County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, California 90020
(213) 351-5602

PHILIP L. BROWNING
Director

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Chief Deputy Director

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June 27, 2014

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

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

ASPIRANET FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a review of Aspiranet Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in September 2013. The FFA has one licensed office, located in the Fourth Supervisorial District, and provides services to County of Los Angeles DCFS foster children and youth. According to the FFA's program statement, its mission is "to meet the need for quality human services for children, families and community and to provide those communities quality foster care services for referred children and their families."

At the time of the review, the FFA supervised 66 DCFS placed children in 42 certified foster homes. The placed children's average length of placement was three months, and their average age was nine.

SUMMARY

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

The FFA was in full compliance with 8 of 11 sections of our contract compliance review: Licensure/Contract Requirements; Facility and Environment; Health and Medical Needs; Psychotropic Medication; Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being; Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being; Discharged Children; and Personnel Records.

OHCMD noted deficiencies in the areas of Certified Foster Homes, related to the FFA failing to submit an inquiry to OHCMD for historical abuse/neglect information and reference check prior to certification for one prospective certified foster parent; Maintenance of Required Documentation and Services Delivery deficiencies, related to Initial Needs and Services Plan (NSP), Updated NSP and Quarterly Report being untimely; and Education and Workforce Readiness, related to one child not being enrolled in school within three school days of placement.

Attached are the details of our review.

REVIEW OF REPORT

On October 11, 2013, the DCFS OHCMD Monitor, Kong Ng, held an Exit Conference with the FFA representative, Andrea Helzer, District Administrator. The FFA's representative: agreed with the review findings and recommendations; was receptive to implementing systemic changes to improve their compliance with regulatory standards; and agreed to address the noted deficiencies in a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

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

The FFA provided the attached approved CAP addressing the recommendations noted in this compliance report. OHCMD will verify that these recommendations have been implemented and will provide technical assistance during our next visit to the FFA in June 2014.

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

PLB:EM:KR
RDS:kn

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
John Naimo, Acting Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Andrea Helzer, District Administrator, Aspiranet FFA
Lajuannah Hills Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

ASPIRANET FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT PROGRAM COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW-SUMMARY

1043 Pine Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90813
License Number: 197806097

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

III	**Facility and Environment** (7 Elements) 1. Exterior/Grounds Well Maintained 2. Common Areas/Interior 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/Service Delivery** (10 Elements) 1. FFA Obtains or Documents Efforts to Obtain County Children's Social Worker's (CSW) 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 Child's Participation 5. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive Updated NSPs with Child's Participation 6. Therapeutic Services Received 7. Recommended Assessments/Evaluations Implemented 8. County Children Social Workers 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. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Improvement Needed 5. Improvement Needed 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Full Compliance 9. Improvement Needed 10. Full Compliance
V	**Education and Workforce Readiness** (5 Elements) 1. Children Enrolled in School Within Three 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	1. Improvement Needed 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance

VI	**Health and Medical Needs** (4 Elements) 1. Initial Medical Exams Conducted Timely 2. Follow-Up Medical Exams Conducted Timely 3. Initial Dental Exams Conducted Timely 4. Follow-Up Dental Exams Conducted Timely	Full Compliance (ALL)
VII	**Psychotropic Medication** (2 Elements) 1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication 2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review	Full Compliance (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 Extra-Curricular Activities, Enrichment and Social Activities	Full Compliance (ALL)
IX	**Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being** (7 Elements) 1. $50 Clothing Allowance Provided in Accordance with FFA Program Statement 2. Ongoing Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quantity and Quality 3. Children's Involvement in Selection of Their Clothing 4. Provision of Sufficient Supply of Clean Towels and Personal Care Items Meeting Ethnic Needs 5. Minimum Weekly Monetary Allowances 6. Management of Allowance/Earnings 7. Encouragement/Assistance with Life Book 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 (DOJ, FBI, CACI) Signed and Submitted Timely 2. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement 3. FFA Social Workers Met Education/Experience Requirements 4. Timely Employee Health Screening/TB Clearances 5. Valid CDL and Auto Insurance 6. FFA Employees Signed Copies of FFA Policies and Procedures 7. FFA Employees Completed All Required Training and Documentation Maintained 8. FFA Social Workers Have Appropriate Caseload Ratio 9. FFA Maintained Written Declarations for Part-Time Contracted FFA Social Workers Caseloads Not Exceed Total of 15 Children	Full Compliance (ALL)

ASPIRANET FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW
FISCAL YEAR 2013-2014

SCOPE OF REVIEW

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

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

For purposes of this review, ten children were selected for the sample. The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) interviewed nine children. One child told her foster mother that she did not want to be interviewed because she had a lot of home work to do; however, the child was observed to be in good health. OHCMD reviewed all ten case files to assess the care and services they received. Additionally, four discharged children's files were reviewed to assess the FFA's compliance with permanency efforts. At the time of the review, three placed children were prescribed psychotropic medication. We reviewed their case files to assess for timeliness of Psychotropic Medication Authorizations and to confirm the required documentation of psychiatric monitoring.

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

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

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

Certified Foster Homes (CFHs)

- OHCMD did not find documentation in one certified foster parent's file that the FFA submitted an inquiry to the OHCMD for historical abuse/neglect information prior to the certification.

During the monitoring review process, the certified foster parents' historical abuse/neglect background information was searched and there were no records that would prevent the certified foster parent from being used as a placement resource for Department of Children and Family Services children.

During the Exit Conference, the FFA representative stated that this was due to the certified foster parent previously being certified with the FFA, decertifying and then recertifying. The FFA representative stated that the FFA will submit an inquiry to OHCMD for historical abuse/neglect information before certifying previously decertified foster parents.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

1. OHCMD is contacted for historical abuse/neglect background information regarding prospective certified foster parents prior to certification and documentation is maintained in the certified foster parents' files.

Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery

- Two Initial Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) reviewed were not completed within 30 days from the date of the children's placement. The two Initial NSPs were completed an average of 16 days late.

- Two Updated NSPs reviewed were not completed within 90 days of placement. The two Updated NSPs were completed an average of 21 days late.

- Five Quarterly Reports reviewed were not completed within 90 days from the date of the children's placement. The five Quarterly Reports were completed an average of 16 days late.

During the Exit Conference, the FFA representative stated that the FFA's understanding has always been that there is a grace period of 10 business days after the due date for all NSPs. OHCMD explained to the FFA representative that there is no grace period. It should be noted that the FFA's representatives attended the OHCMD's NSP training for providers on January 23, 2012 and were made aware of the NSP requirements. The NSPs reviewed were developed subsequent to the NSP training. No representative from the FFA attended the NSP refresher training provided by OHCMD on August 1, 2013.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

2. Initial, Updated NSPs and Quarterly Reports are completed timely.

Education and Workforce Readiness

- One 15 year old youth placed with the FFA was not enrolled in school within three school days of placement. The youth was placed on April 16, 2013 and was not enrolled in school until April 25, 2013, five days late.

- According to the FFA representative, this was due to the school informing the certified foster parent that the youth needed to take an academic placement test before starting school. Additionally, the school did not have any available staff to administer the test and enroll the youth due to budget cuts. OHCMD brought this concern to the attention of DCFS Education Section.

  During the Exit Conference, the FFA representatives stated that the FFA will ensure all children placed with the FFA will be enrolled in school in a timely manner.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

3. All placed children/youth are enrolled in school within three school days of placement.

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

The OHCMD's last compliance report dated February 7, 2013, identified three recommendations.

Results

Based on OHCMD follow-up, the FFA fully implemented all three recommendations for which they were to ensure that:

- All certified foster parent homes remain in compliance with Title 22 Regulations.
- Annual vehicle maintenance for all certified foster parents or their designated drivers are completed.
- Safety inspections of all certified foster homes will be conducted at least every six months.

OHCMD will confirm that these recommendations have been implemented during our next visit to the FFA in June 2014 to provide technical assistance.

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

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

ASPIRAnet

Giving Hope. Empowering Community

ASPIRANET
LOS ANGELES
1043 Pine Ave.
Long Beach, CA
90813
tel: 310.535. 1500
fax: 310.647.2847
fax: 562.493.3753

ASPIRANET HQ
400 Oyster Point Blvd.
Suite No. 501
South San Francisco, CA
94080
tel: 650.866.4080
fax: 650.866.4081

ASPIRANET OFFICES
Antioch
Bakersfield
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Grover Beach
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San Bernardino
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San Jose
San Mateo
San Pablo
San Rafael
Santa Fe Springs
South San Francisco
Stockton
Turlock
Ventura
Visalia

Nestor Figueroa
Department of Children and Family Services
9320 Telstar Ave., Rm. 216
El Monte, CA 91731

November 21, 2013

Dear Mr. Figueroa,

This correspondence is confirmation of the Aspiranet FFA 2013 Compliance Review Corrective Action Plan.

Aspiranet will ensure that the Needs and Service Plans are completed by the due date which will be monitored through our database and supervision.

Aspiranet will complete the history of abuse with the Department of Children and Family Services, Out of Home Care Management Division before certifying a previously decertified foster home and will have the printed email from OHCMD as confirmation.

Aspiranet will communicate to designated school districts regarding AB490 to prevent future delays in school enrollment by the assigned school.

If you need any further clarification or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 310.535.1500.

Sincerely,

Andrea Helzer, MSW
District Director