



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Jeb Bush
Governor

Lucy D. Hadi
Secretary

DATE: December 29, 2006

TO: District/Region Administrators, Community-Based Care CEOS,
Sheriff's Offices

THROUGH: Greg Keller, Assistant Secretary of Operations
David Fairbanks, Director of Provider Relations

FROM: Lucy D. Hadi, Secretary

SUBJECT: Reinstatement of Child Welfare Inservice and Supervisory
Certification Requirements - Effective January 1, 2007

Purpose: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information about the reinstatement of child welfare inservice training and supervisory certification requirements. In addition, this memo provides information about on-going improvements to the child welfare certification and training system. Thanks to you and your staff for taking the time to provide input and for making recommendations for implementing a quality child welfare training/certification program that meets the needs of your local systems of care. This feedback is also included with this memorandum.

Action Required: Please disseminate this memorandum to all family services counselors and child protective investigators, their supervisors and managers, training providers and other interested parties. The effective date for the reinstatement is **January 1, 2007**. No response is required.

Planning for the following training related activities is underway. We will provide more information in the next few days or weeks:

- 1) A one day meeting in Orlando to prioritize tasks addressed in the preservice curriculum,
- 2) A statewide workgroup to develop an administrative rule regarding training and certification as specified in Section 402.40, F.S., and
- 3) Dates and locations for Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) Release 1 Train the Trainer sessions.

Summary of Your Feedback Regarding Child Welfare Training/Certification:

The decision to reinstate inservice training requirements and supervisory certification requirements is based on the recommendations of the Child Welfare Training

1317 Winewood Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700

Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

Excellence Workgroup and your feedback. Attached to this memorandum is a table which provides summaries of your input to the previously disseminated proposals:

- October 4, 2006, Request for Input - Child Welfare Certification Program Realignment and
- November 9, 2006, Performance Assessment Standards and Local Plan.

Your compiled feedback is being reviewed for development of a frequently asked questions document. The transition from a centralized child welfare training and certification system to a standardized but locally driven system has surfaced questions for many of you. We are hopeful that the frequently asked questions format will aid in that transition.

Conversion to the New Preservice Curriculum January 2007: A few of you have provided feedback that conversion to the revised preservice curriculum in January 2007 is posing a hardship. If you need to delay training of the new curriculum and wish to continue to use the existing curriculum for another iteration, please contact Gay Frizzell @ 850-921-3005 to discuss a plan. This is necessary to establish a conversion date and to ensure the written test(s) is matched appropriately to the curriculum delivered to your staff. For information about trainer certification, please go to the following University of South Florida Training Academy web site: <http://cwta.fmhi.usf.edu/>

Reinstatement of Inservice Training Requirements: Effective January 1, 2007, the requirement for 48 hours of inservice training every 3 years for certified Family Services Counselors and Child Protective Investigators is reinstated. This means that currently certified counselors and investigators have until January 1, 2010 to document at least 48 hours of inservice training. Training that occurs January 1, 2007 and later may count toward the 48 hour requirement. For employees certified after January 1, 2007, he/she will have 3 years from the date of certification to obtain and document the 48 hours of inservice training.

Local Management of Inservice

Funds have been provided to department, community-based care and sheriff's agencies to purchase, arrange or deliver inservice training. Management of the inservice training process is largely a local responsibility. Local agencies will be required to maintain documentation of inservice training in the Skillnet system. All certified trainers have received instruction in use of the Skillnet system. If your agency's certified trainers need assistance with use of Skillnet, please have them contact the University of South Florida Training Academy @ 813-974-4606. Additionally, the Training Academy is developing guidelines for using Skillnet to document inservice training. Expect written guidance in January 2007.

Inservice Requirements Rather than Recertification

Some of you have had questions about the previously implemented rules or practices regarding inservice training and/or recertification. It is important to note that:

- the concept of recertification no longer applies,
- there is no requirement for specific courses for the mandatory inservice training hours,

- the headquarters office will not be reviewing or approving inservice training courses, and
- the headquarters office will not be issuing certificates every 3 years as in the past.

Reinstatement of Supervisory Certification Requirements: Effective January 1, 2007, the requirement for all direct service supervisors to complete the professional certification requirements for child protection/welfare staff and a supervisory training program is reinstated. Exceptions to these requirements may be submitted to the department on a case by case basis. In order to provide agencies with time to comply, all direct service supervisors must meet the requirements above by July 1, 2007. Agencies may use the Supervising for Excellence (SFE) Training Program or they may use another model containing the same core elements. The department retains the authority to approve or deny the exception requests and the supervisory training programs. For more information, please email Amy Karimipour at Amy_Karimipour@dcf.state.fl.us or phone 850-922-7015.

Performance Assessment Standards and Local Plan Submission: Local plans for implementation of a standardized performance assessment process will NOT be due February 1, 2007. Participation in FSFN train the trainer sessions and delivery of user training is anticipated to be a significant workload on training resources. In the meantime, please continue to implement your agency's locally developed plan for field based performance assessment.

The feedback we received regarding the degree of standardization of the performance assessment process was varied. Several of you commented on the need to balance the standardized elements of the child welfare training system statewide and the need for flexibility to adapt to local systems of care. We will use your comments, the consultation of our general counsel's office, and the recommendations of the Child Welfare Training Excellence Workgroup to refine the proposed standards. We plan to provide more information by February 1, 2007.

Impact of IV-E Waiver on Preservice Curriculum: There have been a few questions about the impact of the IV-E Waiver on child welfare preservice training. The course entitled, "Federal Funding Training" on Skillnet has NOT been updated. All on-line courses are being revised. For the time being, the best resource for IV-E waiver information is: <http://eww.dcf.state.fl.us/~fsp/newpages/ivewaiver.shtml>

Contact Information: For additional information, please contact Gay Frizzell at Gay_Frizzell@dcf.state.fl.us, or phone 850-921-3005. Thank you.