

**New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect  
Staffing and Oversight Review Subcommittee (SORS)**

**Marygrace Billek= Chair**

**Mary Coogan = Vice-Chair**

**Tuesday July 9, 2019: 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M**

**Embrella (formerly FAFS)**

**101 College Rd East 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor**

**Princeton, NJ 08540**

**In Attendance- In Person**

Marygrace Billek	Mercer County DHS
Carmen Diaz-Petti	DCF Assistant Commissioner
Mary Hallahan	Resource Parent
Corinne LeBaron	Embrella
Lori Morris	Lifeties
Linda Porcaro	Somerset Co. OYS
Chiori Kaneko	Legal Services of NJ (representing Jeyanthi Rajaramam)

**In Attendance- Conference Line**

Lisa Chapland	Kinship Resource Parent
Robyn Veasey	Office of Parental Representation

**Staff**

Dawn Marlow	DCF-NJTFCAN SORS
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**Review of Minutes:**

Introductions were made to include the Open Public Meeting Announcement. The May 2019 minutes were reviewed by the members and approved.

***New Business:***

***Update from Assistant Commissioner CP&P***

Carmen gave an update on the progress of the behavior-based case plan work. Carmen discussed incorporating this model into the case practice model. She reported that this model helps staff look at individual family needs and identify specific behaviors that families need to show to better able to parent. It guides the worker and the family to will develop a consensus case plan that the family will actively engage and create. The case plan is then reviewed and revised every month. Carmen reported that funding sources are currently being explored.

Carmen reported that this will be a large initiative that will include policy changes, document changes, training and other significant changes such as how family team

meetings are structured. Carmen reported it will be an initiative that is phased in over time TBD.

Carmen discussed some of the challenges that has come out of the family team meeting process and this modal will allow staff to sit with families in a more concrete way to discuss and ask specific questions to help families create preliminary goals and ongoing goals. provide more training for staff, what questions to ask, developmental stages of a family- different component. Very prescribed- every month.

Informal and formal assessments more valid, worker informal assessments and workers feeling less valued.

Linda Porcaro asked how Carmen will get staff buy in as this process will be time consuming. Carmen reported that overtime this will reduce crisis-oriented casework and promote better working relationships with families. When asked Carmen reported that caseloads will not need to be changed and expectations will not change. Carmen reported looking at the entire workflow to streamline- for instance case plans are very long, does not fit with the way work is done. This will be redesigned to allow caseworkers to spend the quality time with the family.

Discussion around court ordered services occurred and Carmen reported that this process does not change court ordered services but did discuss that a lot of the time those court ordered services are driven by CP&P. This process will allow staff to document in court reports specific goals for the family, the progress and how behaviors have changed overtime, not just completion of services.

Discussion around what behaviors need to change versus what services need to be completed. Caseworkers will explore with families when they were successful and what triggered negative behaviors. Cultivating a trust-based relationship will be key and Carmen reported that quality caseworker visits with parents is not there as they tend to be service driven conversations. Lisa Chapland and Chiori Kaneko discussed that quality services also need to be explored as well. Carmen agreed and briefly discussed that the department is in the process of looking at the entire service array. Robyn discussed barriers with litigated cases regarding where families are hesitant to disclose or reveal things to service providers for fear it is held against them in court and that this should be part of the service array exploration as it is always not protected information and does not allow for a safe environment for families to receive treatment.

There was some discussion around workforce culture and differences between investigative staff and permanency staff embracing this model. Carmen reported that initial FTM 30 days after removal of children is the most difficult will be discussed. Most families are in home, FTM's for in home cases process will help so that families will not linger.

Lori Morris asked with this new process how will staff and families use the same language. Carmen discussed that staff will learn the concepts and language through

training which will also assist staff with concrete tools and how to have discussions with families. Carmen also discussed assisting resource parents as well and looking to apply for a grant to have capacity to train resource parents on Nurtured Heart model.

### ***Follow up Questions from SORS May meeting for Assistant Commissioner Carmen***

Questions from staff survey analysis

- Streamlining redundant work for staff: Some of this was discussed earlier regarding case plans. Mary Hallahan discussed as an example of redundant work is that as a foster parent she has a resource worker and a licensing worker who come out to her home on an annual basis and complete the same tasks on separate occasions. Carmen discussed objectives and key results process underway across the department as it relates to kinship and that Carmen is also looking at mapping out the current structure of how resource is working to look at efficiency of work. Carmen also reported that IT is looking at connecting office of licensing work and resource work.
- How is staff overtime managed: Carmen reported that in part it is a civil service issue as by contract staff work 9-5 yet families are not always available 9-5. Carmen reported that staff are asked to flex their time, but they do get paid overtime after accumulating 5 hours of comp time. Members discussed when unscheduled/unplanned overtime affects staff personal responsibilities such as child care. Carmen reports that as much accommodation is made as possible but staff are informed when hired that there will be a need for overtime.
- Staff reporting feeling unsafe and traumatized- update on what or will be looked at to assist staff with trauma: Mary Hallahan cited that while the survey was done in 2016 and a lot has been accomplished since that time regarding staff safety, concerns reported by Linda Porcaro at the May meeting still exist. Linda stated that at the Child Stat in Morris County, staff discussed feeling traumatized. Carmen discussed that the Commissioner is creating a new office of Staff Health and Wellness and is in the process of hiring someone. One of the focus areas of this office will be on vicarious trauma. Carmen discussed that currently some offices are creating calm/meditation rooms for staff. Carmen discussed physical safety initiatives to include new safety tether devices that plug into phones that has GPS with automatic dispatch capabilities to law enforcement should the tether separate for staff. The device has an app that staff can input their exact location, car information, identifying attire, etc... should an emergency occur law enforcement would have the necessary identifying information to respond. Carmen reported this will be piloted in the next few weeks.

- What areas would Carmen like to focus on for future SORS staff survey given the analysis findings as the members felt that Supervision would not need to be a focus and services could be tables at this time: Mary Hallahan identified from the survey that senior staff felt like there was not enough advanced professional development and Carmen agreed. Carmen reported that all the training is being reviewed to look at updating curriculum, identify gaps in training like for ongoing supervision, expanding CSOC training to CP&P supervisory staff, prioritize foundational courses for new staff and advanced staff. Carmen discussed that new material will be in person training in a classroom setting and started doing monthly webinars for reinforcement/refreshment of training materials. Carmen further stated that staff can also request topic areas for training.

### ***CFSR PIP and CFSP Update***

Dawn Marlow updated the committee members that NJ DCF received notification on June 24, 2019 that the NJ CFRS PIP has been approved by the Administration of Children and Families (ACF) as of June 1, 2019 over a two-year period. Dawn reported that the next steps will be to establish a baseline of measurement which will include a review of 65 cases over 6 counties in August and September. Dawn also advised that the final 2015-2019 APSR and the 2020-2024 CFSP has been submitted to ACF.

### ***Annual Report***

Carmen reported in terms of recruitment and retention that local job fests in local communities will be occurring as opposed to large job fests at the DCF Professional Center. Carmen will provide updates on this new process.

Discussion around staff survey follow-up and refocus on current DCF administration agenda and many changes occurring or to come to be included. Marygrace reported that she wants to make sure that the DCF Commissioner's tenets of Safe, Healthy and Connected are incorporated in the annual report.

It was determined that Mary Hallahan with Mary Coogan will write an update for the annual report on the staff survey to include what was found and what will be focused on in the future to include supervisory training, safety and well being of staff and streamlining paperwork/process for staff

It was determined that Mary Grace will write a section on the DCF Administrative changes that have occurred, the refocus of priorities and overall how it has been a transition year.

It was determined that Dawn will provide an update on the CFRS and PIP for the annual report.

It was determined that Linda Porcaro will complete a section on continuing to review training to include embedding the new training process, advanced training for staff and opening the CSOC training for staff.

In looking at the SORS goals, there was discussion around the foster parent survey, Carmen reported that she did receive the results and will share with the members. Carmen discussed changes that she would like to see occur such as having resource workers meeting with their resource families on a monthly basis versus

quarterly but due to their caseload size that is not feasible. Carmen is exploring how to shift workload and caseload of resource support staff and right size their caseload to allow them to spend the time needed with their resource families.

It was determined that everyone would submit ideas for what to follow up on for next year to Dawn prior to the next meeting- mid August to incorporate into the annual report. Marygrace and Dawn will attempt to meet in August if schedules permit to review. The annual report will need to be submitted to the Task Force by September 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **Next Meeting:**

Date: September 10, 2019  
Time: 10am-12pm  
Location: Embrella  
101 College Rd E  
Princeton, NJ 08540

### **Announcements & Closure:**

Chiori discussed Family Unification Day with 32 honorees, guest speakers included Jerry Milner from ACF and many fathers were honored. Highlight video included two families where the focus was on prevention and how caseworkers stepped in and helped the families from becoming homeless and separated. Lastly they are accepting nominations for next year's Unification Day honorees.