



December 30, 2009

**New York State
Office of
Children &
Family
Services**

David A. Paterson
Governor

Gladys Carrión, Esq.
Commissioner

Capital View Office Park

52 Washington Street
Rensselaer, NY
12144-2796

Dear Commissioner/VA Executive Director:

This letter is to inform you of the significant progress that has been made in the documentation of casework contacts with children in foster care over the past year. As you are aware, the federal Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 requires steadily increasing levels of compliance with the federal standard, culminating in a 90% compliance level for monthly contacts with children in foster care by October 1, 2011. For 2009, the threshold level of compliance required was 45%. For 2010, the level required is 75%.

I am pleased to announce that, thanks to your extraordinary efforts, analysis of the 2009 federal fiscal year data indicates that 47.3% of children in foster care have a successfully documented casework contact.

Over the past six months, the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) has worked with local districts and voluntary agencies to assist in improving New York's performance through a variety of supports and monitoring efforts, including:

- The distribution of laptop computers to assist caseworkers in documenting their casework contacts;
- The design and implementation of reports through the Data Warehouse that provide foster child specific and aggregate data on casework contacts and
- Each OCFS Regional Office has concluded reviews of progress notes for social services district as well as many agencies.

In addition, a new Computer Based Training module (CBT) has been developed to provide training and information related to the federal and NYS casework contact standards. This CBT will be available for caseworkers to complete as of January 1, 2010. The CBT includes:

- A summary of the federal foster child casework contact standards, as well as an overview of state requirements on all foster care contacts and casework contact requirements in other program areas;
- Instructions for the correct documentation of casework contacts in CONNECTIONS so that full credit is received for all contacts that do meet the requirements;
- Exercises to reinforce learning and
- Information on the available reports and how to access these reports to help in self-monitoring of compliance.



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It is estimated that it will take approximately 30-60 minutes for a caseworker to complete the CBT. Workers will be able to register for the CBT immediately after January 1, 2010.

This CBT is a precursor to the technology that will be used extensively to train caseworkers and supervisors as we roll out the major changes to CONNECTIONS in 2010. I encourage you to support your workers and supervisors in completing this training module.

To access the CBT, workers should refer to the attached guide. In brief, the process includes four steps:

- Register each individual worker who will take the CBT course through STARS with a start date of January 1, 2010 or later.
- Once the worker has been registered in STARS and after January 1, 2010, access the website www.TrainingSpace.org either through the HSEN web browser or directly through the World Wide Web if you have access to the web.
- Sign in using an LDAP account Sign on and Password. Every worker with an HSEN id can obtain an LDAP account. If the worker does not have an LDAP account, or the worker's password has expired, the attached guide provides information on how to obtain an account or reset a password, as appropriate.
- Click on the link to the course that is visible after the prospective trainee has signed in.

Questions should be directed to your Child Welfare and Community Services Regional Office Director, as follows:

Buffalo Regional Office – Mary Miller
(716) 847-3145

User ID: Mary.Miller@ocfs.state.ny.us

Rochester Regional Office – Linda Kurtz
(585) 238-8201

User ID: Linda.Kurtz@ocfs.state.ny.us

Syracuse Regional Office – Jack Klump
(315) 423- 1200

User ID: Jack.Klump@ocfs.state.ny.us

Albany Regional Office – Kerri Barber
(518) 486-7078

User ID: Kerri.Barber@ocfs.state.ny.us

Spring Valley Regional Office – Pat Sheehy
(845) 708-2498

User ID: Patricia.Sheehy@ocfs.state.ny.us

New York City Regional Office – Patricia Beresford
(212) 383-4873

User ID: Patricia.Beresford@ocfs.state.ny.us

Native American Services – Kim Thomas
(716) 847-3123

User ID: Kim.Thomas@ocfs.state.ny.us

There is still much work to be done to reach the requirements for 2010. We are committed to assisting you and your staff with this process. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

Gladys Carrión, Esq.
Commissioner

cc: Laura M. Velez, Deputy Commissioner CWCS
William Travis, Deputy Commissioner, IT
Directors of Services
Sheila Poole
Linda C. Brown
Regional Directors