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DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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January 22, 2013

To: Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, Chairman
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From: Philip L. Browning
Director

OPTIMIST YOUTH HOMES AND FAMILY SERVICES 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 Optimist Youth and Family Services Foster Family Agency (Optimist FFA) in October 2012. Optimist FFA has one licensed office, in the Fifth Supervisorial District and provides services to Los Angeles County DCFS foster children and youth. According to Optimist FFA's program statement, its mission is "to provide culturally sensitive, comprehensive treatment, specialized education and support services to abused, neglected or at-risk children and youth, and their families, to establish stability within families and communities."

At the time of the review, Optimist FFA supervised 42 DCFS placed children in 29 certified foster homes. The placed children's average length of placement was 15 months and their average age was 11.

SUMMARY

During our review, the children interviewed generally reported feeling safe at Optimist 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 Optimist FFA staff in their efforts to provide care, supervision and service delivery to the children placed in their homes.

Optimist FFA was in full compliance with eight of 11 sections of our program compliance review: Licensure/Contract Requirements; Facility and Environment; Education and Workforce Readiness; Health and Medical Needs; Psychotropic Medication; Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being; Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being; and Discharged Children.

We noted deficiencies in the area of Certified Foster Homes with regard to one certified foster home not having an annual vehicle inspection. We also noted a finding in the area of Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery related to the FFA monthly contacts with the County Children's Social Workers (CSWs) missing for three months for two placed siblings in a certified foster home. Lastly, we noted two findings in the Personnel Records area regarding an untimely health screening and current car insurance for one FFA social worker.

Of noteworthy mention, Optimist FFA provides additional financial assistance to their families in need of additional support for the placed children's extra curricular activities, such as summer camps and after school programs.

Attached are the details for our review.

REVIEW OF REPORT

On October 17, 2012, the DCFS OHCMD Monitor, Cori Shaffer, held an Exit Conference with Optimist FFA representative, Crystal Brackin, Assistant Executive Director. Optimist 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 A-C and Community Care Licensing (CCL).

Optimist 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, please call me or your staff may contact Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:RRS:KR
EAH:NF:cs

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Sil Orlando, Executive Director, Optimist FFA
Rosalie Gutierrez, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

OPTIMIST YOUTH HOMES AND FAMILY SERVICES 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. This compliance report addresses findings noted during the October 2012 review. The purpose of the review was to assess Optimist FFA's compliance with the County contract requirements and State regulations and included a review of the agency'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

For the purpose of this review, seven children were selected for the sample. We 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 Optimist FFA's compliance with permanency efforts. At the time of the review, six placed children were prescribed psychotropic medication. We reviewed their case files to assess for timeliness of Psychotropic Medication Authorizations (PMAs) and to confirm the required documentation of psychiatric monitoring.

We reviewed three certified foster parent files; and two staff files were reviewed 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

We found the following three areas to be out of compliance.

Certified Foster Homes

- One certified foster family did not have the required annual vehicle maintenance for the year 2011. Per the FFA Administrator, the agency was not aware of the annual vehicle inspection requirement and has not required their foster parents to obtain vehicle inspections every two years. Per the Administrator, the agency will change

their policy to annual vehicle inspections, will ensure on-going compliance by the foster parents and will maintain updated documentation in the files.

Recommendation

Optimist FFA's management shall ensure that:

1. Certified foster parents maintain annual vehicle inspections, the FFA routinely monitors for on-going compliance and current documentation is maintained in the certified foster parent files.

Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery

- For two siblings placed in the same certified foster home, there was no documentation of FFA contacts with the CSWs for the months of June 2012, July 2012 and August 2012. Per the FFA Administrator, the FFA social worker who visited the home is no longer with the agency and they were unable to obtain any documentation verifying that the monthly contacts occurred. Per the Administrator, they will ensure that the CSWs are contacted monthly and that on-going documentation is maintained in the certified foster parent files.

Recommendation

Optimist FFA's management shall ensure that:

2. The FFA social workers will contact all placed children's CSWs on a monthly basis, documentation is maintained in the children's files and the FFA supervisor routinely monitors for on-going compliance.

Personnel Records

- For one staff hired in October 2011, the health screening was untimely. We noted that there was documentation in the personnel files for health screenings for August 2010 and August 2012, but no documentation that a health screening was completed per Title 22 regulations, no more than one year prior to and seven days subsequent to the date of hire. The FFA Administrator and Human Resource (HR) Director indicated that they will ensure timely health screenings for all staff per Title 22 regulations.

- For the same staff, we did not find current car insurance in her name or documentation as an approved driver on file with the agency. Per the FFA Administrator, current car insurance was provided by the staff; however, they were unaware that the insurance in the staff's parent's names did not have the staff noted as an approved driver. The FFA Administrator immediately had the staff sign an affidavit indicating that she would not transport any placed children until proper documentation for verification of auto insurance is provided to the agency. The FFA's CAP included verification of auto insurance for the staff. The HR Director indicated that the agency will ensure that auto insurance for all staff transporting

placed children is in their name and that current documentation is maintained in the personnel files.

Recommendation

Optimist FFA's management shall ensure that:

3. Staff health screenings are timely, as per Title 22 regulations, on-going documentation is maintained in the personnel files and the FFA staff routinely monitors for on-going compliance.

4. All staff provide documentation of current car insurance in the staff's name and documentation is maintained in the current personnel files and that the agency routinely monitors for on-going compliance.

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

The OHCMD's last compliance dated June 13, 2012 identified 18 recommendations.

Results

Based on our follow-up, Optimist FFA fully implemented all 18 previous recommendations for which they were to ensure that:

- Certified foster parents' initial home studies are conducted and signed prior to the initial certification and documentation is maintained in the files.

- Any adult residing in or frequently visiting the foster home who provides care and supervision to the foster children has the required clearances, CPR/First-Aid certification, California Driver's License (CDL) and car insurance on file with the agency.

- Age-appropriate youth are offered the opportunity to participate in the implementation of the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs); NSPs are approved by CSWs.

- CFPs participate in the development of the children's NSPs and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

- Comprehensive NSPs are developed with age-appropriate children and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

- All children receive the recommended therapeutic services and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

- All children's required evaluations/assessments are implemented and current documentation is maintained in the children's files.

- Comprehensive updated NSPs are developed with the age-appropriate children and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

- Children's initial medical examinations are timely and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

- Children's follow-up medical examinations are timely and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

- Children's initial dental examinations are conducted and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

- Children's initial dental examinations are timely and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

- All foster children taking psychotropic medication have a current court authorization on file with the FFA; the FFA social worker maintains on-going contact with the prescribing psychiatrists, mental health providers and certified foster parents to ensure that children's mental health needs are being properly monitored, managed, on-going compliance is maintained and that updated documentation is maintained in the children's files.

- All foster children taking psychotropic medication are routinely evaluated for medication management and psychiatric services and on-going documentation is maintained in the children's files; FFA administrative staff to develop and maintain a system of oversight to ensure on-going compliance by the FFA social work staff, certified foster parents and mental health providers to ensure that children's mental health needs are being met.

- All placed children feel safe and the FFA social worker staff routinely interview the children to ensure child safety and that documentation is maintained in the children's files.

- Children are treated with respect and dignity and the FFA staff routinely interview the children and monitor the home for on-going compliance.

- All children receive appropriate discipline and the FFA routinely monitors the homes for on-going compliance with Personal Rights and discipline policies.

- Clothing inventories are routinely conducted per the FFA program statement and contract requirements and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

MOST RECENT FISCAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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

OPTIMIST YOUTH HOMES AND FAMILY FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT PROGRAM COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW-SUMMARY
520 W. Palmdale Blvd., Suite H
Palmdale, CA 93551
License Number: 197601246

	Contract Compliance Monitoring Review	Findings: October 2012
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	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. Not Applicable
	6. FFA Pays Certified Foster Parents Whole Foster Family Home Payments	6. Not 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. Full Compliance
	2. Contact with References/Including Check with OHCMD	2. Full Compliance
	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. Full Compliance
	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. Improvement Needed
	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 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	Full Compliance (ALL)
IV	**Maintenance of Required Documentation/Service Delivery** (10 Elements) 1. County Worker's Authorization to Implement NSPs 2. NSPs Implemented and Discussed with Foster Parents 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. County Workers 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. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Improvement Needed 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. On-going 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	Full Compliance (ALL)

	6. Management of Allowance/Earnings 7. Encouragement/Assistance with Life Book	
X	**Discharged Children** (2 Elements) 1. Completed Discharge Summary 2. Child Completed High School (if applicable)	Full Compliance (ALL)
XI	**Personnel Records** (9 Elements) 1. DOJ, FBI, Child Abuse Criminal Index (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 Exceed Total of 15 Children	1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Improvement Needed 5. Improvement Needed 6. Full Compliance 7. Full Compliance 8. Full Compliance 9. Full Compliance

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OPTIMIST COMMUNITY SERVICES

FOSTER FAMILY, ADOPTION & MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

Serving Youth Since 1906

A division of Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services

Silvio John Orlando, ACSW
Executive Director

Nancy Ramos, LCSW
Regional Director

November 7, 2012

Cori Shaffer, CSA I
DCFS OHCMD
9320 Telstar Avenue, Ste 216
El Monte, CA 91731

OPTIMIST YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES FFA 2012 COMPLIANCE REVIEW
CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

Affiliations

The following is the CAP for the2012 compliance review. We hope we have been able to address all the findings satisfactorily

1. **Finding**: Certified foster home reviewed did not have an annual vehicle inspection for 2011. The previous one was done in 2010 and the next was due 2012. The agency stated that they required vehicle inspections every two years.
Correction: The agency has changed its policy and is now requiring that vehicle inspections be done annually. Attached you will find the letter that went out informing the foster parents of the new requirement. The agency is tracking the vehicle inspections.

2. **Finding:** Two foster siblings placed in a CFH had no monthly CSW contacts for June, July and August 2012 completed by the FFA social worker.
Correction: The agency does monitor for CSW notes and in this case the FFA SW was put on a work plan due to documentation not being submitted in a timely manner. Due to the ongoing difficulty in getting the contacts documented, the FFA social worker was terminated. The agency is confident that the contacts were made but unfortunately they were not documented. We continue to track all the notes that are submitted and at this time do not have any employees that are not in compliance.

3. **Finding**: One social work staff hired October 2011 did not have car insurance in her name nor was she listed as an approved driver on the car insurance on file.
Correction: The employee has submitted a copy of her coverage with her name listed as a driver. Our Human Resources Department has also addressed this issue and has submitted a letter stating that they will ensure that for FFA personnel are listed as active drivers on their personal insurance policies.

4. **Finding:** One social work staff hired 10/10/11 did not have a timely TB/ health screening on file. There were two health screens from 8/10 and 8/12, which is not within one year or 7 days subsequent to hire date. (Title 22 requirement). **Correction**: The Director of Human Resources at Optimist has submitted a letter stating that they will ensure compliance with Title 22 requirements regarding TB/health screen requirements for Optimist staff.

Thank you for your input and recommendations regarding the compliance review. If there are any questions regarding the CAP, please let us know so that we can address them accordingly.

Cordially,

Nancy Ramos LCSW

Nancy Ramos, LCSW
Regional Director