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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY JUVENILE COURT AND
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES (DCFS)

In March 2016, Los Angeles County opened five transitional shelter care (TSC) facilities licensed to hold children and youth for 72 hours while the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) locates an appropriate placement for them. While DCFS has been able to place a substantial majority of those children and youth within the 72-hour timeframe, there is a small percentage of youth for whom locating an appropriate placement has been more difficult, resulting in significant overstays.

It is important that the Court monitor these overstays to ensure that DCFS is making reasonable efforts to locate appropriate placements and to encourage these youth to participate with DCFS in that search.

THEREFORE, the undersigned agree to the following:

1. DCFS will participate with the Court in the attached TSC Pilot Project Proposal (Exhibit A) and the Engagement and Placement Stabilization Team Meeting Protocol (Exhibit B)
2. That this proposal is limited to youth at the TSC located at David and Margaret Youth and Family Services
3. That this TSC Pilot Project Proposal will begin on September 1, 2017 and is limited to 90 days unless extended by an additional Memorandum of Understanding.

DATED:

8-11-17



Michael I. Levanas, Presiding Judge
Los Angeles County Juvenile Court

8.15.17



Brandon Nichols, Acting Director
Department of Children and Family Services

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TSC Pilot Project Proposal

This proposal is designed to work with a small number of youth who repeatedly occupy and stay beyond the 72-hour limit at Los Angeles County's Transitional Shelter Care (TSC) facilities. While there are five TSCs in the county, the initial focus will be on females at the David and Margaret TSC. The elements of this pilot are:

1. When a youth has exceeded the 72-hour limit at the TSC, an Engagement Placement Stabilization (EPS) meeting shall be arranged within seven days.
2. The details and mechanics of the EPS, including who will attend, are attached.
3. Following the EPS, a "walk-on" hearing will be heard in Dependency Court Department 417 three court days after the EPS
 - a. Notice will be provided by DCFS to the court, the Children's Law Center, Los Angeles Dependency Lawyers, and CASA, if involved.
4. DCFS will provide a report for the "walk-on" with the following information:
 - a. Date youth entered TSC
 - b. Whether youth had previously been in TSC
 - c. Daily efforts made to place youth
 - d. Date of EPS meeting, attendees, issues discussed
 - e. Recommendations from EPS meeting
 - f. Any requested court orders
5. Youth will be transported to the walk-on hearing unless placed prior to the hearing.
 - a. DCFS will provide update if youth is placed, followed by a Change of Placement Report or Group Home report, depending on the specific placement.
6. If a walk-on hearing occurs, the court will set the next date for a placement review hearing in seven court days.
 - a. The youth is ordered to be transported to the next hearing.
 - b. DCFS is ordered to provide a report for the hearing consistent with number 4 above.
 - c. Placement review hearings will occur every 15 days thereafter until the youth is placed, unless the court orders it sooner
 - d. When the youth is placed, the youth's case will be returned to the youth's home court

Engagement and Placement Stabilization Team Meeting Protocol

Los Angeles County mental health and child welfare systems have begun implementing Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings to promote ongoing teaming and communication amongst service providers. These meetings also intend to ensure that the children/youth feel supported, have a voice and are engaged in matters that ultimately impact their life. These meetings are informed by the concepts of the Shared Core Practice Model (SCPM). Child and family teaming is strength-based. It builds on the SCPM concepts through a process that includes engagement of the staff/service providers, engagement of the child/youth and family, the CFT meeting and debriefing sessions.

A substantial number of DCFS detained children/youth living in Los Angeles County have experienced trauma, abuse and neglect and are coping with multiple placement disruptions. Placement stability is vital to promoting well-being and a positive quality of life for these children/youth. In an effort to address the multiple placement disruption issue, an “Engagement and Placement Stabilization Team” meeting will be held within seven days of a child/youth exceeding the TSC 72 hour time frame. This meeting can fulfill the engagement portion of child and family teaming process. This protocol outlines the process to be implemented.

PURPOSE OF MEETING: To begin identifying the strengths and needs of the child/youth to assist with long term placement stabilization.

MEETING PREPARATION: DCFS TSC/Accelerated Placement Team (APT) staff will outreach to the Intensive Mental Health provider to inform them of the child/youth exceeding the 72 hour time frame. The Intensive Mental Health provider will begin the engagement process by preparing the child/youth for the “Engagement and Placement Stabilization Team” meeting.

ATTENDEES: Child/Youth, Intensive Mental Health Provider, DCFS CSW, DCFS SCSW, DCFS TSC staff, Client’s Attorney, Transitional Shelter Care staff, and other support systems identified by the child/youth. The Intensive Mental Health Provider will ask the child/youth who he/she would like to attend and will make sure those parties are invited.

MEETING FACILITATOR: Intensive Mental Health Provider

LOCATION: Transitional Shelter Care Facility or the child/youth’s current placement

The following steps should be covered in each "Engagement and Placement Transition Team" meeting:

- 1) Identify the child/youth's strengths, immediate needs and long term needs of the child/youth.
- 2) Discuss how the youth has been doing at the TSC and/or current placement. (Discuss positive and challenging behaviors)
- 3) Discuss placement concerns identified by the child/youth and his/her placement goal.
- 4) Address barriers to securing long term/permanent placement?
- 5) The TSC staff and Intensive Mental Health Provider (transition team) can work collaboratively to identify symptoms/behaviors and effective interventions to assist the child/youth secure a future placement.
- 6) As a team, discuss potential placement options to assist the APT in finding the most suitable placement for the child/youth.
- 7) Intensive Mental Health Provider will write a summary of the meeting and provide it to all treatment team members, including the APT CSW, to assist in the long term placement search for the child/youth.

DMH CHILD & FAMILY TEAM PLANNING MATRIX

DATE:	SUPERVISOR:	THERAPIST/CLINICIAN:	CFT FACILITATOR:
TEAM MEMBERS:			
FAMILY GOAL:			
Non-Negotiables (Things the team cannot change right now):			
Family Team Ground Rules:			
WORRIES:			
APPRECIATING STRENGTHS (Strengths/Needs)			
STRENGTHS		UNDERLYING NEEDS	

DMH CHILD & FAMILY TEAM PLANNING MATRIX

PLANNING FOR NEEDS	
Need #1	
Brainstormed Ideas from the team:	Action Steps (Who, What, by when?):
Need #2	
Brainstormed Ideas from the team:	Action Steps (Who, What, by when?):
Need #3	
Brainstormed Ideas from the team:	Action Steps (Who, What, by when?):

DMH CHILD & FAMILY TEAM PLANNING MATRIX

What could go wrong with this plan?	
What will we do to prevent or respond if this happens?	
When will the team meet again?	
Signatures: I agree that this plan reflects the work of the Team	
Parent(s)/Guardian:	Youth:
Team Member:	Team Member:
Team Member:	Team Member:
Team Member:	Team Member:
Team Member:	Team Member:
Team Member:	Team Member:

**DMH CHILD & FAMILY TEAM PLANNING MATRIX
FOLLOW UP CFT MTG**

DATE:	SUPERVISOR:	THERAPIST/CLINICIAN:	CFT FACILITATOR:
NEW/ADDITIONAL (Optional) TEAM MEMBERS:			
FAMILY GOAL:			
Non-Negotiables (Things the team cannot change right now):			
Family Team Ground Rules:			
WORRIES:			
STRENGTHS:		NEEDS:	
UPDATE PLANNING FOR NEEDS			
Need #1			
UPDATE On Action Steps	NEW Action Steps:		
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

**DMH CHILD & FAMILY TEAM PLANNING MATRIX
FOLLOW UP CFT MTG**

Need #2	
UPDATE ON Action Steps	NEW Action Steps:
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
Need #3	
UPDATE On Action Steps	NEW Action Steps:
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
NEW NEED #1	
Brainstorm Ideas from the Team:	Action Steps (Who? What? By When?)
1.	
2.	

**DMH CHILD & FAMILY TEAM PLANNING MATRIX
FOLLOW UP CFT MTG**

3.	
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NEW NEED #2	
Brainstorm Ideas from the Team:	Action Steps (Who? What? By When?)
1.	
2.	
3.	

What could go wrong with this plan?

What will we do to prevent or respond if this happens?

When will the team meet again?

**DMH CHILD & FAMILY TEAM PLANNING MATRIX
FOLLOW UP CFT MTG**

Signatures: I agree that this plan reflects the work of the Team

Parent(s)/Guardian:	Youth:
Team Member:	Team Member:
Team Member:	Team Member:
Team Member:	Team Member:
Team Member:	Team Member:
Team Member:	Team Member:
Team Member:	Team Member: