



Annual Regional Quality Management (QM) Plan 2018-2019 *Southern Region Circuit 11 and 16*

Southern Region Quality Management Plan

Introduction:

1. Description of QA/CQI staff resources:

The Region's Quality Assurance Department is managed by the Family Safety Program Office and covers both Circuits 11, and Circuit 16. There is one Program Manager who over sees the Program Office and all its components. The Critical Child Safety Practice Manager supervises three Critical Child Safety Practice Experts (CCSPE), two Operations Review Specialists and one Child and Family Service Review Specialist (CFSR, PIP Lead). Two of the CCSPE's and the Quality Assurance Manager are certified Child Safety Protection Experts. The third CCSPE is new to the position, she is however a proficient Child Protective Investigator Supervisor and will begin the CCSPE certification process in November.

The three CCSPE's conducts Rapid Safety Feedback (RSF) reviews utilizing Windows into Practice, the RSF manual, and Child Family Operation Procedure (CFOP). The RSF process consist of The Decision Support Team (DST) reviews of investigative activities completed between the 7th to 10th day of the intake date on cases that meet Tier 1 and tier 2 criteria. The DST process guide decisions and build ownership and competence of front line staff while supporting operations in real time decision making to the fidelity of the practice model. The CCSPE, the Child Protective Investigator (CPI) and the CPI Supervisor discuss the case to determine if the CPI's initial assessment of the family conditions were appropriate and the correct present danger safety decision was made.

The 30th day review assesses the sufficiency of the Family Functioning Assessment (FFA), the risk assessment, and the Supervisory reviews to determine if the guidance provided validates

the correct safety determination and guided critical thinking. Case consultations are facilitated in person by the CCSPE, the team engages in discussion of the case and the CPI demonstrates his/her understanding of the information collection process that lead to the safety determination of the child(ren). The CCSPEs provide recommendation of information that needs to be reconciled and completed prior to the case closure.

The CCSPE's also provide individual/group coaching, mentoring and training. They are also leading the learning circles and coaching of the CPIS for their proficiency process. One of the ORS was deemed proficient by Action for Child Protection and the other ORS will go through her proficiency in December of this year. They are both responsible for writing the Mini-CIRRT reports, RFS closed case reviews, special reviews request by operations and also assist the CCSPEs with trainings and coaching. Our OPS/CFSR/PIP Lead works closely with our local CBC as a co-reviewer of the Child and Family Services Review cases and oversees and tracks the Region's Federal Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).

2. Regional Description:

- The Southern Region is comprised of two circuits, Circuit 11 covers Miami-Dade, and Circuit 16 covers the Florida Keys. They are a total of 99 Child Protective Investigators(CPI) and 26 Senior (CPI) in the Region. The Region's community based Care Lead Agency is Our Kids, they're responsible for overseeing all child welfare related services, and provides monitoring, technical assistance and support to its network of subcontractors. Our Kids' network of subcontractors in turn provide direct services to clients
- **Circuit 11:** Miami-Dade is our largest county, it has 23 CPI units and our main intake/receiving unit. This circuit also houses the Institutional Unit that specializes and handles all facility abuse/neglect cases and oversees all Foster Care referrals. The Out of Town Inquiry (OTI) unit handles all out of county/region requests. In the last year the region has developed and implemented two additional specialized units, the Opioid Unit and piloted the BRAIN process in another unit.
- **The Opioids Unit** was developed as a response to the current epidemic and the rapid increase of intakes in the Region. The unit is managed by a proficient Child Protective Investigation Supervisor and 4 investigators that are located in different areas of the Region including Monroe. All of the unit's staff have prior substance abuse training as well as received additional specialized training prior to the implementation of this unit working closely with the judge overseeing Drug Court. This unit accepts intakes with maltreatments of substance abuse/opioids with children ages 0 to 6 years old and substance exposed newborn.
- **The BRAIN project is currently expanded to two Units in Circuit 11.** The primary focus of the "Brain" project is to review cases at intake and during the course of the investigation to identify and facilitate critical information collection, assisting the Child Protective Investigator (CPI) and Child Protective Investigator Supervisor (CPIS) with the

correct safety determination. The “Brain” project is lead by Child Protection Field Support Consultant(CPFSC) who is co-located in the service center and provides onsite support to those two units. The CPFSC request and review any records pertinent to the assessment of the family,coordinate appointment such as Child Protection Team and/or referrals to service provider, observe and document investigator casework activities. During the investigative process, the CPFSC meets with the CPI, the CPIS and the Operations Program Administrator to elevate concerns based on record reviews or additional information received.

- **Office Of Client and Community Relations:** The customer services department for Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties serves as a conduit for the resolution of client concerns and as a liaison to the service provider agencies in our community. Most client concerns for the Southern Region that are received in the Governor, Secretary, Legislator or other Headquarter (Central) offices, are referred to our office via the DCFT tracker system or telephone. Telephone calls and correspondence are also received directly from clients or other sources. Our staff also serves as the liaison for the Regional Director and Deputy Regional Director in regards to client’s concerns.
- **Circuit 16: Monroe:** The county consists of two CPI units, with the main office in Key West and a satellite office in Marathon with some staff assigned to Tavernier. CPI’s in Monroe are dually trained to handle both child and adult investigations based on the number of investigations received for these two components.
- The Key West and Marathon offices house Administrative staff, ACCESS staff, Adult Services, Child Safety and Family Prevention, Legal and Licensing. The staff in Tavernier share a space provided by Law Enforcement.
- Wesley House is the community based care agency responsible for all direct case management services and child welfare services. Wesley House is also monitored by Our Kids of Miami Dade and Monroe County.

- **Number of Intakes received each month:**

The chart below demonstrates all Initial, Additional, Special Conditions and Supplemental intakes received F.Y. 2017 to 2018. As per the data the Region received a total of 17,407 intakes, and as per the Rapid Safety Feedback Qualtrics dashboard 241 of those cases met RSF criteria.

Of the cases that met RFS criteria 224 were reviewed by a Critical Child Safety Practice Experts and /or Operation Review Specialists and the remaining were not review for various

disqualifying reasons (e.g., if child turns 4 years old when the FSFN reports are run, streamlined investigation to “other maltreatment”, and case transfer to other jurisdictions).

Fiscal Year	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	FY TD
Initial	897	1018	814	1112	995	920	1001	1059	1150	1071	1119	816	11,972
Additional	101	83	86	100	98	107	101	101	126	123	117	82	1,225
Special Conditions	84	103	93	122	127	112	124	152	145	144	141	101	1,448
Supplemental	163	172	131	177	166	177	154	179	207	201	199	160	2,086
Miami-Dade	1,245	1,376	1,124	1,511	1,386	1,316	1,380	1,491	1,628	1,539	1,576	1,159	16,731
Initial	38	37	25	49	46	47	41	55	48	43	43	32	504
Additional	2	1	2	3	7	6	1	9	8	12	6	2	59
Special Conditions	3	4	0	6	3	1	1	6	4	1	1	4	34
Supplemental	2	5	3	2	6	3	5	11	13	15	10	4	79
Monroe	45	47	30	60	62	57	48	81	73	71	60	42	676
Received 2017-18	1,290	1,423	1,154	1,571	1,448	1,373	1,428	1,572	1,701	1,610	1,636	1,201	17,407

- **High- Level Discussion of Turnover**

Southern Region’s turnover rates are monitored to determine trends of employee retention, employee satisfaction and the effectiveness of the recruitment processes. From July 2017 to June 2018 there were 47.19 % CPI and 25% senior CPI positions that experienced turnover. There were various reasons for the turnovers such as resignations, dismissals and transitions to private sector jobs. Vacancies creates an increased workload for the remaining Investigators, and supervisors and other staff are reassigned to the field to complete follow-up investigative tasks. Regional trends have also demonstrated a decreased in the quality of documentation, timely face to face contact with families and other areas that effects fidelity to the practice model. Turnover also has an impact on Quality Assurance as RFS cases are deemed insufficient from the lack of information collection, frequent reschedule of consultations and notable inadequate supervisory oversight of cases prior to closure.

The Region recognized the impact this factors play on morale, productivity, and ultimately retention; and Southern Region has made several changes in the recruitment and hiring process. The Region has extended its recruitment campaign by partnering with local Universities that house schools of social work and present DCF’s mission, promote interest in state careers and disseminate information with the hopes of recruiting new graduates. The Region has also created an email website available to those students that may be interested in employment opportunities while finishing their degrees, they can upload their resume, which will be housed for up to a year and will contact the person and alert when a position becomes available and instructs how to apply.

DCF has also implemented the **Star Employee Recognition Program (SERP)** to recognize good work and improve overall morale. This includes four different recognition service awards as follow: **Shooting Star Award**, recognizes an employee that exemplifies the Department's Mission, Vision and/or Core Values: Integrity, Courage, Accountability, Respect and Excellence, this award is presented semi-annually. **Customer Service Award**, this award recognizes an individual who has made exceptional contributions in delivering services to our customers. The contributions may either be internal (co-workers) or external (clients and/or community partners). **Innovation Award**, recognizes an individual who introduces a new idea that led to the improvement of a process or product with measurable results. **Team-Player Award**, recognizes an individual who exemplifies "team" or builds "team" within their unit or department and the **Leadership Award**, recognizes an individual who promotes cooperation, initiative, empowerment and innovation, develops performance management system, supports high performance work and contributes to the achievement of organizational goals. The awards are presented quarterly during an event attended by all employees, Regional Managing Director presents the awards and recognition. There are other social events held by the Program Administrators and the Regional Program Manager that recognizes good work in each service center.

The Region recently revamped its recruitment and retention team and is in the process of reviewing current practices, interviewing staff, and gathering information to implement new recruitment and retention strategies based on results and using input and feedback from current and former employees.

- **Working Relationships with CBC**

The Region's Q.A. Unit has maintained a positive relationship with the lead agency, Our Kids, and the four Full Case Management Agencies. There is regular sharing of information, staff jointly attend quarterly CQI meetings, develop joint trainings, consulted on the development of a fidelity tool/check list that is utilized for the CQI reviews by the Case Management Agencies. Further, the Region's CFSR/PIP lead has assumed oversight responsibility for the implementation and execution of the Regions individualized PIP progress plan.

- **Stakeholders involvement**

The Department and Our Kids share a common understanding that safety, permanency and well-being of the children and families we serve is our primary goal; but with the understanding that collaboration and partnerships are essential in meeting the needs of our families. The Region continues to work closely with the Courts, Children's Legal Services, Guardian Ad Litem, Substance Abuse and Mental Health providers and Consultants, Managing Entity (SFBH), Domestic Violence (DV) Consultants (The Lodge) through FCADV, Early Learning Coalition, along with foster and adoptive parents to ensure that all identified needs of the families are being met. The Region's Deputy Regional Managing Director oversees all stakeholder's initiatives that are child welfare related.

Through the integration workgroups there are Substance Abuse and Behavioral Health Consultants available to investigators and co-housed in the service centers, as well as domestic violence advocates. These subject matter experts each provide one-on-one assistance to the investigators, and can go out and assess in the field along with CPI. The Region has also implemented child welfare practices, programs and policies that are specific to identified areas of needed improvement from the CFSR review. In the last year the Region appointed Joyce Clayton as the CLS Regional Managing Director and Leslie Hinds-St. Surin as our District Chief General Counsel. Ms. Clayton brought with her a wealth of experience in children's legal services as well as a thorough knowledge of the Florida Practice Model, and has made great strides in training her staff and obtaining fidelity to the model in dependency, Ms. Hinds-St. Surin has worked with the Region for several years and has extensive experience representing the Department in all legal matters.

3. Other Special Reviews

The Region's CCSPEs are reviewing all cases that meets RFS criteria, regardless of a removal episode, cases with a removal are staffed within 14 days or prior to the case transfer staffing to determine the sufficiency of the Family Functional Assessment (FFA) and fidelity to the practice model. The two ORS review all Mini-CIIRTS, cases with 10 priors, cases with trackers or complaints, and any requests from Leadership and the Office of Child Welfare. They also conduct special random case reviews for individual Units.

4. Training Initiatives

Since the implementation of the practice model the Region has maintained a continuous contract with Action 4Child Protection for onsite training and case consultations. The Q.A. Manager plans and coordinate monthly on site visits that consists of trainings and consultations which are focused on the supervisory proficiency process. The Region's CCSPEs are committed and responsible for facilitating the proficiency learning circles with supervisory staff in preparation for their proficiency process. The learning circles are structured using the statewide FFA sufficiency training (Back to Basic). As of the writing of this report 90% of the supervisory staff is proficient. CCSPEs also provide continuous in-service trainings based on RFS trends, unit meetings request and one-on-one coaching and mentoring.

The Southern Region has also taken pre-service training in-house with one of the Region's CCSPEs accepting the new role of Training Manager. The Training Manager is responsible for the delivery of the pre-service curriculum. There is a co-trainer (proficient supervisor) who not only serves as the back-up, but has the responsibility of coordinating field days during preservice, identifying training needs and arranging for in-service curriculum as needed. Included in this team are the Field Support Consultants that are mentoring, coaching and supporting new investigators and support and re-train senior staff in need of booster or refresher trainings and support in the field. The team plans to follow and monitor new investigators

through certification, providing the support needed at every step to improve retention and over all knowledge of staff.

5. Strategies to Improve Practice:

During FY 2017-2018 the Region focused on the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) that addressed improvements and practice initiatives from the investigative level, case management, the lead agency and stakeholders. The Region's PIP lead and Quality Assurance Manager have attended several trainings and staffing with the Lead agency and stakeholders as follow:

- Monthly CQI meetings
- CFSR Training with pre-service
- Permanency Training by the Lead agency
- PIP Debriefings
- CQI Debriefings
- Quality Scorecard Items meetings that discussed the grading of each item with specific agencies
- QPI Meeting with Our Kids staff to discuss Caregiver Input forms
- Fidelity calls and on site case management trainings by Action
- Meetings to address Independent Living initiatives/ Life Skills Programming
- Facilitated stakeholder's meetings
- Observation of case management's Rapid Permanency Reviews looking at cases to assess the permanency goals, expired permanency goals and children who have not achieved permanence in a timely manner.

6. Continuous strategies and collaborations with Operations and Stakeholders are as follow:

The Region's Family Safety Program office staff has worked directly with Family Safety Operation on the development and implementation for the Child Protective Investigator Supervisor (CPIS), and the Field Support Consultants (FSC) proficiency process as well as initiated and implemented practices that addressed the Federal Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).

There were a total of twenty four CPI Supervisors that went through the proficiency process during this time frame. Because of new promotions, there are six remaining Supervisors that will complete the process by December 2018. In preparation, the Supervisors participated one-on-one consultation and feedback as well as training by Action and with the CCSPEs. The Field Support Consultants are the next group being prepared to go through the proficiency process and are currently participating in learning circles facilitated by the CCSPEs.

Other strategies include:

- Monthly Team meetings with Operations Manager to discuss performance and performance expectations using the RFS data.
- Methods to systematically improve the areas that are below expectations, such as structured trainings completed by the CCSPEs for Supervisors and Senior CPIS.
- FSFN evidence base trainings from Subject Matter Experts started in January 2018.
- Utilization of the Fidelity reviews to track supervisory accountability of the RFS consultations recommendations prior to case closure.
- Utilization of the fidelity to track CPIS practice competencies.
- Utilization of the CCSPE fidelity reviews to track CCSPE competencies.
- Review of data to identify trends and deficiencies.
- Special review and audits of RFA cases.
- Weekly RSF case consultations staffing conducted by the Regional CCSPEs.
- Monthly CPIS in-service trainings conducted by the CCSPEs.
- On site with Action to conduct case consultations and refresher trainings.
- Closed case reviews by ORS on cases where an administrative RFA was issued.
- Conduct FSFN-FFA audits for CPIS compliance with reviews at critical juncture of the investigations and prior to the case closures.
- Develop monthly executive evaluation reports that incorporate and track the completion of follow-up activities and recommendations from the RFS reviews.
- Special reviews completed by the ORS or CCSPE on complex cases or presenting unresolved issues with other partners.

It is the Southern Region's believe that all these actions and continued work by all our team members will lead to continuous practice improvements and ultimately to better outcomes for the children and families we serve.

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