

Office of Families and Children
Webinar
July 22, 2020
PCSA and IV-E Courts (10:30 am - 11:00 am)
Private Agencies (11:30 pm - 12:00 pm)

WEBINAR WELCOME AND OVERVIEW

Good morning. Thank you for joining this month's call.

I would like to welcome any participants who are joining us for the first time on our monthly calls. My name is Jeff Van Deusen and I am one of the Assistant Deputy Directors in the Office of Families and Children, along with my counterpart Lakeisha Hilton. We have a lot of updates to cover today, so we'll get right to it.

As a reminder, if you have questions, please submit in the question box on the right of the screen.

We will answer the questions at the end, however, if we are unable to answer, we will get the answer to you when we send the final talking points and Q/As.

If you need additional clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to your licensing or technical assistance specialist, or the help desk.

FAMILY FIRST UPDATES

FFPSA- General Updates

The Executive Committee convened on July 8, 2020 and approved funding proposal for utilization of Transition Act Funding. OFC held a combined QRTP and Prevention Services Implementation Workgroup meeting on July 15, 2020 to share status updates of the Prevention Services Plan and Transition Act Funding.

The prevention services plan was shared with the Deputies' Planning Group on June 24, 2020 with a request for comment/feedback by July 8th. OFC staff are currently incorporating feedback and suggestions into the plan in preparation for a second/final state level review. The plan will be shared with the Implementation Groups for comment prior to federal submission. It is anticipated that the plan will be submitted to HHS- CB at the end of the summer.

OFC staff and OhioMHAS met on July 8, 2020 to discuss phased services, EBPs both agencies plan to implement, and establishing a core group to develop a single, unified RFP for service provision and fidelity and evaluation components.

OFC staff are scheduled to present information regarding FFPSA during PCSAO District Meetings in July and August.

FFPSA- QRTP

The cross-department Trauma-Informed Training and Tool Development forum was held on July 14, 2020. Representatives from ODJFS and OhioMHAS licensing and policy participated. The

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morning was a level-setting training focused on SAMHSA's 10 domains and 6 principles, trauma responsive behaviors and secondary-trauma. The afternoon was used to develop a DRAFT tool to review agencies who opt to implement SAMHSA domains and principles, instead of an approved trauma program.

Agency Readiness - Brown Bag Forums: OFC is asking for volunteers from the implementation team to assist with development of first training on Trauma-informed requirement. Staff have started a FAQ that will be published on the Family First webpage in the future. Agency Readiness Survey Data has been received and we are working on providing documentation to be shared with the implementation team.

Model Standards functionality was deployed on Friday, July 10, 2020. OFC Licensing staff are participating in joint Licensing/OIS design sessions. Deployment will be scheduled based on the rule effective date. OFC is meeting internally to discuss discharge planning and after-care SACWIS functionality. QRTP Compliance documentation functionality is slated for September 17, 2020. A meeting was held on July 16, 2020 with a group of residential agencies that represent different sizes, populations served and geographical areas. This group of agency representatives have been asked to participate in discharge planning and after-care services feedback/focus groups with SACWIS representatives. The feedback discussions will commence toward the end of July.

ODJFS/OhioMHAS monthly Collaborative Meetings- The first meeting was held on June 25, 2020. Discussion included department QRTP implementation status, addressing any barriers, and next steps for each department. Meetings have been scheduled for July-September.

QRTP rules original filed- July 17th.

FFPSA- Prevention Services

Program development is focusing on a staging approach which would provide the opportunity for PCSAs to offer reimbursable evidence-based practice services through tertiary prevention efforts and secondary prevention efforts for eligible candidates.

CPS have begun internal collaboration and requested OAC rules to begin revisions for Family First Prevention.

CPS and SACWIS have begun collaboration of functionality, programming and rule development. Some areas of focus include:

- Determination and redetermination of eligibility.
- Consistent assessments throughout service provision.
- Clearly identify eligible candidates and approved EBP services.
- Families and service plan flow in the system even when case status change may occur.

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FFPSA- OhioKAN

Ohio KAN- OhioKAN is rolling out in two cohorts which include 5 regions each. The first cohort is expected to begin services in August. Services will include a website, hotline for referrals, and, in cohort 1, case management services.

Kinnect has been hiring for all regions. As of 6/23, Kinnect has hired 12 of the 15 cohort 1 regional positions. This includes all 5 of the Regional Directors. Kinnect has also started hiring for cohort 2.

Applications to be an OhioKAN site and house a navigator opened on April 26, 2020. On the initial closing date, May 22, 2020, 11 applications were received. After review, it was determined that there was not enough coverage by these sites, and applications were extended through July 14th. Kinnect and ODJFS have been engaged in outreach efforts to target organizations. One outreach effort has been to offer informational sessions for agencies. Upcoming sessions were held at the end of June and the first week of July. Cohort 2 applications opened on July 15, 2020.

Since the selection of Navigator sites has been delayed, Kinnect will use the regional staff hired to start the program. Regional staff are already undergoing training on the model.

Ohio START

A representative from Children and Family Futures (a national nonprofit organization that focuses on the intersections among child welfare, mental health, substance use disorder treatment, and court systems) identified Ohio as a model for which they are now referring other states for guidance in their implementation of Ohio START and the early planning framework for its application within the Family First Prevention Services Act. Ohio START (Sobriety, Treatment and Reducing Trauma) is an evidence-informed children services-led intervention model that helps public children services agencies (PCSAs) bring together caseworkers, behavioral health providers, and family peer mentors into teams dedicated to helping families struggling with co-occurring child maltreatment and substance use disorder.

CHILDREN AND THE COURTS

OFC approved over \$66,000 in Children's Justice Act (CJA) federal funds for Child Welfare law practice training and resource grants.

- As a strategy to address the need for high quality legal representation, PCSAs and IV-E courts were invited to apply for up to \$10,000 to cover the cost of several National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC) opportunities: Red Book virtual training, child welfare law specialist certification, NACC national conference attendance, and/or memberships and materials.
- Applications were received from 25 PCSAs and IV-E Courts from 23 counties for Judges, Magistrates, CASA/GAL, PCSA Attorneys, and other agency/court staff. All were approved.

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- As a result of this collaboration, NACC plans to submit a notice of intent to the *Supreme Court of Ohio Commission on Certification of Attorneys as Specialists (Commission)*, seeking the recognition of child welfare law as a specialty field, and subsequent authority to allow NACC to certify Ohio attorneys as Child Welfare Law Specialists (CWLS).

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

As many of you are aware, Ohio implemented the foster care provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in December of 2016.

This landmark legislation recognizes the unique challenges faced by children in care, including placement moves, being under-credited, and the impact of trauma and other issues impacting a child's ability to learn.

The ESSA foster care provisions stress the shared responsibility by child welfare agencies and educational entities for ensuring educational stability for children in care.

Requirements include:

- Best interest determinations: During these conversations, consider the learning methods and platforms being used by the school of origin and the attendance area district. Consider a student's ease of transfer to new platforms of blended learning, and the effects this could have on their participation in learning and educational programming. Consider a foster families' needs and preferences given these unique circumstances, as well as the youth's.
- Transportation arrangements: Development of transportation arrangements needed to allow children to remain in their schools of origin following placement moves.
- Immediate enrollment: Students in foster care are entitled to immediate enrollment, even if at the time of enrollment, they do not have the paperwork necessary, when retention in the school of origin is not possible. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, different districts are offering different educational plans for students (all year online vs. hybrid models vs. blended learning etc...). Most are requiring families and students to choose which model they will use for the year prior to the start of the school year. The process should be started during the summer break in preparation for the school year.

For your benefit, the Ohio Department of Education updated some of these ESSA forms: Ohio's Model Best Interest Determination Form was updated to an electronically fillable document. This is available on OFC's webpage under Educational Stability for Foster Youth and ODE's webpage under Foster Care. In addition, the Ohio Foster Care Checklist and Education Stability Process documents were updated, but the content has remained the same.

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In order to accomplish all that was mentioned above, coordinated efforts are needed in order to improve notifications of foster care placements, transferring academic records, identifying needed student supports.

Essential to this, is having updated child welfare and school district contacts identified and readily available.

We need your help with this -- many of the contacts we have, are outdated.

Lucy Gobble- OFC's Inter-System Coordinator and ESSA State Point of Contact will be reaching out to you to identify your agency's Local Point of Contact.

Lastly, The Ohio Department of Education values the relationship between ODE and ODJFS - if there are suggestions or considerations that anyone on the call has regarding educational services for youth in foster care in the restart – reopen phase of the school year, please share them with Lucy Gobble. Lucy will, in turn, share with ODE. ODE sees the importance of those who are in the field and wants to ensure there is guidance with the perspective of the child welfare counterparts.

OIG AUDIT

The federal Office of the Inspector General released its audit of our monitoring of foster children's medication use. With your partnership, we will have a strong foundation moving forward. The OIG recommended that Ohio: (1) improve monitoring to ensure that county agencies maintain the required documentation in the Ohio SACWIS for the medications prescribed for children in its custody;

(2) continue its efforts to obtain access to Medicaid claim data for children in its custody to assist with the monitoring of medications prescribed for the children;

(3) implement procedures for the monitoring of opioid medications prescribed for children in its custody;

(4) review and update the medication list in the Ohio SACWIS on a regular schedule, at least once a year and as medications are approved or discontinued, to improve the reliability and relevancy of the list; and

(5) provide training and technical assistance to county agency workers who input medical and medication information into the Ohio SACWIS.

Over the past several years, Ohio has taken a multi-faceted approach to addressing the issue of psychotropic medication use within the foster care population. The state's over-arching strategy was developed in partnership with the Ohio academy of Family Physicians, the Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Voices for Ohio's Children, the Ohio Children's Hospital Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill-Ohio Chapter, the Ohio State University Government Resource Center,

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ODH, ODM, ODJFS, OhioMHAS, DODD, local child welfare agencies, child health care providers, juvenile justice personnel; and representatives of local school districts.

To advance appropriate use of psychotropic medications, Ohio has:

- Established prescription guidelines.
- Implemented Ohio Minds Matter, the state's targeted investment toward improving safe use of psychotropic medications.
- Enhanced data analyses to improve prescribing practices.
- Created a Psychotropic Medication Toolkit to assist PCSAs with development and implementation of local policies and procedures, including informed consent practices.
- Promoted evidence-based, non-pharmacological treatment.

Ohio Minds Matter has been nationally recognized for its approach to improve prescribing practices, its holistic design, and collaborative inter-system implementation model.

In response to the OIG audit findings, we have also developed a coordinated strategy for improving monitoring:

*Our Medicaid TA Team (THANKS Leondrea, Queiana, Nicole, Nick and Peggy !!!) will be working with Medicaid to compare medication claims data against what is documented in SACWIS and working with the TASs to provide guidance to the PCSAs;

*The Psychotropic Medication Toolkit for Child Welfare is in the process of being revised and will soon be distributed throughout the state.

*SACWIS Medication data fields have been updated based on guidance from ODM's pharmacy staff.

*PCSAs subject to findings have completed or are in the process of completing targeted Corrective Action Plans to specifically address the issues.

PROCEDURE LETTER 356

Procedure Letter 356 was published on Wednesday, July 17th. This new letter provides updated guidance that supplements the previously issued Procedure Letter 348 that was issued on March 30th. This new Procedure Letter (356) does not replace Procedure Letter 348, but only adds further guidance regarding one item—the continued certification of foster and adoptive homes that would otherwise expire without recertification during the pandemic.

The original COVID-19 Procedure Letter 348 was issued on March 30th PL 348 included several pieces of guidance regarding practice and flexibility during the COVID-19 pandemic. One of those pieces of guidance addressed foster and adoptive homes that would require recertification during the pandemic. This was based upon emergency legislation (HB 197) signed into law by Governor DeWine, which included a provision to allow for certifications or licenses issued by state to remain valid during the pandemic.

The original PL 348 addressed foster and adoptive homes that would be set to expire during the months of March, April, May and June, and that those certifications would be extended through

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September 30, 2020. As the pandemic has continued, we saw the need to address continued certification of foster and adoptive homes that would be set to expire in July and going forward. Therefore, PL 356 issued on July 17th extends all foster and adoption home recertifications that would otherwise be scheduled to expire during the pandemic until another Procedure Letter is issued providing advanced notification and guidelines for ending this extension.

CHILDREN SERVICES NEW CASEWORKER AND SUPERVISOR ONBOARDING SURVEY ([Specific to Public Children Services Agencies](#))

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Office of Families and Children (OFC) received feedback from counties requesting support with onboarding Children Services new caseworkers and supervisors. Counties face the challenge of keeping information and materials up to date while maintaining the staffing capacity to provide the training necessary. In response to this feedback, OFC met with the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) and several PCSAs to gain specifics regarding onboarding needs and gather ideas of topic areas for an onboarding training. As a result, OFC plans to develop an onboarding training that PCSAs can use upon hiring new caseworker and supervisor staff. Counties will not be required to implement the onboarding training; however, it can be utilized as a resource in your training process. The training will not replace the requirement of caseworkers and supervisors attending CORE.

In an effort to meet as many county specific onboarding needs, we are seeking further input in the development of the new county onboarding project with this survey. Although many counties have internal onboarding components particular to each agency, this [Children Services New Caseworker and Supervisor Onboarding Survey](#) is tailored to the onboarding components specific to the work of Children Services and the onboarding of new caseworkers and supervisors.

If you have not already done so, please be sure to complete the short [Children Services New Caseworker and Supervisor Onboarding Survey](#) as we value your feedback. This survey should only take a few minutes to complete and will remain open through close of business on **Friday, July 24, 2020**.

Please have a staff member who is knowledgeable/responsible for supporting the training and onboarding of staff complete this survey. For the purpose of this survey, a new caseworker and new supervisor will have had less than 12 months of experience in their new role.

Once the information from the surveys are compiled, we'll be reaching out to counties who identified robust internal onboarding programs to gain additional insight as we finalize the deliverables and begin the RFP process.

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LEGAL REPRESENTATION (Specific to Public Children Services Agencies)

Prior to 2019, the cost of legal representation was not Title IV-E allowable. Our federal partners completed a policy revision in January 2019 that now permits Title IV-E agencies to claim administrative costs for independent legal representation, by an attorney.

Title IV-E agencies may now receive 50% reimbursement for these costs.

Why? The reason behind the change is:

- To ensure that, among other things: reasonable efforts are made to prevent removal and finalize the permanency plan; and parents and child are engaged in and complying with case plans.
- To prepare for and participate in all stages of foster care legal proceedings, such as court hearings related to a child's removal from the home.
- The Independent Legal Representation should be appointed at the first hearing.

Who?

- A child at imminent risk of removal from the home for placement into foster care;
- A child in custody/care and placement responsibility of a Title IV-E agency;

AND

- The child's parents

Who can provide the legal representation?

- Attorney – GAL or otherwise appointed (exception of CASA -not attorneys)
- Independent attorney
 - The independence of the attorney cannot be compromised or limited
 - The amount of time or scope of the legal representation cannot be limited
 - The attorney works for the child or the parents
 - This does not apply to criminal charges
 - In April of this year our federal partners further clarified that Title IV-E agencies may also claim administrative costs of paralegals, investigators, peer partners or social workers that support an attorney providing legal representation as well.

Claiming

- Coding has been set up for PCSA's to capture legal representation costs separately for candidates and for children in foster care
- We are finalizing changes to the juvenile court claim forms so these costs can be captured, and these will be published soon

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- The combined eligibility ratio is applied
- The FFP is 50%
- Must maintain documentation to support the costs
 - Invoiced time/costs
 - Also need to identify the child/parent being represented

We are currently partnering with the Supreme Court of Ohio and the Ohio Public Defender to maximize funding by potentially drawing down Title IV-E funding for public defenders providing representation to child welfare involved children and parents.

Please see the attached Technical Bulletin from the Children's Bureau for additional information about the claiming of legal representation costs.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

During our last call on June 24th, we shared we would be going to a monthly format where we'll be discussing other OFC updates. Our next call is scheduled for Thursday August 27. As always, we want to hear from you and ask for your suggestions on future topics. Please also remember to refer to your First Friday bulletin for updates. The next edition of First Friday will be issued September 4 and available on our website here <https://jfs.ohio.gov/PFOF/OFC-First-Friday-Updates.stm>.

We will take a moment for you to type in the question box suggestions.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q1. Where can a IV-E Court learn more about the legal representation portion of this update?

Answer: There is a webinar scheduled for the Title IV-E courts on August 11th, from 10:00-12:00. The link to register:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2639805779955532556>

<https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fattendee.gotowebinar.com%2Fregister%2F2639805779955532556&data=02%7C01%7Cgaye.crawford%40jfs.ohio.gov%7C99fa317819b84d94e3d208d82d7d1042%7C50f8fcc494d84f0784eb36ed57c7c8a2%7C0%7C0%7C637309362458065977&sdata=nm3RVquiSoW0%2BqO1FTiE0LYeMkBjGZnWCsjX0A6ym7I%3D&reserved=0>

Q2. Will the prevention services plan be shared with stakeholders before submitted to HHS?

Answer: Yes.

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Q3. Where can we find the psychotropic meds tool kit for PCSAs?

Answer: The psychotropic medication toolkit is being updated based on updated activities in response to the OIG Audit but the current version can be found here:

<http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/num/JFS01682/pdf/>

Q4. With concern for COVID and Upcoming School Issues--Who Can make decisions regarding foster children participating in distance learning if there is concern for the foster care giver's health with many children attending different schools and increasing risk of COVID exposure in the foster home?

Answer: We all recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic produces some unique circumstances. There is no single answer. During the best interest determination conversation, consider the learning methods and platforms being used by the school of origin and the attendance area district. Consider a student's ease of transfer to new platforms of blended learning, and the effects this could have on their participation in learning and educational programming. Consider a foster families' needs and preferences given these unique circumstances, as well as the youth's.

Q5. Are these recorded? Where can we find the recording? Thanks.

Answer: These touch point calls are not recorded. We do post the talking points and Q and A. You can find the transcripts of these calls here:

[Http://jfs.ohio.gov/ocf/CoronavirusAndChildServices/](http://jfs.ohio.gov/ocf/CoronavirusAndChildServices/)

Q6. Has the Q&A been released from the webinar 6/11/2020 re: new rules effective 6/15/2020?

Answer: There were nearly 400 questions submitted during the webinar, so it has taken some time for policy, licensing and SACWIS staff to review all of them. Staff are working on finalizing the Q & A and plan to have it ready for release early next week. An email will go out anyone to those who registered for the webinar.

Q7. What is the best plan for advocating for additional EBP's or broader EBP's so that more youth can be served? And more agencies can provide services?

Answer: State cabinet leaders have approved the prevention services identified within the plan and ODJFS will continue to evaluate adding services.