



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

MAR 13 2014

Kay M. Rupert, Administrator  
Clarion County Commissioners  
214 South Seventh Avenue, Suite B  
Clarion, Pennsylvania 16214

RE: Clarion County Children and Youth  
Services

License #414820

Dear Ms. Rupert:

As a result of the Department of Public Welfare's licensing inspection on November 20, 21, and 22 and December 4, 5, and 6, 2013, we have found the above agency, to be in compliance with 55 Pa.Code Ch. 3130 and all other applicable supplemental program regulations.

Your regular license for the period February 19, 2014-February 19, 2015 was issued on October 29, 2013. Your regular license remains in good standing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy A. Utz".

Cathy Utz  
Acting Deputy Secretary

Enclosure  
Licensing Inspection Summary

**COUNTY CHILDREN AND YOUTH AGENCY  
ANNUAL SURVEY AND EVALUATION SUMMARY**

NAME OF AGENCY/FACILITY: Clarion County Children and Youth Services				TELEPHONE: 814-226-9280	OCYF REGIONAL STAFF APPROVAL	DATE
ADDRESS: 214 South 7 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite B., Clarion, PA 16214				COUNTY: Clarion	Program Representative: <i>Leonard Davis</i>	<i>2/27/14</i>
INSPECTED BY: Leonard Davis, Cynthia Gariepy, Nathan Humes, Melissa Zakraysek				QSR and INSPECTION DATES: QSR- 11/20,21,22/13 INSPECTION 12/4,5,6/13	<i>Amber S. Kalp</i> Supervisor:	<i>2/27/14</i>
INITIAL INSPECTION	RENEWAL INSPECTION	COMPLAINT	UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION	RANDOM SAMPLE	<i>Elaine C. Bobuck</i> Regional Director:	<i>2/28/14</i>
	<b>X</b>					

The Department of Public Welfare Western Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families conducted the annual licensing inspection of Clarion County Office of Children and Youth Services in conjunction with a QSR Review. The QSR Review took place on November 20-22, 2013. The annual licensing inspection occurred from December 4-6, 2013. The QSR Review included seven (7) cases: three (3) Out-of-Home Placement cases and four (4) Ongoing In-Home cases. These cases were also reviewed as part of the annual inspection. The annual inspection also included a random sample record review, internal policy and procedures review, personnel record review and agency fiscal documentation review. In addition, a site visit to an agency resource home was conducted on November 20, 2013. During the visit, the resource parents described a positive relationship with Clarion County Office of Children and Youth Services staff.

The case sample was drawn from cases assigned to all program units and casework functions within the agency. A total of 10 of the 141 screen out records, 5 of the 50 Child Protective Service intake records, 3 of the 28 placement records, 10 of the 123 General Protective Services intake records, 5 of the 17 agency resource family home records, 1 of the 6 adoption records, 4 of the 10 ongoing/in-home services records, and the personnel records of the 2 new employees were reviewed during the licensing inspection.

Clarion County Office of Children and Youth Services (CCOCYS) is a public child welfare agency serving primarily a rural population of approximately 39,646 residents in a sixth class county. The unemployment rate in Clarion County continued to exceed the state and national average and the number of children living below 100% and 200% of poverty continued to increase.

Throughout 2012-13 the number of intake investigations continued to increase, with CPS referrals increasing significantly. An additional caseworker was assigned to the intake unit. Most referrals to the agency are successfully resolved at the intake level. The agency saw a decrease in the number of families accepted for service, but with more children in those families. Although staff turnover continued to be a major issue for the agency, the county's efforts towards improvement was evident in the first year of implementation of a county wide truancy plan, the first Clarion County MDT meeting was held, and the agency transitioned to the CAPS computerized data system.

It was evident during the site visit that the CCOCYS staff works diligently to maintain the intensity and quality of services provided to the children and families they serve. The strengths identified in CCOCYS practices include: a home visit is attempted within 24 hours on all referrals received by the agency, home visits are varied between announced and unannounced, case documentation is very detailed, caseworkers follow through on contacts, safety assessments are completed for screen outs, safety assessments are adjusted when changes occur in the home, an intake FSP is completed, absent parents are engaged in services, FSP/PPP progress is reviewed by the permanency team, and good collaboration occurs with service providers.

All case specific regulatory references contained within the License and Inspection Summary do not contain specific identifying demographic data due to statutory

prohibitions relating to confidentiality.

### SUMMARY OF AGENCY PRACTICES

**Practice Area:** Safety Assessment and Monitoring

**QSR Indicator:** Safety from Exposure to Threats of Harm

**QSR Indicator:** Safety from Risk to Self/Others

**Practice Area:** CCOCYS utilizes the Safety Assessment tool for all in-home cases and the out-of-home tool for placement cases. The caseworkers and supervisors appear to be more comfortable with the Safety Assessment and Management Process since the staff's one day refresher training on August 14, 2013. The caseworkers are providing a high level of documentation in detailed and descriptive structured case notes and completing meaningful assessments. Supervisors are monitoring, checking, and approving safety assessments. CCOCYS began utilizing CAPS on October 1, 2013.

**QSR Indicators:** The first safety indicator, Safety from Exposure to threats of Harm, was rated 100% acceptable overall and assesses the degree to which the child/youth is free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation by others in his/her place of residence, school, and other daily settings. The high score indicates that CCOCYS is utilizing the Safety Assessment process correctly. The second safety indicator, Safety from Risk to Self/Others, only applies to a child/youth age three or older was rated in the acceptable range overall and assesses the degree to which the child/youth avoids self endangerment. The high score is reflective of the collaborative approach used by the human services system in the county and the agency's ability to access services when needed.

**Practice Area:** Casework Visitation with Family

**QSR Indicator:** Planning for Transitions and Life Adjustments

**QSR Indicator:** Parent/Caregiver Functioning

**Practice Area:** Most referrals to the agency are successfully resolved at the intake level. CCOCYS has four (4) ongoing caseworkers and has been able to maintain small caseloads which average six (6) families per caseworker. CCOCYS utilizes a written visitation plan to ensure that visitation, consistent with risk level, is maintained. CCOCYS conducts in-home visits twice a month at a minimum. As part of the CPP Progress Review, the Permanency Team meets with each family on a quarterly basis to revisit with the family the ASFA time line of 15 out of 22 months and educates the family on the fact that the permanency goal may be changed if the family is not adhering to the established reunification plan. The Permanency Team also reviews the ASFA brochure with the family and requests the parents to re-sign the ASFA brochure to acknowledge their understanding of the federally mandated time lines. Visitation for siblings and parents are scheduled by the Visitation Aide. The agency's best practice suggests making the visits twice a week or as frequent as possible to establish and maintain the bond between child/siblings and the parent. The CPP reflects the established visitation plan which has been signed by the parents. In addition, it shows how frequently they are scheduled and how frequently they are kept by either parent. Prior to the initial visit, visitation guidelines and expectations are discussed in relation to reunification. The visits can either be supervised or unsupervised, in the agency's family room or in the family home if safety is not compromised and this is the least restrictive environment. In addition, the assigned caseworker informs the parents of all activities, medical appointments and educational meetings for the child and encourages the parents to attend. The assigned caseworker offers transportation if needed. Transportation can be provided by the caseworker or the agency's Transportation Aide.

**QSR Indicators:** Planning for Transitions and Life Adjustments was rated in the acceptable range and assesses the degree to which the current or next life change transition for the child/youth and family is being planned, staged, and implemented to assure a timely, smooth, and successful adjustment after the change occurs. The favorable score demonstrates that the agency is conducting quality home visits that address the goals that were established in the family service plans or child permanency plans and adjustments are being made to the family service plan as progress occurs or new concerns arise.

Parent and Caregiver Functioning is an area that requires some refinement and assesses the degree to which the parent(s), other significant adult(s), and/or substitute caregiver(s), is/are willing and able to provide the child/youth with assistance, protection, supervision, and support necessary for daily living. The overall rating for parent and caregiver functioning should be explored to determine what improvements could be made.

<p><b>Practice Area:</b> Fostering Connections Activities</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Parent/ Caregiver Functioning</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Role and Voice</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Engagement Efforts</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Teaming</p>	<p><b>Practice Area:</b> CCOCYS has a paralegal that has the responsibility of conducting diligent searches via the Accurint Search Engine. Kinship families are the first choice for placement for all children entering care. CCOCYS recruits foster families who understand and are willing to follow the principles of Bridging the Gap and team with biological families. The agency also recruits foster parents from all seven school districts encompassing county wide geographical area.</p> <p><b>QSR Indicators:</b> Parent and Caregiver Functioning is an area that needs some refinement. This indicator assesses the degree to which the parent(s), other significant adult(s), and/or substitute caregiver(s), is/are willing and able to provide the child/youth with assistance, protection, supervision, and support necessary for daily living. The overall rating for parent and caregiver functioning should be explored to determine what improvements could be made.</p> <p>Role and Voice was rated in the fair range and assesses the degree to which the child/youth, parents, family members, and caregivers have a significant role, voice, choice, and influence in shaping decisions made about the child/youth and family strengths and needs, goals, supports, and services. Overall this is an area that should be explored to see what improvements could be made.</p> <p>Engagements Efforts was also rated in the fair range and assesses the degree to which those working with the child/youth and his/her family are finding family members to support the family, developing a trust-based working relationship with the family, focusing on family strengths, and offering adjustments in scheduling and meeting locations, transportation and childcare supports to increase family participation in planning efforts.</p> <p>Teaming was rated in the acceptable range and examines and evaluates the formation of the team as two separate components. Formation was rated acceptable and Functioning was rated as needing some refinement. It is recommended that the agency work to better enhance teaming functioning between the agency, providers and family members. Appropriate team leaders and roles must be established early on at the formation of a team. Consistent and regular communication between the members must be a priority to make the team effective.</p> <p>CCOCYS is encouraged to continue to use kin whenever possible.</p>
<p><b>Practice Area:</b> Shared Case Responsibility Activities</p>	<p><b>Practice Area:</b> Clarion County does not have a written protocol between CYS and JPO concerning SCR, but does have an established procedure. Clarion County currently has two SCR cases; both youth are siblings who were dependent prior to their adjudication as delinquent. Case management duties are shared by both agencies.</p> <p>The two departments are encouraged to continue in their attempts to increase the number of shared cases.</p>

<p><b>Practice Area:</b> Family Service Planning</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Assessment and Understanding</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Long-Term View</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Child/Youth and Family Planning Process</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Planning for Transitions and Life Adjustments</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Intervention Adequacy and Resource Availability</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Maintaining Family Connections</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Tracking and Adjusting</p>	<p><b>Practice Area:</b> CCOCYS recognizes the importance and benefit of engaging families in the development of the Family Service Plan. Family Service Plans (FSP) are individualized and objectives are related to the families individual concerns identified through the visits, safety assessments and risk assessments. The caseworkers review the FSP goals/objectives on a monthly basis with the family. This is documented on the FSP Monthly Review, which shows any progress made towards reunification of the family and the Concurrent Plan. In addition, the Permanency Team meets with the family to discuss the Child Permanency Plan (CPP) Progress Review every three months after the placement of the child and at least once before a review hearing. All copies of the monthly FSP review as well as the CPP Progress Review are provided to the family, the court, attorneys and providers involved with the family.</p> <p><b>QSR Indicators:</b> Assessment and Understanding was rated in the acceptable range and assesses the degree to which the team has gathered and shared essential information, so that the members have a shared understanding of the child/youth's and family's strengths and needs based on the underlying issues, safety threats, risk factors, protective capacities, culture, hopes, and dreams.</p> <p>Long-Term View was rated favorable and assesses the degree to which there is a guiding strategic vision shared by the family team which describes the interventions and conditions necessary for achieving safe case closure and the family's knowledge and supports to sustaining those conditions following safe case closure.</p> <p>Planning for Transitions and Life Adjustments was rated in the positive range and assesses the degree to which the current or next life change transition for the child/youth and family is being planned, staged, and implemented to assure a timely, smooth, and successful adjustment after the change occurs. The high score demonstrates that the agency is conducting quality home visits that address the goals that were established in the family service plans or child permanency plans and that adjustments to the family service plan are made as progress is made or new concerns arise.</p> <p>Child/Youth and Family Planning Process was rated in the very favorable range and assesses the degree to which the planning process is individualized and matched to the child/youth's and family's present situation, preferences, near-term needs and long-term view for safe case closure. The high score would indicate that the plans are individualized to meet the specific needs of the family.</p> <p>Intervention Adequacy and Resource Availability was rated at 100% acceptable overall and assesses the degree to which resources required to implement current child/youth and family plans are available on a timely, sufficient, and convenient local basis to meet near-term needs and achieve the conditions necessary for safe case closure.</p> <p>Maintaining Family Connections is an area that needs some refinement. This indicator assesses the degree to which interventions are building and maintaining positive interaction and providing emotional support between the child/youth and his/her parents, siblings, relatives and other important people in the child/youth's life, when the child/youth and family members are temporarily living away from one another. Overall this is an area that should be explored to see what improvements could be made.</p> <p>Tracking and Adjusting are areas that need some improvement in both sub-indicators. These indicators assess the degree to which the team tracks service implementation, checks progress, identifies emergent needs and problems, and modifies services in a timely manner. This is an area that should be explored to see what improvements could be made.</p> <p>CCOCYS is encouraged to continue elicit information from the family, children and providers in the development of goals/objectives.</p>
<p><b>Practice Area:</b> Family Engagement Practices</p>	<p><b>Practice Area:</b> CCOCYS made 44 FGDM referrals during this review period. A total of 80% of the conferences were successfully completed. The caseworker is responsible for obtaining birth certificates and establishing paternity for</p>

<p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Physical Health</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Emotional Well-Being</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Early Learning and Development</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Engagement Efforts</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Role and Voice</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Teaming</p>	<p>the child. The caseworker meets with the family at time of placement and uses a family tree to identify all adult relatives to the 5<sup>th</sup> degree or any additional significant adults in the life of that child. The caseworker sends Kinship letters to identified adults within 30 days to inform them of the child's placement and the opportunity to become a resource or a positive contact for the child. In addition to the family tree, the LSI paralegal uses Accurint, Diligent Search and Fostering Connections to search for additional potential names that may not have been given to the caseworker. In addition, a referral is made by the Adoption Coordinator to a SWAN affiliate in order to use Child Specific Recruitment and Child Prep services.</p> <p><b>QSR Indicators:</b> Physical Health was rated in the acceptable range and assesses the degree to which the child/youth is achieving and maintaining his/her optimum health status.</p> <p>Emotional Well-Being was rated in an adequate range. This indicator determines the degree to which the child/youth, consistent with age and/or ability, is displaying an adequate pattern of attachment and positive social relationships, coping and adapting skills, and appropriate self-management of emotions and behaviors.</p> <p>Early Learning and Development was rated at a 100% acceptable range and assesses the degree to which the young child's, under the age of eight years and not attending school, developmental status is commensurate with the child's age and developmental capacities. Assessing the child's physical health, emotional well being and developmental milestones are strengths of the agency.</p> <p>Engagements Efforts is an area that needs some improvement. This indicator assesses the degree to which those working with the child/youth and his/her family are finding family members to support the family, developing a trust-based working relationship with the family, focusing on family strengths, and offering adjustments in scheduling and meeting locations, transportation and childcare supports to increase family participation in planning efforts.</p> <p>Role and Voice is an area that needs some refinement. This indicator assesses the degree to which the child/youth, parents, family members, and caregivers have a significant role, voice, choice, and influence in shaping decisions made about the child/youth and family strengths and needs, goals, supports, and services. Overall this is an area that should be explored to see what improvements could be made.</p> <p>Teaming examines and evaluates the formation of the team as two separate components. Formation was rated in acceptable and Functioning is an area that needs some improvement.</p> <p>CCOCYS is encouraged to continue to work towards meaningful engagement of families. It is recommended that the agency work to better enhance teaming functioning between the agency, providers and family members. Appropriate team leaders and roles must be established early on at the formation of a team. Consistent and regular communication between the members must be a priority to make the team effective.</p>
<p><b>Practice Area:</b> Permanency Activities</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Stability</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Living Arrangement</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Permanency</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Academic Status</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Pathway to Independence</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Parent and Caregiver</p>	<p><b>Practice Area:</b> During 2012-13 the agency achieved permanency for 3 children under the age of 5, with an average length of stay of 18.7 months, finalized 4 adoptions, and achieved permanency for 4 youth through PLC. CCOCYS developed the CPP review and Permanency Team to help explain concurrent planning to families while showing them progress toward reunification and the agency's progress toward the concurrent goal for the child. Permanency hearings are held at least every 6 months and a permanency decision is made within 12 months of a child being placed in out-of-home care. The agency is continuing to increase its use of SWAN services and the agency opened a 5 unit apartment building for IL eligible youth on November 1, 2012.</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Stability is an area that needs refinement. This indicator assesses the degree to which the child/youth's daily living, and learning arrangements, are stable and free from risk of disruptions; their daily settings, routines, and relationships are consistent over recent times; and known risks are being managed to achieve stability and reduce the probability of future disruption. This indicator score which looks retrospectively over the past 12</p>

<p>Functioning</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Efforts to Timely Permanence</p>	<p>months and prospectively over the next six months was affected by recent moves, which CCOCYS cannot control, by families in the QSR case sample.</p> <p>Living Arrangement was rated in the positive range and evaluates the child/youth's current living situation and assesses the degree to which the child/youth is currently living in the most appropriate living arrangement. The Family Home indicator was positive in the substitute home indicator was 100%. The high scores reflect the agency's efforts to place youth in the least restrictive setting.</p> <p>Permanency was rated in the acceptable range and assesses the degree to which there is confidence by the child/youth, parents, caregivers or other team members that the child/youth is living with parents or other caregivers who will sustain in this role until the child/youth reaches adulthood and will continue to provide enduring family connections and supports into adulthood.</p> <p>Academic Status was rated at 100% acceptable and assesses the degree to which the child/youth, eight years or older or attending school, is regularly attending school; is placed in a grade level consistent with age or developmental level; is actively engaged in instructional activities, and is meeting the requirements for annual promotion and course completion. The high score shows the agency does consider the child's school location when placing youth.</p> <p>Pathways to Independence was rated at 100% acceptable and assesses the degree to which youth, who is age 16 or older, is gaining the skills, education, work experience, connections, relationships, income, housing, and necessary capacities for living safely and functioning successfully independent of the agency's services, and is developing long-term connections and informal supports that will support him/her in adulthood.</p> <p>Parent and Caregiver Functioning was area that needs improvement. This indicator assesses the degree to which the parent(s), other significant adult(s), and/or substitute caregiver(s), is/are willing and able to provide the child/youth with assistance, protection, supervision, and support necessary for daily living. The overall rating for parent and caregiver functioning should be explored to determine what improvements could be made.</p> <p>Efforts to Timely Permanency was an area that needs improvement. This indicator assesses the degree to which current efforts by system agents for achieving safe closure show a pattern of diligence and urgency necessary for timely attainment of permanence with sustained adequate functioning of the child/youth and family following cessation of protective supervision. Timeliness was rated for out-of-home cases only and affected the overall score since permanency could not be achieved in the 1 case reviewed by the specific timeframes, which CCOCYS cannot control, that the reviewers had to consider.</p> <p>It is recommended that CCOCYS continue their progress toward the implementation of Concurrent Planning and the 8 core components. The agency should continue the CPP review and Permanency Team to help explain Concurrent Planning to families while showing them progress toward reunification and the agency's progress toward the concurrent goal for the child.</p>
<p><b>Practice Area:</b> Placement Settings</p> <p><b>QSR Indicator:</b> Living Arrangement (88%)</p>	<p><b>Practice Area:</b> CCOCYS continues to place youth in the least restrictive placement setting that meets the needs of the youth while they work toward finding them a safe and permanent home. CCOCYS currently has 28 children in placement from 16 families. The agency entered 2013-14 with only one youth in congregate care. CCOCYS has historically had low placement rates due to the collaborative approach used by the human services system in the county.</p> <p><b>QSR Indicators:</b> Living Arrangement was rated in the positive range and evaluates the child/youth's current living situation and assesses the degree to which the child/youth is currently living in the most appropriate living arrangement. The Family Home indicator was acceptable and the substitute home indicator was 100%. The high</p>

scores reflect the agency's efforts to place youth in the least restrictive setting.

CCOCYS is encouraged to continue to use the least restrictive placement setting and continue to give kinship caregivers priority over other out-of-home placement options when they meet requirements and it is in the child's best interest.

The following chapters 3350, 3700, 3130, 3490, CPSL and Chapter 20 were reviewed during the annual licensing review.

### REGULATORY FINDINGS REQUIRING PLAN OF CORRECTION

1. 55 PA CODE CHAPTER	2. NON-COMPLIANCE AREA	3. CORRECTION REQUIRED	4. REQUIRED CORRECTION DATE	5. PROVIDERS PLAN OF CORRECTION OR RESPONSE	6. STATUS OF CORRECTION
3130, 3350, 3490, 3700	No areas of non compliance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

THE LEGAL ENTITY REPRESENTATIVE MUST COMPLETE COLUMN 5, SIGN ON THE SIGNATURE LINE AT THE BOTTOM AND DATE ALL PAGES OF THIS DOCUMENT.  
RETURN THIS ENTIRE DOCUMENT TO YOUR REGIONAL OFFICE BY: INSERT DATE

SIGNATURE OF LEGAL ENTITY REPRESENTATIVE

TITLE

DATE

TELEPHONE NUMBER