



Human Services Department
COUNTY OF SONOMA



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August 20, 2013

Honorable René Auguste Chouteau
Presiding Superior Court Judge
Hall of Justice
600 Administration Drive
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Approved:

Superior Court Judge
AUG 23 2013

Date:

FILED

AUG 23 2013

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA,
COUNTY OF SONOMA
BY: DEPUTY CLERK

Response to Grand Jury Report: *Protecting the County's At-Risk Children*
Report Date: June 26, 2013

RECOMMENDATIONS:

R1. Create a position for a full-time case assignment supervisor who would also provide all training.

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.

It is the collective responsibility of the existing supervisors in the Initial Services section to assign referrals to social workers in the Emergency Response program. This responsibility can be managed with existing resources. In addition, a Services Training Coordinator position already exists for the Family, Youth and Children's Services and Adult and Aging Services Divisions.

R2. Finalize and implement the computer program currently in development that will assign cases based on known factors such as current workload, trial preparation time, bilingual requirements and family sizes.

This recommendation has been implemented.

In January 2013, the program for the assignment of Emergency Response referrals was completed and has been successfully implemented since then. This system accounts for social worker's workload and the bilingual requirements of Spanish-speaking families.

R3. Assign each field social worker a laptop.

The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

As part of the 2013/2014 budget, the purchase of an additional 79 tablets/laptops was approved. A workgroup is being formed with employee representation to determine the most effective equipment to purchase for social workers in the field. This will include pilot testing. At the same time, FY&C managers are working with the Assistant Director of the Human Services Department to plan for sufficient IT support, including a new mobile work policy, to ensure that the expectations for staff are clear as to how and when these devices will be used. These laptops will be purchased and field tested, with administrative support in place, by December 2013.

R4. Equip field social workers with 24 hour a day remote access to the FYC computer system.

This recommendation has been implemented.

Social workers have full access to a complete mobile work solution. The combination of a laptop, battery-powered printer/scanner, cellular broadband, Virtual Private Network (VPN) access, and encryption allows for full secure remote access to the FYC (HSD) computer system 24 hours a day. Each unit of social workers currently has a laptop which members of the unit are able to check out and use in the field. As noted in R3, by December 2013 all workers will be assigned their own laptop and the check-out system for shared laptops will no longer be needed.

R5. Revise the current system for managing all mail and fax communications received at FYC to enable tracking and efficient processing.

This recommendation has been implemented.

A new system was developed in the Emergency Response Intake unit whereby the assigned worker of the day reviews all mailed Suspected Child Abuse Report forms and cross reports from law enforcement jurisdictions. These forms and cross reports are then prioritized within the unit to ensure that the high and very high risk referrals are dealt with immediately. All the reports are evaluated within a two day period and appropriately assigned.

R6. Modify the Boys Town Motivational System Program to accommodate the additional consideration of a child's developmental and emotional age.

The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

The Valley of the Moon Children's Home (VMCH) staff team has consulted with Boys Town and has been working to develop additional programs to implement with younger children, as well as to meet the different developmental needs of each

youth. VMCH is also working on a referral process through a multi-disciplinary team; through this process, residents who are not successful in these programs will be placed on modified versions of the programs that are individualized to meet the needs of each child or youth. This implementation process will be completed by December 2013.

Signed:



Nick Honey, Division Director
Family, Youth & Children's Services
Sonoma County Human Services Department

Date:

August 20, 2013