Northwest Region Quality Assurance Plan
Fiscal Year 2010-2011

The Northwest Region Quality Assurance Unit is comprised of five Operations Review Specialists, a Quality Assurance Manager and is under the direction of the Family Safety Program Manager. Within the past year, the region has had the opportunity, to the extent possible, of co-locating each member of the team in the Department Service Centers of their home County. This has ensured that each Circuit has at least one identified QA Specialist available for consultation.

I. Child Protective Investigation Reviews

The Northwest Region Quality Assurance Unit will complete Semi-Annual Comprehensive Reviews of the Child Protective Investigation Units in Circuits 1, 2, and 14. The Region will query Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) for a list of investigations closed within sixty (60) days preceding thirty (30) days before the actual on-site review. The sampling will invoke the 90% confidence level with a 10% confidence interval strategy that will provide the Region with a 90% confidence level that the findings represent the total population. One-half of the 90/10 sample will be completed at each semi-annual review. Each Circuit will be reviewed during the first half of the fiscal year and again in the second half of the fiscal year. The sample list will be generated and sent to the circuit(s) 30 days prior to the beginning of the on-site review.

Investigations closed as “No Jurisdiction”, “Special Conditions”, or “Institutional” will not be included in the semi-annual reviews. Investigations identified for the review will be randomly selected and the methodology used to reach the random sample will be explained in the review report. A maximum of four files will be included that involved a removal to measure performance in that area during each review.

A review tool based on the Quality of Practice Standards for Child Protective Investigators will be used during the Semi-Annual Comprehensive Reviews. That tool has been developed by the Office of Family Safety and is completed electronically during each review in the DCF Web Systems Portal. This system will also generate a data report of findings that will be shared with each circuit after each comprehensive review.

The Northwest Region utilizes a consensus collaboration regarding findings from each semi-annual review in the respective circuits. Subsequent to completing a CPI review, the Lead Reviewer will forward complete tools to the circuit liaison within three business days. The circuit is then given five business days to provide written challenges to the review findings. Challenged information that results in changes will be included in the final report. Completed challenge documents will be retained by the Lead Reviewer to keep as part of the review documentation.

Stakeholder surveys will be utilized during each comprehensive review and results incorporated into the written report. Circuit Administrators or their designee will be contacted by the lead reviewer to provide a potential list of stakeholders to be used for completing the surveys.
A written report will be completed based on the Semi-Annual Comprehensive Review findings. The Child Protective Investigations Quality Assurance Report template has been developed by the Office of Family Safety. The report will be provided to Regional Director and Circuit Administrators within 30 days of the review being completed. If the review noted any immediate administrative or safety concerns, the lead reviewer will report such findings to Region Administration for additional study. The Region will work with Circuit staff in assuring quality improvement efforts are in place which will address any shortcomings noted during the reviews.

II. Schedule for Semi-Annual Comprehensive Reviews FY 2010-2011

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circuit</th>
<th>1ST Semi-Annual CPI Review</th>
<th>2ND Semi-Annual CPI Review</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circuit 1</td>
<td>September 27 – October 1</td>
<td>March 28 – April 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Circuit 2</td>
<td>September 13 – 17</td>
<td>March 7 - 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Circuit 14</td>
<td>October 11 – 15</td>
<td>April 11 - 15</td>
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III. Tracking and Reporting on Performance

Data from the Semi-Annual Comprehensive Reviews will be gathered and provided to the Regional Director and the Circuit Administrators through the use of a rollup of the review elements and the written report. The written report will provide an analysis of the review data to include areas needing improvement and those of substantial compliance.

IV. Tracking and Reporting on Ongoing Improvement Initiatives

The initial review will be used as a baseline for the Circuits’ performance. During each subsequent review, the previous review performance will be compared to the current performance in order to identify any current issues and track ongoing performance. Results from the 2009-2010 Northwest Region Comprehensive Reviews will be utilized to provide performance trends on applicable standards.

The Circuits will be required to develop a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) addressing any areas of deficiency identified in the Comprehensive Review. At the Comprehensive Review following the implementation of the PIP, the report will address the Circuits’ current performance on the activities identified in the PIP as needing improvement.

V. Addressing Immediate Concerns during a Comprehensive Review

A Request for Action (RFA) form will be utilized when an immediate concern regarding a child’s life, health, or safety is identified during the review or if administrative concerns need to be addressed. The reviewer identifying the concern will complete the appropriate sections of the form and provide to the designated lead for the review. The lead for the review will provide the Operations Program Administrator the completed form and case file. The Operations Program Administrator will address all issues and take appropriate
actions to ensure child safety. Then, will complete appropriate sections of the form and return to the review lead. Any difference in opinion regarding the appropriate action necessary to ensure child safety will be negotiated by the review lead and the Operations Program Administrator.

The use of any Request for Action form will be addressed in the Semi-Annual Comprehensive Review report.

VI. Unit Supervisory Discussions

The Northwest Region should implement the Mentoring and Modeling Quality in Child Protective Investigations as detailed in the Windows into Practice Guidelines for 2010-2011. This includes the following guidance:

- CPI Supervisors are required to review investigations 72 hours after an initial assessment regarding child safety is completed by the CPI, and every 30 days thereafter. The statewide Quality Assurance Model requires an additional level of review on investigations submitted for approval for closure.
- The statewide minimum requirement is that supervisors conduct three qualitative discussions with each child protective investigator every month. The Mentoring and Modeling facilitates a discussion of critical and qualitative aspects of the investigation between the child protective investigator and supervisor.
- The CPI Unit Supervisor is to document the discussion occurred to include the basic content of the discussion in Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) case notes.

VII. Case Management Reviews

The Northwest Region includes three Community Based Care (CBC) Lead Agencies: Families First Network in Circuit 1, Big Bend Community Based Care –East in Circuit 2 and Big Bend Community Based Care –West in Circuit 14.

Quarterly, the respective Community Based Care Quality Assurance Manager will pull a sample of 25 cases from the extract provided by the Office of Family Safety data unit that lists all children who are eligible to be reviewed by permanency goal. This sample will be forwarded to the DCF Regional QA Manager or designee who will identify 8 cases for side-by-side reviews and make assignments for the DCF QA staff. Side by Side reviews are to be completed with teams of two representing one Quality Assurance Specialist from both DCF QA and the CBC QA. Base reviews are to be completed by the CBC for the remaining 17 cases.

Two cases from each Side-by-Side Review will be identified to have in-depth reviews completed. These cases will have the case record reviewed, as well as interviews with participants in the case. The Northwest Region has elected to have the in-depth reviews be completed collaboratively with the DCF & CBC QA Reviewers. The schedule for Side by Side Reviews and subsequent In-Depth Reviews is as follows:
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<tr>
<th>CBC</th>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; QUARTER</th>
<th>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; QUARTER</th>
<th>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; QUARTER</th>
<th>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; QUARTER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Big Bend – West</td>
<td>August 16 – 20</td>
<td>November 15 – 19</td>
<td>March 21 – 25</td>
<td>May 16 – 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>FamiliesFirst Network</td>
<td>August 2 – 6</td>
<td>November 15 – 19</td>
<td>February 28 – March 4</td>
<td>May 2 – 6</td>
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### III. Additional Reviews & Training

Reviews to be completed by the DCF Regional QA include as identified in the Windows Into Practice 2010 Guidelines include:

- Discretionary Reviews (once a year per circuit for child protective investigations)
- Executive and Leadership Requests for Special Reviews
- Federal Child and Family Services Reviews
  - Note: Northwest Region QA is in partnership with FamiliesFirst Network in conducting a CFSR Survey in Circuit 1 in the Fall of 2010. Reviews will occur in all four counties within the circuit using the CFSR tool and will include individual interviews with key case participants.
- Special Reviews (outside of the routinely planned QA activities)

In addition, on a monthly basis, the Northwest Region DCF QA team completes the following additional reviews:

**Child Protective Investigations Customer Satisfaction Surveys**  -- Surveys are conducted each month utilizing a portion of the alphabet for each investigator with closed investigations. Reports excluded from the sample include institutional, children removed from the home and families receiving ongoing services. Surveys are completed with the parent or caregiver responsible and who was a case participant during the investigation. Results from the surveys are compiled and forwarded to the appropriate Circuit Administrator and liaison each month.

**Verified Report with 2 or More Priors during the Past 12 Months**  -- A review summary is provided identifying key aspects of the investigation from the most recent closed investigation as well as a minimum of two additional investigations received during the past 12 months. Determination of the sample addresses all closed investigations during the previous month with further stratification by the number in each County. If a County had five or more investigations that met this parameter, they are included in the review analysis. The report includes a list of victims for each circuit from investigations closed during the previous month who is a participant in at least two other previous investigations closed during the twelve months period.

**Psychotropic Medications for Children in Foster Care**  -- Each respective Community Based Care lead agency has a plan in place to monitor express and informed
consent obtained for children in foster care who are prescribed psychotropic medications. At this time, the Northwest Region QA team completes a weekly status report for children identified by the Office of Family Safety as missing consent.

To ensure awareness of the standards and their impact on quality of investigations and services to children and families, the NW Region Family Safety/Quality Assurance specialists are available to share updates and training as requested with unit(s), during circuit child welfare meetings, individual discussion with the supervisor and by email correspondence.