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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February 8, 2016

To: Supervisor Hilda Solis, Chair
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From: Phillip 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 Eggleston Family Services Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in October 2014. The FFA has two offices, one located in the First Supervisorial District and one located in the Second Supervisorial District and provides services to the County of Los Angeles DCFS placed children and youth. According to the FFA's program statement, its stated mission is, "to provide 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: Safety, Permanency, Placement Stability, Visitation, Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, and Tracking & Adjustment. OHCMD noted opportunities for improved performance in the focus area of Teamwork.

The FFA provided the attached approved Quality Improvement Plan addressing the recommendations noted in this report. In April 2015, 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 Teamwork.

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

PLB:EM:KR:rds

Attachments

c: Sachi A. Hamai, Chief Executive Officer
John Naimo, Auditor Controller
Public Information Officer
Audit Committee
Clarence Brown, Chief Executive Officer, Eggleston Family Services Foster Family Agency
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 2014-2015

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of Eggleston Family Services Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in October 2014. The purpose of the QAR is to assess the FFA's service delivery and to ensure that the FFA is providing children with quality care and services in a safe environment, which includes physical care, social and emotional support, education and workforce readiness, and other services to protect and enhance their growth and development.

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

Status Indicators:

- Safety
- Permanency
- Placement Stability
- Visitation

Practice Indicators:

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

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

For the purpose of this QAR, interviews were conducted with three focus children, two Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Children's Social Workers (CSWs), three Certified Foster Parents (CFPs), three FFA social workers, and one FFA administrator.

At the time of the QAR, the placed children's average number of placements was three, their overall average length of placement was 30 months and their average age was 15.

QAR SCORING

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

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	FFA Agency Score	FFA QAR Rating
Safety - The degree to which the FFA ensures that the child is free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation by others in his/her placement and other settings.	6	6	**Optimal Safety Status** - The children are optimally and consistently avoiding behaviors that cause harm to self, others, or the community and are free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and/or intimidation in placement.
Permanency - The degree to which the child is living with caregivers, who are likely to remain in this role until the child reaches adulthood, or the child is in the process of returning home or transitioning to a permanent home and the child, the FFA staff, caregivers and CSW, supports the plan.	5	5	**Optimal Status** - Children have substantial permanence. The children live in a family setting that the child, FFA staff, caregivers, caseworker, and team members have confidence will endure lifelong.
Placement Stability - The degree to which the FFA ensures that the child's daily living, learning, and work arrangements are stable and free from risk of disruptions and known risks are being managed to achieve stability and reduce the probability of future disruption.	5	6	**Optimal Stability -** The children have optimal stability in placement settings and enjoy positive and enduring relationships with primary caregivers, key adult supporters, and peers. There is no history of instability over the past 12 months and little likelihood of future disruption.
Visitation - The degree to which the FFA staff support important connections being maintained through appropriate visitation.	5	5	**Substantially Acceptable Maintenance of Visitation & Connections -** Generally effective family connections are being sought for all significant family/ Non-Related Extended Family Member (NREFM) through appropriate visits and other connecting strategies. All appropriate family/NREFM have regular visits.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	FFA Agency Score	FFA QAR Rating
Engagement - The degree to which the FFA staff working with the child, biological family, extended family and other team members for the purpose of building a genuine, trusting and collaborative working relationship with the ability to focus on the child strengths and needs.	5	5	**Good Engagement Efforts** - To a strong degree, a rapport has been developed, such that the FFA staff, DCFS CSW, certified foster parent and the children feel heard and respected.
Service Needs - The degree to which the FFA staff involved with the child, work toward ensuring the child's needs are met and identified services are being implemented and supported and are specifically tailored to meet the child's unique needs.	5	5	**Good Supports & Services Needs** - A good and substantial array of supports and services substantially matches intervention strategies identified in the case plan. The services are generally helping the children make progress toward planned outcomes. A usually dependable combination of informal and formal supports and services is available, appropriate, used, and seen as generally satisfactory.
Assessment & Linkages - The degree to which the FFA staff involved with the child and family understand the child's strengths, needs, preferences, and underlying issues and services are regularly assessed to ensure progress is being made toward case plan goals.	5	5	**Good Assessment and Understanding** - The children's functioning and support systems are generally understood. Information necessary to understand the children's strengths, needs, and preferences is frequently updated. Present strengths, risks, and underlying needs requiring intervention or supports are substantially recognized and well understood.
Teamwork - The degree to which the "right people" for the child and family, have formed a working team that meets, talks, and makes plans together.	5	4	**Minimally Adequate to Fair Teamwork** - The team contains most of the important supporters and decision makers in the children's lives, including informal supports. The team has formed a good, dependable working system that meets, talks, and plans together.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	FFA Agency Score	FFA QAR Rating
Tracking & Adjustment - The degree to which the FFA staff who is involved with the child and family is carefully tracking the progress that the child is making, changing family circumstances, attainment of goals and planned outcomes.	5	5	**Good Tracking and Adjustment Process** - Intervention strategies, supports, and services being provided to the children are generally responsive to changing conditions. Frequent monitoring, tracking, and communication of children's status and service results to the team are occurring. Generally successful adaptations are based on a basic knowledge of what things are working and not working for the children.

STATUS INDICATORS
(Measured over last 30 days)

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

Safety (6 Optimal Status)

Safety Overview: The FFA's administration ensures that children feel safe in placement. All three focus children reported that the Certified Foster Homes (CFHs) are a safe place to live. The first focus child reports that she feels very safe with her current CFP and she truly feels like she is at "home". The second focus child reported that he knows that his CFP really cares about him. The focus child did not report any safety concerns. The third focus child reported that she feels safe in her current CFH and wants to remain placed with her CFP because she can count on her for everything. The third focus child and her CFP indicated that she is never left unsupervised.

All three CFPs reported that constant training is afforded to them, specifically addressing safety issues as well as constant reminders regarding Special Incident Report (SIR) reporting guidelines and reporting SIRs timely. The FFA did not submit any SIRs through the I-Track database during the past 30 days.

Both of the DCFS CSWs reported that they had no safety concerns regarding the FFA's CFHs. The DCFS CSWs and the FFA staff report that the focus children have a highly safe living situation with fully reliable and competent caregivers who protect the placed children well at all times.

Permanency (5 Good Status)

Permanency Overview: The FFA is providing substantial permanence for each of the focus children. All of the focus children live in family settings where the key people believe the relationship will endure and the permanency goals are supported.

The first focus child's permanent plan is Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (PPLA) with her CFP until she transitions out of care. She has applied to a few local junior colleges and a university; at the time of the QAR, she had not received an acceptance letter.

The permanent plan for the second focus child is also PPLA. The focus child and his CFP refer to each other as "Dad" and "Son". Legal guardianship is being considered as a possible plan by the focus child, his CFP, the DCFS CSW and the FFA social worker.

The third focus child is receiving family reunification services, but a concurrent plan has not been identified. According to the focus child's most recent Needs and Services Plan (NSP), due to absence of appropriate family members the FFA social worker is recommending that she remain placed in her current CFH with her current CFP. The focus child also reported that she does not want to live anywhere else but with her current caregiver. The CFP is in agreement with the focus child, and states that she may remain with her until she transitions out of care.

Placement Stability (6 Optimal Stability)

Placement Stability Overview: The FFA has provided optimal stability for the focus children and there have been no recent disruptions. Each of the focus children shared positive and supportive relationships with their certified foster parents.

The first focus child has remained in the CFH for six years and feels that this is her home. Her CFP shared that the focus child will always have a home with her. The second focus child has remained in the CFH for three years and his CFP continues to advocate for him. His CFP stated that he will only take one child at a time in his home because he wants to give each child his undivided attention. The third focus child has been placed in her current CFH for approximately 16 months. Her CFP has maintained a steadfast commitment with both her and her sister.

The FFA has been able to manage known risks to achieve stability and reduce the probability of future placement disruption. When the second focus child was in need of a placement, the FFA was able to match him with his current foster father. While in his last placement, the second focus child was frequently getting into trouble at school, being disruptive, refusing to follow instructions and walking out of class without permission. Since being placed with his current caregiver, school related problems have diminished and the focus child has had only one incident with a peer at school during the last quarter.

Visitation (5 Substantially Acceptable Maintenance of Visitation & Connections)

Visitation Overview: The FFA is providing generally effective family connections for the focus children. At the time of placement, the FFA staff obtains information from the DCFS CSWs on the visitation orders of the court for the placed children. The FFA seeks to arrange visitation with all parties as required in the court order and has sought to establish, maintain and support important family connections for all of the placed children.

The first focus child has visits with siblings; however, she is not interested in visiting with them at this time as they are not stable. The second focus child has had sporadic visits with his aunt and cousins. His CFP provides transportation to the visits. The second focus child's relatives have attended his football games and his middle school graduation. Although the third focus child is receiving family

reunification services, she has no desire to visit with her parents. Despite attempts made, the DCFS CSW, FFA social worker and her CFP are unable to motivate her to visiting with her parents. The third focus child remembers what brought her into the system and reported that her parents have disappointed her too many times. The focus child has been able to visit with an aunt and her younger siblings during the holidays and summer months maintaining some familial connections. The FFA social worker, DCFS CSW and the CFP continue to encourage her to call her mom particularly on holidays such as Mother's Day and Christmas.

When visitation is not a viable option due to outside circumstances, the FFA and the treatment teams encourage and support alternative methods of communication in order to maintain important connections such as telephone calls, texting, and social media.

PRACTICE INDICATORS

(Measured over last 90 days)

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

Engagement (5 Good Engagement Efforts)

Engagement Overview: The FFA has established a rapport with the key parties, including some family members. Each of the focus children and CFPs feel that their voices are heard. All of the focus children reported they are able to confide with key FFA staff members as needed to discuss their issues or concerns. The first focus child reported that her CFP really listens to her. She feels like she is able to speak for herself, which makes her feel like she is important and is being heard.

The DCFS CSW for the second focus child stated that the FFA staff, the CFP and the focus child's attorney advocated for the focus child to begin the process of transitioning from a non-public high school to a regular high school. As a result of their collective efforts, the second focus child is now splitting his time attending both a non-public and regular high school.

The third focus child feels like she is being heard by both the CFP and her DCFS CSW because they encourage her, but are not forcing her to see her mother. At the same time, the FFA social worker has tried to express to the focus child's parents, her feelings and reservation regarding visitation.

Service Needs (5 Good Supports & Services)

Service Needs Overview: The FFA has a substantial array of supports and services that match intervention strategies identified in each focus child's case plan.

The first focus child has been receiving special education services through her Individualized Education Plan. She is also participating in a sports medicine at her school. The focus child is also receiving tutoring in Math to assist her to improve academically. She was enrolled in an Independent Living Program and also participated in the college tour at a University.

The second focus child has been participating in therapy to address behavioral problems at school, anger management and family issues. The focus child attends a non-public school for the first part of the day and then attends a regular public high school for his 6th and 7th period classes, which allows

him to be able to participate in the high school football team; the focus child's CFP and his attorney were extremely instrumental with ensuring that he felt supported and heard.

The third focus child participated in the summer reading program, where she read over 15 books to help her prepare for college. Her FFA social worker reported that she is polite, respectful, well-mannered and loving towards others. The FFA social worker also reported that the focus child has established a healthy and constructive relationship with her CFP. Her CFPs reported that they have a great support system from the FFA because they have access to the FFA social workers around the clock, so if anything ever arises they are never "alone". The CFPs also reported that the FFA social workers return telephone calls expeditiously.

The FFA services are generally helping each of the focus children make progress toward their planned outcomes, such as, graduating high school, playing high school football and participating in a summer reading program to help prepare for entrance to a University.

Assessment & Linkages (5 Good Assessments and Understanding)

Assessment & Linkages Overview: The FFA generally understood the focus children's functioning and support systems. Information necessary to understand the strengths, needs and choices of the focus children are frequently updated. The DCFS CSWs and the CFPs stated that the FFA always kept them abreast as to any updates on the focus children. The first focus child's CFP, DCFS CSW and the FFA social worker all agree and understand what needs to take place in order to work toward the first focus child enrolling in college once her Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores have been received. The CFP for the second focus child had a very good understanding of what the focus child needs and enjoys. His CFP purchased model planes and cars, which the focus child reported he enjoyed putting together. The third focus child's CFP reports that she pays very close attention to the focus child in order to be able to meet her needs. The CFP reported that the focus child loves to play basketball and prepare meals. Her CFP also reported that the focus child wants consistency in her life and wants to know that people mean what they say.

Tracking & Adjustment (5 Good Tracking and Adjustment Process)

Tracking & Adjustment Overview: The FFA has provided intervention strategies, supports and services that are generally responsive to changing conditions for each of the focus children. The FFA utilizes various tools for monitoring and tracking services being provided to the focus children including meetings with key parties, logs and NSP.

The first focus child continues to thrive and function at a high level in her CFH. The most recent NSP reports that she has maintained positive adjustments in their home and wishes to remain there until she transitions out of care. Her CFPs report they are very pleased with how the focus child conducts herself in their home and they have bonded with her positively. The first focus child is scheduled to graduate from high school in June 2015. She has taken her SATs and has also submitted college applications for admission.

The second focus child continues to be well adjusted in his placement. Although there were some behavioral concerns during the last 90 days, the FFA social worker and the focus child's CFP spoke to him regarding his negative behavior. The FFA social worker invited the treatment team and the therapist to meet with the focus child. Per his NSP, the meeting was successful as the treatment

team was able to redirect the focus child and motivate him to change his behavior which helped him better adjust to his current living situation.

In regard to the third focus child's case, frequent monitoring, tracking, and communication of the focus child's status and services are occurring, they are being tracked by the FFA. The FFA social worker indicated that she tracks strategies, supports and services by using case notes, contact logs and supervision meetings with her supervisor.

What's Not Working Now and Why (Score/Narrative of Opportunities for Improvement)

Teamwork (4 Minimally Adequate to Fair Teamwork)

Teamwork Overview: The FFA involves some of the important supporters in each of the focus children's lives. There is constant communication between the CFPs, FFA social worker and the DCFS CSW. The members of the focus children's team have been identified and include the FFA social worker, DCFS CSW, CFP and the focus child. Despite the focus children knowing their team members, there have been no face-to-face team meetings where the focus child and key team members are present. Further, the team meetings lack the inclusion of family members.

The FFA social worker and the DCFS CSWs agree that better teamwork can be improved on all sides. The team has only formed a minimally adequate to fair working system that meets, talks, and/or plans together. However, there have been no face-to-face team meetings held to develop plans, where important key supporters in the focus child's life are present.

NEXT STEPS TO SUSTAIN SUCCESS AND OVERCOME CURRENT CHALLENGES

In September 2014, OHCMD quality assurance staff provided the FFA with technical support related to findings indicated in the 2013-2014 Contract Compliance Review. Technical support and training provided to the FFA related to: SIRs that were not submitted timely nor cross-reported to all required parties per SIR reporting guidelines, Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery related to one child not participating in the development of an updated NSP and Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being, related to two CFHs not providing opportunities for placed children to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, and/or social activities.

In April 2015, quality assurance reviewer met with the FFA to discuss the results of the QAR and to provide the FFA with technical support to address methods for improvement in the area of Teamwork. The FFA submitted the attached Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). 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

☒ LOS ANGELES
3701 Stocker Street Suite 200
Los Angeles, CA 90008
(323) 954-1464 ~ Fax (323) 954-9515
LICENSE # 197805862

☒ IRWINDALE
13001 Ramona Blvd. Suite E
Irwindale, CA 91706
(626) 480-8107 ~ Fax (626) 480-7688
LICENSE # 197804012

5/01/2015

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

RE: Quality Assurance Review 2014
Quality Improvement Plan

Dear Ms. Noil:

In October 2014, 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, which covered the fiscal year of 2014-2015, examined Eggleston Family Services' service delivery, as well as the overall care provided to the youths in placement.

During the QAR, OHCMD found that the Teamwork focus area needed to be improved, as it did not meet the minimum allowed scoring; it was noted that Eggleston Family Services had minimally adequate to fair teamwork. Although it was noted that there was constant communication between the FFA Social Workers and DCFS CSWs, to achieve either the rating of Good Teamwork or Optimal Teamwork, it was recommended that Eggleston Family Services increase their collaboration with all key members. For the former rating, face-to-face team meetings with the focused child and all key team members must be held periodically and at critical points. For the latter rating, it was recommended that team meetings be held regularly and as frequently as the team sees the need, as well as at critical points.

In response to the 2014 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)- TEAMWORK

Eggleston Family Services takes pride in the services provided to our youths and we believe that collaborative efforts with all service providers are necessary and crucial to obtain optimal outcomes. Although the FFA ensures frequent contact with service providers, particularly DCFS County Social Workers, we do understand the importance of ensuring increased face-to-face team meetings.

Given that the services provided to our youths are child-specific, the amount of face-to-face meetings with the child and all key team members will vary; some youths require periodic face-to-face team meetings, while others require regular team meetings. Effective 5/7/15, it will be standard practice for our FFA Social Workers to request face-to-face team meetings with the focused child and all key team members as frequently as the team sees the need, as well as at critical points. For youths that are substantially meeting treatment goals and are actively involved in activities to achieve treatment goals, it is recommended that face-to-face team meetings be held a minimum of once every 6 months. For those youths that are having difficulty meeting treatment goals or their case is nearing critical points, it will be policy that face-to-face meetings with the child and all key team members be held every quarter, at a minimum.

Further, Eggleston Family Services understands the importance of documenting the face-to-face meetings that take place, as well as the attempts made to request these meetings. It will be protocol, to ensure clarity, that these meetings be titled Team Meetings and documented as such in the FFA's Case Activity Logs as well as the Needs and Services Plans (NSP).

The QAR results and the QIP will be thoroughly discussed with Eggleston Family Services FFA Social Workers and Supervisor at the next staff meeting scheduled for 5/6/15; the QIP will be implemented thereafter effective 5/7/2015.

Eggleston Family Services respectfully submits the above Quality Improvement Plan to address the issue noted as a result of our Quality Assurance Review. We recognize that the above QIP will help to improve the services Eggleston Family Services provides to the children while in out-of-home care, 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 Sonya Noil, 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