County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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October 3, 2013

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

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

NUEVO AMANECER LATINO CHILDREN'S 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 Nuevo Amanecer Latino Children's Services Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in April 2013. The FFA has three licensed offices located in the First, Third and Fifth Supervisorial Districts, one office in San Bernardino County and one office in Orange County and provides services to County of Los Angeles DCFS foster children and youth. According to the FFA's program statement, its mission is "to provide children with a continuity of family based foster care, nurturance and services which will meet their individual needs and expectations, and those of their biological families."

At the time of the review, the FFA supervised 303 DCFS placed children in 177 certified foster homes. The placed children's average length of placement was ten months, and their average age was nine.

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: Certified Foster Homes, 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.

OHCMD noted deficiencies in the areas of Licensure/Contract Requirements, related to a Community Care Licensing (CCL) citation related to certified foster parent failing to obtain a criminal clearance of an adult living in the home and the FFA having failed to follow procedures by placing more than two children in a certified foster home prior to 12 months of certification; Facility and Environment, related to children's bedrooms not being well-maintained and disaster drills not conducted; Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery, related to untimely children's initial Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) and children not participating in the development of the NSPs; and Personnel Records, related to CPR and First-Aid training not having been conducted in a timely manner.

During OHCMD's review, we found that the FFA did not fully implement their 2012 Corrective Action Plan (CAP). We noted that four of the findings, which were found during the February 2012 Contract Compliance Monitoring Review, were also findings in this review.

Attached are the details of our review.

REVIEW OF REPORT

On May 20, 2013, the DCFS OHCMD Monitor, Darío Villamarín, held an Exit Conference with the FFA representatives, David Danwing, Executive Director, Norma Duque, President and Chief Executive Officer. The FFA's representatives agreed with the review findings and recommendations; were 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 CCL.

The FFA provided the attached approved CAP addressing the recommendations noted in this compliance report and what steps the FFA will take to ensure the previous findings are implemented.

OHCMD 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:dv
Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
David Danwing, Executive Director, Nuevo Amanecer Latino Children's Services FFA
Angelica López, Acting Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

NUEVO AMANECER LATINO CHILDREN'S 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 April 2013 monitoring review. The purpose of this review was to assess Nuevo Amanecer Latino Children's Services (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, and
- Personnel Records.

For purposes of this review, eleven children were selected for the sample. Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) interviewed eight children. Two children were not interviewed due their young age and one had been replaced. During the home visits, the children were observed to be comfortable in the certified foster homes and the certified foster parents were observed to be attuned to the needs of the children. OHCMD reviewed all eleven case files to assess the care and services they received. Additionally, four discharged children's files were reviewed to assess the FFA's compliance with permanency efforts. At the time of the review, ten placed children were prescribed psychotropic medication. We reviewed their case files to assess for timeliness of Psychotropic Medication Authorizations and to confirm the required documentation of psychiatric monitoring.

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

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

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

Licensure/Contract Requirements

- Community Care Licensing (CCL) cited the FFA as a result of deficiencies and findings during the investigation of a CCL complaint. According to the complaint report dated February 20, 2013, CCL cited the FFA for a Criminal Clearance violation due to a certified foster parent's son-in-law residing on the property without a criminal record clearance. The FFA submitted a Plan of Correction (POC) to CCL that included decertifying the certified foster parents, which was approved.

- The FFA failed to follow contractual requirements by not ensuring that a newly certified foster parent had experience and was providing quality of care prior to placing more than two children in the home, resulting in several replacements for children. The FFA placed three children in the certified foster home the day after certification. The children were replaced within two and a-half months. Five days later, three additional children were placed in the same certified foster home. They were replaced within two days. Then, the FFA Administrator increased capacity to four children and placed a two-day old infant, prenatally exposed to drugs, along with the infant's three siblings, ages 3, 4 and 12, in the certified foster home.

  On January 10, 2013, a referral was called in to the Child Protection Hotline (CPHL) alleging that the infant above now three-months of age had a severe diaper rash causing bleeding. Additionally, the certified foster parent allowed the children's biological mother to have unmonitored visits, even though the visits were required to be monitored. It was also reported that the children's biological mother took the three-year old child to the hospital for a fever of 102 degrees, which was the result of an infection in the child's genital area due to poor hygiene. According to the Investigation Narrative, the allegations of general neglect were deemed inconclusive, as the oldest child initially denied the allegations, subsequently, the child disclosed that the certified foster parent allowed him and his siblings to have unmonitored visits with their parents. This resulted in the children being replaced.

  Further, while the certified foster home was under investigation, the FFA continued to use this home as a placement resource by placing two additional children in the home. Out-of-Home Care Investigations Section (OHCIS) investigated the allegations and requested a corrective action plan (CAP) from the FFA. Specifically, the FFA was to address how they determined that a certified foster parent with limited experience was an appropriate placement for four foster children. Then reduced the capacity to two children due to the certified foster parent expressing not being able to continue providing services for the siblings and after a DCFS investigation was initiated. Finally, the FFA was to address its protocol in assessing certified foster parents prior to placing more than two foster children in its certified foster homes. The FFA submitted a CAP to OHCIS on June 12, 2013, which included decertification of the certified foster home. OHCIS placed the certified foster home on Indefinite Hold and this home will no longer be used as a placement resource for County of Los Angeles DCFS children. During the Exit

Conference, the FFA representatives stated that the FFA will use a new assessment tool to include not only the County contract requirements, but also additional criteria.

Recommendations

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

1. The FFA is in full compliance with Title 22 regulations, free of CCL citations.

2. Prior to placing more than two children in a certified foster home, the foster parents have at least 12 months experience as per the County contract. Additionally, the FFA staff is trained to make better assessments when placing two children or more in certified foster homes.

Facility and Environment

- In one certified foster home, the child's bedroom did not have lighting. The certified foster parent stated that the lighting for the room comes from the television. OHCMD requested that the certified foster parent place a lamp in the child's bedroom. The issue was also reported to the FFA. Prior to the Exit Conference, the FFA provided OHCMD with a copy of the FFA social worker's contact notes and pictures verifying that the deficiency was corrected.

  In another certified foster home, the bedroom of two youth was too hot, stuffy and did not smell fresh due to the youths' poor hygiene. The interviewed youth stated that the only ventilation came from opening a window. OHCMD brought this issue to the attention of the certified foster parent who stated the youth never complained about the bedroom being too hot. The issue was also reported to the FFA. Prior to the Exit Conference, the FFA provided OHCMD with a copy of the FFA social worker's contact notes indicating that a fan was placed in the room of the two youth.

- One certified foster parent stated that disaster drills had not been conducted for a year. However, when OHCMD reviewed the documentation of the FFA's quarterly home inspections, the documentation indicated that disaster drills had been conducted for this certified foster home.

During the Exit Conference, the FFA representatives stated that the lack of lighting issue would be addressed in a CAP. The FFA representative also indicated that the certified foster parent provides the youth with the necessary toiletries, but the youth do not always use them. Further, the FFA representative stated that the FFA social workers conducted disaster drills with the certified foster parents and the placed children during quarterly home inspections and that perhaps the certified foster parent did not understand the question regarding disaster drills.

Recommendations

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

3. Children's bedrooms/interiors are well maintained.

4. Disaster drills are conducted with placed children and certified foster parents as required by Title 22 Regulations.

Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery

- For one child, the initial NSP was developed six days late.

- Two youth stated that they did not participate in the development of their NSP.

- The initial NSP for one child indicated that the child was replaced to another certified foster home within the FFA. However, the NSP did not indicate the reason for the replacement of the child.

During the Exit Conference, the FFA representative indicated that this issue would be addressed in their CAP, as well as the issue of children participating in the development of their NSPs. Also, that the FFA representative indicated that the FFA social worker did not feel that an explanation was needed when a child is replaced within the FFA.

It should be noted that a representative from the FFA attended OHCMD NSP training on January 27, 2012. The NSPs reviewed had been developed subsequent to the training.

Recommendations

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

5. Initial NSPs are developed timely.

6. Age appropriate children are made aware of their NSPs.

7. NSPs indicate the reason children are replaced.

Personnel Records

- One FFA Social Worker did not receive CPR and First-Aid training until three months after date of hire.

During the Exit Conference, the FFA representatives stated that this issue would be addressed in the CAP.

Recommendation

The FFA's management shall ensure that:

8. FFA Social Workers receive CPR and First-Aid training in a timely manner.

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

The OHCMD's last compliance report dated October 2, 2012, identified 11 recommendations.

Results

Based on OHCMD's follow-up, the FFA fully implemented 7 of 11 previous recommendations for which they were to ensure that:

- OHCMD is contacted for historical abuse information regarding prospective certified foster parents prior to certification.
- Re-certification training topics are related to the County contract and Title 22 Regulations.
- Children's NSP goals are specific and measurable.
- Initial and updated NSPs are comprehensive and all the sections are addressed.
- Children are provided with educational services to facilitate their progress in school.
- Children are provided with tutoring services when children are performing below grade level.
- Children are provided with recreational activities.

Based on OHCMD follow-up, the FFA did not fully implement 4 of 11 previous recommendations for which they were to ensure that:

- Bedrooms are appropriately maintained and meet Title 22 Regulations.
- FFA's social workers are trained on Title 22 Regulations.
- Initial NSPs are developed timely.

- Specific, individualized assessments are developed when placing more than two children in a certified foster home.

Recommendations

The FFA administration shall ensure that:

9. The outstanding recommendations for the October 2, 2012 monitoring report, which are noted in this report as Recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 5 are fully implemented.

At the Exit Conference, the FFA Administration expressed their desire to remain in compliance with all Title 22 Regulations and Contract requirements. In an effort to ensure all certified foster homes are in compliance with Title 22 Regulations the FFA provided training to staff on Title 22 Regulations. Additionally, to be in compliance with their County contract regarding assessments of certified foster parents prior to placing two or more children, the FFA has provided additional training to staff conducting the assessments. To ensure that children's bedrooms are properly maintained, staff received training regarding Title 22 Regulations pertaining to proper ventilation and lighting. Lastly, in efforts to develop timely initial NSPs, the FFA re-trained their staff on developing timely initial NSPs.

MOST RECENT FISCAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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

NUEVO AMANECER LATINO CHILDREN'S SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT PROGRAM COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW SUMMARY

5400 Pomona Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90022
License Number: 197802088

1085 West Badillo Street
Covina, CA 91722
License Number: 197802638

439 North Maclay Avenue
San Fernando, CA 91340
License Number: 197602944

2025 North D Street
San Bernardino, CA 91730
License Number: 366408237

322 West Katella Avenue, Suite 5-B
Orange, CA 92867
License Number: 306099621

	Contract Compliance Monitoring Review	**Findings: April 2013**
I	**Licensure/Contract Requirements** (7 Elements)	
	1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation	1. Full Compliance
	2. Serious Incident Report Documentation and Cross Reporting	2. Full Compliance
	3. Runaway Procedures	3. Full Compliance
	4. Are there CCL Citations/OHCMD Safety Reports	4. Improvement Needed
	5. If Applicable, FFA Ensures Complete Required Whole Foster Family Home Training	5. Full Compliance
	6. FFA Pays Certified Foster Parents Whole Foster Family Home Payments	6. Full Compliance
	7. Assessment of Certified Foster Parent (CFP) Prior to Placement of Two (2) or More Children	7. Improvement Needed
II	**Certified Foster Homes (CFHs)** (12 Elements)	
	1. Home Study and Safety Inspection Prior to Certification	Full Compliance (ALL)
	2. Contact with References/Including Check with OHCMD	
	3. Timely DOJ, FBI, CACI	
	4. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement	
	5. Health Screening & TB Test Prior to Certification	
	6. Required Training Prior to Certification	
	7. Certificate of Approval on File/Including Capacity	
	8. Safety Inspection Every Six Months or Per Approved Program Statement	
	9. Completed Training Hours for Re-certification and Current CPR/First-Aid/Water Safety Certificates	
	10. Current CDL/Auto Insurance/Annual Vehicle Maintenance Documentation for CFPs and Designated Drivers	

	11. Other Adults in the Home: Health Screening/CDL/CPR/DOJ/FBI/CACI/Auto Insurance 12. FFA Assists CFPs with Transportation Needs	
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	1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Improvement Needed 4. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Improvement Needed 7. Full Compliance
IV	**Maintenance of Required Documentation/Service Delivery** (10 Elements) 1. County Children's Social Worker's Authorization to Implement NSPs 2. NSPs Implemented and Discussed with Certified Foster Parents (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. 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. Improvement Needed 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	Full Compliance (ALL)

X	**Discharged Children** (3 Elements) 1. Completed Discharge Summary 2. Attempts to Stabilize Children's Placement 3. Child Completed High School (if applicable)	 1. Full Compliance 2. Full Compliance 3. Not Applicable
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. Full Compliance 5. Full Compliance 6. Full Compliance 7. Improvement Needed 8. Full Compliance 9. Full Compliance

Nuevo Latino
CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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June 17th, 2013

Nestor Figueroa, MSW, Manager, CSA II
Out of Home Care Management Division
9320 Telstar Avenue # 216
El Monte, CA 91731

Re: Corrective Action Plan to Compliance Review

Dear Nestor Figueroa,

Nuevo Amanecer Latino Children's Services has received the report following the contract compliance annual review of our agency conducted by the Out of Home Care Management Division and are submitting the following Corrective Action Plan to remediate and address the recommendations noted.

Licensure/contract requirements.

1. The FFA is free of CCL's complains on safety issues.
   - During the year 2013, and prior to the OHCMD Annual Compliance Review, a foster parent was found to admit that she failed to notify the agency of an adult temporarily living in the property thus, not enabling the agency to request a criminal clearance. As a result, foster mother was involuntarily decertified by this agency. Nuevo's internal house/property inspection was revised to ensure that pertinent information regarding all adult frequent visitors, temporarily guests, and permanent guests are assessed to ensure criminal record compliance. Training regarding the revised house/property inspection was provided to the staff on March 8, 2013 (please see training attendance log and revised house inspection attachment).
2. Staff is trained to make better assessments when placing two children or more in a certified resource home including when certified foster parents have less than 12 months of experience as per County contract. Please note that the assessment in question was conducted prior to Nuevo revising its assessment tool on April of this year which evaluates additional areas on top of those required by County contract. We are confident that with the additional training and the utilization of the revised tool this will lead to better assessments.
   - Additionally, training was provided on June 14, 2013 to those conducting the assessment to ensure that assessments are comprehensive enough to best meet the needs of children while observing County contract requirements (please see training attendance log).

Facility and Environment.

3. Disaster drills are conducted with all placed children.
   - Staff received specific training regarding disaster drills on June 14, 2013 as a means to practice disaster drills with the children (please see

training attendance log).

4. *Children's bedrooms have adequate lighting as well as proper ventilation. Please note that Nuevo Amanecer Latino provided our monitor with photo proof that a lamp and a fan were set in place on the same date of notification.*
    - *Staff received training regarding title 22 regulations pertaining specifically to proper ventilation and lighting on June 14, 2013. (Please see training attendance log).*

Maintenance of required documentation and service delivery.

5. *Initial NSP's are developed timely.*
    - *On June 14, 2013, staff was trained on properly developing timely initial NSP's as well as ensuring that all required signatures have corresponding written dates where applicable. (Please see training attendance log).*
6. *Age appropriate children are made aware of the purpose of an NSP.*
    - *FFA worker will review and ensure that all age appropriate children understand the purpose of an NSP before signing and or acknowledging that they have received a copy and reviewed their goals, FFA worker will document this information on the weekly contact notes when such review takes place.*
7. *NSP's indicate the reason children are relocated to other certified resource homes within the FFA.*
    - *Effective immediately, all children relocated to another certified home within Nuevo, information will be documented and tracked via an internal agency report. FFA worker will incorporate the reason for relocation within the NSP report when applicable. Also, on June 14, 2013 staff was trained on how to properly document relocations within the NSP and internal agency report adequately. (Please see training attendance log).*

Personnel records.

8. *Social workers have their CPR and First aid certificates issued on a timely manner.*
    - *Effective June of 2013, Nuevo Amanecer Latino requires all Social workers to have a current CPR and First Aid training on their first day of employment.*

At this time, we would like to extend a genuine thank you to our monitor Dario Villamarin for his professionalism before and after the annual review and for his recommendations and observations. We welcome the Department's feedback as a means to improve the quality of our services.

Should you have any further questions or suggestions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

David Danwing
Executive Director