

Circuit 2 Interagency Agreement
Between
Florida Department of Children and Families
Florida Department of Juvenile Justice
Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Florida Agency for Health Care Administration
And
Florida Department of Health
To Coordinate Services for Children Served by More than Once Agency

CHALLENGE GROUP

In accordance with the statewide Interagency Agreement, The Department of Children and Families (DCF) in Circuit 2, the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) and the Department of Health (DOH) enter into this interagency agreement to coordinate services and supports for children in Circuit 2 (Leon, Wakulla, Franklin, Liberty, Gadsden and Jefferson Counties) The coordination of services and supports across agencies is critical to positive outcomes for children in Circuit 2. Such services require a coordinated flow of information across multiple child-serving agencies to ensure that policy, procedure, service delivery and resource development are provided in a manner that maximizes the likelihood of positive outcomes.

The name of the group that has been created as a result of this agreement is the Challenge Group which meets the intent of the Local Review Team process as outlined in Sections II and III of the statewide agreement.

The specific terms and conditions of this agreement are as follows:

I. Effective Date

The terms of this Circuit 2 Interagency Agreement shall begin on the date of the last signature and shall continue until one or more parties indicate otherwise. The agreement shall be periodically reviewed by the parties and, if necessary, be renegotiated as needed.

II. Purpose of Challenge Group Meetings

The Challenge Group meetings are structured to meet the needs of children who require a coordinated multi-agency integrated approach to coordinate delivery of services.

Children are identified by members of the group prior to each meeting allowing for all agencies to review their role in the case.

Each member should, whenever feasible, work through the executive leadership of their own agency before making direct contact with the executive leadership of other agencies.

The Challenge Group members seek to resolve the needs of the child from within their own agency and other agencies in the group.

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These meetings are not intended to replace an agency's individualized case specific treatment team, such as Children's Multidisciplinary Assessment Team (CMAT) meetings, or permanency staffings. Rather, The Challenge Group is intended to create a mechanism for the agencies to regularly engage in dialogue to improve their local systems of care. The Challenge Group may also be a mechanism to resolve case specific issues that cannot be appropriately addressed within the child and family's individualized service team(s). Examples of the kind of issues to be brought to the attention of the Challenge Group may include, but are not limited to:

1. Notification and coordination between agencies for children referred for competency evaluations.
2. Identification and review of placement or service needs for children waiting for services from any of the agencies listed.
3. Review of resource capacity of local systems of care and joint interagency efforts that may be necessary for the development of needed local resources.
4. Review of local policies, procedures, working relationships and or practice culture or opportunities to enhance the delivery of services to children.
5. Identification of opportunities to improve interagency coordination for children receiving services from multiple agencies.
6. Involvement of contracted providers in the problem resolution process.
7. Review of specific children in an effort to resolve any placement disputes when staff is not able to reach resolution. The Challenge Group shall review issues in the delivery of services, identify policies that may hinder coordination and/or jointly collaborate on the development of any specialized resources.
8. Examples of the types of cases to be reviewed include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Children who have mental health issues seeking placement in DCF residential treatment programs.
 - b. Children who have developmental disabilities seeking services from APD or placement in APD licensed facilities or group homes.
 - c. Children who have co-occurring developmental disabilities and mental health disorders, or significant behavioral challenges, needing specialized interagency coordinated services from one or more of the agencies included in this agreement.

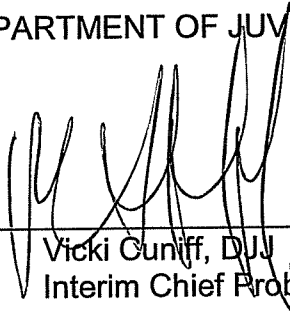
- d. Children with complex medical issues requiring DOH-CMS involvement who also require services from one or more of the agencies included in this agreement.
- e. Children who have committed sexual offenses against a sibling and who cannot return to their home after DJJ residential commitment.
- f. Children who are refused placement by their parent, or court ordered or legal guardian.
- g. Children who are adjudicated dependent and require services from one or more of the agencies included in this agreement.
- h. Children who are adjudicated dependent and are ready for release from DJJ custody (secure detention or residential commitment).
- i. Children who are presented to the juvenile assessment center by law enforcement, do not score for placement in secure detention and are not picked up by their parents or foster children who are picked up by DCF staff or community based care providers. These children need to be released by the Juvenile Assessment Center as soon as the decision to release is made by the DJJ detention screener.
- j. Foster children who are within 6 months of aging out of care and who have developmental disorders, significant health issues, or who are in the custody of DJJ.
- k. Any other child with a unique and challenging set of needs that may require the assistance of the Local Review Team.

The Challenge Group meets the second Wednesday of every month at the Leon Human Services Center Legal Conference Room in Tallahassee, Florida.

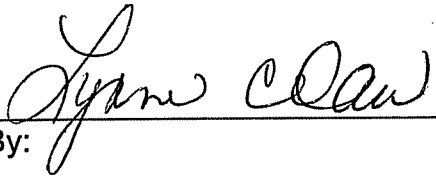
If child specific issues identified cannot be resolved through the Challenge Group meetings, the case shall be referred to the Headquarters Rapid Response Team or a member can contact executive leadership of his/her agency to assist in working with other agencies.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused their hand to be set to this Agreement written by their respective authorized officials thereto.

DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE


By: Vicki Cuniff, DJJ
Interim Chief Probation Officer

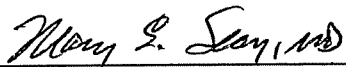
AGENCY FOR PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES


By:

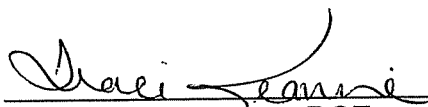
AGENCY FOR HEALTH CARE
ADMINISTRATION

By:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH


By: Mary E. Seay, M.D.
CMS Medical Director, Big Bend Region

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES


By: Traci Leavine, DCF
Circuit 2 Operations Administrator

DATE: 4-10-09