Department of Social and Health Services, Children's Administration

Braam Settlement and Exit Agreement Semi-Annual Performance Report

July – December 2011

Executive Summary

3/30/2012

Introduction

This semi-annual report covers the period of July 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011 and is the first report under the Revised Settlement and Exit Agreement, which was agreed to by the parties on October 31, 2011 and received final approval by the Whatcom County Superior Court on January 25, 2012. The Revised Agreement is effective for 26 months from November 1, 2011 through December 31, 2013. The full text of the Revised Settlement and Exit Agreement can be found on the Children's Administration website.

The Revised Settlement and Exit Agreement acknowledges that "significant progress and improvements have been made to Washington's child welfare system since 2004," and attributes the progress to the commitment of the Governor, Department staff, the Legislature, the leadership of DSHS and Children's Administration and community stakeholders. While acknowledging the Department's progress, the Agreement also recognizes the Department's need to meet key outcomes that have not yet been achieved.

Full Compliance

The renegotiated agreement provides that "the Department will be deemed to be in full compliance with an individual outcome if it achieves the 'full compliance measure' for 18 months". Where full compliance with an individual outcome has been achieved, this is noted in the report.

Consolidation of DSHS Regions

On May 1, 2011, DSHS consolidated six existing regions into three across all administrations. Pursuant to the Agreement, only the three consolidated regions are reflected in this and future reports.

FY 2011 Performance

Although this is the semi-annual report for the second half of calendar year 2011, it includes FY 2011 data on three outcomes. Two outcomes required a targeted case review and one needed additional data validation.

- Outcome 4 – Annual Mental Health/Substance Abuse Screening
- Outcome 5 – Thoroughness and Timeliness of Child Protection Investigations by the Division of Licensed Resources
- Outcome 21 – Median Number of Days Youth are on Runaway Status

Performance Highlights

Children's Administration demonstrated improved performance on 11 of the 15 outcomes included in this report. Performance moved away from the full compliance measure on four outcomes. Following is a summary of performance for the 15 outcomes included in this report:

18 Months of Full Compliance Met for Three Outcomes

For the three outcomes listed below, the Department's performance since July 2010 demonstrates 18 months of achieving full compliance with the full compliance measure for each outcome. The following information is about performance in the semi-annual period of July – December 2011.

- *Child Health & Education Tracking (CHET) Screens - Overall Completion:* 93% of children in care 45 days or longer received a complete Child Health and Education (CHET) Screen within 30 days of entering out-of-home care; an improvement from 91% performance in FY 2011. (Full Compliance is 90% or more.)
- *Placement Stability -Two or Fewer Placements:* 92% of children in out-of-home placement experienced two or fewer changes in placement; an improvement from 91% in FY 2011. (Full Compliance is 90% or more.)
- *Ratio of Licensed Foster Care Beds to Children in Foster Care:* The average monthly ratio of licensed foster care beds to children in licensed foster care was 2.6; a slight decrease from 2.7 in FY 2011 but still substantially better than the full compliance measure. (Full Compliance is 2.0 or more.)

Twelve Months of Full Compliance Met for One Outcome

- *Annual Screening of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Needs:* 91% of children and youth received an annual screening of mental health and substance abuse needs in FY 2011; an improvement from 72% in FY 2010. (Full Compliance is 90% or more.) The data used to measure performance on this outcome is administrative data and a targeted case review of 100 non-compliant cases.

Six Months of Full Compliance Met for One Outcome

- *Monthly Visits (New federal measure[1]):* 95% of the number of visits necessary to visit each child in out-of-home care monthly were completed. This new measure has not been calculated in prior periods. (Full Compliance is 90% or more.)

Performance within 15 Percent of Meeting Statewide Full Compliance Measure for Six Outcomes

- *Caseloads At or Below 18 Cases:* 77% of social workers who provide services to one or more children in out-of-home care had caseloads of 18 children or less; an increase from 73% in FY 2011. (Full Compliance is 90% or more.)
- *Thoroughness and Timeliness of DLR-CPS Investigations:* 90% of intakes (referrals) alleging child abuse and neglect of children in out-of-home care received a thorough investigation by the Division of Licensing Resources (DLR), pursuant to CA policy and timeline, and within documentation requirements; an increase from 83% in FY 2010. (Full Compliance is 95% or more.)
- *Sibling Placement:* 71% of children with brothers and/or sisters who were removed together during the calendar year were placed with their brothers and sisters who were removed at the same time; an increase from 62% in FY 2011. (Full Compliance is 75% or more.) The data used to measure performance on this outcome is now a targeted case review, rather than administrative data that was used in prior periods.

[1] While the parties do not agree on this issue, the Department's position is that the new calculation for monthly visits adopted by the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is the calculation that was intended in the full compliance measure for this outcome. The enclosed report includes performance data under both the new and the previous calculations for this outcome.

- *Adequate Safeguards for Sexually Aggressive Youth (SAY):* 92% of children identified as sexually aggressive (SAY) are placed with caregivers who received specialized training and received a plan to address the safety and supervision issues of children in their home. Performance in July – December 2011 shows an increase from FY 2011 when it was 79%. (Full Compliance is 95% or more.) The data used to measure performance on this outcome is now administrative data from FamLink, rather the foster parent survey that was used in prior periods.
- *Adequate Safeguards for Physically Assaultive / Aggressive Youth (PAAY):* 92% of children identified as physically assaultive or physically aggressive (PAAY) are placed with caregivers who received specialized training and received a plan to address the safety and supervision issues of children in their home; an increase from 66% in FY 2011. (Full Compliance is 95% or more.) The data used to measure performance on this outcome is now administrative data from FamLink, rather the foster parent survey that was used in prior periods.
- *Youth Transition (Exit) Staffings: 93% of youth in out-of-home care who* turned 17.5 years of age between July to December 2011 received a multi-disciplinary transition staffing to address their transition to independence between age 17 and 17.5 years; an increase from 71% performance in FY 2011. (Full compliance is 95% or more.)

Considerable Performance Improvement Needed for Four Outcomes

- *Sibling Visits / Contacts:* 26% of children placed apart from their siblings received two or more monthly visits or contacts (not including staffing meetings or court events) with their brothers or sisters according to a targeted case review; a decrease from 50% in FY 2011. (Full Compliance is 90% or more.) The data used to measure performance on this outcome is now from a targeted case review, rather than the foster parent survey that was used in prior periods.
- *Adequate Training and Care for Medically Fragile Children*: 57% of medically fragile children are reported by their caregiver to be connected to ongoing and appropriate medical care and placed with caregivers who have specialized skills or receive consultation and ongoing training regarding their caretaking responsibilities for the medical condition; an decrease from 91% in FY 2010. (Full compliance is 95% or more.)
- *Frequency of Youth on Runaway Status:* 3.15% of youth in out-of-home care ran from their homes or placement facilities during the calendar year; a decrease from 3.20% in FY 2011 in the portion of children who ran from care. (Full Compliance is now 2.35% or less; it was 2.0% or less originally.)
- *Median Number of Days Youth are on Runaway Status:* The median number of days that youth were on runaway status was 48 days statewide; and increase from 32 days in FY 2011 (rather than the desired decrease) in the number of days youth were on the run. (Full Compliance is 25 or fewer days.)

Revised Data for Past Review Periods Included for Two Outcomes

This semi-annual report includes revised data for two outcomes: Thoroughness and Timeliness of DLR CPS Investigations and Frequency of Youth on Runaway Status.

FY 2010 performance for Thoroughness and Timeliness of DLR CPS Investigations was updated after it was discovered that the electronic program used to compile data for this outcome did not include the two case review questions on timeliness in the calculation. After recalculating the data to include all six questions, FY 2010 performance is 83%.

CY 2011 data validation showed that previously submitted FY2011 data on Frequency of Youth on Runaway Status was incorrect because it included youth who are not members of the Braam class. Therefore, revised FY 2011 data is included, which shows that the frequency of youth on runaway status in FY 2011 was 3.20% rather than 3.50%.

Outcomes Not Included in this Report

Six outcomes are not included in this report as the data is not due under the Revised Agreement. The following outcomes will be reported in the September 2012 Semi-Annual Report:

- Outcome 9 – Caregiver Training
- Outcome 10 – Caregiver Support
- Outcome 11 – Caregiver Information
- Outcome 13 – Safety in Care
- Outcome 14 – School Changes
- Outcome 15 – Educational Needs

Strategies for Improvement

For those outcomes where the full compliance measure was not achieved, this report includes the strategies that the Children's Administration used in the last reporting periods and will use in the next reporting period to continue to improve performance on the outcomes in the Agreement.

For questions regarding this report, please email cabraamsettlement@dshs.wa.gov.