



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

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DIRECTOR

April 28, 2011

The Honorable Bruce Caswell
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS
Michigan State Senate
State Capitol
Lansing, Michigan 48933

The Honorable Dave Agema
House Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS
Michigan House of Representatives
State Capitol
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Dear Senator Caswell and Representative Agema:

Section 515 of 2010 PA 190 requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to report on the benchmarks developed in conjunction with private providers on the use of performance-based models for foster care services, results the department or agencies have achieved in improving permanency placements and recommendations for further improvements for foster care services across the entire state.

The DHS Report for Section 515 follows:

- I. The department has established foster care policies and procedures that define foster care services provided across the state. Updated policies/procedures have been implemented to increase the state's compliance with Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) and the Children's Rights settlement. Private child placing agencies are required by contract to provide foster care services according to the department's policies.

The department uses CFSR scores to measure permanency performance outcomes. Scores are determined by case specific data entered into the department's SWSS case management system by local office foster care staff.

Because private child placing agencies do not have direct access to SWSS, representatives from DHS (central and local offices) and private agency contractors began meeting in January 2008 to review performance-based contracting practices for foster care services. Child Welfare Contract Compliance Unit (CWCCU) amended foster care contracts effective May 1, 2009 to include the performance based measures. Data management staff began

extracting data on October 31, 2009 and has worked with CWCCU to analyze the validity and integrity of the data. CWCCU and data management have determined that the data collected during 2009 and 2010 is not valid.

The department is in the process of developing a statewide case management system (SACWIS) which will allow the department and private child placing agencies to enter the same information on assigned foster care cases. Implementation is scheduled for October 2012. In the interim, the department has developed a private agency interface to the department's SWSS case management system which will be implemented in July 2011. The Private Agency SWSS Web will allow private agencies to enter limited case information into SWSS FAJ, which will ensure accurate and timely data entry into SWSS FAJ.

- II. Results the department or child placing agencies have achieved improving permanency placements.

The department has continued to have Permanency Resource Managers (PRM) focus on children that have been in foster care more than two years. PRMs have continued to work at the county level with both public and private agencies to identify and resolve barriers to permanency. Permanency Planning Conferences (PPC) were expanded to be held at all key decision making points in the largest counties, enhancing the permanency process for children in these counties. In addition, Concurrent Permanency Planning was piloted in three counties (Gratiot, Clinton and Ingham).

As a result of these efforts, CFSR data indicates that in FY 2010, 4,932 children have achieved permanency through reunification with their parent(s) and/or relatives while 2,564 children were adopted.

- III. Recommendations for further improvements for foster care across the entire state.

DHS has drafted a practice model of family engagement for pilot implementation in late fiscal year 2011. This effort will improve the practice of positively engaging parents and extended family members in permanency planning for children in foster care.

If you have any questions, please contact Christine Rehagen, Acting Manager of the Child Welfare Contract Compliance Unit at 517-241-1771.

Sincerely,



Susan Kangas,
Chief Financial Officer

cc: Senate and House Appropriations subcommittees
Senate and House Fiscal Agencies
Senate and House Policy Offices
State Budget Director