County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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July 17, 2012

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

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

WALDEN 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 Walden Family Services Foster Family Agency (Walden FFA) in January 2012, at which time they had 91 DCFS placed children in 51 certified foster homes. Walden FFA is licensed to serve children ranging from birth through 17.

Walden FFA is located in the Third Supervisorial District and provides services to Los Angeles County DCFS foster children. Walden FFA has a satellite office in Riverside County that also provides services to Los Angeles County DCFS foster children. According to Walden FFA's program statement, its stated goal is "to provide an environment of emotional and physical security, nurturing and consistency for children in placement."

For the purpose of this review, 15 children's files were reviewed and 14 children were interviewed in five certified foster homes. The placed children's overall average length of placement was 22 months, and the average age was 12. Five certified foster parents' (CFP) files, five discharged files and five staff files were reviewed for compliance with Title 22 Regulations and the County contract requirements.

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

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The purpose of this review was to assess Walden FFA's compliance with the County contract and State regulations. The visit included a review of the agency's program statement, administrative internal policies and procedures, 15 placed children's case files, five certified foster parent files and five personnel files. Five certified foster homes were visited and the foster parents were interviewed to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to children and 14 placed children were interviewed 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

Generally, the children interviewed reported feeling safe, 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 Facility and Environment, Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery.

Based on our review, the aforementioned deficient areas revealed the need for more thorough documentation and increased oversight.

In conclusion, Walden 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).

NOTABLE FINDINGS

The following are the notable findings of our review.

- One certified foster home visited had tools in the backyard garden that were accessible to the placed children. The FFA social worker verified the next day that the tools were properly stored in a locked shed. Photgraphic verification was provided by the FFA. The FFA staff instructed the foster parents that the tools must be kept locked at all times. The FFA staff ensured that they would monitor the home for on-going compliance.

- Four children's initial Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) were untimely. Per the FFA Administrator, the FFA social workers have been retrained on NSP procedures and FFA supervisors will monitor the NSPs for on-going compliance.

- Two children's NSPs were not comprehensive. Per the FFA Administrator, the FFA social workers have been retrained on NSP procedures and FFA supervisors will monitor the NSPs for on-going compliance.

- For two children there were no CSW authorizations, or documented agency's efforts to obtain authorization, on the NSPs. Per the FFA Administrator, the FFA social workers have been retrained on NSP procedures and FFA supervisors will monitor the NSPs for ongoing compliance. The FFA staff representatives attended the January 2012 NSP training conducted by OHCMD.

A detailed report of our findings is attached.

EXIT CONFERENCE

The following are highlights from the Exit Conference held February 1, 2012.

In attendance:

Marci Galvez, Regional Administrator and Sue Evans, Director of Operations was present via teleconference, of Walden Family Services FFA and Cori Shaffer, CSA I, Monitor, DCFS, OHCMD

Highlights:

The Walden Family Services FFA administrative staff was in agreement with our findings and recommendations. The Director of Operations and Administrator indicated that they would ensure that all placed children's NSPs would be timely and would contain all the required elements, including the CSW's authorizations to implement the NSPs. The FFA staff provided verification that gardening tools at one certified home visited were safely stored and were not accessible to the placed children and that the FFA social worker would provide routine monitoring to ensure on-going compliance and child safety. Walden Family Services FFA submitted a timely approved written Corrective Action Plan (CAP) which discussed each recommendation in the compliance report. The approved 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:cs

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Wendy Watanabe, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Sue Evans, Director of Operations, Walden Family Services FFA
Jean Chen, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

WALDEN FAMILY SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
MONITORING REVIEW-SUMMARY

Los Angeles Office
18860 Nordhoff Street, Suite 200
Northridge, CA 90230
License #: 197805512

Riverside Office
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Riverside, CA 92506
License #: 336403491

	Contract Compliance Monitoring Review	**Findings: January 2012**
I	**Licensure/Contract Requirements** (6 Elements) 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	**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 6. Adequate Perishable and Non Perishable Food 7. Disaster Drills Conducted 8. Allowance Logs	 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	**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. Needs Improvement 2. Full Compliance 3. Full Compliance 4. Full Compliance 5. Needs Improvement 6. Needs Improvement 7. Full Compliance 8. Full Compliance 9. Full Compliance 10. Full Compliance 11. Full Compliance
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	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** (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	Full Compliance (ALL)
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)

WALDEN FAMILY SERVICES FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW

Los Angeles Office
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License #: 197805512

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Riverside, CA 92506
License #: 336403491

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

CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE

Based on the results of the compliance review, Walden FFA was in full compliance with nine of 11 sections of our contract compliance review: Licensure/Contract Requirements; Certified Foster Homes; Education and Workforce Readiness; Health and Medical Needs; Psychotropic Medications; Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being; Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being; Discharged Children and Personnel Records. The following report details the results of our review.

FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Based on our review of five certified homes, Walden FFA fully complied with seven of eight elements reviewed in the area of Facility and Environment.

In one certified foster home visited, we noted that the garden tools had been left unsecured in the backyard area and were accessible to the young foster children in the home. During the review, the FFA staff ensured that the matter would be attended to immediately. The FFA provided verification that the tools were securely locked in the outside tool shed and that the FFA staff reviewed the policy with the foster parents that all tools and sharp items need to be kept from the foster children at all times.

Recommendation:

Walden FFA's management shall ensure that:

1. Certified foster parents ensure that all tools and sharp items are safely secured from the placed children and that the FFA staff routinely monitor for ongoing compliance.

MAINTENANCE OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Based on our review of 15 children's files and/or documentation from the provider, Walden FFA fully complied with eight of 11 elements reviewed in the area of Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery. We noted that for two

children the initial Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) were not comprehensive as there was no verification that the CSWs authorized, or that the FFA's effort was documented to obtain the CSW's signature to authorize the implementation of the initial NSPs. Four children's NSPs were not timely (two were three days late, one was five days late and one was two weeks late).

Recommendation:

Walden FFA's management shall ensure that:

2. Placed children's initial NSPs are timely and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

3. Placed children's initial NSPs are comprehensive and contain all the required elements and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

4. The FFA staff obtain the children's CSW's authorization (or efforts to obtain the documentation) to implement the initial NSPs are obtained and documentation is maintained in the children's files.

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

Objective

Determine the status of the recommendations reported in the A-C's prior monitoring report.

Verification

We verified whether the outstanding recommendations from the last Auditor-Controller's (A-C) contract review report issued April 29, 2008 were implemented.

Results

The A-C's prior monitoring report contained four outstanding findings. Specifically, Walden FFA was to ensure that NSPs were timely; NSPs were approved by the children's CSWs as required; all children prescribed psychotropic medication had approved current court authorizations on file with the agency; and that the agency maintained on-going documentation of required monthly evaluations by the prescribing physician for all of the children taking psychotropic medication. Based on our follow-up review of these recommendations, Walden FFA did not fully implement the above noted recommendations.

Recommendation:

Walden FFA's management shall ensure that:

5. NSPs were approved by the children's CSWs and that documentation is maintained in the children's files.

MOST RECENT FISCAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

There has not been a fiscal review of Walden FFA posted to date.

Walden Family Services
A Foster Family & Adoption Agency
Fostering Promising Futures

June 20, 2012

Department of Children and Family Services
Out of Home Care Management Division
9320 Telstar Ave., #206
El Monte, CA 91731

Dear Ms. Shaffer,

This is in response to your request for an amended Corrective Action Plan resulting from our annual performance evaluation that you conducted in January 2012. The audit resulted in the following areas that needed to be addressed:

1. Facility and Environment: One home you visited had gardening tools in the backyard. By the following day, the tools were stored in a shed and a lock was installed on the shed. You viewed the picture of the lock during our preliminary exit interview. The family is aware that all tools and sharps must be kept locked at all times
2. Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery: Two files did not have adequate documentation pertaining to CSW signatures; four files had the NSPs completed late; and 2 files did not include comprehensive NSPs. All staff have since been retrained on NSP procedures including required time frames, required elements and obtaining CSW authorization. Social Work Supervisors will monitor NSPs for compliance.

It is always a pleasure to work with you and we appreciate your time and input. If you need further information please feel free to contact me at (818) 365-3665.

Sincerely,

Marci Galvez
Regional Director

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