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August 24, 2016

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

EGGLESTON FAMILY SERVICES 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 the Eggleston Family Services Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in December 2015. The FFA has two sites, one located in the First Supervisorial District and one office in the Second 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 optimal quality, culturally relevant treatment, placement, and post-placement services to children and their families under interim supervision by DCFS."

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 8 of 9 focus areas: Permanency, Placement Stability, Visitation, Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, Teamwork, and Tracking & Adjustment. The OHCMD noted an opportunity for improved performance in the focus area of Safety.

In May 2016, the OHCMD Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the FFA to discuss results of the QAR and to provide the FFA with technical support to address methods for improvement in the area of Safety. The FFA provided the attached approved Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) addressing the recommendation noted in this report.

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

PLB:KR
KDR:rds

Attachments

c: Sachi A. Hamai, Chief Executive Officer
John Naimo, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Clarence Brown, Executive Director, Eggleston Family Services FFA
Lajuannah Hills, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division
Lenora Scott, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division

EGGLESTON FAMILY SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW (QAR)
FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of the Eggleston Family Services Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in December 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 QAR focuses on the child's functioning during the most recent 30-day period and for Practice Indicators, the QAR 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 members, and three certified foster parents.

At the time of the QAR, the FFA supervised 108 DCFS placed children in 67 certified foster homes. The focus children's average number of placements was three, their overall average length of placement was 25 months, and their average age was 14. The focus children were randomly selected. None of the focus children were included as part of the sample for the Contract Administration Division's (CAD's) 2015-2016 Contract Compliance Review.

QAR SCORING

The FFA received a score for each focus areas based on information gathered from on-site visits, agency file reviews, DCFS court reports and updated case plans, interviews with the FFA staff, DCFS CSWs, service providers, and the focus 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 staff and certified foster parents ensure that the focus children are free of abuse, neglect and exploitation by others in his/her placement and other settings.	6	4 - Fair Safety Status	The focus children have a minimally safe living arrangement with the present caregivers. Protective strategies are at least minimally adequate in reducing risks of harm. The focus children are at least minimally free from danger in other settings.
Permanency - The degree to which the focus children are living with certified foster parents, who are likely to remain in this role until the focus children reach adulthood, or the focus children are in the process of returning home or transitioning to a permanent home and the focus children, the FFA staff, certified foster parents, DCFS CSWs and if applicable, Department of Probation Officers (DPOs) support the plan.	5	5 - Good Status	The focus children have substantial permanence. The focus children live in a family setting that the focus children, FFA staff, caregivers and team members have confidence will endure lifelong.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	FFA QAR Score	FFA QAR Rating
Placement Stability - The degree to which the FFA staff and certified foster parents ensure that the focus children's daily living, learning and work arrangements are stable and free from risk of disruptions. Known risks are being managed to achieve stability and reduce the probability of future disruptions.	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 past 30 days.
Visitation - The degree to which the FFA staff and certified foster parents support maintaining important connections with significant family members/Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFMs) through appropriate visitation and other means.	5	5 - Substantially Acceptable Maintenance of Visitation & Connections	Generally effective family connections are being sought for all significant family members/NREFMs through appropriate visits and other connecting strategies. All appropriate family members/NREFMs have regular visits.
Engagement - The degree to which the FFA staff and certified foster parents working with the focus children, their family members/NREFMs and other team members for the purpose of building a	5	5 - Good Engagement Efforts	To a strong degree, a rapport has been developed, such that the FFA staff, DCFS CSWs, DPOs (if applicable), caregivers and the focus children feel heard and respected. Reports

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	FFA QAR Score	FFA QAR Rating
genuine, trusting and collaborative working relationship with the ability to concentrate on the focus children's strengths and needs.			indicate that good, consistent efforts are being used.
Service Needs - The degree to which the FFA staff and certified foster parents involved with the focus children work toward ensuring the focus children's needs are met and identified services are being implemented and supported and are specifically tailored to meet the focus children'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 focus children's case plans. The services are generally helping the focus children make progress toward planned outcomes.
Assessment & Linkages - The degree to which the FFA staff and certified foster parents involved with the focus children and their family members/NREFMs understand the focus children's strengths, needs, preferences and underlying needs and services provided 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 is frequently updated.
Teamwork - The degree to which the "right people" for the focus children and their family members/NREFMs,	5	5 - Good Teamwork	The team contains most of the important supporters and decision-makers in the focus children's lives,

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	FFA QAR Score	FFA QAR Rating
have formed a working team that meets, talks and/or makes plans together.			including informal supports. The team has formed a good, dependable working system that meets, talks and/or plans together.
Tracking & Adjustment - The degree to which the FFA staff and certified foster parents involved with the focus children and their family members/NREFMs are carefully tracking the progress that the focus children are 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 is occurring.

OHCMD conducted the last QAR of the FFA in October 2014, and noted an opportunity for improvement in the focus area of Teamwork. In April 2015, the 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 this area. Based on the information below, it appears that the FFA showed improvement in the area of Teamwork on their 2015-2016 QAR. However, the OHCMD noted an opportunity for improvement in the area of Safety.

STATUS INDICATORS
(Measured over last 30 days)

Status Indicators	Safety	Permanency	Placement Stability	Visitation
2014-2015 Scores	6	5	6	5
2015-2016 Scores	4	5	5	5

In the area of Safety, the OHCMD found that the FFA showed efforts in ensuring the safety and supervision to the placed children. The FFA Director reported the FFA Social Workers conduct announced and unannounced weekly visit to the certified foster homes and monthly home inspections to ensure the homes are safe. Further, the FFA staff conducts thorough home inspections on every certified home every six months. The certified foster parents are trained in recognizing problems and situations that could place children in imminent danger,

and the FFA Social Workers train the certified foster parents on reporting of special incidents. Although the focus children reported they feel safe at the FFA and being supervised, and the DCFS CSWs did not report any concerns regarding the well-being of the focus children, there were two investigations of physical abuse allegations during the QAR review period. One referral alleged physical abuse of a placed child by his certified foster parent. The investigating DCFS CSW deemed the allegation inconclusive. The DCFS Out-of-Home Care Investigations Section (OHCIS) placed the certified foster home on an "Indefinite Hold" status due to substantiation of a prior referral of general neglect of a placed child. Subsequently, the certified foster home was involuntarily decertified by the FFA. The second investigation involved alleged physical abuse of a placed child by his certified foster parent. The investigation has not been concluded by the OHCIS. However, the placed child was removed from the certified foster home. None of the investigations involved the focus children. The focus children reported they felt safe at the certified foster homes, as they were supervised at all times.

In the areas of Permanency, Placement Stability, and Visitation, the FFA provides good quality services and stability to the focus children and ensures the maintenance of family connection through visitation. The FFA continues to support the focus children's permanency plans and collaborates with the DCFS CSWs to ensure the focus children's permanency plans are implemented. The permanency plan for two focus children is Planned Permanent Living Arrangement. Both focus children maintain regular contact with their family members. Additionally, for one of the focus children who is reaching the age of maturity in the near future, the FFA and the certified foster parents assist the child with preparation for self-sufficiency by teaching him to perform basic independent living tasks such as cooking, doing laundry and budgeting. The third focus child's permanency plan is Family Reunification. The certified foster parents and the FFA staff support the plan by encouraging consistent communication and ensuring regular family visits. The focus children's placements have been stable with no placement or school disruptions. One focus child shared that he has resided with his current certified foster parents for the past four years and he feels he is part of the family. The focus children reported they have a good relationship with their certified foster parents and the FFA Social Workers, and stated their needs are being met by the FFA and their certified foster parents.

The FFA ensures the focus children have regular weekly visits with their family members. One focus child has weekly monitored visits with his family members. His certified foster parents transport him to and from the designated meeting site. The second focus child has frequent visits with his siblings who are placed with the certified foster mother's sister, as they visit each other's homes often. In addition, the focus child has visits with his uncle, who is caring for his younger sibling. The third focus child has weekly unmonitored visits with her mother and sibling. The focus children's DCFS CSWs reported that the FFA and the certified foster parents are supportive of the focus children and ensure their needs are being met.

PRACTICE INDICATORS
(Measured over last 90 days)

Practice Indicators	Engagement	Service Needs	Assessment & Linkages	Teamwork	Tracking & Adjustment
2014-2015 Scores	5	5	5	4	5
2015-2016 Scores	5	5	5	5	5

In the areas of Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, and Tracking & Adjustment, the FFA continues to make good efforts to engage the focus children and key people in decisions that are being made for them. The focus children have developed a good rapport with their certified foster parents and feel comfortable communicating with their FFA Social Workers and DCFS CSWs. The foster children reported they can express their needs and concerns to them and believe they work together to ensure they are receiving the services and supports they need. The focus children felt they are treated as family members. One focus child's certified foster parent is very involved in the focus child's academic progress, as evidenced by her attending parent conferences, advocating for educational supports, such as tutoring services and monitoring the focus child's grades online. Further, the focus child is included in the certified foster family's activities and is participating in the upcoming Quincinera celebration for the certified foster parent's grandniece. Another focus child reported that he spends time with his certified foster father watching movies or going to the park during the foster father's day off. The certified foster father reported that he enjoys his interaction with the focus child and tries to give him good advice about education and life skills. The certified foster parents reported they have good communication with the focus children's family members, DCFS CSWs, and the FFA staff. The certified foster parents all reported they can count on the FFA for support, as the FFA staff is always available when they need assistance. The DCFS CSW of the focus children reported the FFA Social Workers maintain regular communication with them and provide them with updates on the focus children's progress.

There continues to be a good array of services available to the focus children. Intervention strategies identified in the case plan and Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) match the services that are being provided to the focus children. One focus child has been receiving special education services through her Individualized Education Plan and attends an after-school program. Additionally, the focus child participates in an art/recreational program through the local Boys and Girls Club, as well as weekly individual counseling. All three focus children are receiving tutoring to assist them in improving academically. The second focus child, who will soon be reaching the age of maturity, is receiving Individualized Transition Skills Program services. The focus child is assisted by a Transitional Development Specialist who provides him with educational and transitional supports, such as taking him to the library, assisting with school projects, and providing him with information necessary for self-sufficiency. The focus children reported participating in family-oriented activities, such as going to the movies, eating out at restaurants, hiking, and going to the park.

In the area of Teamwork, the OHCMD found that the FFA has implemented the 2014-2015 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to ensure teaming occurred between the FFA staff, the focus children, the certified foster parents, and key supporters. During the last QAR, the OHCMD found that there had not been any face-to-face team meetings where the focus children and key team members were present. To address this finding, the FFA trained the FFA Social Workers to invite the focus children and all key team members for a face-to-face team meeting at least every six months. More frequent team meetings will be conducted if there are challenges that may affect the focus children's overall progress. The OHCMD noted that the FFA Social Worker for each focus child have made attempts to schedule team meeting for the focus children and their key supporters. Further, the FFA Social Workers made efforts to conduct conjoint visits with the DCFS CSWs at the certified foster homes, in order to have a team meeting where all members are present. One DCFS CSW reported that the FFA Social Worker visited the certified foster home during the DCFS CSW's visit to the focus child, to meet face-to-face and discuss treatment planning with the focus child and his certified foster parents. The focus children's DCFS CSWs reported that the FFA Social Workers have contacted them to schedule team meetings.

The FFA continues to monitor and track the focus children's needs and progress in their certified foster homes and at school. The FFA Social Workers assess the focus children's needs and address concerns the focus children may have during their meetings with the focus children and their certified foster parents. The children's NSPs are reviewed and adjustments are made as deemed necessary. For example, when two of the focus children were performing below grade-level, tutoring services were requested to assist the focus children on improving their academic performance. The DCFS CSWs reported that the certified foster parents and the FFA Social Workers kept them informed regarding the focus children's progress and provide regular updates.

NEXT STEPS TO SUSTAIN SUCCESS AND OVERCOME CURRENT CHALLENGES

In December 2015, the OHCMD provided the FFA with technical support related to the CAD's 2015-2016 Contract Compliance Review findings in the areas of Licensure/Contract Requirements and Education and Workforce Readiness. Technical support was provided on how the FFA can ensure compliance with Title 22 Regulations and efforts to assist the placed children in improving their academic performance and are properly documented.

In May 2016, the Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the FFA to discuss the results of the QAR and to provide the FFA with technical support addressing methods on improving in the area of Safety. The FFA submitted the attached QIP. The OHCMD Quality Assurance staff will continue to provide ongoing technical support, training, and consultation to assist the FFA in implementing their QIP.

EGGLESTON FAMILY SERVICES

A FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY

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6/07/2016

Gladys Hidayat, M.S., Children Services Administrator I
Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD)
9320 Telstar Avenue, Suite # 216
El Monte, CA. 91731

RE: Quality Assurance Review 2015
Quality Improvement Plan

Dear Ms. Hidayat:

In December 2015, Department of Children and Family Services, Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OMCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of Eggleston Family Services Foster Family Agency. This review examined Eggleston Family Services' service delivery, as well as the overall safety and care provided to the youths in placement. The QAR assessed the following 9 focus areas: safety, permanency, placement stability, visitation, engagement, service needs, assessment and linkages, teamwork, and tracking and adjustment.

During the QAR, OHCMD found that Eggleston Family Services met the minimum acceptable score for 8 of the 9 indicators. The Safety focus area received a scoring of 4, indicating Fair Safety Status. Although the focus children had optimal safety status, the scoring reflected the FFA's overall safety status during the review period. There were 2 allegations of physical abuse made during this time, both of which were found to be inconclusive. However, one of these homes was placed on "Indefinite Hold" status due to a prior substantiated general neglect allegation. Consequently, this home was involuntarily decertified by the FFA.

In response to the 2015 Quality Assurance Review conducted by Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OMCMD), Eggleston Family Services is submitting the following Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to address the issue found.

Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)- SAFETY

Eggleston Family Services is committed to protecting our youths and securing their overall safety. Eggleston Family Services takes pride in the varied numerous efforts currently in place to ensure the youths' safety and wellbeing. However, Eggleston Family Services understands that additional efforts are necessary and crucial to obtain optimal outcomes.

With regards to investigative findings made by DCFS, Eggleston Family Services understands that inconclusive findings do not signify that the allegation did not occur, but rather that there was insufficient evidence to prove that the allegation occurred. Thus, in hopes of further securing our children's safety, it will be protocol that the FFA addresses each inconclusive finding with a corrective action plan to include training for the Certified Foster Parent specific to the allegations.

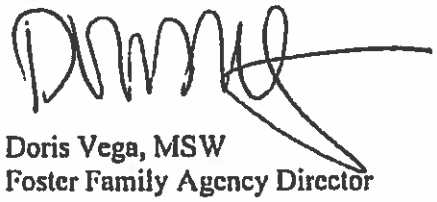
The QAR results and the QIP will be thoroughly discussed with Eggleston Family Services FFA Social Workers and Supervisor; the QIP will be implemented effective 6/15/2016.

Eggleston Family Services respectfully submits the above Quality Improvement Plan to address the issue noted as a result of our Quality Assurance Review. We hope that the above QIP, in addition to all other safety efforts currently in place, will help to improve the safety of the children placed in out-of-home care with Eggleston Family Services, thus we are looking forward to the implementation of the QIP.

On behalf of Eggleston Family Services, I would like to thank DCFS Out-of-Home Care Management Division, specifically our Quality Assurance Reviewer Gladys Hidayt, for the thorough review and feedback provided.

Should you have any questions or need further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me at (323) 954-1464 or via email at dvega@egglestonfamilyservices.org.

Sincerely,



Doris Vega, MSW
Foster Family Agency Director

Cc: Clarence Brown, Executive Director
Cassandra Gibson-Judkins, Assistant Executive Director