



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carroll
Secretary

DATE: July 7, 2017

TO: Regional Managing Directors

THROUGH: David L. Fairbanks, Deputy Secretary 

FROM: Vicki Abrams, Assistant Secretary for Operations 
JoShonda Guerrier, Assistant Secretary for Child Welfare 

SUBJECT: Program Improvement Plan

PURPOSE: The purpose of this communication is to provide an update on the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) and guidance for implementation. The PIP was approved by the Children's Bureau (CB) on May 24, 2017 with implementation beginning July 1, 2017.

BACKGROUND: Florida completed its Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) in September 2016 and the CB issued the final report on December 28, 2016, giving the state 90 days to develop and submit the PIP. The final PIP represents a collaboration between the Office of Child Welfare, Regions, Community-Based Care Lead Agencies (CBCs), Children's Legal Services, the Office of Court Improvement, as well as other stakeholders and partners. The Department submitted the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to the Children's Bureau (CB) for approval on March 28. The PIP, built in part from the Regional PIPs, is the result of many hours of work of a large number of dedicated child welfare partners at the state and local levels.

The PIP emphasizes practice improvement at all levels. Florida's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system (CFSR, Rapid Safety Feedback, and fidelity reviews) is the federally approved method for measuring improvement. The PIP is available on Florida's Center for Child Welfare under the Results-Oriented Accountability tab.

<http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/QualityAssurance/CFSRHome.shtml>

Florida has two (2) years to both implement the key activities and achieve the sustained level of performance prescribed by the Children's Bureau. States are allowed a non-overlapping year at the end of the PIP implementation period to reach any remaining unmet performance goals. Although implementation is underway on a number of the key activities, there are key activities with multiple sub-steps needing more time for implementation to drive the practice change. Any delay in completing key activities and related sub-steps could result in Florida not reaching the performance goals. Failure to complete all key activities within the two-year implementation period and reach the performance goals by the end of year three (non-overlapping year) will result in substantial financial penalties.

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Mission: Work in Partnership with Local Communities to Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

The CB requires states to report periodically on progress with PIP implementation. Regional periodic (quarterly) progress reports are necessary to show progress and status of Regional PIP activities. For each key activity due within the report quarter, insert under the column labeled "Quarterly Update" whether completed, on/ahead of schedule, behind schedule, or no longer applicable. Additionally, when a key activity is completed, provide evidence or documentation of completion. The progress reports are due by the middle of the first month following the end of the quarter.

- July – September reports are due October 15
- October – December reports are due January 15
- January – March reports are due April 15
- April – June reports are due July 15

ACTION NEEDED: In order to effect practice improvement, it is critical for the regions, CBC, and community stakeholders to focus attention on completion of the key activities according to the timeframes. It is imperative that Operations personnel in each region lead the completion of the key activities within the plans throughout the two-year implementation period. The PIP is a plan to improve practice in the field which will be monitored by quality management professionals from the regions and CBCs through file reviews and case specific interviews.

Each region will be required to compile a quarterly report of progress on the key activities, strategies, and goals starting with the July – September 2017 quarter which is due October 15, 2017. The formatted reporting documents will be sent to each region office to coordinate timely submission to the Office of Child Welfare CQI team. The region will submit quarterly progress reports to Peggy Niermann at Peggy.Niermann@myflfamilies.com and Mark Shults at Mark.Shults@myflfamilies.com.

CONTACT INFORMATION: Should you have questions about this communication, please contact Mark Shults, Office of Child Welfare, Manager of Continuous Quality Improvement, at 850-717-4650 or via e-mail at Mark.Shults@myflfamilies.com.

cc: Grainne O'Sullivan, Director, Children's Legal Services
Family and Community Services Directors
CBC Chief Executive Officers
Sheriff's Offices Performing Child Protection Investigations
Office of Court Improvement