

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

This summary report describes the results of the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) Calhoun County Quality Assurance Review, conducted August 4 – 8, 2014. The period under review was August 1, 2013 to July 31, 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. Fifteen cases were reviewed including 5 foster care and 10 family preservation cases. The five foster care cases were all of the cases that met the eligibility requirements during the period under review.

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	67% (6)	33% (3)	0% (0)
Safety 2 CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE	60% (9)	7% (1)	33% (5)
Permanency 1 CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS	40% (2)	20% (1)	40% (2)
Permanency 2 THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN	40% (2)	40% (2)	20% (1)
Well-Being 1 FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN’S NEEDS	27% (4)	60% (9)	13% (2)
Well-Being 2 CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	100% (6)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Well-Being 3 CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS	59% (7)	33% (4)	8% (1)

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>	47% (7)	53% (8)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	13% (2)	7% (1)
<i>Not Applicable</i>	40% (6)	40% (6)
Total	100% (15)	100% (15)
<i>% Strengths</i>	77.8% (7)	88.9% (8)

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>	60% (9)	60% (9)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	13% (2)	40% (6)
<i>Not Applicable</i>	27% (4)	0% (0)
Total	100% (15)	100% (15)
<i>% Strengths</i>	81.8% (9)	60% (9)

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	7% (1)	13% (2)	13% (2)	7% (1)	0% (0)	13% (2)
Area needing improvement	0% (0)	20% (3)	20% (3)	7% (1)	13% (2)	0% (0)
Not Applicable	93% (14)	67% (10)	67% (10)	86% (13)	87% (13)	87% (13)
Total	100% (15)	100% (15)	100% (15)	100% (15)	100% (15)	100% (15)
% Strengths	100% (1)	40% (2)	40% (2)	50% (1)	0% (0)	100%(2)

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	20% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	27% (4)	13% (2)	7% (1)
Area needing improvement	7% (1)	7% (1)	27% (4)	7% (1)	20% (3)	20% (3)
Not Applicable	73% (11)	93% (14)	73% (11)	66% (10)	67% (10)	73% (11)
Total	100% (15)	100% (15)	100% (15)	100% (15)	100% (15)	100% (15)
% Strengths	75% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	80% (4)	40% (2)	25% (1)

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	47% (7)	47% (7)	73% (11)	13% (2)
Area needing improvement	53% (8)	53% (8)	27% (4)	80% (12)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	7% (1)
Total	100% (15)	100% (15)	100% (15)	100% (15)
% Strengths	46.7% (7)	46.7% (7)	73.3% (11)	14.3% (2)

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	40% (6)
Area needing improvement	0% (0)
Not Applicable	60% (9)
Total	100% (15)
% Strengths	100% (6)

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>	40% (6)	60% (9)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	20% (3)	13% (2)
Not Applicable	40% (6)	27% (4)
Total	100% (15)	100% (15)
<i>% Strengths</i>	66.7% (6)	81.8% (9)

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

Item	July 2013 (PUR 7-1-2012 to 6-31-2013)	August 2014 (PUR 8-1-2013 to 7-31-2014)
1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations	100%	77.8%
2. Reoccurrence of Maltreatment	100%	88.9%
3. Services to Family	81.8%	81.8%
4. Risk Assessment and Safety Management	52.9%	60%
5. Foster Care Re-Entries	100%	100%
6. Stability of Foster Care Placement	70%	40%
7. Permanency Goal for Child	50%	40%
8. Reunification, Guardianship, or Perm. Placement with Relatives	33.3%	50%
9. Adoption	0%	0%
10. Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement	100%	100%
11. Proximity of Foster Care Placement	100%	75%
12. Placement with Siblings	100%	0%
13. Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care	42.9%	0%
14. Preserving Connections	70%	80%
15. Relative Placement	33.3%	40%
16. Relationship of Child in Care with Parent	42.9%	25%
17. Needs and Services for Child, Parents, and Caregivers	47.1%	46.7%
18. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning	52.9%	46.7%
19. Worker Visits with Child	94.1%	73.3%
20. Worker Visits with Parents	28.6%	14.3%
21. Educational Needs of the Child	63.6%	100%
22. Physical Health of the Child	46.2%	66.7%
23. Mental Health of the Child	92.9%	81.8%

SECTION II: FOSTER HOME LICENSE REVIEW

As part of the Quality Assurance Review Process in Calhoun County, five Foster Home Licenses were 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
- 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 Calhoun County

Note: These services are contracted to a private provider, who is responsible for the ratings instead of the county DSS office. These are included in the county report because the QA system is the present system for evaluating compliance for Foster Home License requirements with the samples pulled via the county in which the home is located to assure that all homes have the same opportunity to be in the random sampling.

Initial License Cases. Two foster care issuances for initial/standard license were reviewed. Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. One of the cases reviewed was 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 the one case include:

Safety:

- Documentation verifying whether or not the foster parent had an in-ground swimming pool was not located. (1 case)

Firearms:

- Documentation verifying that ammunition was stored in a separate, locked location away from the firearms was not in the case file. (1 case)

Renewal License Cases. Three 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 was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* for three cases include:

Table 10. Summary of Ratings for Initial and Renewal Cases

Rating	Initial	Renewal
<i>Strength</i>	1 (50%)	0 (0%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	1 (50%)	3 (100%)
Total	2 (100%)	3 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	1 (50%)	0 (0%)

Background Checks:

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

Medical Records:

- Medical statement documentation for a family member was not located in the file. (1 case)

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

Initial Case Deficiencies

Documentation:

- The Child Factor's Checklist could not be located in the file to verify completion. (1 case)
- A third reference letter for the Foster/Adoption Family Assessment was not located. (1 case)

Renewal Case Deficiencies

Fire Drills:

- Documentation verifying that fire drills were conducted within 24 hours of a child's placement was not located in the case file. (3 cases)
- Documentation verifying that quarterly fire drills were conducted while children were placed in foster homes was not located in the case file. (3 cases)

Safety:

- Documentation did not provide verification that quarterly home visits were completed in a timely manner or at all. (1 case)
- All Discipline Agreements were not located in the case file and/or were not dated. (3 cases)
- All Disaster Preparedness Plans were not located in the case file. (3 cases)

SECTION III: CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICE NO ACTION REPORTS REVIEW

A review of eight no action reports was completed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed. The reports were all of the 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	8	0	8
2. Use of CAPSS and/or other systems for prior involvement	6	2	0	8
3a. Did the intake worker thoroughly complete the Sufficiency tab in CAPSS	8	0	0	8
3b. If question 1 or 2 is answered no, did worker provide explanation	3	0	5	8
4a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	6	1	1	8
4b. If yes to maltreatment, did worker provide an explanation	1	0	7	8
4c. If yes to maltreatment, did supervisor provide additional information	1	0	7	8
5. Safety factors documented on Intake Assessment not discovered by intake worker	0	5	3	8
6. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	5	0	3	8
7a. Risk Matrix results included statements contradictory to allegation	4	1	3	8
7b. Risk Matrix results failed to include all statements that support allegation	4	1	3	8
8. Contact with necessary collaterals prior to screen-out decision	3	2	3	8
9. Another intake referral on same perpetrator and/or child within 12 months	1	7	0	8
10. Intake Supervisor ensured consultation with another supervisory-level authority	0	0	8	8

*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.

In five 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. (4 cases)
- Some of the areas in the Risk Matrix and/or other documentation did not include statements to verify all documented allegations made by the reporter, with no reconciliation of facts documented. (3 cases)
- There was no documentation to verify that the agency made, or attempted to make, contact with all indicated and appropriate collateral contacts. (2 cases)

Table 12. Summary of Ratings for No Action Reports Review

Rating	Were agency policy and procedures followed?
<i>Strength</i>	3 (37.5%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	5 (62.5%)
Total	8 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	3 (37.5%)

- Case documentation indicated that the child was at substantial risk for abuse, but the agency failed to include the information in the Maltreatment Tab documentation. (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

	Yes	No	N/A	Total
1A. Investigation not initiated in accordance with timeframes and requirements	4	1	0	5
1B. Face-to-face contact not made in accordance with timeframes and requirements	5	0	0	5
1C. Delays in investigation initiation or face-to-face contact beyond control of agency	0	5	0	5
2A. At least one substantiated or indicated maltreatment report	0	5	0	5
2B. One substantiated or indicated maltreatment report within six months before or after	0	0	5	5
2C. Repeat maltreatment involving the same or similar circumstances	0	0	5	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	0	5	0	5
3C. Safety concerns that were not adequately or appropriately addressed by the agency	5	0	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>	4 (80%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	1 (20%)
Total	5 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	4 (80%)

Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Reasons that one unfounded case 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. (1 case)
- Case documentation regarding a home visit did not include information specific to the physical environment of the home as it is related to the risk and safety of the child. (1 case)
- There was no documentation to verify that the agency followed up with the counselor's recommendations and the mother's need for school advocacy before unbounding the case. (1 case)

SECTION V: FAMILY STRENGTHENING SERVICES REVIEW

There were no available cases to review during the PUR.

SECTION VI: VOLUNTARY CASE MANAGEMENT REVIEW

There were no available cases to review during the PUR.

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 Calhoun County conducted August 5, 2014. The period under review was August 1, 2013 to July 31, 2014.

Positives:

5 (*Foster Care reentries*), 10 (*Other planned permanent living arrangement*), 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 6 (Stability of foster care cases)* – 3 of 5 (60%) applicable cases rated as ANI
 - The target child experienced multiple placements during the PUR. (2 cases) Cases that provided a specific number of placements included the following totals:
 - Four placements (1 case)
 - Nine placements (1 case)
 - The agency did not assess the appropriateness of the placement following safety concerns. (2 cases)
 - The agency did not make concerted efforts to assess the target child’s safety concerns regarding the placement in a timely manner. (1 case)

- *Item 7 (Permanency goal for child)* – 3 of 5 (60%) applicable cases rated as ANI
 - The permanency goal was not achieved in a timely manner. (2 cases) Cases that provided specific reasoning noted the following issues:
 - The agency did not file for TPR in a timely manner or at all. (2 cases)
 - The permanency goal was not appropriate for the target child. (2 cases)

- *Item 8 (Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives)* – 1 of 2 (50%) applicable cases rated as ANI
 - The agency did not make concerted efforts to achieve the goal of reunification in a timely manner.
 - The goal of reunification was not appropriate for the target child.

- *Item 9 (Adoption) – 2 of 2 (100%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - The agency did not make concerted efforts to achieve adoption in a timely manner. (2 cases) A case that provided specific reasoning noted the following issue:
 - The agency did not file or complete a TPR in a timely manner. (1 case)

- *Item 12 (Placement with siblings) – 1 of 1 (100%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - The target child was not placed with all of his siblings.

- *Item 13 (Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care) – 4 of 4 (100%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - The frequency of the visits with the following family members was not sufficient: (4 cases)
 - Father (4 cases)
 - Mother (3 cases)
 - Step-father (1 case)
 - Siblings (1 case)
 - The quality of the visits between the target child’s mother and stepfather was insufficient, as the parents could not focus on the target child during visits with the siblings present. (1 case)

- *Item 15 (Relative placement) – 3 of 5 (60%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - The agency failed to make concerted efforts to identify, locate, and evaluate relatives as potential placements for the target child. (3 cases) Potential placements included:
 - Maternal and paternal relatives (3 cases)
 - Adoptive family members (1 case)
 - Father (1 case)

- *Item 16 (Relationship of child in care with parents) – 3 of 4 (75%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - The agency did not make concerted efforts to promote, support, and maintain positive relationships between the child and family. (3 cases) Specific relationships affected include:
 - Child and mother (3 cases)
 - Child and father (2 cases)
 - Child and stepfather (1 case)

- A follow-up diligent search was not conducted within six months of the first search when the whereabouts of the father were unknown, which prevented the father from being invited to medical and mental health appointment. (1 case)
- *Item 17 (Needs and services of child, parents, & foster parents) – 8 of 15 (53.3%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - Assessments were not conducted for the following individuals: (6 cases)
 - Father(s) (6 cases)
 - Mother (3 cases)
 - Foster parents (2 cases)
 - Step-father (1 case)
 - Concerted efforts were not made to provide services for the following individuals: (5 cases)
 - Mother (3 cases)
 - Step-father (1 case)
 - Target child (1 case)
 - Father (1 case)
 - Foster parents (1 case)
- *Item 18 (Child & family involvement in case planning) – 8 of 15 (53.3%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - Concerted efforts were not made to involve the following people in the case planning efforts: (7 cases)
 - Father(s) (7 cases)
 - Mother (3 cases)
 - Step-father (1 case)
 - The agency failed to follow-up with a diligent search for a father in order to include him in the case planning process. (1 case)
 - A diligent search was not conducted when the whereabouts of the father(s) were unknown to include them in the case planning process. (2 cases)
- *Item 20 (Caseworker visits with parents) – 12 of 14 (85.7%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
 - The frequency of visits between the agency and the following individuals was insufficient: (12 cases)
 - Father(s) (8 cases)
 - Mother (7 cases)
 - Step-father (2 case)

- Alternative Caregiver (1 case)
- The quality of visits between the agency and the following individuals was not sufficient: (4 cases)
 - Mother (3 cases)
 - Father (3 cases)
- The agency failed to follow-up with a diligent search for a father in order to initiate visits. (1 case)
- A diligent search was not conducted when the whereabouts of the father were unknown, which prevented visits with the parents. (2 cases)