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June 30, 2016

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

**FUTURO INFANTIL HISPANO 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 Futuro Infantil Hispano Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in December 2015. The FFA has two offices; one office located in the Fifth Supervisorial District and one office in San Bernardino County and provides services to the County of Los Angeles DCFS placed children. According to the FFA's Program Statement, its stated purpose is, "to achieve the placement agency's overall goals of safety, permanency and well-being. The primary goals of the FFA program are: to ensure children are provided with a safe and healthful living environment; a continuity of care, nurturance and services that will meet their individualized problems, needs and situation; to work with their families to achieve reunification; or to achieve other designated legal permanency plans such as adoption, legal guardianship or a permanent planned living arrangement for children when family reunification is not possible."

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 all 9 focus areas: Safety, Permanency, Placement Stability, Visitation, Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, Teamwork and Tracking & Adjustment.

In April 2016, the OHCMD Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the FFA to discuss results of the QAR. The FFA scored at or above the minimum acceptable score in all 9 areas; therefore, did not require a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

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
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**FUTURO INFANTIL HISPANO 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 Futuro Infantil Hispano 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), two FFA staff members and three certified foster parents.

At the time of the QAR, the FFA supervised 237 DCFS placed children in 97 certified foster homes. The focus children's average number of placements was two, their overall average length of placement was two years and their average age was 10. 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 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 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 | 6 - Optimal Safety Status | The focus children have a highly safe living situation with fully reliable and competent caregivers and are protected well at all times. Protective strategies are fully operative and dependable. |
| **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 genuine, trusting and collaborative working relationship with the ability to concentrate on the focus children's strengths and needs. | 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 indicate that good, consistent efforts are being used. |

| Focus Area | Minimum Acceptable Score | FFA QAR Score | FFA QAR Rating |
|---|---|---|---|
| **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, have formed a working team that meets, talks and/or makes plans together. | 5 | 5 - Good Teamwork | The team contains most of the important supporters and decision-makers in the focus children's lives, including informal supports. The team has formed a good, dependable working system that meets, talks and/or plans together. |

| Focus Area | Minimum Acceptable Score | FFA QAR Score | FFA QAR Rating |
|---|---|---|---|
| **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 January 2015 and noted an opportunity for improvement in the focus area of Safety. In November 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 has shown improvement in the area of Safety on their 2015-2016 QAR.

**STATUS INDICATORS**
*(Measured over last 30 days)*

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

In the area of Safety, OHCMD found that the FFA implemented the 2014-2015 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to enhance the quality of care provided to placed children by retraining their certified foster parents in the area of Personal Rights. The focus of the training was to ensure placed children are free from harm in their placements. In addition, the FFA conducted unannounced visits to the certified foster homes for three months following the training to ensure that the certified foster parents were implementing the skills taught at their training. Further, to ensure child safety, the FFA now requires their FFA Social Workers to conduct at least one unannounced visit each month to their certified foster homes and conduct private interviews with placed children. The FFA supervisor reported that during the interviews with the placed children, the FFA Social Workers address child safety. The focus children reported that they felt safe in their placements.

In the areas of Permanency, Placement Stability and Visitation the FFA has maintained an acceptable level of service. All three certified foster parents continue to work closely with the focus children toward their individual permanent goals and have expressed a willingness to have the focus children to remain in their homes until their goals are achieved. Two focus children are receiving Family Reunification services and one focus child is receiving Adoption services. Two DCFS CSWs are working on relative placements in support of the focus children's permanent plans. The certified foster parent for the focus child receiving Adoption services stated that she is willing to become the legal guardian of the focus child and two of her siblings if adoption is not possible. The DCFS CSW for this focus child reported working on an Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) to place the focus child with a relative. The same focus child age 11, stated that after returning from Dependency Court she was happy because she was given the choice of being placed with a relative placement or in her certified foster mother's home. This same focus child refers to her certified foster mother as "Mom". At the time of the QAR, the focus child had not made a decision yet as to where she will choose to reside. The focus children have established strong positive relationships with their certified foster parents, FFA staff, neighborhood children and with staff at their schools. The stable placement of each focus child had directly lent itself to the development of such relationships. The FFA Social Worker and certified foster parent report they will support the focus child's decision. None of the focus children have had any placement disruptions since being placed in their current certified foster home. The focus children have developed long lasting relationships with their current caregivers and have been accepted as part of the family.

The FFA has continued to ensure that each focus child had weekly visits with their family members. The certified foster parents have coordinated visitation schedules with the focus children's family members to ensure transportation and monitoring needs are met. The certified foster parents ensure that the focus children maintain weekly telephone contact with important people in their lives. The focus children stated they enjoy their weekly visits with their family members/NREFMs.

**PRACTICE INDICATORS**
*(Measured over last 90 days)*

| **Practice Indicators** | Engagement | Service Needs | Assessment & Linkages | Teamwork | Tracking & Adjustment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2014-2015 Scores** | 6 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 6 |
| **2015-2016 Scores** | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |

In the areas of Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, Teamwork, and Tracking & Adjustment, the FFA continues to maintain a good level of services provided to the focus children. The FFA has worked well with service providers by linking each focus child with the services they need to improve their educational outcomes and behaviors in

school. The focus children are receiving a good range of educational services such as, after-school tutoring programs, honors classes, and the school's Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) Program. The AVID Program identifies college bound students and ensures that those students are enrolled in the appropriate level of Math, Science, and English classes for college acceptance. The AVID Program also provides guidance and tracks the student's classroom performance to ensure grades are acceptable for college acceptance. One focus child's DCFS CSW referred her to an educational consultant. The educational consultant was instrumental in facilitating the development of an Individualized Education Plan to address assistance needed in Math and Reading. In addition, two of the focus children's therapist reported that the focus children completed their therapeutic goals. The successful teaming by the FFA staff resulted in these two focus children meeting their case plan goals. The two focus children's therapy services were successful in improving behaviors and relationships in their certified foster homes. One focus child continues to receive weekly therapy and will be assessed for psychotropic medication to address her hyper-activity. The DCFS CSWs, FFA Social Workers and certified foster parents continue to learn to assess the focus children's ongoing needs to ensure they receive needed services. One FFA Social Worker referred the certified foster mother to their agency's clinical intervention program to provide additional visits and guidance in fostering. Specifically, the certified foster mother needed additional assistance with strengthening the quality of care for the four boys placed in her home. The clinical intervention was successful in stabilizing the placement and the four placed children are doing well in the certified home after having received more structure in the home.

The FFA Social Workers continue to review and track the focus children's status on a weekly basis. The FFA Social Workers also consult with their supervisors on a weekly basis to discuss the focus children's status. DCFS CSWs reported that the FFA staff maintains regular contact with them in regards to the progress and adjustment of the focus children's case plans.

## NEXT STEPS TO SUSTAIN SUCCESS AND OVERCOME CURRENT CHALLENGES

In February 2016, 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 Requirement, Facility and Environment, and Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery. Technical support was provided on how the FFA can reduce the substantiated CCL violations related to Personal Rights; ensure that the FFA notifies the DCFS CSW prior to removing a child from their current placement within the agency; ensure special incidents are reported timely; common areas are free of hazards; and ensure that the Needs and Services Plans are comprehensive.

In April 2016, the Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the FFA to discuss the results of the QAR. The FFA was not required to provide a QIP.