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

PHILIP L. BROWNING
Director

BRANDON NICHOLS
Chief Deputy Director

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June 30, 2016

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
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Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

FRED JEFFERSON MEMORIAL HOME FOR BOYS, INC. 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 Fred Jefferson Memorial Home for Boys, Inc. Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in February 2016. The FFA has three offices, one located in the Second Supervisorial District, one in Riverside County and the third 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 maintain minors placed in our homes within their existing support system. In doing so, we maintain the minors existing attachments that they are familiar and comfortable with. We maintain attachments to birth parents when possible and when appropriate. When birth parents are not available our goal then becomes centered on developing and maintaining suitable placements. All children must be attached to a parent that is loving, nurturing and consistently there for them. Without appropriate relationships with adults that are consistent, minors are unable to develop appropriately."

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 opportunity for improved performance in the focus area of Teamwork.

In April 2016, 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. 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
Cecelia Jefferson-Freeman, Executive Director, Fred Jefferson FFA
Lajuannah Hills, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division
Lenora Scott, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division

FRED JEFFERSON MEMORIAL HOME FOR BOYS, INC. 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 Fred Jefferson Memorial Home for Boys, Inc. Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in February 2016. 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, two Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Children's Social Workers (CSWs), three FFA staff members, three certified foster parents and three service providers.

At the time of the QAR, the FFA supervised 67 DCFS placed children in 67 certified foster homes. The focus children's average number of placements was one, their overall average length of placement was nine months and their average age was 16. 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	4 - Minimally Adequate to Fair Teamwork	The team contains some of the important supporters and decision-makers in the focus children's lives, including informal supports. The team has formed a minimally adequate to fair 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 areas of Permanency, Engagement and Teamwork. In July 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 these three areas. Based on the information below, it appears that the FFA showed improvement in the areas of Permanency and Engagement on their 2015-2016 QAR. However, there is still an opportunity for improvement in the area of Teamwork.

STATUS INDICATORS
(Measured over last 30 days)

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

In the area of Safety, the FFA scored at the optimal level, as the FFA's staff continues to ensure that the placed children's certified foster homes are safe environments for them. The FFA Social Workers visit the certified foster homes on a weekly basis. During the weekly visit, the FFA Social Workers ensure that the certified foster parents are following procedures and protocols. Also during the weekly visits, the FFA Social Workers check in with the focus children and address any concerns they want to share. The certified foster parents reported that they receive monthly trainings on the FFA procedures, state regulations and the County contract. One certified foster parent stated that she lets the FFA staff know everything that is

going on with the focus child and she always receives assistance from the FFA. The focus children reported feeling safe in the certified foster homes. One focus child stated that she feels love from her certified foster parent. Another focus child reported that everyone "around here" cares for her and helps her. One DCFS CSW reported that the FFA shares information with him. He stated that the FFA staff has been accountable to him and the focus child.

In the areas of Placement Stability and Visitation, the FFA continues to provide a good quality of services and stability to the focus children. The FFA has continued to ensure that the focus children have had no recent placement disruptions and to minimize academic disruptions, the FFA encourages the certified foster parents to maintain the placed children in their school of origin. There is constant communication between the FFA Social Workers, the certified foster parents and the focus children. The FFA staff and the certified foster parents continue to support the focus children's visitation plans in maintaining contact with all DCFS approved visitors. The FFA assists in monitoring visits. According to one DCFS CSW, the FFA tries to accommodate everyone's schedule when planning visits.

In the area of Permanency, OHCMD found that the FFA had implemented the 2014-2015 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to enhance the quality of care provided to the placed children in its care. As part of the QIP the FFA trained the Social Worker staff on the differences of the permanent plans by utilizing a DCFS website resource, "A Guide to Permanency." The focus children reported that they are aware of their permanency goals as they are discussed with them by their FFA Social Workers. One focus child reported that she feels supported by the FFA in her plan to become self-sufficient and transition to a four year college. Another focus child stated that she has frequent discussions with her certified foster mother and FFA Social Worker regarding her future. The certified foster parents reported that the plans for the focus children are discussed and have been made clear to them. Two of the focus children are high school seniors and are on track to graduate in June 2016. One focus child has been accepted to a four-year university. Her DCFS CSW stated that the certified foster parent and FFA Social Worker are on board with the plan for the focus child.

PRACTICE INDICATORS
(Measured over last 90 days)

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

In the areas of Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages and Tracking & Adjustment, the FFA continues to ensure that there are a good array of services provided to the focus children. Each of the focus children and certified foster parents stated that they collaborate with the

FFA Social Workers when assessing the resources being provided to the focus children. The FFA continues to assess the focus children's needs and provides intervention to assist them in performing successfully in the certified foster homes, school settings and the community. As to Tracking & Adjustment, the DCFS CSWs reported that the FFA Social Workers address issues and look for alternatives and certified foster parents continue to share their daily observations of the focus children with the FFA Social Workers to promote positive outcomes for the focus children. Continued intervention strategies are identified in the case plans and Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) match the services that are being provided to the focus children.

In the area of Engagement, OHCMD found that the FFA had implemented the 2014-2015 QIP. The FFA was to have improved the engagement of the DCFS CSWs in the decisions that involve the focus children. The DCFS CSWs reported that the FFA Social Workers collaborate with them in discussions regarding the well-being of the focus children. One DCFS CSW reported that there is constant communication with the FFA Social Worker and everyone is on the same page.

In the area of Teamwork, OHCMD found that the FFA had not implemented the 2014-2015 QIP. One focus child and one DCFS CSW reported that they were not included in team meetings. The OHCMD QAR Reviewer met with the FFA staff to discuss why the previous QIP was not implemented and to work together to develop a new QIP which would be successful for the FFA and the placed children.

NEXT STEPS TO SUSTAIN SUCCESS AND OVERCOME CURRENT CHALLENGES

In August 2015, 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, Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery, Education and Workforce Readiness, Health and Medical Needs and Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being. Technical support was provided on how the FFA can ensure that: Special Incident Reports are properly documented and cross-reported; the FFA is in compliance with Title 22 Regulations; allowance logs are properly maintained; NSPs are comprehensive; children are enrolled in school within three days of placement; initial medical and dental examinations are conducted timely; and children are encouraged and assisted to maintain a Life Book/Photo Album.

In April 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 Teamwork. The FFA submitted the attached approved QIP. OHCMD Quality Assurance staff will continue to provide ongoing technical support, training, and consultation to assist the FFA in implementing their QIP.

Fred Jefferson Memorial Homes For Boys
152 West Walnut Street Suite #150
Gardena, Ca 90248

Phone # (310) 763-1660 Fax # (310) 763-0357

May 9, 2016

Department of Children and Family Services
Attention: Esther Pulido
9320 Telstar Avenue, Suite 216
El Monte, CA 91731

Quality Assurance Review Fiscal Year 2015-2016- Quality Improvement Plan

The following is in response to the quality assurance review for the fiscal year 2015-2016. Below you will find a response to the area needing improvement to assist enhancing the quality of care provided to our clients while in placement and improve the working relationship with Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services.

Teamwork

In an effort to improve the teamwork between the Agency and DCFS, the Agency Social Worker will request to meet with the DCFS Social Worker, Certified Parent and the Child together at a face to face meeting within the first seven days of placement and every ninety days thereafter. If the child has a therapist and/or a W.R.A.P. team, they will be invited to the meeting as well. If there are issues or barriers that is keeping the child from progressing while in placement the number of face to face meetings may be increased as needed. Regardless, of issues and/or barriers there will be meetings arranged to ensure the Agency and DCFS are working toward the same goals with each placed child.

On April 21, 2016 the Agency Social Workers were informed of this new requirement. The Social Worker Supervisors will ensure that the requests are being sent to the DCFS Social Workers in a timely manner. Not only will the Supervising Agency Social Worker be included in the email request to the DCFS Social Worker, but a copy of the email will submitted with the monthly documentation regarding each child. The request for these meetings will be made via email in order to place a copy of the request in the child's file. If there is no response from the DCFS Social Worker, the Agency Social Worker will follow up with a telephone call. The Agency Social Worker will make at least two attempts to schedule the meeting with in the first seven days of placement. When requesting a meeting at the quarterly period two attempt will be made also.

Although the Supervising Agency Social Worker will ensure each Agency Social Worker is requesting the team meetings, the Administrator will ensure this plan is implemented and followed at all times.

If further information is needed, please feel free to contact me at the above mentioned number at extension 118.

Respectfully submitted,

Niquelle Lewis, MA
Administrator