



PHILIP L. BROWNING
Director

**County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, CA 90020
(213) 351-5602

May 15, 2012

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

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip L. Browning".

**CHILDREN'S BUREAU 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 Children's Bureau Foster Family Agency (FFA) in May 2011, at which time they were supervising a total of 159 DCFS placed children and 126 homes. Children's Bureau FFA is licensed to serve children ranging from birth through 18. At the time of the review, the placed children's average length of placement was ten months and average age was seven.

Children's Bureau FFA is located in the 1st and 5th Supervisorial Districts and provides services to Los Angeles County DCFS foster youth. According to the Children's Bureau FFA program statement, its stated mission is "to prevent child abuse and neglect; protect, nurture, and treat abused children. Enhance the potential of families and communities to meet the needs of their children and advance the welfare of children and families through superior programs in foster care, adoptions, child development, parent education, mental health, research and advocacy."

For the purpose of this review, 12 children's files were reviewed and eight children were interviewed in five certified foster homes. Four children were not available for the interview due to their young age. Five certified foster parent files; four discharged

children's files; and five staff files were also reviewed for compliance with Title 22 Regulations and contract requirements.

Four placed children were on psychotropic medication. We reviewed their case files to assess the timeliness of the Psychotropic Medication Authorizations (PMAs) and to confirm the documentation of psychiatric monitoring was maintained as required.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The purpose of this review was to assess Children's Bureau 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; four psychotropic files; five certified foster parents' files; four discharged files and five personnel files. Face-to-face visits and interviews were conducted with five certified foster parents to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to children. We also conducted interviews with the DCFS placed children to assess the care and services they were receiving.

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

SUMMARY

Children's Bureau FFA was in substantial compliance with providing the services outlined in its program statement. Based on our review, deficiencies revealed a need for the Agency to provide training to certified foster parents on safety procedures and practices; and a need for social workers to complete more thorough and frequent foster home inspections. There is also a need for thorough documentation and increased oversight to include routine monitoring of the files by supervisory staff to decrease or eliminate documentation issues found. Overall, Children's Bureau FFA was providing good care and services to the children and support to the certified foster parents as outlined in its program statement and as evident in the relationships formed.

The following deficiencies were noted during the monitoring review. Two homes had backyards that were in poor and unsafe condition. One foster parent had medication in an unlocked box and a Needs and Services Plans (NSP) for one child was submitted late.

NOTABLE FINDINGS

The following are the notable findings of our review:

- Two of five certified foster homes visited had backyards that were in poor and unsafe condition. One yard had a pick, an axe, two ladders and a saw stored inside the fenced pool area. The other backyard had trash, pots, pans, a saw, a knife, an axe, a large tree trimmer and were accessible to children.
- One of the five certified foster homes stored medication in an unlocked box.
- One of 12 initial NSP reviewed was not completed timely.

A detailed report of our findings is attached.

EXIT CONFERENCE

The following are highlights from the Exit Conference held May 9, 2011.

In attendance:

Lou Graham, Director of Foster Care & Adoptions, Cathy Allan, Program Coordinator and Elaine Lane, CSA I, Monitor, DCFS OHCMD.

Highlights:

During the Exit Conference, the Children's Bureau Administrator was in agreement with our findings and recommendations. The Director indicated she would provide a plan of oversight to ensure ongoing monitoring of foster homes, and that the Agency would provide training to foster parents to ensure that medication is stored in a locked container or cabinet. In regards to the late initial NSP, the Administrator indicated that Children's Bureau FFA makes every effort to ensure that initial NSPs are timely for all placed children.

Children's Bureau FFA agreed to submit an approved written Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to address 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.

Each Supervisor
May 15, 2012
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If you have any questions, please call me or your staff may contact Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:RS:KR:
EAH:Nf:el

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Lou Graham, Director of Foster Care & Adoptions, Children's Bureau FFA
Jean Chen, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

**CHILDREN'S BUREAU FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW-SUMMARY**

1910 Magnolia Ave
Los Angeles, CA 90007
License Number: 197805422

1529 E. Palmdale Blvd.
Palmdale, CA 93550
License Number: 197800281

	Contract Compliance Monitoring Review	Findings: May 2011
I	<p><u>Licensure/Contract Requirements</u> (6 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation 2. SIRs Documented and Cross-Reported 3. Runaway Procedures 4. Community Care Licensing Citations, Out-of-Home Care Management Division Reports on Safety and Physical Deficiencies 5. If Applicable, FFA Ensures Complete Required Whole Foster Family Home Training 6. FFA Pays Certified Foster Parents Whole Foster Family Home Payments 	Full Compliance (ALL)
II	<p><u>Certified Foster Homes</u> (13 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<p><u>Facility and Environment</u> (8 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exterior Well Maintained 2. Common Areas Maintained 3. Children's Bedrooms/Interior Maintained 4. Sufficient Recreational Equipment 5. Sufficient Educational Resources 6. Adequate Perishable and Non-Perishable Food 7. Disaster Drills Conducted 8. Allowance Logs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Needs Improvement 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Full Compliance
IV	<p><u>Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery</u> (11 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Needs Improvement 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Full Compliance 9. Full Compliance 10. Full Compliance 11. Full Compliance
V	<p><u>Education and Workforce Readiness</u> (7 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Child Enroll in School Within Three Days 2. Child Attends 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 Child's Participation in YDS/ Equivalent Vocational Program 	<p>Full Compliance (ALL)</p>

VI	<p><u>Health and Medical Needs</u> (6 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initial Medical Examinations Conducted 2. Initial Medical Examinations Timely 3. Follow-up Medical Examinations Timely 4. Initial Dental Examinations Conducted 5. Initial Dental Examination Timely 6. Follow-up Dental Examinations Timely 	Full Compliance (ALL)
VII	<p><u>Psychotropic Medications</u> (2 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication 2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review 	Full Compliance (ALL)
VIII	<p><u>Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being</u> (13 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children Informed of 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, Dental and Psychiatric Care 12. Children Participation in At-Home, School, Community Activities 13. Children Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities 	Full Compliance (ALL)
IX	<p><u>Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-being</u> (8 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clothing Allowance 2. Ongoing Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quantity 3. Ongoing Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quality 4. Involvement in Selection of Clothing 5. Provision of Personal Care Items 	Full Compliance (ALL)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Minimum Monetary Allowances 7. Management of Allowance 8. Encouragement and Assistance with Life Book 	
X	<p><u>Discharge Children</u> (3 Elements)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stabilization of Placement prior to Discharge 2. Discharge Summary Completed 3. Child Completed High School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Not Applicable
XI	<p><u>Personnel Records</u> (14 Elements)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Ongoing Training Documentation 14. Social Workers Appropriate Case Ratio 	<p>Full Compliance (ALL)</p>

**CHILDREN'S BUREAU FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW**

**1910 Magnolia Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90007
License Number: 197805422**

**1529 E. Palmdale Blvd. #210
Palmdale, CA 93550
License Number: 197800281**

The following report is based on a "point in time" monitoring visit. This compliance report addresses findings noted during the May 2011 monitoring review.

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

Based on the results of the monitoring review, Children's Bureau FFA was in substantial compliance. Based on our review of 12 children's files, five certified foster parent files, four discharge files and five staff files and/or documentation from the provider, Children's Bureau FFA was in full compliance with nine of 11 sections of our Contract Compliance Review: Licensure/Contract Requirements; Certified Foster Homes; 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; Personal Records. The following report details the results of our review.

FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Based on Children's Bureau FFA's review of five certified foster home files and/or documentation from the provider, Children's Bureau FFA fully complied with seven of eight elements reviewed. During OHCMD's visits to two of the certified foster homes, we noted two backyards were cluttered with dangerous tools such as picks, axes, a saw, a tree trimmer, a knife, trash, holes, and one yard was generally unkempt. Also, in one certified foster home, the foster parent stored medication in an unlocked box. Following the FFA review, Children's Bureau FFA submitted a CAP which included written verification by the FFA social worker that the certified foster parents cleaned their backyard areas. The FFA Administrator indicated that the staff will routinely check the home for ongoing compliance.

Recommendations:

Children's Bureau FFA's management shall ensure that:

1. Certified foster home backyards are clean and safe for children.
2. Foster parents store all medications in a locked container or cabinet.

MAINTENANCE OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Based on our review of 12 children's files and/or documentation from the provider, Children's Bureau FFA fully complied with ten of 11 elements reviewed. We noted that one initial NSP was not completed timely. The FFA Administrator indicated that they would ensure all children's initial NSPs were developed in a timely manner.

Recommendation:

Children's Bureau FFA's management shall ensure that:

4. Initial NSPs are completed within 30 days of the child's placement, that FFA staff routinely monitor for on-going compliance and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

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

The A-C's last compliance review was issued on February 16, 2011.

Objective

Determine the status of the recommendations reported in the prior A-C's compliance review.

Verification

We verified whether the outstanding recommendations from the last A-C's compliance report dated February 16, 2011 were implemented.

Results

The prior compliance report contained two outstanding recommendations. Children's Bureau FFA's management was to ensure NSPs contained all the required information regarding the children's progress were updated monthly and included measurable goals that were individualized to the children and DCFS social workers. The recommendations were fully implemented

MOST RECENT FISCAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

A fiscal review of the Children's Bureau FFA has not been posted by the A-C.



1910 Magnolia Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90007
Telephone: 213.342-0100 or 800.730-3933
Fax: 213.342-0253

March 22, 2012

Department of Children and Family Services
Out-of-Home Care Management Division
Attn: Elaine Lane
9320 Telstar Avenue, Suite 206
El Monte, CA 91731

Re: FFA Monitoring Review CAP Addendum

Dear Elaine,

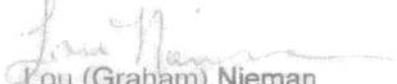
This is in response to the email dated March 21, 2012 requesting a CAP Addendum on the deficiencies noted in 2011 Compliance Monitoring Review areas 1, 2, 4, 6 & 7.

- 1) Attached please find the case note from [REDACTED] regarding her home inspection of the [REDACTED] foster home, Safety Awareness and Assessment of Foster Home and a foster parent training form.
- 2) Attached please find the case note from [REDACTED] regarding his home inspection of the [REDACTED] foster home, Safety Awareness and Assessment of Foster Home and a foster parent training form.
- 4) Attached please find the foster parent training form and signed medication guidelines for the [REDACTED] foster home.
- 6) Attached please find the original letter sent to CCL requesting the 3 to a room exception for the [REDACTED] foster home. Cathy Allan had a verbal conversation with analyst Diana Ayala about the need to even have the exception. Children's Bureau made the decision to have the [REDACTED] foster family remove the additional crib from the foster children's bedroom. Since the crib was removed we did not require anything in writing from CCL.
- 7) CB believes the audit finding was an isolated incident that does not require a systemic change to our procedure. There are normally sufficient checks and balances in place between the social worker and supervisor. On June 6, 2011 we held a team meeting to review the audit and reinforce the importance of all reports being completed on time. A copy of our agenda and sign in sheet is attached. Regarding the late report however, in this case, the change made with respect to what was found in the audit was that the social

worker involved was terminated and her supervisor also left CB. This should reflect sufficient concern about what happened and that CB followed up to rectify the situation.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to call me at 661/810-2138.

Sincerely,



Lou (Graham) Nieman
Director of Foster Care and Adoption

Attachments



1910 Magnolia Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90007
Telephone: 213.342-0100 or 800.730-3933
Fax: 213.342-0253

February 6, 2012

Department of Children and Family Services
Out-of-Home Care Management Division
Attn: Elaine Lane
9320 Telstar Avenue, Suite 206
El Monte, CA 91731

Re: FFA Monitoring Review CAP

Dear Elaine,

This is in response to the email dated January 24, 2012 requesting a CAP on the deficiencies noted in the 2011 Compliance Monitoring Review.

- 1) CB Social Worker [REDACTED] made a home visit to the [REDACTED] home and completed a safety walk through on July 26, 2011. The items mentioned during the exit interview (an axe, two picks, and two ladders that had been stored in the pool gated area) have all been removed. The items were disposed of completely and are no longer at the home. Foster parent is aware that these were potentially unsafe items and agrees to abide by safety regulations in the future.
- 2) CB Social Worker Tim Bell made home visits on July 7th and again on July 20, 2011 to complete a safety walk through of the [REDACTED] home. On his first visit on July 7th the knife and other sharp items had already been put in foster father's tool box in the garage. On July 20th the yard was fully cleaned up with all items mentioned either put away or thrown out. The trailer and boat were moved to a safe area to ensure there was a clear pathway to the gate. Foster parent is aware of our concerns and agrees to maintain the knife and other sharp items in inaccessible areas to children.
- 3) It is our understanding that neither the Title 22 regulations nor County Contract require safety locks on all kitchen cabinets. When asked during the exit interview if there were poisons or toxins in the kitchen cabinets areas where you requested the locks, you stated no. It is our understanding that poisonous items and cleaning products are locked and knives are kept out of reach of children. In both homes ([REDACTED]) this was the case. Please verify the regulations that require safety locks on all kitchen cabinets in order for us to further address this CAP request.

- 4) There seems to be some confusion regarding this. The CAP request states that [REDACTED] placed medications in a box but it was not locked. [REDACTED] states that on the day of the monitoring visit that all medications were locked in a filing cabinet and that no request was made to see them. She states that you only reminded her to put safety locks on all kitchen cabinets. CB questions that CAP as noted in #3 above. We therefore request that you remove this item from our 2011 Compliance Monitoring Review.
- 5) The CAP request states that, despite the [REDACTED] foster homes having more than adequate clothing to meet the child's needs during your visit, they are not spending \$50.00 per month per child as Children's Bureau's Program Statement recommends. The CB form you are referring to is an example of types of monthly items that foster parents may use as **guidelines** or **suggestions** as to how to budget their monthly stipend amount. Nowhere in our program statement does it state that CB will collect receipts for this type of expenditure nor that it is a requirement (Section 26, see attached). This is also not a county contract requirement. The spirit of a clothing allowance procedure is that within the first four months of placement and ongoing that all children will have sufficient clothing. It is my understanding during the exit interview that both of these families had more than enough clothes for the children in their homes. CB therefore requests that you remove this item from our 2011 Compliance Monitoring Review.
- 6) The CAP states that [REDACTED] sometimes has [REDACTED] to sleep in the bedroom with two older children which means there are three children in a room. Please submit the approved waiver to allow three children to sleep in a room. [REDACTED] had his own crib in the [REDACTED] bedroom. [REDACTED] had an extra crib in the room mentioned so that on occasion she and her husband could move the infant temporarily into that crib in order to spend an intimate moment together. The infant was always moved back into their bedroom as soon as they finished. This was again only on occasion when the baby was awake in their bedroom. CCL did not feel the need to approve the exception since the child did not sleep in the room on a regular basis nor have their belongings stored there. They stated that it would be similar to three children playing in a room together temporarily. There is no requirement for an exception under these circumstances. In order to comply with your request, we have had [REDACTED] remove the additional crib from the other bedroom.
- 7) The 30 day needs and service for [REDACTED] was submitted late. She was part of a sibling set of six children placed in two CB homes and her report was accidentally missed. The social worker had performance issues and is no longer employed with Children's Bureau.

Out-of-Home Care Management Division
Attn: Elaine Lane
Page Three

If you have any further questions, please feel free to call me at 661/810-2138.

Sincerely,



Lou Nieman
Director of Foster Care and Adoption

Cc: Nestor Figueroa