

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

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This summary report describes the results of the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) Sumter County Quality Assurance Review, conducted October 20-24, 2014. The period under review was October 1, 2013- September 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 ten foster care and ten 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**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Substantially Achieved</b>	<b>Partially Achieved</b>	<b>Not Achieved</b>
<b>Safety 1</b> CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT	70% (9)	30% (4)	0% (0)
<b>Safety 2</b> CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE	35% (7)	5% (1)	60% (12)
<b>Permanency 1</b> CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS	30% (3)	60% (6)	10% (1)
<b>Permanency 2</b> THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN	30% (3)	40% (4)	30% (3)
<b>Well-Being 1</b> FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN’S NEEDS	20% (4)	45% (9)	35% (7)
<b>Well-Being 2</b> CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS	57% (4)	29% (2)	14% (1)
<b>Well-Being 3</b> CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS	56% (9)	31% (5)	13% (2)

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>	50% (10)	60% (12)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	15% (3)	5% (1)
<i>Not Applicable</i>	35% (7)	35% (7)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>76.9% (10)</b>	<b>92.3% (12)</b>

**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>	20% (4)	35% (7)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	60% (12)	65% (13)
<i>Not Applicable</i>	20% (4)	0% (0)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>25% (4)</b>	<b>35% (7)</b>

**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
<i>Strength</i>	30% (6)	30% (6)	30% (6)	10% (2)	10% (2)	5% (1)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	0% (0)	20% (4)	20% (4)	20% (4)	25% (5)	5% (1)
Not Applicable	70% (14)	50% (10)	50% (10)	70% (14)	65% (13)	90% (18)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>100% (6)</b>	<b>60% (6)</b>	<b>60% (6)</b>	<b>33.3% (2)</b>	<b>28.6% (2)</b>	<b>50% (1)</b>

**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% (4)	10% (2)	15% (3)	35% (7)	20% (4)	10% (2)
Area needing improvement	15% (3)	10% (2)	20% (4)	15% (3)	15% (3)	25% (5)
Not Applicable	65% (13)	80% (16)	65% (13)	50% (10)	65% (13)	65% (13)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)
% Strengths	<b>57.1% (4)</b>	<b>50% (2)</b>	<b>42.9% (3)</b>	<b>70% (7)</b>	<b>57.1% (4)</b>	<b>28.6% (2)</b>

**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)	20% (4)	60% (12)	5% (1)
Area needing improvement	75% (15)	75% (15)	40% (8)	75% (15)
Not Applicable	0% (0)	5% (1)	0% (0)	20% (4)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)	100% (20)
% Strengths	<b>25% (5)</b>	<b>21.1% (4)</b>	<b>60% (12)</b>	<b>6.3% (1)</b>

**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	20% (4)
Area needing improvement	15% (3)
Not Applicable	65% (13)
Total	100% (20)
% Strengths	<b>57.1% (4)</b>

**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.**

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Item 22</b>	<b>Item 23</b>
<i>Strength</i>	50% (10)	25% (5)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	20% (4)	20% (4)
Not Applicable	30% (6)	55% (11)
Total	100% (20)	100% (20)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>71.4% (10)</b>	<b>55.6% (5)</b>

**Table 9. Sumter County *Percentage of Strengths* on 23 Quality Assurance Items Across 2 Reviews**

Item	May 2013 (PUR 5-1-2012 - 3-31-2013)	October 2014 (PUR 10-1-2013 - 9-30-2014)
1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations	28.6%	76.9%
2. Reoccurrence of Maltreatment	92.3%	92.3%
3. Services to Family	23.1%	25%
4. Risk Assessment and Safety Management	60%	35%
5. Foster Care Re-Entries	100%	100%
6. Stability of Foster Care Placement	100%	60%
7. Permanency Goal for Child	70%	60%
8. Reunification, Guardianship, or Perm. Placement with Relatives	50%	33.3%
9. Adoption	83.3%	28.6%
10. Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement	100%	50%
11. Proximity of Foster Care Placement	85.7%	57.1%
12. Placement with Siblings	50%	50%
13. Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Foster Care	57.1%	42.9%
14. Preserving Connections	85.7%	70%
15. Relative Placement	87.5%	57.1%
16. Relationship of Child in Care with Parent	42.9%	28.6%
17. Needs and Services for Child, Parents, and Caregivers	55%	25%
18. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning	63.2%	21.1%
19. Worker Visits with Child	70%	60%
20. Worker Visits with Parents	47.1%	6.3%
21. Educational Needs of the Child	77.8%	57.1%
22. Physical Health of the Child	81.3%	71.4%
23. Mental Health of the Child	54.5%	55.6%

## SECTION II: FOSTER HOME LICENSE REVIEW

As part of the Quality Assurance Review Process in Sumter 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
- 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 Sumter County

**Initial License Cases.** Two foster home issuances for initial/standard license were reviewed. Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. None of the cases reviewed were rated as *ANI* because all pieces of the licensing requirements were met prior to authorization of the license issuance.

**Renewal License Cases.** Eight foster home license renewals were reviewed. Information for ratings was obtained by reviewers through case file documentation, which includes the use of CAPSS. Eight cases reviewed were rated as *ANI* because some pieces of the licensing requirements were not met prior to authorization of the license renewal. Issues identified that led to the rating of *ANI* for eight cases include:

**Table 10. Summary of Ratings for Initial and Renewal Cases**

Rating	Initial	Renewal
<i>Strength</i>	2 (100%)	0 (0%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	0 (0%)	8 (100%)
Total	2 (100%)	8 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>2 (100%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>

- 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 in a timely manner, or were completed at all. (6 cases)
- Documentation confirming that pet vaccinations were up-to-date was not located in the case file. (2 cases)
- There was not documentation to verify whether or not the family had firearms in the home. (2 cases)
- There was not documentation to verify that any firearms in the home were secured and that ammunition was stored separately. (1 case)
- Medical statement documentation for all family members was not located in the file. (1 case)
- Documentation was not sufficient to allow for verification of the completion of all training hours. (1 case)
- Documentation in the file did not verify the required 28 hours of training. (1 case)
- Documentation verifying that fire drills were conducted within 24 hours of a child’s placement was not located in the case file. (1 case)

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

#### **Initial Case Deficiencies**

- Documentation did not include identification of an alternative caregiver. (1 case)
- Foster home is out of compliance with the capacity licensed for the home and the agency did not place the license in “Exceeds” status to accommodate the total number of biological and foster children in the home. (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. (4 cases)
- Documentation verifying that quarterly fire drills were conducted while children were placed in foster homes was not located in the case file. (1 case)

##### **Documentation:**

- Signed and dated documentation for the Licensing Application (1513) was not located in the case file. (1 case)
- Documentation did not provide verification that quarterly home visits were either timely or completed at all. (2 cases)

##### **Safety:**

- All disaster plans were not located in the case file or were not signed and/or dated. (4 cases)
- All discipline agreements were not located in the case file or were not signed and/or dated. (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	10	0	0	10
3a. Did the intake worker thoroughly complete the Sufficiency tab in CAPSS	9	1	0	10
3b. If question 1 or 2 is answered no, did worker provide explanation	1	0	9	10
4a. Maltreatment tab in CAPSS completed	7	3	0	10
4b. If yes to maltreatment, did worker provide an explanation	2	0	8	10
4c. If yes to maltreatment, did supervisor provide additional information	2	0	8	10
5. Safety factors documented on Intake Assessment not discovered by intake worker	0	10	0	10
6. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	6	2	2	10
7a. Risk Matrix results included statements contradictory to allegation	4	2	4	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	2	2	6	10
9. Another intake referral on same perpetrator and/or child within 12 months	3	7	0	10
10. Intake Supervisor ensured consultation with another supervisory-level authority	0	3	7	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>	3 (30%)
<i>Area needing improvement</i>	7 (70%)
Total	10 (100%)
<i>% Strengths</i>	<b>3 (30%)</b>

In seven 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:

- 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. (3 cases)
- Statements documented in the Risk Matrix were contradictory to documentation of the allegations, with no reconciliation of facts documented. (2 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. (2 cases)
- Statements documented in the Risk Matrix were contradictory to the prior history of a family, without reconciliation of the facts documented. (1 case)
- Case documentation indicated that there were typologies for maltreatment present, but the agency documented that the allegation did not meet the legal definition of maltreatment, and there was no reconciliation of facts documented. (1 case)
- The agency provided a “YES” response to the Maltreatment Tab indicating that there was risk of maltreatment, but the case documentation did not support with response, with no reconciliation of the facts documented. (1 case)
- Case documentation indicated that there was a referral that indicated risk of maltreatment, but the agency answered “NO” to the Maltreatment Tab, indicating there was no risk of maltreatment, with no reconciliation of the facts documented. (1 case)

### SECTION III: CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES UNFOUNDED REPORTS REVIEW

Five unfounded reports were reviewed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed. The 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 cases issue was present: 0				
1B. Face-to-face contact not made in accordance with timeframes and requirements. Total cases issue was present: 2				
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Total</b>
1C. Delays in investigation initiation or face-to-face contact beyond control of agency	0	2	3	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	4	1	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	2	3	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>	<b>2 (40%)</b>

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

- Documentation did not provide sufficient initial, ongoing, and final risk and safety assessments with children in their home. (3 cases)
- There was no documentation to verify that the Agency monitored the recommendations of the Safety Plan during the investigation prior to unbounding the case. (1 case)
- There was no documentation in the case file or CAPSS to verify that the Agency conducted comprehensive and thorough ongoing assessment of the risk to the four year old in home and information to verify that the agency gathered enough information during the investigation before unbounding the case. (1 case)
  - There was no documentation to verify that the agency monitored the safety plan.

- There was not documentation to verify that background checks were obtained prior to unfounding
- There was no documentation to verify that the mother followed-up with her physician following hospitalization due to alcohol.
- There was no documentation to verify recommendations of alcohol and drug assessments for the parents (1 case)

#### SECTION IV: FAMILY STRENGTHENING SERVICES REVIEW

A review of five allegations was completed to determine whether agency policy and procedures were followed for reports referred to Family Strengthening 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	1	0	4	5
4c. If yes to maltreatment, did supervisor provide additional information	0	0	5	5
5. Existing Safety Factors not seen by intake worker or documented	0	5	0	5
6. Assessment made utilizing SCDSS Risk Matrix	5	0	0	5
7a. Results of SCDSS Risk Matrix contradicted allegation made by reporter	4	1	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	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	4	1	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 16.

**Table 16. Summary of Ratings for FSS Review**

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

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

- 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. (3 cases)
- Statements documented in the Risk Matrix were contradictory to documentation of the allegations, with no reconciliation of facts documented. (3 cases)
- Documentation did not verify that all indicated and appropriate collateral contacts were made. (2 cases)
- Case documentation indicated that the family was not adequately providing food and supervision for the child, but the agency answered “NO” in the Maltreatment Tab, which indicated that there was no risk of maltreatment, with no reconciliation of facts documented. (1 case)

## SECTION V: 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	5	0	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	1	0	4	5
4c. If yes to maltreatment, did supervisor provide additional information	0	0	5	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	3	2	0	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	0	5	0	5
10. Family received community-based prevention services	0	0	5	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	1	3	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>	<b>0 (0%)</b>

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 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 address all documented allegations made by the reporter, with no reconciliation of facts documented. (3 cases)
- 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 Sumter County conducted October 20-24, 2014. The period under review was October 1, 2013-September 30, 2014.

### **Positives:**

*Item 5 (Foster Care reentries)* was identified as a *strength* 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 3 (Services to family)* - 12 of 16 (75%) applicable cases rated as ANI
  - The agency did not provide services to the following individuals. (12 cases)
    - Mother (11 cases)
    - Father (4 cases)
    - Paramour (2 cases)
    - Alternative Caregiver (2 cases)
  - The agency did not conduct appropriate and/or ongoing assessments for the following individuals. (5 cases)
    - Alternative caregivers (3)
    - Mother (1 case)
    - Father (1 case)
    - Paramour (1 case)
  - A diligent search was not conducted for missing parents, which prevented required assessments for services. (1 case)
- *Item 4 (Risk assessment and safety management)* - 13 of 20 (65%) applicable cases rated as ANI
  - The agency did not complete assessments for the following individuals. (8 cases)
    - Child(ren) (4 cases)
    - Mother (2 cases)
    - Father(s) (2 cases)
    - Alternative Caregivers
    - Alternative Caregiver (1 case)

- Safety concerns existed that were not addressed by the agency. (9 cases)  
Examples provided include the following:
    - The home was not assessed for safety. (7 cases)
    - The caregiver had substance use/abuse issues. (2 cases)
    - The child was left in the home with an abusive caregiver. (1 case)
    - The children had an unauthorized, unsupervised visit with their parents. (1 case)
    - The children were left unsupervised in the home. (1 case)
  - The agency did not provide appropriate services to the following individuals: (4 cases)
    - Mother (3 cases)
    - Father (2 cases)
    - Child (1 case)
  - All appropriate background checks were not completed on all applicable people in the home. (2 cases)
  - A diligent search was not conducted for the missing parents, which prevented required assessments for risk and safety. (1 case)
- *Item 8 (Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives) – 4 of 6 (66.7%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
    - The agency did not make concerted efforts to achieve the goal of reunification. (3 cases) Specific reasons for the delay include:
      - The court hearings were delayed. (1 case)
      - There was a delay in determining paternity. (1 case)
      - The mother was not provided with the appropriate services to help her achieve reunification. (1 case)
    - The permanency goal of placement with a relative was not achieved in a timely manner due to the relative being non-compliant with the agency. (1 case)
  - *Item 9 (Adoption) – 5 of 7 (71.4%) applicable cases rated as ANI*
    - No concerted efforts made for recruitment because the agency was focused on the goal of reunification. (1 case)
    - No concerted efforts were made to achieve the goal of adoption in a timely manner. (1 case)
      - There were no ongoing recruitment efforts to identify additional placement resources when the adoption did not go through with the foster mother.

- The agency did not assist the foster parent in completing the paperwork for the home study.
  - The child had been in foster care for 116 months and there was no work being done to address the child’s lack of desire to be adopted. (1 case)
  - There were no concerted efforts to achieve the goal of adoption. (2 cases)
- *Item 10 (Other planned permanent living arrangement)* – 1 of 2 (50%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
  - The agency did not make concerted efforts to ensure that the child had a permanent living arrangement upon his release from care. (1 case)
- *Item 12 (Placement with siblings)* – 2 of 4 (50%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
  - The agency did not have the foster parent resources in order to place two children with their siblings. (2 cases)
- *Item 13 (Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care)* – 4 of 7 (57.1%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
  - The frequency of the visits with the following family members was not sufficient: (4 cases)
    - Mother (2 cases)
    - Father (2 cases)
    - Sister (1 case)
  - The quality of the visits with the following family members was not sufficient: (1 case)
    - Mother (1 case)
  - Diligent searches were not conducted for missing parents which prevented the required visits with the child. (2 cases)
- *Item 16 (Relationship of child in care with parents)* – 5 of 7 (71.4%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
  - The agency did not make concerted efforts to promote, support, and maintain positive relationships between the child and family. (4 cases)  
Specific relationships affected include:
    - Child and parents (2 cases)
    - Child and parents and mother’s paramour (1 case)
    - Child and father (1 case)
  - The agency did not make concerted efforts to invite the parent(s) to the following appointments:
    - Medical (4 cases)
    - Dental (1 case)

- Diligent searches were not conducted for parents to invite them to activities scheduled for the child. (2 cases)
- *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: (10 cases)
    - Father(s) (9 cases)
    - Mother (4 cases)
    - Children (2 cases)
    - Paramour (1 case)
  - Concerted efforts were not made to provide services for the following individuals: (9 cases)
    - Mother (7 cases)
    - Father (6 cases)
    - Foster parents (1 case)
  - Evidence of follow-up efforts was not provided to ensure the mother engaged in the services. (1 case)
- *Item 18 (Child & family involvement in case planning)* – 15 of 19 (78.9%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
  - The agency failed to make concerted efforts to involve the following individuals in the case planning process: (15 cases)
    - Father (12 cases)
    - Mother (10 cases)
    - Child(ren) (3 cases)
    - Paramour (1 case)
  - A diligent search was not conducted to allow for the parent to be included in the case planning process. (4 cases)
- *Item 20 (Caseworker visits with parents)* – 15 of 16 (93.7%) applicable cases rated as *ANI*
  - The frequency of the visitation was insufficient with the following family members: (11 cases)
    - Father(s) (11 cases)
    - Mother (7 cases)
    - Paramour (2 cases)
  - The quality of visitation was insufficient between the agency and the following individuals: (9 cases)
    - Mother (8 cases)

- Father(s) (5 cases)
- Diligent searches were not conducted for missing parents, which prevented the required visits with the caseworker. (3 cases)