

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



July 29, 2005

Ms. Sharon Fujii, Regional Administrator  
Administration for Children and Families  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Region IX  
50 United Nations Plaza  
San Francisco, California 94102

SUBJECT: FINAL QUARTERLY REPORT FOR QUARTER ENDING JUNE 30, 2005  
OF CALIFORNIA'S PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Dear Ms. Fujii:

In accordance with 45 CFR 1355.35 (d) (4), we are submitting the eighth and final quarterly report for California's Program Improvement Plan (PIP) for the quarter ending June 30, 2005.

We are pleased with the progress that California has made over the past two years. We have completed all action steps, and have passed all the systemic factors. We have already passed some of the outcome measures: Safety Outcome 1, Item 2A; and Permanency Outcome 1, Items 7, 8, 9 and 10. For Permanency Outcome 2, Item 14, and for the Well Being items, we are utilizing surveys to obtain data and have met our goals for some portions of these measures already. As we enter into the final phase of the surveys, we will have data on the remainder of these measures. For the outcome measures for which we have not yet reached our goals, we are continuing to track and analyze the data. As per federal instructions, we have until September 2006 to gauge the impact of the progress we have made in California's Child Welfare Services (CWS) System Improvements and measure the impact on the outcomes.

California has again this year made a significant financial commitment to child welfare services, as \$13.7 million has been included in the budget for FY 2005-06 for CWS System Improvements. These funds are to continue implementation of Differential Response, the Standardized Safety Assessment System and the quality case planning and service delivery protocols that were implemented during FY 2004-05. In addition, new funding has been added that will give all counties access to \$12.8 million included in the budget to fund outcome and system improvements consistent with the counties' self improvement plans (SIPs). The CDSS has been working with the County Welfare Directors Association to develop a process for counties to apply for the funds.

In terms of the CWS System Improvements, over the past two years we have made a number of far-reaching enhancements to the system that promote the safety of children, promote stable permanent homes, and enhance well-being. We have achieved our goals through an incredible effort on the part of the counties and our State staff in several key areas. One of our accomplishments is the implementation by June 30, 2005, of the Standardized Safety Assessment System by the eleven pilot counties. This is a consistent approach to the assessment of safety, risk, protective capacity and family strengths. Another accomplishment is the implementation of Differential Response in targeted communities and/or identified populations in the eleven pilot counties by the June 30, 2005, target date.

Another achievement is the development and implementation of quality case planning and service delivery protocols for a target population in each of the pilot counties by our June 30, 2005 deadline. The protocols were developed for three focus areas, which are intended to strengthen and ensure the success of the case plan, and improve outcomes for children. These focus areas are Team Decision-Making, Family Participation in Case Planning and Youth Inclusion in Case Planning.

Over the past two years the State Interagency (Children's) Team (SIT) was formed, defined its role, increased the number of agencies participating and began work on a variety of issues that impact children and families. The SIT is chaired by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and is comprised of representatives overseeing programs effecting children from departments within the California Health and Human Services Agency such as the California Department of Health Services, the California Department of Mental Health, the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, the California Department of Developmental Services and the CDSS. In addition to those agencies, the California Department of Education, the Employment Development Department, the California Workforce Investment Board, the California Department of Justice and the Foundation Consortium are also participants. The SIT is charged with looking at cross-cutting issues for children, including supporting CWS System Improvements. Some of the issues the team has been working on include the issue of confidentiality across systems, funding issues and access to services by families.

California has also made significant progress in the training area by developing a common core curriculum for new child welfare workers and for supervisors. This occurred after identifying training needs, developing core competencies and developing the training modules. The State has utilized information obtained regarding current training practices, training needs and input from stakeholders to address the goals and objectives of the Child and Family Services Review in developing the statewide common core. Throughout the process of surveying the counties and developing the curricula, best practices have been shared by members of the Statewide Training Education Committee and the Curriculum Development Oversight Group.

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Technical assistance and training for judges has continued under the contract provisions of the Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA) contract to provide additional training regarding concurrent planning, reassessment of permanency and termination of parental rights. The JRTA team prioritized its training to focus initial efforts on the ten largest counties, and the team will use individualized county data and the county self improvement plans (SIPs) to tailor the training to individual county needs. Additionally, the JRTA sponsored a video broadcast, which was aired for all judicial officers, as a teaching tool to help maximize the provision of judicial training on permanency.

Finally, Los Angeles County has made major advances in several key areas over the past two years. These include improvements in the areas of concurrent planning, adoption, safety and risk assessment, placement policies, and quality assurance. They have also completed all of the 2,085 adoption home studies that were pending as of June 2003.

Enclosed with the PIP matrix are a number of attachments, which provide information on some of the tasks that have been completed during this quarter. We have also included a document with the state's progress by item, which summarizes each item and indicates the progress the State has made in the PIP. We hope you will find the enclosed information useful.

Should you have any questions about the quarterly report, please contact me at (916) 657-2614 or you can contact Wesley A. Beers, Chief of the Operations and Evaluation Branch at (916) 651-8111.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

BARBARA EATON  
Acting Deputy Director  
Children and Family Services Division

Enclosures