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DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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May 20, 2016

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
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Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

SERENITY INFANT CARE HOMES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY FISCAL COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT AND CONTRACT COMPLIANCE REVIEW

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Contracts Administration Division (CAD) conducted a Fiscal Compliance Assessment and Contract Compliance Review of Serenity Infant Care Homes Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in December 2015 and January 2016. The FFA has one licensed office located in the Fifth Supervisorial District and provides services to the County of Los Angeles DCFS placed children. According to the FFA's Program Statement, its stated purpose is "to provide quality foster homes for abused, abandoned, and neglected infants and children, with special emphasis on the care of drug affected infants."

At the time of the review, the FFA supervised 87 DCFS placed children in 60 Certified Foster Homes (CFHs). The placed children's average length of placement was 11 months and their average age was two.

SUMMARY

CAD conducted a Fiscal Compliance Assessment which included a review of the FFA's financial records: such as financial statements, bank statements, check register, and personnel files to determine the FFA's compliance with the terms, conditions and requirements of the Foster Family Agency Contract, the Auditor-Controller Contract Accounting and Administration Handbook (A-C Handbook) and other applicable federal, State and County regulations and guidelines.

The FFA was in full compliance with all areas of the Fiscal Compliance Assessment: Financial Overview; Loans, Advances and Investments; Board of Directors and Business Influence; Cash/Expenditures; and Payroll and Personnel.

During CAD's Contract Compliance Review, the interviewed children generally reported: feeling safe at the FFA CFHs; having been provided with good care and appropriate services; being comfortable in their

placement environment; and treated with respect and dignity. The Certified Foster Parents (CFPs) reported that 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 9 of 10 applicable sections of CAD's Contract Compliance Review: Licensure/Contract Requirements; Certified Foster Homes; Facility and Environment; Education and Workforce Readiness; Health and Medical Needs; Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being; Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being; Discharged Children; and Personnel Records. The Psychotropic Medication section was not applicable as the sampled children were not prescribed psychotropic medication at the time of the review.

CAD noted deficiencies in the area of: Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery, related to the FFA not obtaining the DCFS Children's Social Worker's (CSW's) authorization to implement Needs and Services Plans (NSPs).

Attached are the details of CAD's review.

REVIEW OF REPORT

On February 18, 2016, Patricia Kirkpatrick, DCFS CAD and Mary Espinoza, DCFS Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD), held an exit conference with the FFA representatives: Linda Kontis, Program Director; Amanda Morales-Jimenez, Foster Care Social Work Supervisor; and Angela Kalies, Foster Care Social Work Supervisor. On February 18, 2016, Ali A. Gomaa-Mersal, DCFS CAD, held a fiscal exit conference with Jennifer Jones-Choctaw, Executive Director and Gladys Paredes, Accountant. There were no fiscal findings. The FFA's representatives agreed with the Contract Compliance Review findings and recommendations; were receptive to implementing systemic changes to improve the FFA's 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 A-C and Community Care Licensing.

The FFA provided the attached approved CAP addressing the recommendations noted in this compliance report. The OHCMD provided technical assistance to the FFA on February 26, 2016, to assist in the implementation of their new protocol.

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

PLB:KR:LTI:pk

Attachments

c: Sachi A. Hamai, Chief Executive Officer
John Naimo, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Jennifer Choctaw, Executive Director, Serenity Infant Care Homes
Lenora Scott, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division
Lajuannah Hills, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division

SERENITY INFANT CARE HOMES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
FISCAL COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT REVIEW
FISCAL YEAR 2015–2016

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Fiscal Compliance Assessment included a review of Serenity Infant Care Homes Foster Family Agency's (the FFA's) financial records for the period of July 1, 2013 through October 31, 2015. CAD reviewed financial records such as financial statements, bank statements, check register, and personnel files to determine the FFA's compliance with the terms, conditions and requirements of the Foster Family Agency Contract, the Auditor-Controller Contract Accounting and Administration Handbook (A-C Handbook) and other applicable federal, State, and County regulations and guidelines.

The agency-wide Fiscal Compliance Assessment review focused on 5 key areas of internal controls:

- Financial Overview,
- Loans, Advances and Investments,
- Board of Directors and Business Influence,
- Cash/Expenditures, and
- Payroll and Personnel.

The FFA was in full compliance with all areas of the Fiscal Compliance Assessment: Financial Overview; Loans, Advances and Investments; Board of Directors and Business Influence; Cash/Expenditures; and Payroll and Personnel.

NEXT FISCAL COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT

The next Fiscal Compliance Assessment of the FFA will be conducted in County Fiscal Year 2016-2017.

SERENITY INFANT CARE HOMES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE REVIEW SUMMARY

600 South Grand Avenue
Covina, CA 91724
License Number: 191593485

	Contract Compliance Review	**Findings: December 2015**
I	**Licensure/Contract Requirements** (7 Elements) 1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation 2. Timely, Cross-Reported SIRs 3. Runaway Procedures in Accordance with the Contract 4. Are there CCL Citations/OHCMD Safety Reports 5. If Applicable, FFA Ensures Complete Required Whole Foster Family Home Training 6. FFA Pays Certified Foster Parents (CFP) Whole Foster Family Home Payments 7. FFA Conducts an Assessment of CFP Prior to Placement of 2 or More Children	Full Compliance (All)
II	**Certified Foster Homes** (12 Elements) 1. Home Study and Safety Inspection Conducted Prior to Certification 2. Agency's Inquiry with OHCMD for Historical Information Prior to Certification 3. Timely Criminal Clearances (Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), California Department of Justice (DOJ), Child Abuse Central Index (CACI) Prior to Certification 4. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement 5. Health Screening & TB Test Prior to Certification 6. All Required Training Prior to Certification 7. Certificate of Approval on File/Including Capacity 8. Safety Inspection Completed At Least Every Six Months or Per Approved Program Statement 9. Completed Annual Training Hours for Re-certification and Current CPR/First-Aid/Water Safety Certificates 10. Current Driver's License/Auto Insurance/Annual Vehicle Maintenance Documentation for CFPs and Designated Drivers 11. Criminal Clearances and Health Screening/Driver's License/CPR/FBI/DOJ/CACI/Auto Insurance for Other Adults in the Home 12. FFA Assists CFPs in Providing Transportation Needs	Full Compliance (All)

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

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 Medication** (2 Elements) 1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication 2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review	Not Applicable (All)
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 Choices 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 Extracurricular Activities, Enrichment and Social Activities at the CFH, School, and Community	Full Compliance (All)
IX	**Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being** (7 Elements) 1. Clothing Allowance Provided in Accordance with FFA Program Statement 2. Ongoing Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quantity and Quality 3. Children Involved in the 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 and Assistance with a Life Book or 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 (FBI, DOJ, 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 DL 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 a Total of 15 Children	Full Compliance (All)

SERENITY INFANT CARE HOMES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE REVIEW
FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The following report is based on a "point in time" review. This compliance report addresses findings noted during the December 2015 review. The purpose of this review was to assess Serenity Infant Care Homes 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 compliance review covered the following 11 areas:

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

For purposes of this review, 10 placed children were selected for the sample. The Contracts Administration Division (CAD) interviewed 2 of 10 children, as eight children were too young to be interviewed. During the home visits, the children were observed to be comfortable and well-cared for in the Certified Foster Homes (CFHs) and their Certified Foster Parents (CFPs) were observed to be responsive to the children's needs. CAD reviewed 10 case files to assess the level of care and services the children received. Additionally, four discharged children's files were reviewed to assess the FFA's compliance with permanency efforts. At the time of the review, the placed children were not prescribed psychotropic medication.

CAD reviewed four CFP files and five staff files for compliance with Title 22 Regulations and County contract requirements. Site visits were conducted to the FFA and the CFHs to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to the placed children.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

CAD found the following area out of compliance:

Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery

- The FFA did not obtain the DCFS Children's Social Worker's (CSW's) authorization to implement Needs and Services Plans (NSPs).

CAD found that 9 of 32 NSPs reviewed did not have the DCFS CSWs' authorization. The FFA's efforts listed to obtain the DCFS CSWs' signatures on the NSPs were not within the mandated

timeframes of three attempts within five days. The FFA did not follow-up as required to ensure that the DCFS CSWs' signatures were timely obtained.

Recommendation:

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

1. The FFA obtains or documents efforts to obtain DCFS CSW's authorization to implement NSPs.

PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES CAD'S FFA CONTRACT COMPLIANCE REVIEW

CAD's last compliance report dated October 2, 2015, identified nine recommendations.

Results:

Based on CAD's follow-up, the FFA implemented all recommendations for which they were to ensure that:

- Special Incident Reports (SIRs) are submitted timely.
- The FFA is in compliance with Title 22 Regulations and free of Community Care Licensing (CCL) citations.
- Certified Foster Parents received all the required training prior to certification.
- All vehicles are maintained in good repair.
- FFA Social Workers develop timely Initial NSPs.
- FFA Social Workers develop timely Updated NSPs.
- FFA Social Workers develop timely quarterly reports.
- Employees timely complete and sign a criminal background statement.
- Employees timely complete health screenings.

At the exit conference, the FFA representatives stated their desire to remain in compliance with Title 22 Regulations and contractual requirements and reiterated that the FFA will implement procedures to strive towards greater compliance. The FFA will continue to consult with the Out-of-Home Care Management Division for additional support and technical assistance, and CAD will assess implementation of the recommendations during the next review.