County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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October 25, 2013

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

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

CHILDHELP, INC. 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 Childhelp, Inc. Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in April 2013. The FFA has one licensed office located in San Bernardino County and one office located in the Third Supervisorial District and both offices provide 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 13 DCFS placed children in 8 certified foster homes. The placed children's average length of placement was 11 months, and their average age was 6.

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: Facility and Environment; Education and Workforce Readiness; Health and Medical Needs; Psychotropic Medication; Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being; Discharged Children; and Personnel Records.

OCHCMD noted deficiencies in the areas of Licensure/Contract Requirements, related to replacement of children without notifying the DCFS Children Social Worker and not contacting OHCMD for historical abuse/neglect history when an adult moved into the home; Certified Foster Homes, related to one prospective foster parent not having received the initial training prior to certification; Maintenance of

Required Documentation and Service Delivery, related to non-comprehensive Needs and Service Plans (NSPs); and Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being, related to the FFA Social Workers not conducting physical clothing inventories and two children not having Life Books/Photo Albums completed.

It should be noted that the FFA was placed on an Administrative Hold April 18, 2013, due to placing foster children at risk by failing to seek the historical abuse/neglect information from OHCMD and failing to alert OHCMD and the DCFS Children's Social Worker that the FFA was seeking a criminal exemption from CCL. Further, the FFA omitted this individual, the husband of the prospective certified foster mother from the Adoption Home Study. On June 6, 2013 a Review Conference was held at which time the FFA agreed to submit a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) addressing deficiencies noted in the monitoring review. The FFA submitted a CAP addressing the issues related to the Administrative Hold; the CAP was approved on July 5, 2013. The Hold was subsequently lifted on July 17, 2013.

Attached are the details for our review.

REVIEW OF REPORT

On May 22, 2013, the DCFS OHCMD Monitor, Thomas Manning, held an Exit Conference with the FFA's representative, Jennifer Quinn, 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.

We will confirm that these recommendations have been implemented during our next monitoring review.

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

PLB:EM:KR
RDS:NF:tm

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy L. Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Sara O'Meara, Executive Director, Childhelp, Inc. FFA
Angelica Lopez, Acting Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

CHILDHELP, INC. FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT PROGRAM COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW SUMMARY

1743 Orange Tree Lane
Redlands, CA 92373
License Numbers: 366404114

1345 N. El Centro Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90028
License Numbers: 197801357

	Contract Compliance Monitoring Review	**Findings: April 2013**
I.	**Licensure/Contract Requirements** (7 Elements)	
	1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation	1. Improvement Needed
	2. Serious Incident Report Documentation and Cross Reporting	2. Full Compliance
	3. Runaway Procedures	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 Training	5. Non applicable
	6. FFA Pays Certified Foster Parents Whole Foster Family Home Payments	6. Non Applicable
	7. Assessment of Certified Foster Parent (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 Prior to Certification	1. Improvement Needed
	2. Contact with References/Including Check with OHCMD	2. Improvement Needed
	3. Timely DOJ, FBI, CACI	3. Full Compliance
	4. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement	4. Full Compliance
	5. Health Screening & TB Test Prior to Certification	5. Full Compliance
	6. Required Training Prior to Certification	6. Improvement Needed
	7. Certificate of Approval on File/Including Capacity	7. Full Compliance
	8. Safety Inspection Every Six Months or Per Approved Program Statement	8. Full Compliance
	9. Completed Training Hours for Re-Certification and Current CPR/First-Aid/Water Safety Certificates	9. Full Compliance
	10. Current CDL/Auto Insurance/Annual Vehicle Maintenance Documentation for CFPs and Designated Drivers	10. Full Compliance
	11. Other Adults in the Home: Health Screening/CDL/CPR DOJ/FBI/CACI/Auto Insurance	11. Full Compliance
	12. FFA Assists CFPs with Transportation Needs	12. Full Compliance
III	**Facility and Environment** (7 Elements)	
	1. Exterior/Grounds Well Maintained	Full Compliance (ALL)

	2. Common Areas Maintained 3. Children's Bedrooms/Interior Maintained 4. Sufficient Educational Resources 5. Adequate Perishable and Non-Perishable Food 6. Disaster Drills Conducted and Documentation Maintained 7. Allowance Logs Maintained	
IV	**Maintenance of Required Documentation/Service Delivery** (10 Elements) 1. Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Children's Social Worker's Authorization to Implement NSPs 2. NSPs Implemented and Discussed with CFPs 3. Children Progressing Towards Meeting NSP Goals 4. Develop Timely, Comprehensive Initial NSP with Child's Participation 5. Develop Timely, Comprehensive Updated NSPs with Child's Participation 6. Therapeutic Services Received 7. Recommended Assessments/Evaluations Implemented 8. DCFS Children's Social Worker's Monthly Contacts Documented in Child's Case File 9. Develop Timely, Comprehensive Quarterly Reports 10. FFA Social Workers Conduct Required Visits	1. Full Compliance 2. Improvement Needed 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Full Compliance 9. Full Compliance 10. Full Compliance
V	**Education and Workforce Readiness** (5 Elements) 1. Children Enrolled in School within Three School Days 2. Children Attend School as Required and FFA Facilitates Children's Educational Goals Met 3. Children's Academic Performance and/or Attendance Increased 4. Current Report Cards Maintained 5. FFA Facilitates Child's Participation in YDS/Equivalent/Vocational Programs	Full Compliance (ALL)
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 Medications** (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 3. CFPs' Efforts to Provide 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 7. Reasonable Chores 8. Children Informed About Their Medication and Right to Refuse Medication 9. Children Aware of Right to Refuse 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. Clothing Allowance in Accordance with FFA Program Statement ($50 Minimum if After November 1, 2012) 2. Ongoing Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quantity and Quality 3. Children's Involvement in Selection of Clothing 4. Provision of Sufficient Supply of Clean Towels and Personal Care Items Meeting Ethnic Needs 5. Minimum Monetary Allowances 6. Management of Allowance/Earnings 7. Encouragement/Assistance with Life Book/Photo Album	1. Full Compliance 2. Improvement Needed 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)	Full Compliance (ALL)

XI	**Personnel Records** (9 Elements) 1. DOJ, FBI, CACI Submitted Timely 2. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement 3. Education/Experience Requirements 4. Employee Health Screening/TB Timely 5. Valid CDL and Auto Insurance 6. Signed Copies of FFA Policies and Procedures 7. Staff Completed All Required Training and Documentation Maintained 8. FFA Social Workers Have Appropriate Caseload Ratio 9. Written Declarations for Contract FFA Social Workers That Caseloads Not To Exceed Total of 15 Children	Full Compliance (ALL)

CHILDHELP, INC. FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW
FISCAL YEAR 2012-2013

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The following report is based on a "point in time" monitoring visit. The compliance report addresses findings noted during the April 2013 review. The purpose of this review was to assess Childhelp, Inc. Foster Family Agency's (the FFA's) 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,
- Personnel Records, and

For purposes of this review, six children were selected for the sample. Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) interviewed each child 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, two placed children were prescribed psychotropic medication. OHCMD 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 three certified foster parents to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to children.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

OHCMD found the following areas to be out of compliance.

Licensure/Contract Requirements

The FFA failed to provide timely notification to the Department of Children and Family Services' (DCFS) Children's Social Worker (CSW) when DCFS children were replaced into the home of the certified foster mother's husband's relatives. The relatives were not criminally cleared by the FFA to provide supervision of the children. Additionally, the FFA had not submitted their names to OHCMD as required for the search of historical abuse/neglect information. The FFA

representative provided verification to OHCMD that staff was retrained on required clearances and County policy regarding providing notice to DCFS CSWs prior to replacing children.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

1. All FFA Social Workers (FFA SWs) are retrained on the County policy regarding notifying the DCFS CSW prior to any replacement of any children.

Certified Foster Homes

- The FFA failed to comply with County policy and Title 22 regulations in not securing historical abuse/neglect information from OHCMD prior to allowing an adult, the foster mother's husband, to move into the certified foster home. The FFA also failed to provide the required training to the husband, a prospective certified foster parent. This resulted in the FFA being placed on Hold on April 18, 2013 and a Review Conference was held on June 6, 2013 as this placed children at risk, as the foster mother's husband had a criminal background. Further, the FFA was aware of the husband's criminal history and failed to alert OHCMD and the DCFS CSW that they were seeking a criminal exemption from Community Care Licensing (CCL), which was granted. Additionally, the FFA did not include the husband in the Adoption Home Study. The FFA representative provided documentation that their staff was retrained to ensure County policy and Title 22 compliance when allowing an adult to move into a certified foster home. The Hold was subsequently lifted on July 17, 2013.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

2. All prospective certified foster parents' and caregivers' names are to be submitted to OHCMD for historical abuse/neglect information prior to certification or when an adult moves into the home.

3. All prospective certified foster parents' spouses are to be included on the Safe Adoption Home Study. If there are any changes in the household status of adults in the home, the FFA will submit a Safe Adoptions Home Study addendum within 60 days.

4. All prospective certified foster parents will receive the required training prior to certification.

Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery

- One certified foster parent did not participate in the development of the NSPs. In addition, three certified foster parents were not provided with complete copies of the children's NSPs.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

5. All certified foster parents are included in the development of the NSPs. The FFA shall retrain FFA SWs on NSPs requirements of including certified foster parents in the NSP process.

6. All Certified Foster Parents will be given a complete copy of the NSPs by the FFA SWs.

Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being

- The FFA failed to conduct inventories of the children's clothing in one foster home. One certified foster parent did not encourage or assist the children in starting and maintaining a Life Book/Photo Album. The FFA representative said they would provide each child a Life Book at the time of placement.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

7. The FFA SWs are retrained on the procedures of conducting physical clothing inventories of all children.

8. All FFA SWs and certified foster parents are retrained on the Life Book policy. All FFA SWs conduct monthly checks on certified foster homes to ensure certified foster parents are encouraging and assisting children with the development of their Life Book/Photo Album.

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

The OHCMD's last compliance report dated February 20, 2012, identified one recommendation.

Results

Based on our follow-up, the FFA did not fully implement the previous recommendation for which they were to ensure that:

- The FFA certified foster parents assist and encourage all children in developing, updating, and maintaining their own personal Life Book/Photo Album.

At the Exit Conference, the FFA representative expressed her desire to remain in compliance with all Title 22 Regulations and Contract requirements. The FFA has retrained all staff members in the proper procedures to ensure that all certified foster parents are providing, encouraging, and maintaining the Life Book/Photo Album for every child. The FFA Administrator will conduct periodic checks to monitor compliance with the CAP.

MOST RECENT FISCAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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

Founded in 1959
by Sara O'Meara and Yvonne Fedderson
PREVENTION *and* TREATMENT *of* CHILD ABUSE

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Department of Children & Family Services
County of Los Angeles
Attn: Nestor Figueroa
9320 Telstar Ave, #206
El Monte, CA 91731

July 5, 2013

RE: Corrective Action Plan – Review Conference re: Hold Status (effective 4/18/13)

Mr. Figueroa,

This letter serves as the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) regarding "Notification of Childhelp Being Placed on a Hold status" as of 4/18/13, referencing contract compliance findings by Mr. Thomas Manning during the annual monitoring visit at Childhelp Foster Family Agency. This CAP is based on the 6/6/13 Review Conference which guided these recommendations made by OHCMD.

In order to ensure contract compliance regarding the following items, Childhelp's action plan includes the following:

Issue #1: Failing to conduct a thorough Home Study by not including the husband in the Home Study.

Director trained staff on 7/2/13 regarding *Childhelp Home Study and Home Study Updates* policy and procedure, which includes all occupants of the home, adults and minors, to be included in the Home Study, and also indicates the conditions in which an update to the Home Study is required. (See Home Study and Home Study Updates policy, and staff training sign in sheet attached)

All new staff will be trained on agency policy and procedure, which will be documented on the *Clinical Coordinator Training Checklist*. (See Clinical Coordinator Training Checklist form)

Director, and/or Clinical Coordinator Supervisor, and/or office support staff will monitor ongoing compliance by auditing 10% of all certified foster home files monthly.

Issue #2: Failure to submit all prospective caregivers' names to OHCMD for a child abuse and criminal background search prior to certification of the home, and Failure to alert OHCMD when there is a significant change in the household. (not informing OHCMD at any time during the children's 18 months of placement that the certified foster mother's husband was living in the home.)

Director trained staff on 7/2/13 regarding *Childhelp Pre-Certification Process* policy and procedure, which includes submitting for clearances (back ground check for abuse and criminal history) from OHCMD all adults who will be living in a foster home or providing babysitting of a foster child, prior to residing in a foster home, and/or prior to babysitting a foster child. When there is a change in the home's occupants, CCL, OHCMD and CSW, if applicable, are to be notified. (See Pre-Certification Process policy and staff training sign in sheet attached)

Director, and/or Clinical Coordinator Supervisor, and/or office support staff will monitor ongoing compliance by auditing 10% of all certified foster home files monthly.

Issue #3: Did not alert OHCMD of the medical condition of the certified foster home.

Director trained staff on 7/2/13 regarding *Change in Household* form, which includes conditions which foster parent(s) must immediately notify Childhelp, to allow Childhelp to report changes to appropriate entities (OHCMD, CSW, host county representative, CCL). (See Change in Household form and training sign in sheet attached)

Staff shall train all foster parents by 7/15/13 regarding their responsibility to immediately notify the agency of any change in their ability to provide care and supervision to a child in placement, including change in health, and will be provided with a *Change in Household* form as means to notify the agency and understand the conditions in which the agency needs to be notified. (Evidence of foster parent completed training will be forwarded to Mr. Figueroa by 7/15/13)

Director, and/or Clinical Coordinator Supervisor, and/or office support staff will monitor ongoing compliance by auditing 10% of all certified foster home files monthly.

Issue #4: Failed to provide full disclosure of the above information to LA County DCFS CSW and Dependency Investigator.

Director trained staff on 7/2/13 regarding providing notification to OHCMD, CSW, and/or dependency investigator, of any changes in a certified home, within 24 hours of agency receiving notification. (See Change in Household form and training sign in sheet attached)

Director, and/or Clinical Coordinator Supervisor, and/or office support staff will monitor ongoing compliance by auditing 10% of all certified foster home files monthly.

A certificate of approval regarding the adult in the home, who is a spouse of a currently certified foster parent, will be forwarded to Mr. Figueroa once completed, and by the designated due date of 8/5/13, as recommended at the Review Conference.

In conclusion, it is Childhelp's commitment to work as a team with Los Angeles County, Department of Children and Family Services, and remain in compliance with contract requirements. It is Childhelp's goal to protect the health, safety and welfare of at risk children who are placed in Childhelp's care. Once foster parent proof of training is completed by 7/15/13, it will be forwarded to Mr. Figueroa as indicated above. Please contact me should you require anything further.

Respectfully,

Jennifer A. Quinn, Psy.D.
Childhelp, Foster/Adoption Director

Attachments: *Home Study and Home Study Update*
Clinical Coordinator Training Checklist
Childhelp Pre-Certification Process
Change in Household
Childhelp Staff Training sign in sheet (for policies listed)

cc: Latrice Hickman, Childhelp VP Programs