County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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September 21, 2012

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
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Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

CHILDNET d.b.a. FOSTER FAMILY NETWORK FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a review of ChildNet d.b.a. Foster Family Network Foster Family Agency (FFA) in February 2012, at which time the agency had 76 Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) placed children in 51 certified foster homes. The placed children's overall average length of placement was four months and the average age was 12.

Foster Family Network FFA is located in the Fourth Supervisorial District and provides services to Los Angeles County DCFS foster youth. According to Foster Family Network FFA's program statement, its stated goal is "Foster Family Network offers long/short-term foster care and placement for children working toward family reunification and permanency." Foster Family Network FFA is licensed to serve children ranging from birth through 17.

For the purpose of this review, 12 children were selected for the review. One certified foster parent was decertified during the monitoring review when it was determined her employment with the agency violated DCFS policy. This home had three placed children who were replaced to another agency. Two children were returned to their families during the monitoring review and were not available to be interviewed. Therefore, seven children were interviewed in three certified foster homes and 12 children's case files were reviewed. Four certified foster parent files were reviewed; five

discharge files were reviewed and five staff files were reviewed for compliance with Title 22 Regulations and the County contract.

Nine children were prescribed psychotropic medication. We reviewed their case files to assess timeliness of Psychotropic Medication Authorizations (PMA) and to confirm that documentation of psychiatric monitoring was maintained as required.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The purpose of this review was to assess Foster Family Network FFA's compliance with the contract and State regulations. The visit included a review of the agency's program statement, administrative internal policies and procedures, 12 placed children's case files, five certified foster parent files, five discharged files and five personnel files. Four certified foster homes were visited and the foster parents were interviewed to assess the quality of care and supervision they were providing to children, and seven placed children were interviewed to assess the care and services they were receiving.

During our monitoring review, one certified foster parent was decertified after our office was notified that she was an employee of DCFS (de-certification date March 1, 2012). County policy prohibits County employees (without special approval from the Director), from being certified foster parents with agencies contracted with Los Angeles County. The three foster children placed in her home were replaced to another agency due to a conflict of interest.

A copy of this report has been sent to the Auditor-Controller (A-C) and Community Care Licensing (CCL).

SUMMARY

Overall, the children interviewed indicated that they were provided with good care and appropriate services, were comfortable in their environment and were treated with respect and dignity.

The deficiencies noted during the monitoring review were in the areas of Licensure/Contract Requirements, Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery, Health and Medical Needs, Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being and Psychotropic Medication. Several safety deficiencies were noted in the referrals from OHCMD, resulting in two Review Conferences that lead to the agency being placed on an Endangerment Do Not Refer Status. For maintenance of required documentation and service delivery, two age-appropriate children and two certified foster parents did not participate in the development of Needs and Service Plan (NSP); four initial and five updated NSPs were not comprehensive.

In the area of Health and Medical Needs, four children's initial medical examinations were not timely, and seven children's dental examinations were not timely. In the area of Psychotropic Medication, two children did not receive their monthly psychiatric evaluations. In the area of Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being, two children did not have Life Books/Photo Albums.

Based on our review, the aforementioned deficiencies revealed the need for more training in completion of NSPs. Additionally, routine monitoring of the files by supervisory staff would appear to eliminate untimely completion of medical and dental examinations. Overall, Foster Family Network FFA was providing good care and services to placed children and support to the certified foster parents, which is evident in the relationships formed with the children, agency staff, and certified foster parents.

In conclusion, Foster Family Network FFA was receptive to implementing systemic changes to improve their compliance with regulations and the contract terms. The Administrator agreed to address the noted deficiencies in a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) and has implemented the corrections.

NOTABLE FINDINGS

The following were notable findings of our review:

- Safety issues were noted in several homes, specifically the lack of annual vehicle maintenance. The Director indicated that all Certified Foster Parents' vehicles have been checked by certified auto mechanics. In addition, two foster parents were arrested for driving under the influence. In the first incident, two foster children were in the vehicle at the time of the foster parent's arrest. In the second incident, two foster children and the foster parent's two biological children were in the vehicle, which flipped over in a single vehicle accident. The foster parent was arrested for driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol. One foster child was seriously injured along with serious injuries to the foster parent's child. Foster Family Network FFA has re-assessed all foster parents for waivers and criminal records and exemptions and will no longer certify these individuals.

- Of the 12 children's files reviewed, two age-appropriate children did not participate in the development of their NSPs. The Executive Director has provided documentation to DCFS indicating that all agency social work staff members have attended training to develop comprehensive initial and on-going NSPs with an emphasis on securing foster children's participation and signatures.

- Of the four certified foster parents' files reviewed, two certified foster parents did not participate in the development of the NSPs. The Executive Director has provided documentation indicating to DCFS that all agency social work staff members have attended training to develop comprehensive initial and on-going NSPs with an emphasis on securing certified foster parents' participation and signatures.

- Of the 12 children's files reviewed, two children's progress toward meeting their NSP goals was not documented.

- Of the 12 children files reviewed, four children's initial NSPs were not comprehensive.

- Of the 12 children's files reviewed, five children's Updated NSPs were not timely. The Regional Director indicated that their social work staff will be re-trained on the proper timeframes for submitting Updated NSPs. The agency Regional Director attended the NSP training on January 20, 2012.

- Of the 12 children's files reviewed, seven children did not receive timely initial medical examinations.

- Of the 12 children's files reviewed, four children did not receive timely initial dental examinations. The Regional Director indicated that social work staff is aware that the agency will pay for initial examinations for children whose Medi-Cal coverage is lagging and they are unable to secure a timely appointment at the DCFS medical HUB.

- Two children, who were prescribed psychotropic medication, did not receive their monthly psychiatric evaluations. The agency stated their new Quality Assurance staff member will work on setting up a new tracking method to ensure all evaluations are tracked.

- Of the 12 children interviewed, one certified foster parent did not encourage and help two foster children to create and update a Life Book/Photo Album. Foster Family Network FFA indicated that the Life Books/Photo Albums will be a part of the monitoring performed by the new Quality Assurance staff.

- Foster Family Network was placed on Do Not Refer status during our review as a result of substantiated allegations of severe neglect. After meeting with Foster Family Network, they decertified the foster parents and implemented significant systemic improvements, which have been confirmed by OHCMD, resulting in lifting the Do Not Refer status. Foster Family Network FFA has hired a Quality Assurance staff person at the Master of Social Work (MSW) level to oversee the on-going compliance programming. To address vehicle safety issues, Foster Family Network FFA has revised its program to include annual vehicle

inspections by certified mechanics for designated drivers and other drivers in the home. In addition, Foster Family Network FFA has stated they will no longer certify any individual with a criminal history that has a waiver or require an exemption from CCL.

A detailed report of our findings is attached.

EXIT CONFERENCE

The following are highlights from the Exit Conference held April 17, 2012.

In attendance:

Cherrie Gibbs, Regional Director, Foster Family Network FFA and Thomas Manning, CSA I, Monitor, DCFS, OHCMD.

Highlights:

During the Exit Conference, Cherrie Gibbs, Regional Director, Foster Family Network FFA indicated that the agency has made corrections to improve its compliance with Title 22 Regulations and the Foster Care Agreement. The FFA Regional Director provided documentation of the NSP training provided to ensure all staff can develop and write comprehensive NSPs. In addition, the agency is working on documenting their efforts to obtain Children's Services Workers' (CSW's) signatures on treatment plans and quarterly reports. Ms. Gibbs indicated that the agency has informed all staff to pay for initial medical and dental examinations if they can not get a HUB appointment or the Medi-Cal coverage is lagging. To address the lack of monthly psychiatric evaluations, their mental health division will automatically complete and forward the "DCFS 561c" for their files.

The Regional Director, Cherrie Gibbs, was in agreement with our findings and recommendations. The FFA Regional Director indicated that verification would be provided to OHCMD and that on-going documentation in the files will be maintained, as would on-going oversight by administrative staff.

Foster Family Network FFA submitted an approved written CAP, which addressed each recommendation noted in this compliance report. The CAP is attached.

We will assess for full implementation of the recommendations during our next monitoring review.

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

PLB:RRS:KR
EAH:NF:tm

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Kathy Hughes, Executive Director, Foster Family Network FFA
Jean Chen, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

FOSTER FAMILY NETWORK FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW SUMMARY

900 E. Wardlow Road
Long Beach, CA 90804-0550
License Number: 197804066

	Contract Compliance Monitoring Review	**Findings: February 2012**
I	**Licensure/Contract Requirements** (6 Elements)	
	1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation	1. Full Compliance
	2. SIRs Documented and Cross-Reported	2. Full Compliance
	3. Runaway Procedures	3. Full Compliance
	4. Community Care Licensing Citations, Out-of-Home Care Management Division Reports on Safety and Physical Deficiencies	4. Needs Improvement
	5. If Applicable, FFA Ensures Complete Required Whole Foster Family Home Training	5. Not Applicable
	6. FFA Pays Certified Foster Parents Whole Foster Family Home Payments	6. Not Applicable
II	**Certified Foster Homes** (13 Elements)	
	1. Home Study Prior to Certification 2. Contact with References/Including Check with OHCMD 3. Safety Inspection Prior to Certification 4. Timely DOJ, FBI, CACI 5. Health Screening Prior to Certification 6. Required Training Prior to Certification 7. Current Certificate of Approval on File Including Capacity 8. Home Inspection/Evaluations for Re-certification 9. Completed Training Hours for Re-certification 10. CPR/First-Aid/Water Safety Certificates 11. CDL/Auto Insurance 12. Other Adults: DOJ/FBI/CACI/Other Required Docs 13. Transportation	Full Compliance (ALL)
III	**Facility and Environment** (8 Elements)	
	1. Exterior Well Maintained 2. Common Areas Maintained 3. Children's Bedrooms/Interior Maintained 4. Sufficient Recreational Equipment 5. Sufficient Educational Resources	Full Compliance (ALL)

	6. Adequate Perishable and Non-Perishable Food 7. Disaster Drills Conducted 8. Allowance Logs	
IV	**Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery** (11 Elements) 1. DCFS CSW Authorization to Implement NSPs 2. Children's Participation in the Development of NSPs 3. NSPs Implemented and Discussed with Foster Parents 4. Children's Progress Towards Meeting Goals 5. Timely Developed Initial NSPs with Child 6. Timely Comprehensive Initial NSPs with Child 7. Therapeutic Services Received 8. Recommended Assessments/Evaluations Implemented 9. DCFS CSWs Monthly Contacts Documented 10. Timely Developed Updated NSPs with Child 11. Timely Comprehensive Updated NSPs with Child	1. Full Compliance 2. Needs Improvement 3. Needs Improvement 4. Needs Improvement 5. Full Compliance 6. Needs Improvement 7. Full Compliance 8. Full Compliance 9. Full Compliance 10. Full Compliance 11. Needs Improvement
V	**Education and Workforce Readiness** (7 Elements) 1. Children Enrolled in School Within Three Days 2. Children Attended School as Required 3. Agency Facilitates Child's Educational Goals 4. Child's Academic and/or Attendance Increase 5. Current IEPs Maintained 6. Current Report Cards Maintained 7. Agency Facilitates Children's Participation in YDS/Equivalent/Vocational Programs	Full Compliance (ALL)
VI	**Health and Medical Needs** (6 Elements) 1. Initial Medical Examinations Conducted 2. Initial Medical Examinations Timely 3. Follow-up Medical Examinations Timely 4. Initial Dental Examinations Conducted 5. Initial Dental Examinations Timely 6. Follow-up Dental Examinations Timely	1. Full Compliance 2. Needs Improvement 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Needs Improvement 6. Full Compliance

VII	**Psychotropic Medications** (2 Elements) 1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication 2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review	1. Full Compliance 2. Needs Improvement
VIII	**Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being** (13 Elements) 1. Children Informed of Foster Home's Policies and Procedures 2. Children Feel Safe 3. Satisfaction with Meals and Snacks 4. Foster Parents Treatment of Children with Respect and Dignity 5. Appropriate Rewards and Discipline System 6. Children Allowed Private Visits, Calls, and Correspondence 7. Children Free to Attend Religious Services/Activities 8. Reasonable Chores 9. Children Informed About Psychotropic Medication 10. Children Aware of Right to Refuse Psychotropic Medication 11. Children Informed About Voluntary Refusal of Medical and Dental Care 12. Children Participation in At-Home, School, Community Activities 13. Children Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities	Full Compliance (ALL)
IX	**Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being** (8 Elements) 1. Clothing Allowance 2. On-going Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quantity 3. On-going Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quality 4. Involvement in Selection of Clothing 5. Provision of Personal Care Items 6. Minimum Monetary Allowances 7. Management of Allowance 8. Encouragement and Assistance with Life Book	1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Needs Improvement

X	**Discharged Children** (3 Elements) 1. Stabilization of Placement Prior to Discharge 2. Discharge Summary Completed 3. Child Completed High School	Full Compliance (ALL)
XI	**Personnel Records** (14 Elements) 1. DOJ Timely Submitted 2. FBI Timely Submitted (After January 1, 2008) 3. CACIs Timely Submitted 4. Signed Criminal Background Statement Timely 5. Education/Experience Requirement 6. Employee Health-Screening Timely 7. Valid Driver's License 8. Signed Copies of FFA Policies and Procedures 9. Initial Training Documentation 10. One-hour Training of Child Abuse Reporting 11. CPR Training Documentation 12. First-Aid Training Documentation 13. On-going Training Documentation 14. Social Workers Appropriate Case Ratio	Full Compliance (ALL)

FOSTER FAMILY NETWORK FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

800 E. Wardlow Road
Long Beach, CA 90807
License Number: 197804066

The following report is based on a "point in time" monitoring visit. This compliance report addresses findings noted during the February 2012 monitoring review.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

Based on the results of the compliance review, Foster Family Network FFA was in full compliance with six of 11 sections of our contract compliance review: Certified Foster Homes; Facility and Environment; Education and Workforce Readiness; Personnel Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being; Discharged Children and Personnel Records. The following report details the results of our review:

LICENSE/CONTRACT REQUIREMENT

Based on our review of certified foster parent files and/or documentation from the provider, Foster Family Network FFA fully complied with five of six elements reviewed.

There were significant safety violations by two foster parents, neither of whom were a part of this sample as they were decertified by the agency prior to the monitoring review. One foster parent was arrested for driving under the influence, which contributed to an accident, in which a foster child and foster parent's own child sustained serious injuries. According to the California Highway Patrol, this same parent's vehicle had safety problems that contributed to the accident. None of the agency's certified foster parents files contained current vehicle safety check documentation. Another foster parent was arrested for driving under the influence, with foster children in the vehicle at the time of the arrest.

As a result of the safety concerns, OHCMD placed Foster Family Network FFA on an Endangerment Hold from October 3, 2011 to March 12, 2012, with the lifting of the Do Not Refer status. Two Review Conferences and two other meetings were held with the FFA's management team to address these and other issues within the agency. The agency provided a comprehensive CAP to address the substantiated referrals and other noted deficiencies. OHCMD performed a Focus Review of the agency on February 16, 2012 to assess the implementation of the CAP. Subsequently, the Do Not Refer was lifted.

Recommendation:

Foster Family Network FFA's management shall ensure that:

1. All foster parents and designated drivers have annual vehicle inspections and provide documentation to the agency from a certified auto mechanic.

MAINTENANCE OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Based on our review of 12 foster children's file and four certified foster parent files and/or documentation from the provider and our visits to three of the certified foster homes, Foster Family Network FFA fully complied with six of 11 elements reviewed.

We found that two age-appropriate children did not participate in their NSPs, two certified foster parents did not participate in the development of the NSPs, an agency social worker did not document children's progress toward meeting the goals of NSPs, several initial NSPs were not timely and comprehensive; and several updated NSPs were not timely and comprehensive.

The Agency Representative stated they have conducted training with all social work staff related to developing timely and comprehensive initial and on-going treatment plans. The training was completed on March 6, 2012. Part of the training emphasized getting the foster parents' and foster children's input while developing the NSPs as well as getting their signatures on the document. In addition, staff will more clearly indicate in the report when and why particular goals are not being met and what is being done to adjust goals to meet the child's level of ability, or develop achievable goals.

Recommendations:

Foster Family Network FFA's management shall ensure that:

2. All age-appropriate children participate in the development of NSPs.

3. All certified foster parents participate in the development of NSPs.

4. Children's progress towards meeting goals is documented.

5. Timely comprehensive initial NSPs are developed.

6. Timely comprehensive updated NSPs are developed.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL NEEDS

Based on our review of 12 children's files and/or documentation from the provider, Foster Family Network FFA fully complied with four of six elements.

During the review of the medical and dental files, we noted that four children did not receive timely initial medical examinations and seven children did not receive timely initial dental examinations. The Agency stated that they continue to experience delays in medical examinations because proof of Medi-Cal coverage is lacking and HUB

appointments being scheduled late by DCFS CSWs. The Agency stated they will continue to schedule medical and dental examinations timely, and to clearly indicate in contact notes when Medi-Cal or HUB delays are an issue. Agency stated they have instituted a system with their mental health division (ChildNet Behavioral Health Services-BHS) wherein the charts for Foster Family Network FFA clients on psychotropic medication being monitored by ChildNet staff psychiatrists are flagged by BHS med support staff.

Recommendations:

Foster Family Network FFA's management shall ensure that:

7. All placed children receive timely initial medical examinations.

8. All placed children receive timely initial dental examinations.

PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION

Based on our review of nine children's files and/or documentation from the provider, Foster Family Network FFA fully complied with one of two elements. We noted that two children did not receive monthly follow-up evaluations. Foster Family Network FFA stated psychotropic medication is now being monitored by their staff psychiatrists and the support staff of their Behavioral Health Services program. A DCFS 561c form is now automatically completed and forwarded to Foster Family Network FFA for their files.

Recommendations:

Foster Family Network FFA's management shall ensure that:

9. All children's receiving psychotropic medications have monthly follow-up evaluations.

PERSONAL NEEDS/SURVIVAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Based on our review of 12 children's files and/or documentation from the provider, Foster Family Network FFA fully complied with seven of eight elements. Two children did not receive encouragement and assistance in preparing life books. Foster Family Network FFA indicated that Life Books/Photo Albums will be a part of the monitoring performed by the new Quality Assurance staff.

Recommendations:

Foster Family Network FFA's management shall ensure that:

10. All certified foster parents encourage and assist all foster children in making their life books.

PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP FROM THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER'S COMPLIANCE REPORT

Objective

Determine the status of the recommendations reported from the A-C's prior monitoring review.

Verification

We verified whether the outstanding recommendations from the A-C's last compliance review dated May 12, 2011 were implemented. The A-C's report had two outstanding recommendations, which included foster parents completing the required hours of annual continuing education training, and children's medical and dental examinations being conducted timely.

Results of Focus Review

We also conducted a follow-up to verify implementation of the A-C's recommendations, which were noted in their last monitoring report dated May 12, 2011. The A-C's report had three outstanding recommendations, which included foster parents completing the required hours of annual continuing education training, and children's medical and dental examinations being conducted timely. The Agency has complied with one of the three recommendations.

Recommendation:

Foster Family Network FFA's management shall ensure that:

11. Staff implements the two outstanding recommendations from the A-C's May 12, 2011 report, which is also noted as Recommendation in this report.

MOST RECENT FISCAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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

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5/25/12

Department of Children and Family Services
Out of Home Care Management Division
9320 Telstar Avenue, Suite 216
El Monte, CA 91731

Attn: Thomas Manning, Monitor

Dear Mr. Manning:

Per your request, below is our response to your request for corrective action following your review of our agency on 2/21/12. Also please see attached accompanying documents.

1. Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery
   a) We have conducted training with all social work staff related to developing comprehensive initial and ongoing treatment plans. **Attached** is the sign-in sheet document for this training, which occurred on 3/6/12. Also attached is the outline used during the training. Emphasis was also placed on getting the foster parent and foster child's signatures (when age/developmentally appropriate) indicating they were involved in developing the treatment plan.
   b) We will continue to document our efforts to obtain CSW input on developing treatment goals prior to completion of the NSP report.
   c) We will continue to document our efforts to obtain CSW signatures on treatment plans and quarterly reports.
   d) With regard to progress toward goals, we will more clearly indicate in the report when/why particular goals are not being met and what is being done to adjust goals to meet the child's level of ability, or to develop achievable goals.

2. Education and Workforce Readiness
   a) [redacted] began ILP training on 4/3/12. Documentation of enrollment is **attached**.

3. Health & Medical Needs
   a) We will continue to attempt to schedule medical and dental examinations timely, and clearly indicate in the contact notes when Medi-Cal or HUB delays are an issue.
   b) We continue to experience delays in medical examinations because proof of Medi-Cal coverage is lacking and HUB appointments being scheduled late by DCFS CSWs.
   c) Social workers are aware that the agency will pay for examinations for children whose Medi-Cal coverage is lagging.

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4. Psychotropic Medication
   a) We have instituted a system with our mental health division (ChildNet Behavioral Health Services - BHS) wherein the charts for Foster Family Network clients on psychotropic medication being monitored by ChildNet staff psychiatrists are flagged by BHS med support staff. For these clients, a DCFS 561c (Psychological or Other Exam) form is now automatically completed and forwarded to FFN for our files. Previously, we were depending on foster parents to get psychiatrists to complete this form.
   b) Copies of DCFS 561c forms from our files for [redacted] and [redacted] [redacted] are **attached**.

5. Personnel Records
   a) It has been our practice to submit fingerprints for clearance during the pre-employment period and to hire once DOJ clearance is confirmed. CCL rarely sends written copies of clearances.
   b) We are now being instructed to use the CCL database to confirm and print copies of clearance information. In addition to this going forward, we have instituted a system wherein our HR staff will call CCL for verbal clearance prior to hire and document these calls on a form for the employee's personnel file.
   c) **Attached** are documents from our HR department regarding clearances for the social work and supervisory staff named in your report.

Please let us know if you need further information.

Respectfully,

Cherrie Gibbs

Cherrie Gibbs, M.S., M.F.T.
Southern Regional Director