

South Carolina Department of Social Services
Child Welfare Quality Assurance Review: Beaufort County
Summary Report

This summary report describes the results of the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) Beaufort County Quality Assurance Review, conducted July 14-18, 2014. The period under review was July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014.

DSS Child Welfare Quality Assurance Reviews are conducted using the *Onsite Review Instrument* (OSRI) finalized by the federal Administration for Children & Families (ACF) in July 2008. This instrument is used to review foster care and family preservation services cases. Twenty cases were reviewed including 10 foster care and 10 family preservation cases.

The OSRI is divided into three sections: safety, permanency, and child and family well-being. There are two safety outcomes, two permanency outcomes, and three well-being outcomes. Reviewers collect information on a number of *items* related to each of the outcomes through case file review, the use of the Child and Adult Protective Services System (CAPSS), and case related interviews. CAPSS is South Carolina’s Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), which contains all case related information. This information is detailed on the OSRI as support for rating selection.

The ratings for each *item* are combined to determine the rating for the outcome. The *items* are rated as *strength*, *area needing improvement*, or not applicable. Outcomes are rated as being substantially achieved, partially achieved, not achieved, or not applicable. Ratings for each of the outcomes are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Child Welfare QA Onsite Reviews – Ratings by Outcome

Outcome	Substantially Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
Safety 1 CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT	83% (10)	17% (2)	0% (0)
Safety 2 CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE	50% (10)	35% (7)	15% (3)
Permanency 1 CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS	60% (6)	40% (4)	0% (0)
Permanency 2 THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN	40% (4)	60% (6)	0% (0)
Well-Being 1 FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN’S NEEDS	25% (5)	50% (10)	25% (5)
Well-Being 2 CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	100% (7)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Well-Being 3 CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS	44% (7)	19% (3)	37% (6)

Results for outcomes and *items* are reported by the number of cases and the percentage of total cases given each rating. In addition, the percentage of *strengths* is calculated for each *item*. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *areas needing improvement*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the *percentage of strengths*. Appendix 1 provides more detailed analysis of issues impacting the ANI ratings.

SECTION I: REVIEW FINDINGS

SAFETY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Two *items* are included under Safety Outcome 1. Ratings for the two *items* are shown in Table 2.

Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether responses to all accepted child maltreatment reports received during the period under review were initiated and face-to-face contact with the child made, within the timeframes established by agency policies or State statute.

Table 2.

Rating	Item 1	Item 2
<i>Strength</i>	55% (11)	50% (10)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	5% (1)	5% (1)
<i>Not Applicable</i>	40% (8)	45% (9)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	91.7% (11)	90.9% (10)

Item 2: Repeat maltreatment

Purpose of Assessment: To determine if any child in the family experienced repeat maltreatment within a 6-month period.

SAFETY OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE

Two *items* are included under Safety Outcome 2. Ratings for the *items* are shown in Table 3.

Item 3: Services to family

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to provide services to the family to prevent children’s entry into foster care or re-entry after a reunification.

Table 3.

Rating	Item 3	Item 4
<i>Strength</i>	55% (11)	60% (12)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	20% (4)	40% (8)
<i>Not Applicable</i>	25% (5)	0% (0)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	73.3% (11)	60% (12)

Item 4: Risk assessment and safety management

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess and address the risk and safety concerns relating to the child(ren) in their own homes or while in foster care.

PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS

Six *items* are included under Permanency Outcome 1. Ratings for the *items* are shown in Table 4.

Item 5: Foster Care reentries

Purpose of Assessment: To assess whether children who entered foster care during the period under review were re-entering within 12 months of a prior foster care episode.

Item 6: Stability of foster care placement

Purpose of Assessment: To determine if the child in foster care is in a stable placement at the time of the onsite review and that any changes in placement that occurred during the period under review were in the best interest of the child and consistent with achieving the child’s permanency goal(s).

Item 7: Permanency goal for child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether appropriate permanency goals were established for the child in a timely manner.

Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether concerted efforts were made, or are being made, during the period under review, to achieve reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives in a timely manner.

Item 9: Adoption

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made, or are being made, to achieve a finalized adoption in a timely manner.

Item 10: Other planned permanent living arrangement (OPPLA)

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure:

- That the child is adequately prepared to make the transition from foster care to independent living (if it is expected that the child will remain in foster care until he or she reaches the age of majority or is emancipated).
- That the child, even though remaining in foster care, is in a “permanent” living arrangement with a foster parent or relative caregiver and that there is a commitment on the part of all parties involved that the child remain in that placement until he or she reaches the age of majority or is emancipated.
- That the child is in a long-term care facility and will remain in that facility until transition to an adult care facility.

Table 4.

Rating	Item 5	Item 6	Item 7	Item 8	Item 9	Item 10
Strength	25% (5)	40% (8)	45% (9)	30% (6)	5% (1)	0% (0)
Area needing improvement	0% (0)	10% (2)	5% (1)	5% (1)	15% (3)	0% (0)
Not Applicable	75% (15)	50% (10)	50% (10)	65% (13)	80% (16)	100% (20)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)
% Strengths	100% (5)	80% (8)	90% (9)	85.7% (6)	25% (1)	N/A

PERMANENCY OUTCOME 2: THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN

Six items are included under Permanency Outcome 2. Ratings for the items are shown in Table 5.

Item 11: Proximity of Foster Care Placement

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that the child’s foster care placement was close enough to the parent(s) to facilitate face-to-face contact between the child and the parent(s) while the child was in foster care.

Item 12: Placement with siblings

Purpose of Assessment: To determine if, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that siblings in foster care are placed together unless a separation was necessary to meet the needs of one of the siblings.

Item 13: Visiting with parents & siblings in foster care

Purpose of Assessment: To determine if, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation between a child in foster care and his or her mother, father, and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child’s relationship with these close family members.

Item 14: Preserving connections

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to maintain the child’s connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family, tribe, school, and friends.

Item 15: Relative placement

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to place the child with relatives when appropriate.

Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationships between the child in foster care and his or her mother and father or other primary caregiver(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than just arranging for visitation.

Table 5.

Rating	Item 11	Item 12	Item 13	Item 14	Item 15	Item 16
Strength	45% (9)	15% (3)	20% (4)	45% (9)	45% (9)	15% (3)
Area needing improvement	0% (0)	10% (2)	30% (6)	5% (1)	5% (1)	35% (7)
Not Applicable	55% (11)	75% (15)	50% (10)	50% (10)	50% (10)	50% (10)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)
% Strengths	100% (9)	60% (3)	40% (4)	90% (9)	90% (9)	30% (3)

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 1: FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN’S NEEDS

Four items are included under Well-Being Outcome 1. Ratings for the items are shown in Table 6.

Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, & foster parents

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess the needs of children, parents, and foster parents (both at the child’s entry into foster care [if the child entered during the period under review] or on an ongoing basis) to identify the services necessary to achieve case goals and adequately address the issues relevant to the agency’s involvement with the family, and provided the appropriate services.

Item 18: Child & family involvement in case planning

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made (or are being made) to involve parents and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

Item 19: Caseworker visits with the child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the child(ren) in the case are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child and promote achievement of case goals.

Item 20: Caseworker visits with parents

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the mothers and fathers of the children are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the children and promote achievement of case goals.

Table 6.

Rating	Item 17	Item 18	Item 19	Item 20
Strength	25% (5)	25% (5)	55% (11)	20% (4)
Area needing improvement	75% (15)	65% (13)	45% (9)	70% (14)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	10% (2)	0% (0)	10% (2)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)
% Strengths	25% (5)	27.8% (5)	55% (11)	22.2% (4)

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

One item is included under Well-Being Outcome 2. Ratings for the item are shown in Table 7.

Item 21: Educational needs of child

Purpose of Assessment: To assess whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess children’s educational needs at the initial contact with the child (if the case was opened during the period under review) or on an ongoing basis (if the case was opened before the period under review), and whether identified needs were appropriately addressed in case planning and case management activities.

Table 7.

Rating	Item 21
Strength	35% (7)
Area needing improvement	0% (0)
Not Applicable	65% (13)
Total	100% (20)
% Strengths	100% (7)

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

Two items are included under Well-Being Outcome 3. Ratings for the items are shown in Table 8.

Item 22: Physical health of child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the physical health needs of the child, including dental health needs.

Item 23: Mental/behavioral health of child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the mental/behavioral health needs of the child(ren).

Table 8.

Rating	Item 22	Item 23
<i>Strength</i>	30% (6)	40% (8)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	45% (9)	5% (1)
Not Applicable	25% (5)	55% (11)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	40% (6)	88.9% (8)

Table 9. Beaufort County *Percentage of Strengths* on 23 Quality Assurance Items Across Two Reviews

Item	August 2012 (PUR 8-1-2011 to 7-31-2012)	July 2014 (PUR 7-1-2013 to 6-30-2014)
1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations	33.3%	91.7%
2. Reoccurrence of Maltreatment	100%	90.9%
3. Services to Family	53.8%	73.3%
4. Risk Assessment and Safety Management	60%	60%
5. Foster Care Re-Entries	100%	100%
6. Stability of Foster Care Placement	70%	80%
7. Permanency Goal for Child	40%	90%
8. Reunification, Guardianship, or Perm. Placement with Relatives	75%	85.7%
9. Adoption	0%	25%
10. Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement	100%	N/A
11. Proximity of Foster Care Placement	100%	100%
12. Placement with Siblings	80%	60%
13. Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care	28.6%	40%
14. Preserving Connections	57.1%	90%
15. Relative Placement	60%	90%
16. Relationship of Child in Care with Parent	0%	30%
17. Needs and Services for Child, Parents, and Caregivers	25%	25%
18. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning	26.3%	27.8%
19. Worker Visits with Child	65%	55%
20. Worker Visits with Parents	13.3%	22.2%
21. Educational Needs of the Child	75%	100%
22. Physical Health of the Child	33.3%	40%
23. Mental Health of the Child	77.8%	88.9%

SECTION II: FOSTER HOME LICENSE REVIEW

As part of the Quality Assurance Review Process in Beaufort County, ten Foster Home Licenses were randomly selected from the list of all licenses issued for the county during the period under review. These licenses are reviewed using the *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Foster Home License Review Instruments*. There is one instrument for issuance of initial licenses and another instrument for the renewal of licenses. Each instrument contains a section of deficiencies, namely agency oversight, data entry, and qualitative issues. Deficiencies noted in this section may not invalidate the license but still require attention and correction by county management. Each instrument includes the appropriate agency, state, and federal requirements.

Initial License review criteria include the following *items*:

- Information related to firearms and ammunition in the house
- Pet vaccination information
- Background checks
- Convictions
- Required trainings
- Medical reports
- Fire inspections/re-inspections
- DHEC/Lead inspections
- Central registry check on alternative caregiver, if applicable
- A review of any conflicts noted between file documents and CAPSS
- Completion and issuance of the 1513 prior to the license being issued
- Guidelines regarding in-ground swimming pools

Renewal License review criteria include the following *items*:

- Convictions
- Training hours
- Medical reports if a new household member has been added or if there is a change in foster parent's medical status
- Fire inspections
- FBI checks, if applicable
- Guidelines regarding in-ground swimming pools
- 1513 completed prior to issuance of the license
- Any amendments to the license, if applicable
- Documentation regarding if there are more than five children in the home
- Annual firearms location update
- Information concerning the alternative caregivers
- Safety checks of alternative caregivers
- A review of child protective service allegations
- Pet vaccination information
- A review of any regulatory infractions
- A review of any conflicts noted between file documents and CAPSS

Possible *deficiencies* found in Initial and Renewal cases include:

- Updated home studies
- Discipline Agreements
- Fire drills
- Quarterly home visits
- Disaster Preparedness Plans
- Information concerning the alternative caregivers
- Alternative caregiver forms
- Applications
- Autobiography information
- Financial information
- Child factor's checklists
- Initial home assessment studies
- References

Areas noted as having occurred as required on the assessment are rated as *strengths*. Those *items* that were not met are rated as *area needing improvement (ANI)*. If the issue is not applicable, it is rated N/A.

Additionally, the percentage of *strengths* is also calculated for each *item*. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Results of the review are noted in Table 10.

Foster Home Licensing Findings for Beaufort County

Initial License Cases. Four foster care issuances for initial/standard licenses were reviewed. Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Two of the cases reviewed were rated as *ANI* because some of the licensing requirements were not met prior to authorization of the license issuance. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* for two cases include:

Background Checks:

- There was not documentation in the case file to verify that central registry, SLED, and/or sex offender registry checks for all applicable individuals were completed in a timely manner, or were completed at all. (2 cases)

Training:

- Documentation in the case file did not verify that the required 28 hours of training were completed. (2 cases)

Safety:

- Documentation could not be located to verify a lead inspection was completed on a home. (1 case)
- Documentation did not verify that a fire inspection was conducted. (1 case)
- Documentation did not support that there was a sufficient inquiry conducted to verify the presence of a swimming pool on the premises. (1 case)

Documentation:

- Documentation confirming that pet vaccinations were up-to-date was not located in the case file. (1 case)
- Medical statement documentation for all family members was not located in the file. (1 case)

Firearms:

- There was no documentation found to address the presence of a firearm or ammunition in the home. (1 case)

Renewal License Cases. Six cases reviewed were rated as *ANI* because some of the licensing requirements were not met prior to authorization of the license renewal. Information for ratings

Table 10. Summary of Ratings for Initial and Renewal Cases

Rating	Initial	Renewal
<i>Strength</i>	2 (50%)	0 (0%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	2 (50%)	6 (100%)
Total	4 (100%)	6 (100%)
% <i>Strengths</i>	2 (50%)	0 (0%)

was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Issues identified that led to the rating of ANI for six cases include:

Background Checks:

- There was not documentation in the case file to support that central registry, SLED, sex offender registry, and/or FBI checks were completed for all applicable individuals. (6 cases)

Documentation:

- Medical statement documentation for all family members was not located in the file. (3 cases)

Fire Safety:

- The case file did not include documentation supporting that all annual fire inspections for the re-licensure period were conducted. (2 cases)

Training:

- Training certificates for the re-licensure period were not located in the case file. (1 case)

Firearms:

- The case file did not include documentation indicating that the guns were stored separately from the ammunition. (1 case)

Deficiencies found in Initial and Renewal Cases. Deficiencies were noted for all ten files reviewed. Issues identified by the reviewers include:

Initial Case Deficiencies

Alternative Caregiver:

- Documentation did not include identification of an alternative caregiver/ babysitter. (4 cases)

Documentation:

- All signed Discipline Agreements were not located in the case file. (1 case)
- All signed Disaster Plans were not located in the case file. (1 case)
- Documentation did not provide verification that a Family Assessment was completed in a timely manner. (1 case)

Renewal Case Deficiencies

Alternative Caregiver:

- Documentation did not include identification of an alternative caregiver/ babysitter. (3 cases)

Fire Drills:

- Documentation verifying that fire drills were conducted within 24 hours of a child's placement was not located in the case file. (5 cases)
- Documentation verifying that quarterly fire drills were conducted while children were placed in foster homes was not located in the case file. (4 cases)

Documentation:

- The Licensing Application (1513) and license were not located in the case file which reflected the information in CAPSS. (1 case)
- The current license could not be located in the case file. (1 case)

Safety:

- Case file documentation did not provide verification that quarterly home visits were either timely or completed at all. (6 cases)
- All Disaster Plans were not located in the case file. (2 cases)

SECTION III: CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICE NO ACTION REPORTS REVIEW

A review of ten no action reports was completed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed. The reports were randomly selected from the list of reports on which no action was taken by the county during the period under review. The *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Review No Action Reports Instrument* was used to conduct the review. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and fourteen questions regarding the no action decisions and processes (see Table 11).

Table 11. Summary of Item Ratings for No Action Reports Review

	Yes	No	NA	Total
1. Illegal substance use alleged AND reason for safety threatened with harm	0	10	0	10
2. Use of CAPSS and/or other systems for prior involvement	7	3	0	10
3a. Did the intake worker thoroughly complete the Sufficiency tab in CAPSS	8	2	0	10
3b. If question 1 or 2 is answered no, did worker provide explanation	2	1	7	10
4a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	8	2	0	10
4b. If yes to maltreatment, did worker provide an explanation	0	0	10	10
4c. If yes to maltreatment, did supervisor provide additional information	1	0	9	10
5. Safety factors documented on Intake Assessment not discovered by intake worker	2	8	0	10
6. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	8	0	2	10
7a. Risk Matrix results included statements contradictory to allegation	8	0	2	10
7b. Risk Matrix results failed to include all statements that support allegation	7	1	2	10
8. Contact with necessary collaterals prior to screen-out decision	1	4	5	10
9. Another intake referral on same perpetrator and/or child within 12 months	1	9	0	10
10. Intake Supervisor ensured consultation with another supervisory-level authority	0	1	9	10

*Note: A single case may have more than one issue identified.

The percentage of *strengths* is also calculated for the cases reviewed. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Findings of these reviews are noted in Table 12.

Table 12. Summary of Ratings for No Action Reports Review

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	0 (0%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	10 (100%)
Total	10 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	0 (0%)

In ten cases, pieces of agency policy and procedures were not followed. Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* include:

- Statements documented in the Risk Matrix were contradictory to documentation of the allegations, with no reconciliation of facts documented. (8 cases)
- Some of the areas in the Risk Matrix and/or other documentation did not include statements to address all documented allegations made by the reporter, with no reconciliation of facts documented. (4 cases)
- There was no documentation to verify that the agency made, or attempted to make, any direct contact with all indicated and appropriate collateral contacts. (4 cases)

- Case documentation verified that there was a documented CDV report on file from the local law enforcement office regarding fighting between the mother and father in the presence of the child, but the agency failed to include documentation of violence around the child in the intake assessment under safety factors. (1 case)
- Case documentation verified that the four year old child had a bruise on the bridge of their nose and their right eye was bruised and swollen and that there were three small bruises on her forehead, but the agency failed to include documentation of injuries to the child in the intake assessment under safety factors. (1 case)
- Documentation could not be located to support that the NO response corresponded to the documented allegation per the Intake assessment. (1 case)
- The NO response indicated in the Maltreatment Tab in CAPSS did not correspond to the documented allegation. (1 case)
- Documentation did not verify that the agency researched CAPSS and/or other agency systems for prior CPS involvement. (2 cases)
- There were not documented efforts to verify that the agency researched CAPSS for prior family history with the agency. (1 case)
- All prior intakes of a family were not documented in the Records Check Tab documentation of the intake. (1 case)
- The Sufficiency Tab documentation was not thoroughly completed. (1 case)

SECTION IV: CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES UNFOUNDED REPORTS REVIEW

Five unfounded reports were reviewed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed. The five unfounded reports were randomly selected from the list of all reports unfounded by the county during the period under review. The review was conducted using the *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Review Unfounded Report Instrument*. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and items regarding three primary areas (see Table 13):

- Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment,
- Repeat maltreatment, and
- Risk assessment and safety management.

Table 13. Summary of Item Ratings for Unfounded Review

1A. Investigation not initiated in accordance with timeframes and requirements. Total for five cases: 0				
1B. Face-to-face contact not made in accordance with timeframes and requirements. Total for five cases: 1				
	Yes	No	N/A	Total
1C. Delays in investigation initiation or face-to-face contact beyond control of agency	0	1	4	5
2A. At least one substantiated or indicated maltreatment report	1	4	0	5
2B. One substantiated or indicated maltreatment report within six months before or after	0	1	4	5
2C. Repeat maltreatment involving the same or similar circumstances	0	1	4	5
3A. Initial assessment of risk to the children and family in the home	3	2	0	5
3B. Ongoing assessment(s) of risk to the children and family in the home	2	3	0	5
3C. Safety concerns that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency	3	2	0	5

*Note: A single case may have more than one issue identified.

The percentage of *strengths* is calculated for each decision to unfound. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Findings of these reviews are noted in Table 14.

Table 14. Summary of Ratings for Unfounded Review

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	2 (40%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	3 (60%)
Total	5 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	2 (40%)

Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Reasons three unfounded cases reviewed violated pieces of agency policy and procedures include:

- Case file documentation did not verify that sufficient ongoing risk and safety assessments with children in their home were provided by the agency. (3 cases)
- There was no documentation to support that face-to-face contacts with all appropriate family members were made in a timely manner or at all. (3 cases)
- Documentation did not verify that all safety concerns were adequately addressed. (2 cases)
- Documentation did not verify that all appropriate referrals for services, such as BabyNet, were made. (2 cases)

- Documentation did not verify that the agency made contact or followed-up with all appropriate collateral contacts. (2 cases)
- There was no documentation to indicate that background checks, to include SLED, sex offender, and Central Registry checks, were completed for all appropriate family members. (2 cases)
- Documentation did not verify that appropriate follow-up occurred with service agencies or the family. (2 cases)
- The agency documented that there was no prior CPS history for the family; however, there was documentation of a previous unfounded case for the child. (1 case)
- Documentation did not verify that the agency followed through with all of the recommendations set forth in the family staffing, such as implementing a safety plan and following-up with the minor child's school. (1 case)
- There was no documentation to indicate that the minor child was interviewed at all regarding the reason for agency involvement or to assess her for marks and bruises at the time of the initial contact in the Domestic Violence shelter. (1 case)
- Documentation did not verify that the home of a minor child was assessed. (1 case)
- Documentation did not verify that the agency made a referral to Babynet. (1 case)

SECTION V: FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES REVIEW

A review of five allegations was completed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed for reports referred to Family Support Services (FSS). The reports were randomly selected from the list of reports referred to a Community-Based Prevention Services Provider by the county during the period under review. The *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Review Community-Based Prevention Services Assessment Instrument* was used to conduct the review. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and sixteen questions regarding the referral to the (FSS) Community-Based Prevention Services Provider and processes (see Table 15).

Table 15. Summary of Item Ratings for Assessment

	Yes	No	NA	Total
1. Illegal substance use alleged AND reason for safety threatened with harm	0	5	0	5
2. Use of CAPSS and/or other systems for prior involvement	4	1	0	5
3a. Did the intake worker thoroughly complete the Sufficiency tab in CAPSS	5	0	0	5
3b. If question 1 or 2 is answered no, did worker provide explanation	0	0	5	5
4a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	4	1	0	5
4b. If yes to maltreatment, did worker provide an explanation	0	0	5	5
4c. If yes to maltreatment, did supervisor provide additional information	1	0	4	5
5. Existing Safety Factors not seen by intake worker or documented	4	1	0	5
6. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	4	0	1	5
7a. Results of SCDSS Risk Matrix contradicted allegation made by reporter	4	0	1	5
7b. Did results fail to include statements to support allegations made by reporter	2	2	1	5
8. Agency contacted collaterals for Community-Based Prevention Services	1	2	2	5
9. Additional intake referral made on same perpetrator AND/OR child	1	4	0	5
10. Family received community-based prevention services	0	1	4	5
11. Community-based provider entered an account in CAPSS	5	0	0	5
12. Family accepted services from Community-Based Prevention Services Provider	1	4	0	5

*Note: A single case may have more than one issue identified.

The percentage of *strengths* is also calculated for the cases reviewed. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Findings of these reviews are noted in Table 16.

Table 16. Summary of Ratings for FSS Review

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	1 (20%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	4 (80%)
Total	5 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	1 (20%)

Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. In four cases reviewed, pieces of agency policy and procedures were not followed. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* include:

- Statements documented in the Risk Matrix were contradictory to the documentation of the allegations, with no reconciliation of facts documented. (4 cases)
- Case documentation indicated that the child had suicidal thoughts, but the agency failed to include documentation of the mental health issue in the intake assessment under safety factors. (1 case)
- Case documentation indicated that the father had a history of violence with the child, but the agency failed to include documentation of the domestic violence issues in the intake assessment under safety factors. (1 case)
- Case documentation indicated that the caregiver was found driving legally intoxicated or incapacitated by substance abuse, but the agency failed to include documentation of the caregiver's impairment due to alcohol abuse in the intake assessment. (1 case)
- Case documentation indicated that the family had garbage piled in the hot water heater closet, but the agency failed to include documentation of the child's physical living conditions being hazardous in the intake assessment under safety factors. (1 case)
- Some of the areas in the Risk Matrix did not include statements to address all documented allegations made by the reporter, with no reconciliation of facts documented. (2 cases)
- Documentation did not verify that all indicated and appropriate collateral contacts were made. (1 case)
- Documentation did not support that the agency researched CAPSS and/or other agency systems for prior CPS involvement. (1 case)

SECTION VI: VOLUNTARY CASE MANAGEMENT REVIEW

A review of five allegations was completed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed for reports referred to Voluntary Case Management (VCM). The reports were randomly selected from the list of reports referred to a Community-Based Prevention Services Provider by the county during the period under review. The *South Carolina Department of Social Services Quality Assurance Review Community-Based Prevention Services Assessment Instrument* was used to conduct the review. This instrument includes a description of the allegation and sixteen questions regarding the referral to the VCM Community-Based Prevention Services Provider and processes (see Table 17).

Table 17. Summary of Item Ratings for Assessment

	Yes	No	NA	Total
1. Illegal substance use alleged AND reason for safety threatened with harm	1	4	0	5
2. Use of CAPSS and/or other systems for prior involvement	4	1	0	5
3a. Did the intake worker thoroughly complete the Sufficiency tab in CAPSS	4	1	0	5
3b. If question 1 or 2 is answered no, did worker provide explanation	0	1	4	5
4a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	3	2	0	5
4b. If yes to maltreatment, did worker provide an explanation	0	0	5	5
4c. If yes to maltreatment, did supervisor provide additional information	1	0	4	5
5. Existing Safety Factors not seen by intake worker or documented	2	3	0	5
6. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	5	0	0	5
7a. Results of SCDSS Risk Matrix contradicted allegation made by reporter	5	0	0	5
7b. Did results fail to include statements to support allegations made by reporter	5	0	0	5
8. Agency contacted collaterals for Community-Based Prevention Services	0	2	3	5
9. Additional intake referral made on same perpetrator AND/OR child	2	3	0	5
10. Family received community-based prevention services	1	1	3	5
11. Community-based provider entered an account in CAPSS	5	0	0	5
12. Family accepted services from Community-Based Prevention Services Provider	3	2	0	5

*Note: A single case may have more than one issue identified.

The percentage of *strengths* is also calculated for the cases reviewed. This percentage is calculated by adding the number of *strengths* and the number of *ANIs*. The number of *strengths* is divided into this total to determine the percentage of *strengths*. Findings of these reviews are noted in Table 18.

Table 18. Summary of Ratings for VCM Review

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	0 (0%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	5 (100%)
Total	5 (100%)
% <i>Strengths</i>	0 (0%)

Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. In five cases reviewed pieces of agency policy and procedures were not followed. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* include:

- Statements documented in the Risk Matrix were contradictory to the documentation of the allegations, with no reconciliation of facts documented. (5 cases)
- Some of the areas in the Risk Matrix did not include statements to address all documented allegations made by the reporter, with no reconciliation of facts documented. (5 cases)
- Case documentation indicated that the parent's used illegal substances while driving vehicles, but the agency failed to include this information in the Maltreatment Tab documentation. (1 case)
- Case documentation indicated that the parent's failed to provide adequate food, clothing, and education for the child, but the agency failed to include this information in the Maltreatment Tab documentation. (1 case)
- Case documentation verified that the child had an unreasonable delay in obtaining medical services for outside of school behaviors, but the agency failed to document the need in the intake assessment under safety factors. (1 case)
- Documentation did not verify that the agency thoroughly researched CAPSS and/or other agency systems for prior CPS involvement. (1 case)
- The agency failed to document the reason why the alleged perpetrator was unknown in the Sufficiency Tab documentation. (1 case)
- Documentation did not verify that all indicated and appropriate collateral contacts were made. (1 case)

APPENDIX 1. SUMMARY OF ISSUES CAUSING AN *AREA NEEDING IMPROVEMENT* (ANI) RATING FOR APPLICABLE CASES

The following is an overview of strengths and weaknesses that were found in the cases for Beaufort County conducted July 14-18, 2014. The period under review was July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014.

Positives:

Items 5 (Foster Care reentries), 11 (Proximity of Foster Care Placement), and 21 (Educational needs of child) were identified as *strengths* of the agency; all applicable cases reviewed were rated as *strength* with no *area needing improvement* (ANI).

Concerns:

The following examines the *items* that had the highest ANI ratings.

- *Item 9 (Adoption)* – 3 of 4 (75%) applicable cases rated as ANI
 - The agency did not make concerted efforts to achieve adoption in a timely manner. (3 cases) Cases that provided specific reasoning noted the following issues:
 - The Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) Complaint was not filed for 39 months following the child’s entry into foster care. (1 case)
 - There was no documentation to support that the agency made any recruitment efforts in order to achieve adoption in a timely manner. (1 case)
 - A child had been in care for 23 months and the adoption was pending because the agency had not received a completed adoption home study. (1 case)

- *Item 13 (Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care)* – 6 of 10 (60%) applicable cases rated as ANI
 - The frequency of the visits with the following family members was insufficient: (4 cases)
 - Father (4 cases)
 - Mother (2 cases)
 - Siblings (1 case)
 - The quality of the visits with the following family members was insufficient: (3 cases)
 - Father (2 cases)

- Mother (1 case)
 - Diligent searches were not conducted when the whereabouts of the following individuals were unknown: (2 cases)
 - Father (2 cases)
 - Mother (1 case)
- *Item 16 (Relationship of child in care with parents) – 7 of 10 (70%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - The agency did not make concerted efforts to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationships between the child and the family. (3 cases)
Specific events that parents were not invited to included:
 - Medical appointments (2 cases)
 - Dental appointments (1 case)
 - Therapy sessions (1 case)
 - Educational events (1 case)
 - Diligent searches were not conducted when the whereabouts of the following individuals were unknown: (3 cases)
 - Father (3 cases)
 - Mother (1 case)
- *Item 17 (Needs and services of child, parents, & foster parents) – 15 of 20 (75%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - Assessments were not conducted for the following individuals during the PUR: (13 cases)
 - Father(s) (12 cases)
 - Mother (7 cases)
 - Child(ren) (2 cases)
 - Services were not provided for the following individuals during the PUR: (2 cases)
 - Mother (2 cases)
 - Father (1 case)
 - A diligent search was not conducted when the whereabouts of a father were unknown. (1 case)
- *Item 18 (Child & family involvement in case planning) – 13 of 18 (72.2%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - The agency failed to make concerted efforts to involve the following people in the case planning process: (13 cases)
 - Father(s) (10 cases)

- Mother (7 cases)
 - Diligent searches were not conducted when the whereabouts of fathers were unknown. (3 cases)
- *Item 20 (Caseworker visits with parents)* – 14 of 18 (77.8%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
 - The frequency of the visitation between the following family members was insufficient: (14 cases)
 - Father (13 cases)
 - Mother (8 cases)
 - The quality of visitation was insufficient. (7 cases)
 - The quality of visitation was lacking with the following individuals:
 - Mother (5 cases)
 - Father (4 cases)
 - Reasons that visitation lacked quality included:
 - The environment was not conducive to engaging in quality visitation. (5 cases)
 - Visits were not focused on engaging parents in case planning, identification of needs and services, and/or goal achievement. (2 cases)
 - Diligent searches were not conducted when the whereabouts of the following family members were unknown: (4 cases)
 - Father (3 cases)
 - Mother (1 case)
- *Item 22 (Physical health of child)* – 9 of 15 (60%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
 - The following records were not located in the case file: (5 cases)
 - Dental (4 cases)
 - Medical (4 cases)
 - Referrals for BabyNet were not made, per agency policy. (3 cases)
 - Medical/physical health assessments were not conducted when indicated and appropriate. (2 cases)
 - Dental assessments were not conducted when indicated and appropriate. (2 cases)
 - There was no documentation of direct contact with all appropriate health care collaterals to ensure the health and well-being of child(ren). (2 cases)
 - In one case, the child had been under the supervision of a doctor for seizures.

- The agency failed to provide the appropriate medical services for the target child. (2 cases)