



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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March 11, 2011

TO: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **DANGERFIELD INSTITUTE OF URBAN PROBLEMS FOSTER FAMILY
AGENCY CONTRACT REVIEW – A DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN
AND FAMILY SERVICES PROVIDER**

We have completed a contract compliance review of Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency (Dangerfield or Agency), a Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) provider. The purpose of our review was to determine whether Dangerfield was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement and the County contract. We completed our review in April 2009 and conducted a follow-up review in May 2010.

DCFS contracts with Dangerfield, a private non-profit community-based organization to recruit, train and certify foster parents for supervising children DCFS places in foster care. Once the Agency places a child, it is required to monitor the placement until the child is discharged from the program. Dangerfield oversees 17 certified foster homes in which 35 DCFS children were placed at the time of our review. Dangerfield is located in the Second District. DCFS paid Dangerfield approximately \$700,000 and \$655,000 during Fiscal Years 2008-09 and 2009-10, respectively.

Results of Review

The foster children indicated that they enjoyed living with their foster parents and the foster parents indicated that the services they received from Dangerfield generally met their expectations. In addition, the Agency ensured that social workers' caseloads did not exceed the maximum established by California Department of Social Services'

(CDSS) Title 22 regulations. The Agency also ensured that staff possessed the required education and work experience, conducted hiring clearances, and provided ongoing training for staff working on the County contract. However, Dangerfield did not always ensure that foster homes complied with other County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations. For example:

- Two (67%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 did not adequately secure knives and cleaning solutions. This issue was also noted in our Dangerfield contract review report issued on July 26, 2007.

During our follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed that one (50%) of the two homes was now securing items that could pose a safety hazard to children. However, the other home still did not adequately secure knives and another home from our original review was no longer securing cleaning solutions.

Dangerfield's attached response indicates that they are now performing home inspections monthly and an independent consultant will perform home inspections semi-annually.

- One (33%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 did not have an operable smoke detector in the hallway leading to the children's bedroom as required.

During our follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed that home now had operable smoke detectors.

Dangerfield's attached response indicates that they will check smoke detectors during the monthly home inspections.

- One (33%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 was a second floor apartment and did not have an adequate means of escape in case of an emergency.

During our follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed that the second floor apartment now had an adequate means of escape from the second story.

Dangerfield's attached response indicates that the foster parent purchased a fire escape ladder to provide an adequate means of escape.

- One (33%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 was not air conditioned. The child's bedroom was extremely warm at the time of our visit and, in order to sleep at night, the child had to open the bedroom window, which posed a potential safety concern.

During or follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed that the home purchased fans and maintains a comfortable temperature for the children.

Dangerfield's attached response indicates that the foster parent purchased fans for the children's bedroom and that the Agency social workers will ensure the temperature at foster homes is comfortable during their visits.

- One (33%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 was not assessed by Dangerfield to ensure the foster parents could care for more than two children. At the time of our review, three children were placed in the home. This issue was also noted in our report issued on July 26, 2007.

During our follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed that the home was appropriately assessed.

Dangerfield's attached response indicates that they are implementing an assessment form and are using it as a tool to complete the required assessments.

- Three (60%) of the five Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) reviewed in 2009 were not approved by the DCFS social workers as required. This issue was also noted in our report issued on July 26, 2007.

During our follow-up review in 2010, all three additional NSPs reviewed were approved by the DCFS social workers.

Dangerfield's attached response indicates that they revised their protocol to ensure the NSPs are approved by the DCFS social workers.

- Three (60%) of the five NSPs reviewed in 2009 did not indicate that the children or the foster parents were offered the opportunity to participate in developing the NSPs.

During our follow-up review in 2010, all three additional NSPs reviewed indicated that the children or the foster parents were offered the opportunity.

Dangerfield's attached response indicates that they will ensure they have the children and the foster parents' signatures to document their participation.

- All five case files reviewed in 2009 did not have documentation that the children or their DCFS social workers were informed of the Agency's policies and procedures as required. This issue was also noted in our report issued on July 26, 2007.

During our follow-up review in 2010, all three additional case files reviewed did not have documentation that the children or their DCFS social worker were informed of the Agency's policies and procedures.

Dangerfield's attached response indicates that they now ensure the children and their DCFS social worker sign the Agency's policies and procedures to document that they were informed.

Details of our review, along with recommendations for corrective action, are attached.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with Dangerfield on November 18, 2010. In their attached response (Attachment I), Dangerfield management indicates the actions the Agency has taken or plans to take to implement the recommendations. We also notified DCFS of the results of our initial and follow-up reviews. In their responses to both reviews (Attachment II), DCFS indicates they will monitor the Agency for compliance with our recommendations.

We thank Dangerfield management for their cooperation and assistance during this review. Please call me if you have any questions or your staff may contact Don Chadwick at (213) 253-0301.

WLW:MMO:JET:DC:AA

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Antonia Jiménez, Acting Director, DCFS
Connie Dunn, Board of Directors, Dangerfield
Eloise Dangerfield, Executive Director, Dangerfield
Jean Chen, Community Care Licensing
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY PROGRAM
DANGERFIELD INSTITUTE OF URBAN PROBLEMS FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
FISCAL YEARS 2008-09 AND 2009-10**

BACKGROUND

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) pays Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency (Dangerfield or Agency) a negotiated monthly rate, per child placement, established by the California Department of Social Services' (CDSS) Foster Care Rates Bureau. Based on the child's age, Dangerfield receives between \$1,589 and \$1,865 per month, per child. Out of these funds, the Agency pays the foster parents between \$624 and \$790 per month, per child. DCFS paid Dangerfield approximately \$700,000 and \$655,000 during Fiscal Years (FY) 2008-09 and 2009-10, respectively.

PURPOSE/METHODOLOGY

The purpose of our review was to determine whether Dangerfield was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement and the County contract. We reviewed certified foster parent files, children's case files, personnel files and interviewed the Agency's staff. We also visited a number of certified foster homes and interviewed the children and the foster parents. We completed our review in April 2009 and conducted a follow-up review in May 2010.

BILLED SERVICES

Objective

Determine whether Dangerfield provided program services in accordance with their County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations.

Verification

We visited three of the 17 Los Angeles County certified foster homes that Dangerfield billed DCFS and interviewed three foster parents and seven foster children placed in the three homes. In addition, we reviewed the case files for three foster parents and five children and we reviewed the Agency's monitoring activity. During May 2010, we revisited three homes and reviewed additional case files for nine children.

Results

Dangerfield needs to ensure that foster homes are in compliance with the County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations. The Agency also needs to ensure that foster parent and children's case files and Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) have all the required information. In addition, the Agency needs to ensure that NSPs are completed timely and are approved by DCFS social workers. We specifically noted the following:

Foster Home Visitation

- Two (67%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 did not adequately secure knives and cleaning solutions. This issue was also noted in our Dangerfield contract review report issued on July 26, 2007.

During our follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed that one of the two homes was now securing items that could pose a safety hazard to children. However, the other home still did not adequately secure knives and another home from our original review was no longer securing cleaning solutions.

- One (33%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 did not have an operable smoke detector in the hallway leading to the children's bedroom as required.

During our follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed that home now had operable smoke detectors.

- Two (67%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 did not have a readily available disaster plan and an emergency contact list as required.

During our follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed the two homes now had an emergency contact list. However, one of the three homes from our original review no longer had a readily available disaster plan.

- One (33%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 had carpet that needed professional cleaning or replacement. In addition, the home's bathroom needed painting and the bathtub needed re-glazing.

During our follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed that the home now had carpet and bathrooms that were clean and in good condition. However, one of the other two homes from our original review now had carpet that needed professional cleaning or replacement.

- One (33%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 was a second floor apartment and did not have an adequate means of escape in case of an emergency.

During our follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed that the second floor apartment now had an adequate means of escape from the second story.

- One (33%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 had a hallway leading to the children's bedroom that was obstructed by boxes and other items.

During our follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed that the home now had indoor passageways that were free from clutter, clothing and boxes as required.

- One (33%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 was not air conditioned. The child's bedroom was extremely warm at the time of our visit and, in order to sleep at night, the child had to open the bedroom window, which posed a potential safety concern.

During our follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed that the home purchased fans and maintains a comfortable temperature for the children.

- One (33%) of the three homes reviewed in 2009 was not assessed by Dangerfield to ensure the foster parents could care for more than two children. At the time of our review, three children were placed in the home. This issue was also noted in our report issued on July 26, 2007.

During our follow-up review in 2010, we confirmed that the home was appropriately assessed.

Needs and Services Plans

- One (20%) of the five NSPs reviewed in 2009 was completed 59 days late.

During our follow-up review in 2010, all three additional NSPs reviewed were completed timely.

- Three (60%) of the five NSPs reviewed in 2009 were not approved by the DCFS social workers as required. This issue was also noted in our report issued on July 26, 2007.

During our follow-up review in 2010, all three additional NSPs reviewed were approved by the DCFS social workers.

- Three (60%) of the five NSPs reviewed in 2009 did not indicate that the children or the foster parents were offered the opportunity to participate in developing the NSPs.

During our follow-up review in 2010, all three additional NSPs reviewed indicated that the children or the foster parents were offered the opportunity.

- One (20%) of the five NSPs reviewed in 2009 did not have goals that were measurable and specific to the child. This issue was also noted in our report issued on July 26, 2007.

During our follow-up review in 2010, all three additional NSPs had appropriate goals.

Children's Case Files

- All five case files reviewed in 2009 did not have documentation that the children or their DCFS social worker were informed of the Agency's policies and procedures as required. This issue was also noted in our report issued on July 26, 2007.

During our follow-up review in 2010, all three additional case files reviewed did not have documentation that the children or their DCFS social worker were informed of the Agency's policies and procedures.

Recommendations

Dangerfield management ensure:

- 1. Staff adequately monitor foster homes to ensure they comply with the County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations.**
- 2. Foster parents adequately secure knives, cleaning solutions and other items that could pose a safety hazard to children.**
- 3. Foster homes have operable smoke detectors in the hallways leading to the children's bedrooms.**
- 4. Foster parents have written disaster plans and readily available emergency numbers.**
- 5. Foster homes have an adequate means of escape from the second story of the home in case of an emergency.**
- 6. Foster homes are well-maintained with acceptable housekeeping.**
- 7. Foster homes maintain a comfortable temperature for children.**
- 8. Assessments are completed for homes where more than two children are placed.**
- 9. NSPs are completed timely and approved by the DCFS social worker.**
- 10. Children and foster parents are offered the opportunity to participate in developing the NSPs.**
- 11. NSPs contain all the required information including goals that are individualized to the children and measurable.**
- 12. The children and the DCFS social workers receive a comprehensive overview of the Agency's policies and procedures.**

CLIENT VERIFICATION

Objective

Determine whether the program participants received the services that Dangerfield billed to DCFS.

Verification

We interviewed seven children placed in three Dangerfield certified foster homes and three foster parents to confirm the services the Agency billed to DCFS.

Results

The foster children indicated that they enjoyed living with their foster parents and the foster parents indicated that the services they received from the Agency generally met their expectations.

Recommendation

None.

STAFFING/CASELOAD LEVELS

Objective

Verify that Dangerfield social workers' caseloads do not exceed 15 placements and that the supervising social worker does not supervise more than six social workers as required by the County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations.

Verification

We interviewed Dangerfield's administrator and reviewed caseload statistics and payroll records for the Agency's social workers and supervising social worker.

Results

Dangerfield's three social workers carried an average caseload of 12 cases and the Agency's supervising social worker supervised three social workers.

Recommendation

None.

STAFFING QUALIFICATIONS**Objective**

Determine whether Dangerfield's staff possess the education and work experience qualifications required by their County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations. In addition, determine whether the Agency conducted hiring clearances prior to hiring their staff and provided ongoing training to staff.

Verification

We interviewed Dangerfield's administrator and reviewed each staff's personnel file for documentation to confirm their education and work experience qualifications, hiring clearances and ongoing training.

Results

Dangerfield's staff possessed the required education and work experience and the Agency conducted hiring clearances and provided ongoing training for staff working on the County contract.

Recommendation

None.

PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP**Objective**

Determine the status of the recommendations reported in the prior Auditor-Controller monitoring review.

Verification

We verified whether the outstanding recommendations from the FY 2006-07 monitoring review were implemented. The report was issued on July 26, 2007.

Results

The July 26, 2007 monitoring report had 11 recommendations. As indicated above, the findings related to five recommendations in this report were also noted in the July 26, 2007 report.

During our follow-up review in 2010, Dangerfield had fully implemented eight recommendations from our July 26, 2007 report. Of the remaining three recommendations, one was partially implemented and two were not implemented.

Recommendation

13. Dangerfield management fully implement the outstanding recommendations from the prior monitoring report.

November 18, 2010

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

J. Tyler McCauley, Auditor Controller

Elouise Dangerfield, CEO
Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency

Subject: Response to Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency Contract Review

The following is Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency response to the findings and recommendations made by the Auditor-Controller / Countywide Contract Monitoring Division during their contract compliance review.

1. Ensure that staff adequately monitor foster homes to ensure they comply with the County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations.

Agency Social Workers will continue to receive ongoing training that focuses on their role and responsibility in ensuring foster homes are in compliance with Title 22 regulations and County contract requirements. For example, in mid-December there will be a Quality Assurance In-Service to provide Agency Social Workers with additional training on Title 22 regulations and conducting home inspections. Further, monthly home inspections to assess the condition of the foster homes will now be required in addition to the expected quarterly walk-thru and documented on Foster Family Agency Visit Log. Any deficiencies will immediately be addressed by Agency Social Workers. A plan of correction with due date will be devised and a copy provided to the foster parent, FFA Supervisor, and Administrator. In weekly team meetings, FFA Supervisor as well as Administrator will be kept abreast of compliance issues, deficiencies, and Corrective Action Plans. Additionally, Administrator, Lorrie Irving will be conducting home visits in January 2010 and February 2010 to assess the condition of all Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems foster family homes.

- 2. Ensure that foster parent adequately secure knives, detergents, cleaning solutions, and other items that could pose a safety hazard to children.**

A Quality Assurance consultant not associated with Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency will be conducting foster home inspections twice per year. Findings of home inspections will be documented and provided to FFA Supervisor, Administrator, and case carrying Agency Social Worker. Any deficiencies will be corrected within a specified time frame such as within 5 days and depending on the nature of the deficiency. Formal home inspections will continue to be performed by Agency Social Workers on a quarterly basis and documented on Quarterly Home Inspection Check-List serving as evidence that foster homes are in compliance with Title 22 regulations and County contract requirements. As mentioned, Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency will now be implementing monthly home inspections of foster homes. Foster parents will continue to receive ongoing, additional monthly training in the area of maintaining the physical safety of their homes to include proper storage of cleaning chemicals, cleaning solutions, disinfectants, poisons, and other items that could pose a safety hazard to children in their care. All razors, knives, and other sharp or hazardous equipment will be kept in a locked inaccessible area. Agency Social Workers will routinely check kitchens, washing rooms, bathrooms, and cabinets to ensure safety and accident prevention in the foster homes.

- 3. Ensure foster homes have operable smoke detectors in the hallways leading to the children's bedrooms.**

When conducting monthly and quarterly home inspections, Agency Social Workers will check all smoke detectors in the foster home to make sure they are operating properly as well as to ensure they are centrally located (i.e., smoke detectors are located near each facility bedroom). At monthly and quarterly home inspections as well as annual recertification, Certified Family Home Checklist for Fully Functioning Smoke Detectors form will be completed and utilized as a tool to ensure there are adequate number of smoke detectors in the home and they are fully functioning.

- 4. Ensure that all foster parents have written disaster plans and posted emergency numbers.**

Effective January 1, 2010, all foster parents will be expected to fill out and complete new Emergency Disaster Plans as well as Emergency Plan for Foster Family Homes. Updated emergency and disaster plans will be reviewed by Agency Social Workers and returned to foster parents to post in their homes. A copy of the updated plans will be filed in the foster parents' charts. In the month of January 2010, Agency Social Workers will verify that these forms are in fact posted and document findings on Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency Visit Log.

5. **Ensure that foster homes have an adequate means of escape from the second story of the home in case of emergency.**

With regard to the foster home that did not have an emergency plan of exit from a second floor apartment in case of an emergency, foster parent has purchased a fire escape ladder.

6. **Ensure that foster homes are well-maintained with acceptable housekeeping.**

Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency expects every foster parent to maintain a healthy and safe environment that includes floor and floor coverings clean and in good repair. To ensure the physical environment of the foster home is well-maintained, Agency Social Workers will conduct monthly and quarterly home inspections. As previously mentioned, a Quality Assurance consultant will be working with Agency Social Workers to assist in identifying and correcting deficiencies in the foster homes. With respect to one of the three foster homes visited, carpet was professionally cleaned, bathroom was painted, and the bathtub was re-glazed as advised.

7. **Ensure foster homes maintain a comfortable temperature for children as required by CDSS Title 22 regulations.**

At weekly home visits, Agency Social Workers will make sure the temperature in the foster homes is comfortable. If determined too hot, air conditioning units will be checked and/or fans will be purchased by the foster parent. If determined too cool, heaters will be assessed to make sure they are in good working condition and/or portable space heaters will be purchased by the foster parent. With respect to the home called into question, foster parent purchased fans for the children's bedroom.

8. **Ensure foster home assessments are completed for homes where more than two children are placed.**

FFA Supervisor and Agency Social Workers are responsible for evaluating a foster parent's capacity and ability to care for more than two children. Generally, Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency takes into account the nature of the foster parent's parenting skills and level of experience, whether or not the foster parent has additional assistance, and focuses on the placement of sibling sets. A Foster Parent Evaluation form is currently being implemented and used as a tool to determine if more than two children should be placed in any given foster home. Agency Social Workers are responsible for completing the assessment and the FFA Supervisor reviews the evaluation form prior to placements as well as retroactively.

- 9. Ensure Needs and Services Plans are completed within the timeframes specified in the County contract and are approved by the DCFS social worker.**

Agency Social Workers continue to be held responsible for completing Needs and Services Plans within the timeframe specified in the County contract. An initial Needs and Services Plan is completed within thirty days of a foster child's initial date of placement. Thereafter, Needs and Services Plans are updated every three months. Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency has a revised the protocol to ensure that Plans are completed within specified timeframes. FFA Supervisor is now to have Agency Social Workers submit Needs and Services Plans five days prior to the due date. FFA Supervisor will review the Needs and Services Plans utilizing a Quality Assurance Needs and Services Plan form. If there are any corrections to be made prior to the Plan being forwarded to DCFS social worker, the Plan will be returned to Agency Social Worker with QA form. Agency Social Worker will have approximately two days to make revisions and resubmit to FFA Supervisor. FFA Supervisor will monitor timeframes by logging due dates of all Needs and Services Plans and provide a copy to Agency Social Worker. As proof that timeframes are met, Agency Social Worker will fax Plans to DCFS social worker and place receipt of fax with date in foster children's files.

- 10. Ensure children and foster parents are offered the opportunity to Participate in the development of the Needs and Services Plans.**

Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency makes every attempt to actively recruit foster children, foster parents, and DCFS social workers in the development and modification of the Needs and Services Plans. Agency Social Workers will continue to be responsible for reviewing with foster children and their foster parents' the Needs and Services Plans, and obtaining appropriate signatures. All Needs and Services Plans will be submitted to and reviewed by FFA Supervisor. FFA Supervisor will make sure that all Plans have necessary signatures prior to being forwarded to DCFS social worker that includes foster children and foster parents.

- 11. Ensure that Needs and Services Plans contain all required information including goals that are individualized to the children and measurable.**

Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems Foster Family Agency continues to work with Agency Social Workers on the proper writing of Needs and Services Plans particularly the development of specific, measurable, and time limited goals. In an effort to ensure Plans contain all pertinent information and contain individualized, appropriate goals, additional training will be provided to Agency Social Workers. In mid-December 2009, FFA Supervisor

will meet with social work staff to review Needs and Services Plans and focus on making goals specific and measureable. In addition, on 1/12/2010, one personnel from Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems FFA will attend DCFS Needs and Services Plan Training.

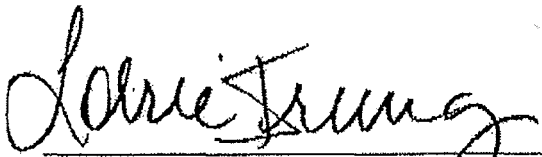
12. Ensure children and the DCFS social workers receive a comprehensive overview of the Agency's policies.

At the time of initial placement, Agency Social Workers will make sure that foster children (age and maturity level permitting), foster parents, and DCFS social workers have an opportunity to review, discuss, and sign FFA policies such as Foster Youth Bill of Rights, House Rules, Discipline Practices, and Grievance/Complaint and Discharge Procedures. All parties will receive a copy of FFA policies and signed copies will be placed in the foster children's and foster parents' files. During routine, internal audits of foster children's and foster parents' files, agency staff will ensure that all policies have been reviewed and signed by foster children, foster parents, and DCFS social workers. In the event that the policies have not been signed, appropriate signatures will be obtained. For example, Agency Social Workers will fax a copy of the policies to DCFS Social Workers and place receipt of fax and attempt in the foster children's file.

13. Prior Year Follow Up

Please see our results to recommendations 2,6,7,8,10 for our plan to implement the outstanding recommendations from Fiscal year 2006-2007 monitoring report

We are working on implementing the remaining outstanding recommendations 2, 6, and 12 from Fiscal year 2006 to 2007.



Lorrie Irving, Administrator
Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems FFA

1/18/2010

Date

cc: Board of Directors



PATRICIA S. PLOEHN, LCSW
Director

**County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, California 90020
(213) 351-5502

February 5, 2010

TO: Aggie Alonso, Chief Accountant-Auditor
Countywide Contract Monitoring Division

FROM: Elizabeth A. Howard, Section Head *EAH*
Out of Home Care Management Division
Foster Family Agency/Group Home Performance Management

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District
MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District
ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District
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Fourth District
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

**DCFS RESPONSE TO THE AUDITOR CONTROLLER'S CONTRACT REVIEW OF
DANGERFIELD FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY**

The Auditor Controller's Contract Review of Dangerfield Foster Family Agency was conducted in March/April 2009. The Out of Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) received the Auditor-Controller's (A-C) January 7, 2010 final draft report of the contract compliance review on January 7, 2010. The DCFS monitor reviewed the report on January 22, 2010.

The A-C review found no egregious findings which rose to the level of a referral to the Child Protection Hotline. The report, however, noted that two homes failed to adequately secure knives, detergents and cleaning solutions; one home had an inoperable smoke detector; one home did not have an adequate means of escape from a two-story apartment building; and one home was not air-conditioned. The Agency's approved Corrective Action Plan (CAP) of December 9, 2009 addresses each of the aforementioned physical plant deficiencies. In addition, OHCMD will conduct a follow up review to determine full implementation of the Agency's approved CAP. The A-C's report stated all five case files reviewed were missing documentation such as a comprehensive overview of the Agency's policies signed by the appropriate parties. Additionally, several Needs and Services Plans/Quarterly Reports (NSPs) were found deficient. OHCMD provided NSP/Quarterly Report training to all providers on January 12, 2010.

The Auditor Controller approved Dangerfield FFA's CAP dated December 9, 2009 which includes the agency's plan to conduct monthly, quarterly and additional home inspections by the Administrator to ensure well-maintained, hazard free home conditions. The CAP also addresses additional staff training and closer supervision to ensure that all case files contain the required documentation and comprehensive NSPs.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

**DCFS RESPONSE TO THE AUDITOR CONTROLLER'S CONTRACT REVIEW OF
DANGERFIELD FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
PAGE 2**

A staff from the Agency participated in the NSP/Quarterly Report training provided by OHCMD on January 12, 2010.

The Out of Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) will conduct an unannounced follow-up review based on the A-C's recommendations within six months after the issuance of the A-C's final report.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (626) 569-6804.

MG:EAH:EK

c: Brian Mahan, CEO, Children & Families Well-Being Cluster
Wendy L. Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Patricia Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Lisa Parrish, Deputy Director, DCFS



PATRICIA S. PLOEHN, LCSW
Director

**County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, California 90020
(213) 351-5602

December 2, 2010

TO: Aggie Alonso, Chief Accountant-Auditor
Countywide Contract Monitoring Division

FROM:  Elizabeth A. Howard, Section Head
Out of Home Care Management Division
Foster Family Agency/Group Home Performance Management

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District
MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District
ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
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**DCFS RESPONSE TO THE AUDITOR CONTROLLER'S CONTRACT REVIEW OF
DANGERFIELD FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY**

The Auditor Controller's (A-C) Contract Review of Dangerfield Foster Family Agency was conducted in March/April 2009. The Out of Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) received the Auditor-Controller's January 7, 2010 initial final draft report of the contract compliance review on January 7, 2010. The DCFS monitor reviewed the report on January 22, 2010, and provided the response letter to the A-C on February 5, 2010.

The A-C's January 7, 2010 review found no egregious findings which rose to the level of a referral to the Child Protection Hotline. The report, however, noted that two homes failed to adequately secure knives, detergents and cleaning solutions; one home had an inoperable smoke detector; one home did not have an adequate means of escape from a two-story apartment building; and one home was not air-conditioned. The Agency's approved Corrective Action Plan (CAP) of December 9, 2009 addresses each of the aforementioned physical plant deficiencies. Additionally, the A-C's report stated all five case files reviewed were missing documentation such as a comprehensive overview of the Agency's policies signed by the appropriate parties. Several Needs and Services Plans/Quarterly Reports (NSPs) were found deficient. OHCMD provided NSP/Quarterly Report training to all providers on January 12, 2010.

The A-C approved Dangerfield FFA's initial CAP dated December 9, 2009 which includes the Agency's plan to conduct monthly, quarterly and additional home inspections by the Administrator to ensure well-maintained, hazard free home conditions. The CAP also addresses additional staff training and closer supervision to ensure that all case files contain the required documentation and comprehensive NSPs. A staff from the Agency participated in the NSP/Quarterly Report training provided by OHCMD on January 12, 2010.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

**DCFS RESPONSE TO THE AUDITOR CONTROLLER'S CONTRACT REVIEW OF
DANGERFIELD FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
PAGE 2**

On November 18, 2010, the A-C informed OHCMD that they conducted a follow up review in May, 2010, and provided DCFS with an updated draft report dated November 18, 2010 along with the approved updated CAP from Dangerfield FFA also dated November 18, 2010. The A-C's May, 2010 follow up review found no egregious findings which rose to the level of a referral to the Child Protection Hotline. The follow up review reflects that the A-C verified the implementation of their recommendations in most of the areas of concerns. The remaining findings indicate that two homes did not adequately secure knives, detergents and cleaning solutions; one home did not have a disaster plan; one home had carpet that needed professional cleaning or replacement; and three case files did not have documentation that the children or their DCFS CSWs were informed of the Agency's policies and procedures.

The OHCMD will continue to monitor the Agency's full compliance with the State regulations including the remaining non-implemented A-C's recommendations within six months after the issuance of the A-C's final report.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (626) 569-6804.

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c: Brian Mahan, CEO, Children & Families Well-Being Cluster
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