County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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March 13, 2014

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

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

ALPHA TREATMENT CENTERS FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a review of Alpha Treatment Centers Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in July 2013. The FFA has one licensed office in the First Supervisorial District and provides services to County of Los Angeles DCFS foster children and youth. According to the FFA's program statement, its mission is "to provide foster care and treatment for abused and neglected children while re-unification services with their families are being explored and/or completed."

At the time of the review, the FFA supervised 39 DCFS placed children in 32 certified foster homes. The placed children's average length of placement was five months, and their average age was six.

SUMMARY

During OHCMD's review, the interviewed children generally reported: feeling safe at the FFA; having been provided with good care and appropriate services; being comfortable in their environment and treated with respect and dignity. The certified foster parents reported they were supported by the FFA staff in their efforts to provide care, supervision and service delivery to the children placed in their homes.

The FFA was in full compliance with 7 of 11 sections of our program compliance review: Licensure/Contract; Certified Foster Homes; Education and Workforce Readiness; Health and Medical Needs; Psychotropic Medication; Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being; and Personnel Records.

OHCMD noted deficiencies in the areas of Facility and Environment, related to exterior and interior grounds not being well maintained, inadequate food in a certified foster home and no documentation of fire drills; Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery, related to the Needs and Services Plans (NSP) not having DCFS Children's Social Workers signature authorizing implementation; Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being, related to two certified foster parents who were not encouraging and assisting children to develop Life Book/Photo Album; and Discharged Children related to two files not having a discharge summary.

Attached are the details of our review.

REVIEW OF REPORT

On August 15, 2013, the DCFS OHCMD Monitor, Thomas Manning, held an Exit Conference with FFA representative, Deanna Cool, Director. The FFA's representative: agreed with the review findings and recommendations; was receptive to implementing systemic changes to improve their compliance with regulatory standards; and agreed to address the noted deficiencies in a Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

A copy of this compliance report has been sent to the Auditor-Controller and Community Care Licensing.

The FFA provided the attached approved CAP addressing the recommendations noted in this compliance report. OHCMD will verify that these recommendations have been implemented and provide technical assistance during our next visit to the FFA in April 2014.

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

PLB:EM:KR
RDS:tm

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy L. Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Emmanuel Humphries, Chief Executive Director, Alpha Treatment Centers FFA
Angelica Lopez, Acting Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

ALPHA TREATMENT CENTERS FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW SUMMARY

1044 W. West Covina Parkway
West Covina, CA 91790
License Numbers: 1978056881

	Contract Compliance Monitoring Review	**Findings: July 2013**
I	**Licensure/Contract Requirements** (7 Elements)	
	1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation	1. Full Compliance
	2. Serious Incident Report Documentation and Cross Reporting	2. Full Compliance
	3. Runaway Procedures in Accordance with the Contract	3. Full Compliance
	4. Are there CCL Citations/OHCMD Safety Reports	4. Full Compliance
	5. If Applicable, FFA Ensures Complete Required Whole Foster Family Home (WFFH) Training	5. Non-Applicable
	6. FFA Pays Certified Foster Parents (CFP) WFFH Required Supplemental Payments	6. Non-Applicable
	7. FFA Conducts an Assessment of CFP Prior to Placement of Two (2) or More Children	7. Full Compliance
II	**Certified Foster Homes (CFHs)** (12 Elements)	
	1. Home Study and Safety Inspection Conducted Prior to Certification	Full Compliance (ALL)
	2. Agency's inquiry with OHCMD for Historical Information Prior to Certification	
	3. Timely Criminal Clearances (DOJ, FBI, CACI) Prior to Certification	
	4. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement	
	5. Health Screening & TB Test Prior to Certification	
	6. All Required Training Prior to Certification	
	7. Certificate of Approval on File/Including Capacity	
	8. Safety Inspections Completed At Least Every Six Months or Per Approved Program Statement	
	9. Completed Annual Training Hours for Re-certification and Current CPR/First-Aid/Water Safety Certificates	
	10. Current CDL/Auto Insurance/Annual Vehicle Maintenance Documentation for CFPs and Designated Drivers, if Applicable Car Seat(s)	
	11. Criminal Clearances and Health Screening/CDL/CPR DOJ/FBI/CACI/Auto Insurance for Other Adults in the Home	
	12. FFA Assists CFPs in Providing Transportation Needs	

III	**Facility and Environment** (7 Elements)	
	1. Exterior/Grounds Well Maintained	1. Improvement Needed
	2. Common Areas/Interior Well Maintained	2. Improvement Needed
	3. Children's Bedrooms/Interior Well Maintained	3. Full Compliance
	4. Sufficient and Appropriate Educational Resources	4. Full Compliance
	5. Adequate Perishable and Non-Perishable Food	5. Improvement Needed
	6. CFP Conducted Disaster Drills and Documentation Maintained	6. Improvement Needed
	7. Money and Clothing Allowance Logs Maintained	7. Full Compliance
IV	**Maintenance of Required Documentation/Service Delivery** (10 Elements)	
	1. FFA Obtains or Documents Efforts to Obtain County Children's Social Worker's (CSW) Authorization to Implement NSPs	1. Improvement Needed
	2. CFPs Participated in Development of the NSPs	2. Improvement Needed
	3. Children Progressing Towards Meeting NSP Goals	3. Full Compliance
	4. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive Initial NSP with Child's Participation	4. Full Compliance
	5. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive Updated NSPs with Child's Participation	5. Improvement Needed
	6. Therapeutic Services Received	6. Full Compliance
	7. Recommended Assessments/Evaluations Implemented	7. Full Compliance
	8. County Children Social Workers Monthly Contacts Documented in Child's Case File	8. Full Compliance
	9. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive Quarterly Reports	9. Improvement Needed
	10. FFA Social Workers Conduct Required Visits	10. Full Compliance
V	**Education and Workforce Readiness** (5 Elements)	
	1. Children Enrolled in School Within Three School Days	Full Compliance (ALL)
	2. Children Attend School as Required and FFA Facilitates in Meeting Children's Educational Goals	
	3. Current Children's Report Cards/Progress Reports Maintained	
	4. Children's Academic Performance and/or Attendance Increased	
	5. FFA Facilitates Child's Participation in YDS or Equivalent Services and Vocational Programs	

VI	**Health and Medical Needs** (4 Elements) 1. Initial Medical Exams Conducted Timely 2. Follow-Up Medical Exams Conducted Timely 3. Initial Dental Exams Conducted Timely 4. Follow-Up Dental Exams Conducted Timely	Full Compliance (ALL)
VII	**Psychotropic Medication** (2 Elements) 1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication 2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review	Full Compliance (ALL)
VIII	**Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being** (10 Elements) 1. Children Informed of Agency's Policies and Procedures 2. Children Feel Safe in the CFP Home 3. CFPs' Efforts to Provide Nutritious Meals and Snacks 4. CFPs Treat Children with Respect and Dignity 5. Children Allowed Private Visits, Calls and to Receive Correspondence 6. Children Free to Attend or Not Attend Religious Services/Activities of Their Choices 7. Children's Chores Reasonable 8. Children Informed About Their Medication and Right to Refuse Medication 9. Children Aware of Right to Refuse or Received Medical, Dental and Psychiatric Care 10. Children Given Opportunities to Participate in Extra-Curricular Activities, Enrichment and Social Activities	Full Compliance (ALL)
IX	**Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being** (7 Elements) 1. $50 Clothing Allowance Provided in Accordance with FFA Program Statement 2. Ongoing Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quantity and Quality 3. Children's Involvement in Selection of Their Clothing 4. Provision of Sufficient Supply of Clean Towels and Personal Care Items Meeting Ethnic Needs 5. Minimum Weekly Monetary Allowances 6. Management of Allowance/Earnings 7. Encouragement/Assistance with Life Book/Photo Album	1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Improvement Needed

X	**Discharged Children** (3 Elements) 1. Completed Discharge Summary 2. Attempts to Stabilize Children's Placement 3. Child Completed High School (if applicable)	1. Improvement Needed 2. Full Compliance 3. Non-Applicable
XI	**Personnel Records** (9 Elements) 1. Criminal Clearances (DOJ, FBI, CACI) Signed and Submitted Timely 2. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement 3. FFA Social Workers Met Education/Experience Requirements 4. Timely Employee Health Screening/TB Clearances 5. Valid CDL and Auto Insurance 6. FFA Employees Signed Copies of FFA Policies and Procedures 7. FFA Employees Completed All Required Training and Documentation Maintained 8. FFA Social Workers Have Appropriate Caseload Ratio 9. FFA Maintained Written Declarations for Part-Time Contracted FFA Social Workers Caseloads Not Exceed Total of 15 Children	Full Compliance (ALL)

ALPHA TREATMENT CENTERS FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW
FISCAL YEAR 2013-2014

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The following report is based on a "point in time" monitoring visit. The compliance report addresses findings noted during the July 2013 review. The purpose of this review was to assess Alpha Treatment Center Foster Family Agency's (the FFA) compliance with the County contract and State regulations and included a review of the FFA's program statement, as well as administrative internal policies and procedures. The monitoring review covered the following 11 areas:

- Licensure/Contract Requirements,
- Certified Foster Homes,
- Facility and Environment,
- Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery,
- Educational and Workforce Readiness,
- Health and Medical Needs,
- Psychotropic Medication,
- Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being,
- Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being,
- Discharged Children, and
- Personnel Records.

For purposes of this review, six children were selected for the sample. The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) interviewed six children and reviewed their case files to assess the care and services they received. Additionally, five discharged children's files were reviewed to assess the FFA's compliance with permanency efforts. At the time of the review, four placed children were prescribed psychotropic medication. We reviewed their case files to assess for timeliness of Psychotropic Medication Authorizations and to confirm the required documentation of psychiatric monitoring.

OHCMD reviewed three certified foster parent files and five staff files for compliance with Title 22 Regulations and County contract requirements. Interviews were conducted with two certified foster parents to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to children.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

OHCMD found the following four areas to be out of compliance.

Facility and Environment

- During the review of the FFA, OHCMD noted a referral for one of the certified foster parents selected for a home visit. This foster home was visited by Out-of-Home Care Investigations Section (OHCIS) on April 24, 2012, to investigate an allegation of general neglect by the certified foster mother. The referral alleged that the certified foster mother failed to provide proper care for a child placed in her home. The allegation was deemed "Unfounded"; however, a Corrective Action Plan was requested to address deficiencies

related to the home. It was determined that the foster home had some of the same findings that were found during the monitoring visit. The same fence panel had broken boards at the time of the visit to the home; the rear yard had broken pieces of pottery lying about in the dirt which, had no grass at the time of the visit; the swing set was broken and was a hazard to children who might have used it; and one smoke detector in the stairway was in need of a battery, so it would be in operable condition.

In addition, the same foster home had no documentation of fire drills; there were several knives and cleaning supplies under the sink in the kitchen that were not secured. Additionally, this house had two food freezers located in the garage that were unlocked; therefore, it posed a safety hazard to young children placed in the home; and there were five frozen one gallon milk containers in the freezer, which the certified foster mother stated she was going to use at a later date for the children. Lastly, one bedroom lamp did not have a bulb in it and posed a safety hazard to the two young children who occupied the room.

During the Exit Conference, the FFA Director stated she was concerned with all the findings of the foster home, especially in light of the OHCIS referral findings, which were similar to the monitoring findings. The FFA Director stated they would move aggressively to correct all of the deficiencies found in the foster home by meeting with the certified foster parent and their FFA social worker. The FFA Director stated they will conduct monthly checks to ensure compliance with the CAP is maintained. In addition, she stated that the FFA social worker trained and conducted a disaster drill with the certified foster mother and the deficiencies have been addressed as of September 12, 2013.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

1. The exterior and grounds of the certified foster home are well maintained.

2. The commons areas of the foster home are well maintained and contain no safety hazards.

3. The certified foster parent provides fresh perishables for meals.

4. The certified foster parent conducts and documents fire drills twice a year.

Maintenance of Required Documentation/Service Delivery

- Two children's Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) did not have their Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Children's Social Worker (CSW) signatures approving implementation or proof that the FFA made more than one attempt to obtain the CSW's signatures. It was also noted that the certified foster parent of two children did not participate in the development of the children's NSPs. Further, the FFA social worker did not develop NSPs with the participation of age appropriate children. The FFA social worker did not develop timely Quarterly Reports.

During the Exit Conference, the FFA's Director stated the FFA will train the FFA social workers and certified foster parents on NSP requirements and ensure that all contacts with DCFS CSWs are documented in the children's case files.

A FFA representative attended the OHCMD NSP training for providers conducted on August 1, 2013 and was made aware of the NSP requirements.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

5. FFA social workers have NSPs signed by the DCFS CSW or document their efforts to obtain the signature.

6. FFA social workers include the certified foster parents in the development of NSPs.

7. FFA social workers include all age appropriate children in the development of NSPs.

8. FFA social workers develop timely Quarterly Reports.

Personal Rights and Survival/Economic Well-Being

- One foster parent did not assist four children to develop and maintain a Life Book/Photo Albums.

During the Exit Conference, the FFA's representative stated that the FFA would retrain the certified foster parent on the importance of creating and maintaining Life Books or Photo Albums.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

9. All children are provided a Life Book/Photo Album by certified foster parents and encouraged and assisted in updating a Life Book/Photo album.

Discharged Children

- The discharge case files for two children did not contain a discharge summary.

During the Exit Conference, the FFA's Director stated she would review all closed files to ensure each has a discharge summary.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

10. FFA social workers complete a discharge summary after the child's placement is terminated from the agency.

YEAR FOLLOW-UP FROM DCFS OHCMD's FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

The OHCMD's last compliance report dated November 26, 2012, identified four recommendations.

Results

Based on OHCMD follow-up, the FFA fully implemented 1 of 4 previous recommendations for which they were to ensure that:

- All certified foster homes maintained clothing allowance logs.

Three recommendations were not implemented:

- NSPs did not include the DCFS CSW's signature to authorize the implementation of the NSPs.
- Certified foster parents were not included in the development of the NSPs.
- Children were not provided Life Books/Photo Albums.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

The outstanding recommendations from the 2012 – 2013 monitoring report dated November 26, 2012, which are noted in this report as Recommendations 5, 6, and 9, are fully implemented.

At the Exit Conference, the FFA representative expressed her desire to remain in compliance with all Title 22 Regulations and Contract requirements. To ensure that FFA social workers obtain the DCFS CSW's signature on the NSP, the FFA Director will ensure all efforts made to obtain the DCFS CSW's authorization to implement NSPs are documented. Additionally, the FFA will include all certified foster parents in the development of NSPs. The FFA Director will retrain all FFA social workers to ensure all certified foster parents have provided and updated all children's Life Books/Photo Albums monthly. The FFA Director will conduct periodic checks to monitor compliance with the CAP. OHCMD will visit to the FFA in April 2014 to provide the FFA with technical assistance and follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations.

MOST RECENT FISCAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER (A-C)

A fiscal review of the FFA has not been posted by the A-C.

ALPHA TREATMENT CENTERS
FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
License #'s Riverside 330600001 - Los Angeles 197805881

Alpha Adoption Centers
One World, One Heart, One Family
License # 336424024

November 25, 2013

Nestor Figueroa & Thomas Manning
DCFS – Out of Home Care Management
9320 Telstar Ave, #206
El Monte, CA 91731

RE: FFA Monitoring Review 2013 Plan of Correction

Dear Mr. Figueroa and Mr. Manning,

Below is in Reference to the POC for the items found missing or incomplete during your 2013 Annual review on Ms. Washington's home in Victorville. POC for items listed as: Section III. , numbers 20, 21, 24 and 25.

Plan of Correction For FFA Monitoring Review Items:

III. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

20. Are the exterior and the grounds of the certified foster home well maintained?

Plan of correction: Ms. Washington on 8/30/13 had repaired ***the backyard broken fence*** by having new boards attached. An ATC SW will check the backyard at least monthly for any broken or unsafe items.

20. **Plan of correction:** Ms. Washington on 8/30/13 had removed the teeter tater with a ***broken bench seat from the swing set***. An ATC SW will check the back yard at least monthly for any broken or unsafe items.

21. Are common area/interior well maintained?

Plan of correction: Ms. Washington removed all the ***broken pots and pieces of debris from the backyard*** immediately following the investigation. An ATC SW will check the back yard at least monthly for any broken or unsafe items.

Plan of correction: Ms. Washington placed a ***bulb in the lamp*** immediately following the investigation in the ***lamp in the bedroom***. An ATC SW will check the foster home monthly to insure all rooms have working light fixtures.

Plan of correction: Ms. Washington immediately following the investigation bought and placed a new ***battery in the upstairs smoke detector***. An ATC SW will check the foster home monthly for any smoke detectors needing replacement batteries.

Plan of correction: Ms. Washington immediately after investigation has removed all ***knives and Cleaning supplies from the kitchen into the locked laundry room***, where they are now housed. She has informed the ATC SW that they will remain locked up in the laundry room unless being used, and will be returned to the locked laundry room when not being used. ATC SW will check to make sure both knives and cleaning supplies are securely locked up during monthly home checks and periodically at weekly visits.

Plan of correction: Ms. Washington placed new ***lockes on the two freezers*** in the garage on 8/30/13. ATC SW will check during the monthly home checks and periodically at weekly visits to make sure the two freezers are locked.

24. Does the certified foster home maintain adequate nutritious perishable and non-perishable foods and adhere to product "used or freeze by," "best by," "sell by," or expiration dates?

Plan of correction: Ms. Washington after investigation ***discarded the frozen milk***. Ms. Washington was informed she was unable to store milk in the freezer.

25. Has the certified foster parent conducted disaster drills at least every 6 months and maintained completed disaster drill logs?

Plan of correction: Ms. Washington had her ***disaster drill posted*** immediately upon investigation. She now has it posted on the bulletin board on the wall in the kitchen. On 9/4/13 ATC SW, Ms. Crockett, provided training for Ms. Washington on the described complaints of ***reviewing a plan of escape and conducted a disaster drill with the foster family***. Ms. Washington was receptive and quickly corrected the problems ensuring a safe environment for the foster children in her home. ATC SW will check monthly to make sure the disaster drill log is posted and a disaster drill is conducted each month.

Please review this statement along with the POC ATC SW Rhonda Crockett submitted on September 12, 2013 to Mr. Nestor Figueroa and Thomas Manning.

Thank you,

If you have any questions you may contact me at (626) 939-9100 ext 113 or Deanna.alpha@gmail.com, Quality Assurance Director for Alpha Treatment Centers FFA.

Deanna Cool, Quality Assurance