

Ministry of Children and Family Development

Background to Provincial Audit Summary Rating Sheet For Child and Family Service Case Practice Audits Completed Between January 1, 2006 – June 30, 2006

Between January 1 and June 30, 2006, 606 individual family service files in various offices across the province were audited to the Child and Family Service Standards. These audits were conducted by regional auditors in accordance with standardized methodologies, procedures and tools.

Recommendations were developed to address any practice issues identified in the audits. Recommendations are tracked and monitored for implementation by the Regional and Provincial Directors of Child Welfare.

During the time period covered by this provincial audit summary, the Ministry continued to support families to keep children at home safely; expanded planning options with families to provide increased opportunities for joint decision-making and increased involvement in care plans by family and community members; increased the use of non-court processes such as family conferencing, alternate dispute resolution processes and mediation to resolve child-protection issues; helped children in care to develop and maintain permanent family and other life-long relationships; and continued a greater use of out-of-care options.

The audit results highlighted areas for improvement, including concluding child protection investigations in a timely manner, reassessing a plan to keep a child safe and notifications of fatalities and critical injuries.

Concluding Child Protection Investigations in a Timely Manner

A major focus of the Ministry is to protect children and youth from abuse, neglect and harm. The purpose of a child protection investigation is to determine, in a timely manner, whether there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child needs protection. The information gathered informs decisions about what further actions are needed to ensure the child's ongoing safety and well-being, including possible court actions. The investigation is concluded when sufficient information is gathered and documented to make a plan to keep the child safe.

The relevant audit measures assess compliance with the procedural requirement to document and conclude an investigation within 30 calendar days. The results should not be interpreted to conclude that a child was left at risk because the procedural requirements were not met in some cases.

Reassessing a Plan to Keep a Child Safe

When a child is found to be in need of protection, the service standards emphasize the importance of involving the child's family and community in

developing a plan to keep the child safe and the ongoing review of the effectiveness of the plan.

The relevant audit measures assess compliance with the procedural requirement to document reassessments of and any adjustments to the plan necessary to keep the child safe. The results should not be interpreted to conclude that a child was left at risk because the procedural requirements were not met in some cases.

Notification of Fatalities and Critical Injuries

The relevant measures address whether or not the required reportable circumstance report was completed. They rely on a small sample that is not representative. The Ministry is aware of all fatalities of children in care and children who had received services in the previous 12 months. In addition to receiving reportable circumstance reports from the regions, the provincial office receives and checks reports on child deaths from the Coroner and reviews the monthly child death listing reports from Vital Statistics.

All audit measures that received non-compliance ratings were immediately brought to the attention of Team Leaders who ensured that outstanding work was completed.

Total # of Cases Audited: 606

	CRITICAL MEASURES	C		PC		NC		NA
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#
1	Screening and Best Approach to Service Delivery <i>CFS Service Standards #1 and #12</i>	539	89.1%			66	10.9%	
2	When a Child is at Immediate Risk of Harm <i>CFS Service Standard #11</i>	129	86.0%			21	14.0%	456
3	Assessing a Child Protection Report and Determining the most Appropriate Response <i>CFS Service Standard #12</i>	520	89.7%			60	10.3%	26
4	Family Development Response <i>CFS Service Standard #14</i>	0	0.0%			0	0.0%	606
5	Determining the Time Frame to Begin an Investigation <i>CFS Service Standard #16</i>	302	77.6%			87	22.4%	215
6	Conducting a Child Protection Investigation <i>CFS Service Standard #16</i>	256	67.7%			122	32.3%	227
7	Seeing and Interviewing the Child and Family <i>CFS Service Standard #16</i>	261	69.0%			117	31.0%	227
8	Concluding a Child Protection Investigation <i>CFS Service Standard #16</i>	273	73.2%			100	26.8%	232
9	Concluding a Child Protection Investigation in a Timely Manner <i>CFS Service Standard #16</i>	150	39.2%			233	60.8%	223
10	Developing and Implementing a Plan to Keep a Child Safe <i>CFS Standard #17</i>	158	66.7%			79	33.3%	369
11	Reassessing a Plan to Keep a Child Safe and Ending a Family Service Response <i>CFS Service Standards #17 and #20</i>	117	49.6%			119	50.4%	370
12	Notification of Facilities and Critical Injuries (Reportable Circumstances) <i>CFS Service Standard #24</i>	3	25.0%	1	8.3%	8	66.7%	593
13	Supervisory Approval	522	86.3%			83	13.7%	
	Total Applicable Indicators: 4,326 NA Ratings Not Included in Count	3,230	74.7%	1	0.0%	1,095	25.3%	3,544

= Number of applicable cases

% = Percent of total

Rating Definitions:

C Full Compliance to the standard

PC Partial Compliance: The intent of the standard is met but significant practice issues have not been addressed

NC Non-Compliance to the standard's criteria requirements

NA Not applicable to the standard being measured