Central Region Quality Assurance Plan
FY 2010 – 2011

July 2010
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Section I - Background
Department’s Mission Statement
Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency.

Department’s Vision
We will be recognized as a world class social services system, delivering valued services to our customers. We are committed to providing a level and quality of service we would want for our own families.

Secretary’s Guiding Principles
The Department’s Child Welfare Quality Assurance (QA) Regional Model is based on the guiding principles defined by General Bob Butterworth.

- Integrity
- Leadership
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Community Partnerships
- Orientation to Action

“All staff must understand each person has a role in assuring quality service to children and families. Everyone must be responsible for taking immediate action when there is any evidence the life, safety, or health of a child may be threatened. Whether the evidence is observed in the field, identified through formal review, or heard in an interview or other discussion with knowledgeable case participants or stakeholders, personal integrity and responsibility require action.”

Central Region Quality Assurance
Effective July 1, 2007, QA Specialists that formerly reported to Central Office were to report to the Regional Family Safety Program Administrator. The Central Region Family Safety Program Office (FSPO) consists of 1 Program Manager, 2 QA Managers, 4 Family Safety Specialists, 9 QA Specialists and one Child Fatality Prevention Specialist.

Section II Child Welfare Quality Assurance Activities

Child Protective Investigation (CPI) Operational Review
Operational reviews occur at the unit level daily and are an ongoing responsibility through supervisory review requirements. Unit CPI Supervisors are responsible to review investigative activities during the course of the investigation, at critical milestones and at closure on 100% of their cases. This unit level review also includes second party reviews of investigations meeting certain criteria. Oversight, guidance and follow-up provided by the CPI Supervisor and second party reviewer provide guidance to ensure that all necessary investigative activities are completed prior to disposition of the investigation and guarantee child safety throughout the course of the investigation.
Documentation of this level of review will be completed in the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN), to capture existing milestones and data elements reviewed.

The “Mentoring and Modeling Quality” Discussion Guide for Child Protective Investigations Supervisors is an additional qualitative tool that is to be utilized by CPI Supervisors on a monthly basis. The CPI Supervisor at a minimum will randomly select three investigations per CPI, each calendar month and facilitate discussion of critical and qualitative aspects of the investigative process with the CPI. The CPI Supervisor must first review the investigative record in preparing for the qualitative discussion including a review of the following:

- All prior reports to the Hotline and outcomes
- Intake summary and allegations
- Household composition and frequent visitors
- Interview notes of child and family members
- Use of collateral contacts in assessing the family
- Assessment of criminal background checks
- Referrals to Child Protection Team and Law Enforcement as appropriate
- Completeness of Child Safety Assessment
- Consultation with Children’s Legal Services as appropriate
- Referral for behavioral health assessment as needed

The CPI Supervisor will document in an investigation case note in FSFN that the discussion occurred, summarizing any major points that may need further attention and potential trend characteristics to be considered in the future. The CPI Supervisor will provide documentation to the Program Administrator that discussions occurred as outlined in this guide to include the investigation case number. The Program Administrator will maintain an excel spreadsheet that identifies which investigations were reviewed monthly by the CPI Supervisor and CPI. The Program Administrator will forward the excel spreadsheet each month to the FSPO QA Manager for tracking and analysis. The Region QA will conduct a random sample review of the investigations that used the discussion guide to evaluate the quality of the discussions occurring between the CPI Supervisor and CPI and to provide technical assistance to further enhance this qualitative discussion process.

**Regional Discretionary CPI Quality Review**

Regional management will conduct circuit level QA on topics or focus areas selected at the Region’s discretion. This may include joint reviews by QA staff and CPI Supervisors.

The purpose for any particular review will vary depending on the Regional selection of topic, which may include but is not limited to:

- Provide corrective feedback to supervisors about their review process
- Capture data on investigative quality not included in automated data capture
- Opportunity for joint learning about both practice and QA issues and topics
• Assess specific characteristics of staff, units, or types of cases (i.e. high risk factors, geographic area), especially indicated by comprehensive review results.

Regions must conduct at least two reviews per year. Regions will conduct a discretionary review in each circuit at least once per year. The selection should focus on cases where immediate corrective feedback can occur to enhance performance improvement (prior to closure). Region will choose the topic and scope of the review. Region QA will have the discretion to address review topics of the circuits to ensure discretionary reviews are focusing on operational issues, and not necessarily a specific case file review. For instance, a request for a single case review would not constitute a discretionary review; however, findings from that review might result in a more comprehensive review of program performance in the circuit.

Special QA Reviews
Special reviews may be requested during the course of the year by various individuals, particularly leadership from the Circuit, Region or Headquarters. Although, QA and FSPO staff have completed numerous special reviews during fiscal year 2009-2010, the specific number of reviews to be completed each year is unknown. These reviews primarily involve high profile cases and are comprehensive reviews.

Regional Comprehensive CPI Oversight Review
Region QA will conduct a comprehensive review of a sample of closed investigations on a semi-annual basis to assess the level of qualitative interventions and compliance with Florida Statute and Administrative Code. The purpose is to provide analysis and documentation of oversight and broad assessment of the Circuit and Region’s performance in responding to child investigations, as well as longer term practice improvement for child protective investigation and supervision and assessment of compliance with rule and statute.

The annual total review will cover a “90/10” (90% confidence level and a 10% confidence interval) random sample for each circuit. The sample will be split in half and a review will be completed in each circuit semi-annually. The Statewide QA web based system will be used to compile review data, reporting and analysis of the findings. Each investigation reviewed will be captured in the system as an individual report and the data will be aggregated to come up with specific data at the Circuit, Region and State level for reporting and analysis. With the availability of the data in the QA web based system, performance over time and across reviews can be further analyzed and areas for improvement identified. This will allow the region to identify systemic issues occurring within the Region as well as at the individual circuit level and compare statewide performance.

Region QA will select the sample based upon standardized statewide parameters. Region QA will query FSFN for a list of investigations closed within the past 60 days preceding 30 days before the actual on-site review to allow for preparation time and still being able to capture recently closed investigations.
Investigations excluded from the sample include those closed as “No Jurisdiction” or “Duplicate”, “Special Conditions”, and institutional investigations. The review sample must be randomly selected and methodology used to identify the sample must be explained in the review report.

**Central Region Semi-Annual CPI QA Review Schedule FY 2010 – 2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPI Circuit</th>
<th>Quarter 1 - 2</th>
<th>Quarter 3 - 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circuit 5</td>
<td>September 13th - 17th</td>
<td>March 7th - 11th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circuit 9</td>
<td>September 20th - 24th</td>
<td>March 21st - 25th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Circuit 10</td>
<td>September 27th - Oct. 1st</td>
<td>March 28th - April 1st</td>
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<tr>
<td>Circuit 18</td>
<td>November 29th - Dec 3rd</td>
<td>June 6th - 10th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Circuit 19</td>
<td>December 6th - 10th</td>
<td>June 13th - 17th</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**No Jurisdiction and Duplicates Review**

Region FSPO reviews all investigations closed with closure reason of No Jurisdiction and Duplicate on a monthly basis. This review is currently being done and will continue to ensure the proper use of these closure reasons and compliance with the Central Region policy concerning proper documentation and justification of these closure reasons.

Upon completion of the semi-annual case file reviews an exit will follow within one (1) week and a written report will be provided to the Circuit within thirty (30) days following the end of the on-site review.

The final review report will include Circuit specific recommendations to address opportunities for improvement identified which may include training needs. Region FSPO Specialists and QA coordinate to create or provide any training needs identified to the circuit. Region FSPO and QA will participate in any workgroups or action plans resulting from a QA review and work in collaboration with the Circuit and Region to improve performance. The Region FSPO has a brochure which identifies all training available to the Region.

**Challenge Process**

In February 2008, the Central Region QA implemented a challenge process to occur upon completion of the on-site file review. The purpose of the challenge process is to educate the investigation staff and Region QA as to the QA process and needs of the field; to facilitate communication; and as a result has been received positively by all involved. This has been an excellent learning opportunity for everyone and will continue for all semi-annual Comprehensive CPI reviews.
Region QA provides all completed review tools and a challenge form to the Program Administrator and CPI Supervisor upon completion of the case file review. They are asked to review each tool and document any questions, comments or concerns they identified and return the challenge form to Region QA within seven (7) days. The challenges received are then reviewed by Region QA and discussed with the CPI Supervisor initiating the challenge. If the CPI Supervisor can show in concrete terms any discrepancies to their benefit, the QA team lead will modify the tool and adjust the score accordingly.

**Role of QA Lead Reviewer**
The QA Manager will assign a lead reviewer for all QA reviews assigned to the unit. The QA lead reviewer responsibility will rotate amongst QA Reviewers in the region to ensure equitable work distribution. The decision will be based upon workload and QA review requests received.

The lead QA reviewer is responsible for taking a leadership role during the course of the review as follows:

- Selecting a random sample appropriate to the criteria of the review
- Identify team members to participate in the review
- Provide technical assistance to review applicable laws, rules, policies, procedures and review instrument
- Schedule review activities; organize and assign team member responsibilities; and identify location of review
- Review all completed tools of team members to ensure inter-rater reliability; data integrity, and consistency
- Provide the QA Manager with status updates as to progress throughout the review process
- Compile and analyze the data obtained from all the files reviewed
- Prepare and present a power point presentation to provide preliminary results of the QA review to the Circuit / Region leadership team upon completion of the on-site file review; the presentation is to include; strengths; opportunities for improvement; child safety issues identified, training needs; systemic or programmatic concerns and comparison data from previous reviews
- Analyze data and provide a professionally written report addressing findings from the review to include issues that affect child safety and offer recommendations to address problem areas or issues.
- Complete stakeholder interviews, as appropriate for Semi-Annual CPI Comprehensive QA reviews

**Stakeholder Survey**
As part of each comprehensive CPI review, the interview of internal and external stakeholders will be conducted. These interviews are done via telephone or in person and documented in the stakeholder survey format that is currently being developed by Central Office FSPO. The results of responses provided from the stakeholders will be compiled into a separate excel spreadsheet and a summary of the findings included in
the final Comprehensive Review Report. The report will include overall comments provided by the stakeholders to assist Circuit Administration in identifying areas that may require additional focus to build community partnerships and facilitate communication.

Request for Action
There are two types of Request for Action that may be generated during a review: administrative or child safety. If at any time during a case file review a Region QA reviewer or FSPO Specialist identifies a concern that warrants bringing attention to management due to an administrative or child safety concern, a Request for Action form will be completed immediately upon knowledge of the concern.

Child Safety Request for Action maybe generated to document any evidence the life, safety, or health of a child may be threatened. If a Request for Action is generated due to child safety issues, the information is immediately (within 4 hours) provided to the Program Administrator responsible for the investigation and a formal written response is requested back from the field staff within 48 hours as to how the issue was resolved by management. This may include providing Region QA with supporting documentation as to how it was addressed. Region QA will review the response and determine if the response was sufficient to address the child safety concern identified. Should for any reason, additional action need to be taken by Region QA it will be addressed on a case by case basis with Operations Manager and then the Circuit Administration to ensure child safety.

Administrative Request for Action may be generated when there are concerns that are not related to child safety. They may include but are not limited to: data integrity issues; FSFN documentation; failure to follow up on medical or mental health needs; or missing documents.

All Requests for Action generated by the Region QA will be saved in the FSPO share drive for each semi-annual Comprehensive Review. The Request for Actions capture specific case information; the request date and requestor; the type of request (administrative or safety); the presenting concern; due date; date response received; and how it was resolved. Information regarding Request for Actions generated will be included in the final Comprehensive Review Report provided to the Circuit Administrator 30 days from case file completion.

Real Time CPI Reviews
The Central Region QA Unit initiated the Real Time reviews in the Region in May of 2008. These reviews have been on-going and will continue for FY 2010 – 2011 and will be conducted monthly using the July 2010 revised CPI review standards used for semi-annual Comprehensive CPI reviews. Region QA will provide training on the new standards.
A Region QA Specialist is assigned to each of the seventeen service centers in the Region to complete these reviews. The QA Specialist is responsible for scheduling these reviews monthly with the Program Administrator and will randomly select one investigation from each unit that was closed the previous week by the supervisor of that unit. Upon completing the individual file review, the QA Specialist will provide one-on-one face-to-face feedback with the CPI Supervisor and review the completed tool. The CPI's presence is requested, but not a requirement. The findings of all reviews done for a particular service center will be presented to the Program Administrator at the conclusion of each monthly review. Results from each monthly review will be compiled in a service center specific spreadsheet and analyzed quarterly to identify trends, training needs, strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Region QA are also ensuring that the needs of CPI and CPI Supervisors are being met by attending monthly service center meetings and providing immediate technical assistance or training at the request of the Program Administrator.

Child Death Reviews
A Region Child Fatality Prevention Specialist (QA position) is responsible for conducting ongoing reviews of child deaths. These reviews include conducting a death review staffing, compiling information, providing technical assistance to operations, documenting information in the Death Review Database, as well as completing an assessment and summary report, as either a Limited or Comprehensive Review. The Child Fatality Prevention Specialist reports to the QA Manager and is responsible for tracking all child deaths received in the region and ensuring compliance with applicable Florida Statutes, Administrative Codes and Operating Procedures.

Section III Case Management QA Reviews

The Region QA conducts quarterly side-by-side reviews with each of the six Community Based Care (CBC) Agencies in the region. These reviews are conducted in accordance with the QA 2010 Windows Into Practice QA Guidelines (available on the Florida’s Center for the Advancement of Child Welfare Practice website under QA Resources). Ongoing communication and collaboration occurs between the Region QA staff and the CBC QA staff to ensure compliance with all guidelines and reviews.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Quarter 1</th>
<th>Quarter 2</th>
<th>Quarter 3</th>
<th>Quarter 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBC of Seminole</td>
<td>July 12th - 16th</td>
<td>October 18th - 22nd</td>
<td>February 7th - 11th</td>
<td>May 16th - 20th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heartland for Children</td>
<td>July 19th - 23rd</td>
<td>October 11th - 15th</td>
<td>January 10th - 14th</td>
<td>April 11th - 15th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United for Families</td>
<td>July 26th - 30th</td>
<td>October 25th - 29th</td>
<td>January 24th - 28th</td>
<td>April 18th - 22nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brevard Family Partnership</td>
<td>August 2nd - 5th</td>
<td>November 1st - 5th</td>
<td>January 18th - 21st</td>
<td>May 9th - 13th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids Central Inc.</td>
<td>August 16th - 20th</td>
<td>November 15th - 19th</td>
<td>February 14th - 18th</td>
<td>April 25th - 29th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Services</td>
<td>August 23rd - 27th</td>
<td>November 8th - 12th</td>
<td>February 21st - 25th</td>
<td>May 23rd - 27th</td>
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