focus child's certified foster mother and is in contact with her at least once a week to reassure the certified foster mother and the focus child that she is there to support and assist them. The focus child's certified foster mother reported that the FFA social worker has maintained constant communication and has assisted her in addressing many issues and concerns regarding the focus child.

The third focus child is happy with the relationship he shares with his certified foster family. The certified foster parents wants to ensure the focus child and his brother have a well-balanced life. The DCFS CSW reported that the FFA staff has been in tune with the focus child's needs.

Service Needs (5 Good Supports and Services)

Service Needs Overview: A good and substantial array of supports and services substantially matches intervention strategies identified in each focus child's case plan. The FFA ensures medical and dental appointments are arranged and therapy is provided for children requiring therapeutic services. The FFA encourages participation in extracurricular activities; the FFA ensures each of the focus children is receiving necessary educational support services or tutoring.

The first focus child participated in weekly in-home individual therapy. However, therapy was terminated as the focus child made excellent progress. The focus child has an interest in music and plays the clarinet. The focus child has participated in school performances, which the certified foster parents have attended. With appropriate education supports and tutoring in place, the focus child has shown academic improvement. He achieved one of his identified short-term treatment goals as evidenced by increasing one of his grades. Educational supports will continue to be provided and the focus child will continue to work on improving academically. The FFA staff reported that the certified foster parents are very supportive of the focus child's educational needs. The certified foster parents are also working with the focus child by teaching him responsibility and life skills.

Although supportive services and tutoring were offered, the second focus child refused to participate during the last 90 days. The school, the FFA and his certified foster parent have tried to work with the focus child to assist him in improving academically; however, he refuses assistance, and has stated, "I am going to do it my way." The DCFS CSW reported that the focus child has had numerous truancies and is doing poorly in school. Reportedly, the DCFS School-Based Educational Liaison met with the focus child to offer educational services, but the focus child informed her that he is not interested in participating in the program. All key parties understand that the focus child could benefit from therapeutic services and educational support services, but the focus child is not receptive to any services at this time. The FFA and his certified foster parent will continue to work together to be supportive of the focus child. The focus child's certified foster parent attends and will continue to attend all school meetings to address his performance. The FFA and his certified foster parent will continue to monitor the focus child's school attendance and class work assignments.

The third focus child participates in weekly therapy sessions. The therapist reported that the focus child is gradually progressing. His certified foster mother reported that the focus child is very sociable and outgoing. The focus child currently participates in dance and soccer. The focus child is also receiving life skills instructions and guidance from his certified foster parent and the FFA social worker.

Assessment & Linkages (5 Good Assessment and Understanding)

Assessment & Linkages Overview: The FFA provides good assessments for each of the focus children. The FFA staff meets monthly to discuss the focus children's progress, evaluate their needs and assess their strengths. The focus children expressed that they are offered the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities. The FFA staff are very supportive and active with ensuring that each focus child is participating, if they so choose, in activities within the community and assists the focus children with enrollment.

The FFA was proactive, as they were able to assess and link the first focus child to needed tutoring services. The FFA social worker reported that she and the DCFS CSW are always assessing the

focus child's school performance, reviewing the focus child's report cards, ensuring that his grades are improving and making sure tutoring is always available to the focus child to ensure progress toward the educational goals as defined in his NSPs. The focus child's grades have improved, and he is doing well in school.

The FFA staff have assessed and attempted to link the second focus child to an array of services, but the focus child is not receptive. Although the focus child is not open to services at this time, he is very much interested in playing basketball. The focus child recognizes that there is a correlation between doing well academically and being allowed to play on his school team. The focus child reports that he is trying to do better in his certified foster home and at school, as he wants to play high school basketball and reunify with his relatives.

The FFA social worker assessed the third focus child and determined that he enjoys socializing and performing as the focus child reported that he loves to dance and being on stage. Prior to his current placement, the focus child was part of a dance company. The FFA and his certified foster mother ensured that the focus child was able to continue performing with the dance company. The DCFS CSW, the FFA social worker and his certified foster mother understand how important this connection is for the focus child.

Tracking & Adjustment (5 Good Tracking and Adjustment Process)

Tracking & Adjustment Overview: the FFA is providing intervention strategies, supports, and services to the focus children. The FFA staff monitors, tracks, and communicates the focus children's status and service results, and conveys pertinent information to team members, including the DCFS CSWs, teachers, and other key supporters. Implementation of strategies, supports and services are tracked through progress notes, case plans, NSPs, and communication with the focus children. Tracking of each focus child's progress occurs weekly. The FFA social worker adjusts treatment goals to meet the focus children's needs or when services being provided are not producing desired results. The DCFS CSWs expressed good interaction and responsiveness by the FFA staff.

An example of the FFA and the certified foster parent working together and being responsive to the needs of the focus child is evidenced by their work with the third focus child. The team had observed the focus child began to withdraw after missed visits with his biological mother. However, he was able to express himself in therapy and through sports and performing. The treatment team determined that in order for the focus child to adapt successfully, it would be in the focus child's best interest to continue his social and extracurricular activities that he participated in prior to his current placement. Though the FFA has continued monitoring and tracking, they have observed that the focus child has made improvements in many areas, including in the certified foster home, at school, and in therapy. The focus child appears to be happier and adjusting well to his current placement.

<u>What's Not Working Now (Score/Narrative of Strengths for Focus Area)</u>

Teamwork (4 Minimally Adequate to Fair Teamwork)

Teamwork Overview: The team contains most of the important supporters and decision makers in the focus children's lives, including informal supports. The team has formed a minimally adequate to fair working system that meets, talks, and plans together.

Although, the focus children have contact information for all the team members and have access to call them as needed, improvement is needed in this area to ensure that all parties have an opportunity to meet, discuss and be made aware of team meetings.

Only the first focus child has participated in a face-to-face meeting where all key parties were present. The focus child reported that he is satisfied with the way his team is functioning; his DCFS CSW reported being present at a meeting where all team members were present. The second focus child reported that he has had a team meeting at his school to discuss "school stuff". The DCFS CSWs for the second and third focus child reported that team meetings have not been occurring. Further, phone contact, fax, or e-mail is usually used for communication among the key parties. DCFS CSWs for the focus children reported that they are made aware of the children's progress through NSPs and court reports.

Although the FFA has monthly meetings with the FFA staff to discuss the focus children's progress and the FFA social worker's meet with the certified foster parents and the focus children regularly, as a whole, teams are minimally formed and not all key parties are present for team meetings. The teams could benefit from the participation of all key members including the focus children's family members and DCFS CSWs.

NEXT STEPS TO SUSTAIN SUCCESS AND OVERCOME CURRENT CHALLENGES

In March 2015, the OHCMD provided the FFA with technical support related to findings indicated in the 2014-2015 Contract Compliance Review which consisted of the following: Licensure/Contract Requirements and Maintenance of Required Documentation, Education and Workforce Readiness, Health and Medical Needs and Personal Rights.

In October 2015, the OHCMD Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the FFA to discuss the results of the QAR and to provide the FFA with technical support to address methods for improvement in the areas of Safety and Teamwork. The FFA submitted the attached Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The OHCMD Quality Assurance staff will continue to provide ongoing technical support, training, and consultation to assist the FFA in implementing their QIP.

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QAR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

REQUESTING AGENCY:	DCFS – OUT OF HOME CARE MANAGEMENT DIVISION
AUDIT YEAR:	2015
QIP DUE DATE:	DECEMBER 8, 2015
QIP SUBMITTED TO:	SONYA NOIL, CHILDREN SERVICES ADMINISTRATOR I
QIP SUBMITTED BY:	KINIKKI FULLERWOOD, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

OVERVIEW

Guardians of Love, FFA (GOL) has been providing foster care services since 1997. It is and has always been our desire to provide comprehensive services to all the children that we serve, while concurrently adhering to all the contractual requirements specified in our Department of Children and Family Services contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations.

During our 2015 Quality Assurance Review conducted by Out of Home Care areas of improvement were noted that required correction. The following Quality Improvement Plan details the deficiencies in their entirety and provides GOL's Plan of Action, which will ensure that all corrective actions are executed. The Chief Operating Officer will be responsible for creating the QIP and ensuring its implementation. The Supervising Foster Care Social Workers will provide oversight to ensure ongoing compliance of items addressed within this Quality Improvement Plan. GOL fully implemented the Quality Improvement Plan on November 6, 2015.

DEFICIENCES:

SAFETY – 5 – GOOD SAFETY STATUS:

A Special Incident Reporting refresher training was conducted on September 16, 2015 with all clinical staff and certified parents. The training including all DCFS, CCL and agency SIR requirements. On-going trainings will also be conducted as needed for all certified parents and clinical staff.

To emphasize the importance of timely SIR reporting; Guardians of Love will take disciplinary action toward any FCSW, SFCSW or certified parent responsible for an SIR being reported outside of the appropriate timeframes. Disciplinary action taken will include but not be limited to training, counseling sessions, verbal and written warnings, employee suspension/certified parent internal hold and termination/decertification.

TEAMWORK – 4 – MINIMALLY ADEQUATE TO FAIR TEAMWORK:

Guardians of Love continuously teams with all important supports and decision makers in our foster youth's lives. Minimally, FCSWs contact CSWs to update them on their children's progress, needs and goals on a monthly basis. All FCSWs communication is documented in the minor's case file. Currently, all appropriate parties are engaged and successfully work together to ensure the safety and well being of placed youth. GOL has worked diligently to improve our team development strategy and will

continuously strive to work optimally in partnership with every minor's support system (CSWs, FCSWs, biological family, therapist, teachers, etc.). Guardians of Love will ensure that all CSWs are invited to team meetings quarterly and that all attempts to invite CSWs are documented and maintained in the minor's case file.

Guardians of Love would like to thank Ms. Noil for her knowledge and valuable recommendations. GOL respectfully submits this QAR Quality Improvement Plan for your review.

Prepared By: _____ Date: 12/8/15

Kinikki Fullerwood
Chief Operating Officer