

**New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect  
Staffing and Oversight Review Subcommittee (SORS)  
Rita Gulden, MSW = Chair  
Linda Porcaro = Vice-Chair  
Tuesday September 22, 2016: 10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.  
30 Van Dyke Ave.  
New Brunswick, NJ  
Conference Room 105**

**In Attendance- In Person**

Marygrace Billek	Mercer County DHS
Amy Fischer	Administrative Office of the Courts
Rita Gulden	CASA of New Jersey
Lori Morris	CASA- Bergen County
Sara Munson	Institute for Families/Rutgers University
Patricia Myers	Legal Services of New Jersey
Linda Porcaro	Somerset Co. Office of Youth Services
Aubrey Powers	DCF Assistant Commissioner, PMA

**In Attendance- Conference Line**

Lisa vonPier	DCF Assistant Commissioner, CP&P
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**Staff**

Dawn M. Leff	DCF-NJTFCAN SORS
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**Review of Minutes:**

Introductions were made and the July 2016 minutes were reviewed by the members and approved.

***New Business:***

Rita announced her retirement as of 12/31/16 and that this September meeting is her last. Rita also announced that Mary Jane Awrachow submitted her resignation as well due to her retirement as of 12/31/16. She will be unable to attend the November meeting.

Dawn announced that the DCF Director of Training and Professional Development, Lisa Gallagher, will be presenting at the SORS November meeting. The group discussed the topics/questions to propose to the Director. The discussion centered on questions related to passing grades, timing on how well staff did on a course, feedback loop to supervisors, supervisor training, what are the steps when a staff member fails a course and what are the software advancement updates. Sara Munson discussed having representatives from the Partnership co-present to discuss the evaluation process as well as the semi-annual reporting tool that is presented to DCF. This tool is used to see what is succeeding and what needs to be modified. There was also a discussion

around elective versus mandatory and the pros and cons of each as well as mapping of special training needs in particular areas- such as special populations located in specific counties. Aubrey Powers reported that RER within PMA will be looking at diversity and demographic data at the county level in the months ahead so this work is getting started. Dawn provided the group with copies of the Training Course Catalog and highlighted the courses that address specialty populations as well as the cultural competency modules. Sara Munson highlighted that although some courses are elective, the Workforce Report data shows that most staff receive almost double the annual training requirements. Sara also highlighted that area and local supervisory staff drives what training is needed and what their staff should be taking. Sara also explained that with each staff member enrollment, supervisory letters are sent to explain strategies to use with staff once they complete a course. Lisa vonPier also reported that LO has the latitude to mandate that certain elective courses should be taken if the specific needs are present and that they will also reach out to local providers for community specific training. Question was proposed regarding the prevalence of heroin use and staff being trained on administration of Narcan. Lisa vonPier reported that it would be too much to train 3500 field staff and carry kits as well and that is left up to first responders.

Sara discussed that there is also a move towards more hybrid on-line training formats and they are looking at courses that can lend itself to this type of learning keeping in mind technical skills versus adaptive skills. Sara also reported that the learning management system will also include a resource hub that will have micro learning opportunities such as Quick Bits or 5 minute refreshers- give the workforce what they need when they need it.

There was a pause in the meeting due to disruption with the parking situation at the professional center.

Discussion resumed with questions around the data fellows. Lisa vonPier reported that the Capstone Project which centered on Local Office Managers has ended however they have moved to a semi-annual day long training for LOM's where they pick a topic and discuss it. Lisa also reported that data fellows' graduates continue their exploration of their specific topic if it is relevant in their area. They are also asked to assist with Area/County challenges or needs. An example she provided centered on the Essex Model Court working with the Essex AD and data fellows around disproportionality. Lisa highlighted that data fellows can be used to assist at a local basis, community partners or statewide issues. Lisa also discussed expanding data fellows' topics such as looking at supervised visitation and the pilot that has been launched in Morris/Passaic/Sussex that is looking at moving away from contracted rate funding to allow growth as demands increase so that programs can add additional staff and vehicle resources.

The next topic discussed was the Workforce report. Sara highlighted the report that was published in 2015 to include low vacancy rate compared to national average; highly educated workforce which requires a minimum of a bachelor's degree; low turnover rate compared to national average; diverse workforce which is reflective (mirrors) families

served; highlighted the effective recruitment strategies with an average retention of 6 years and that caseworker/supervisor ratio of 4.7 is light-years ahead of most states. Sara also discussed that DCF's investment in training and the staff commitment to learning is a key foundational element to any system. Sara discussed that the next Workforce Report which is due to be published in December will highlight the "how" DCF accomplished the workforce sustainability and that this story is an important one to share.

This led to a discussion on sustainability of the SORS and Task Force membership especially with the impact of the coming political transitions and that both need to be built up to encourage providers to participate so their voice can be heard. There was further discussion around clarity of role of the SORS and the Task Force as DCF continues to self-monitor. Rita reported that one of her last tasks will be to discuss at the next Task Force meeting to re-define the purpose to include advocacy, not just monitoring, possibly update the SORS statute to broaden the scope and re-frame questions that SORS has to tie back to the workforce.

**Old Business: None at this time**

**Next Meeting:**

**Tuesday November 22, 2016**

Location: Commissioners Conference Room  
50 East State St. 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Trenton, NJ 08625

### **Announcements & Closure**

Aubrey announced that the National Commission to End Child Abuse/Neglect Fatalities issued a report and charged each state to form a committee. Commissioner Blake has identified an internal advisory committee who will be conducting a meta-analysis of 5 years of fatality data from 2010-2015 to include data from Child Fatality and Near Fatality Review Board as well as the Executive Directed Case Reviews to help identify trends and develop programs, practices and policies to prevent future child abuse/neglect fatalities. This internal advisory committee will issue a report which will be presented to the Task Force as well as SORS.

The group thanked both Rita Gulden and MaryJane Awrachow for their service and wished them both well.