



State of Florida  
Department of Children and Families

Charlie Crist  
Governor

Robert A. Butterworth  
Secretary

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**DATE:** May 16, 2008  
**TO:** Regional Directors  
**THROUGH:** David Fairbanks, Assistant Secretary for Programs  
George Sheldon, Assistant Secretary for Operations  
*Patricia Badland*  
**FROM:** Patricia Badland, Director of Office of Family Safety  
**SUBJECT:** FY 2008/2009 Community Based Care Quality Assurance Plans

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**Purpose:** This memorandum outlines the process for lead CBC agencies to develop their Quality Assurance (QA) Plans for FY 2008/2009.

**Background:** In 2006, each lead agency developed individualized QA Plans based on criteria developed by the centralized QA unit. After development, each lead agency's plan was reviewed and approved by the central QA unit.

Since that time, the state's child welfare system has been reorganized, with service delivery and other responsibilities under geographic regions aligned with judicial circuits. A new statewide Child Welfare QA Regional Model has been developed in alignment with the reorganization. The new QA model continues the requirement for lead agencies to produce and implement a quality assurance plan. These plans are intended to:

- Facilitate a common understanding between the CBC and DCF (region/circuit) about the processes and schedules affecting quality assurance and improvement.
- Clarify and document the basis (beginning point) and desired end state (goals, expectations) of CBC performance.

The Child Welfare Quality Assurance Implementation and Oversight Team, appointed by the Secretary, has reviewed, revised, and approved the statewide criteria and the schedule for developing the new lead agency QA plans. This team includes representatives from DCF and CBC leadership, and is chaired by David Fairbanks and Glen Casel.

**Actions Required:** Each lead agency must develop a QA Plan to conform to the new statewide minimum criteria (attached). These criteria provide guidance for the community-based care lead agencies and their circuits/regions in creating CBC-specific quality assurance plans. Note that these are considered "minimum" criteria. The agency, in conjunction with the DCF staff in their geographic area, may decide to include additional

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information that guides local relationships and/or provides for local consistency in action, understanding, and expectation. Planning should be done in communication and coordination with the appropriate regional and circuit DCF staff. The regions must identify appropriate staff to review the plans, and to work with lead agencies as necessary to ensure mutual understanding of processes and expectations.

The draft QA plans should be provided to the relevant regional director by the close of business June 4, 2008. Regions must also ensure any necessary modifications to the drafts are made, and updated plans approved by June 25, 2008. Approved plans must be provided in electronic format to the QA staff at the Family Safety program office for posting to the Center for the Advancement of Child Welfare Practice. Plan implementation will begin July 1, 2008.

**Contact Information:** If you have any questions, please contact Eleese Davis, Chief of Systems Performance Management, in the Office of Family Safety (850) 921-9857 (Eleese\_Davis@dcf.state.fl.us), or Gail Perry, Quality Assurance Manager, (850) 921-7794 (Gail\_Perry@dcf.state.fl.us).

**Attachment**

cc: Don Winstead, Deputy Secretary  
Steve Holmes, Director of Strategic Planning and Innovation  
Regional Family Safety Program Administrators  
Regional Quality Assurance Managers  
Community-Based Care Lead Agency CEOs  
CBC Contract Managers

**CBC Lead Agency Quality Assurance Plans**  
**Statewide QA Planning Criteria**  
**For Fiscal Year 2008/09**

*As approved by Implementation and Oversight Team 5/1/2008*

The following criteria provide guidance for the community-based care lead agencies and their circuits/regions in creating CBC-specific quality assurance plans. This document contains minimum criteria. The agency, in conjunction with the DCF staff in their geographic area, may decide to include additional information that guides local relationships and/or provides for local consistency in action, understanding, and expectation. The purposes for creating these plans include:

- Facilitating a common understanding between the CBC and DCF (region/circuit) about the processes and schedules affecting quality assurance and improvement.
- Clarifying and documenting the basis (beginning point) and desired end state (goals, expectations) of CBC performance.

### **1. Focus on Coordination**

In the 2008 Quality Assurance statewide plan, several activities call for regions and lead agencies to develop local processes to meet the statewide minimum requirement(s). In your QA plan, provide information about how the lead agency will coordinate with the circuit/region to accomplish the activities and requirements.

- Unit Supervisory Discussions. Describe how the lead agency will use the supervisory discussion guide. Also, describe whether the documentation of the discussions will be made available to the circuit/region and if so, how [to be determined in collaboration with circuit/region]
- CBC QA and Side-by-Side Reviews. Describe how the lead agency (and as appropriate, subcontractors and region staff) will prepare for and conduct the base, side-by-side and in-depth reviews. This includes defining the various roles of the reviewers and facilitator for the review and how reviewers and facilitators will be selected. Note: the sampling and conducting of in-depth reviews is the responsibility of the region, but these three activities should be coordinated.
- Executive Management and Region Discretionary Reviews. Describe how the lead agency will work with the region to respond to special review requests.
- Local Review Schedule. Provide a schedule for the upcoming fiscal year (2008/09) that shows when standard QA activities will occur (for example, the quarterly base reviews and side-by-side reviews). Include other events that affect quality tasks or represent local milestones or opportunities for coordinating quality processes (for example, quarterly regional/circuit performance meetings, CBC board of director performance reports, circuit Child Protective Investigation quality assurance reviews that will need region staff time, etc.).

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**2. Focus on Results:**

- Quality Improvement Standards and Process.

The CBC QA plan should address the following.

1. Describe how the CBC will track and report on its performance on contract measures. Describe what data sources will be used and how the performance will be communicated to management, the Board and stakeholders.
2. Describe how the CBC will track and report on the strategic objectives set by its Board. Describe what data sources will be used and how the performance will be communicated to management and the Board.
3. Describe how the CBC will track and report on the performance of their contract providers. Describe what data sources will be used and how the performance will be communicated to management, the Board and stakeholders.
4. Describe how the CBC will track and report on ongoing improvement initiatives that will still be occurring during the upcoming fiscal year. What need or performance gap is each one intended to fill, especially with respect to items 1-3 above? What evidence exists to show the initiatives will produce the desired change? For example, is there a Quality Improvement and Control (QIC) story or other systematic QI model in use that describes the initiative and tracks progress? Describe how the CBC will report the status of ongoing improvement initiatives to management, the Board and interested stakeholders.
5. Describe what new performance improvement initiatives the CBC is going to undertake in the upcoming year. Describe the performance issue the initiative is meant to address, how it was selected, and how it will be managed (e.g., QIC approach?).
6. Describe how the CBC will evaluate and react as new information becomes available. For example, analyze what is revealed about practice standards during quality assurance reviews, or by performance measure trend data, or by performance on federal outcome measures. Will the information be used to either modify ongoing improvement initiatives or start new ones? For example, if quality assurance review information provides indications of issues in a particular site or for a particular function, how will a QI initiative be defined and managed?
7. If a critical life, health, or safety threat to a child is identified during any quality assurance or other review activity, how will the CBC assure that the situation is immediately addressed and corrected?
8. If the lead agency has completed or is working on tasks related to national accreditation, please include a brief description.