

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P. O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

January 26, 2015

M E M O R A N D U M

What's Inside:Revised
PERforM
Objectives

TO: REGIONAL DIRECTORS, FIELD SUPPORT MANAGERS,
CIRCUIT MANAGERS, SPECIALISTS AND SUPERVISORS

FROM: TIM DECKER, DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: PERforM OBJECTIVES/COMPETENCIES

DISCUSSION:

Supporting effective front-line practices is one of the top priorities of the Children's Division because well prepared, supported, and effective front-line child welfare practitioners and supervisors are essential to achieving safety, permanency, and well-being with children and families. Children's Service Workers and Supervisors are primary change agents and have the opportunity to engage and support families and communities in changing lives for the better.

This is an important mission and is deserving of the best efforts of all of us including administrators, managers, supervisors, front-line practitioners, and communities. Accomplishing these goals requires a multi-faceted approach including:

An organizational culture that reflects a commitment to and alignment with the mission and values of the organization, providing a lens through which practices are chosen, policies are written, and decisions are made.

Development of a common leadership philosophy, and effective management and leadership throughout the organization. This begins with better supporting those who are formally in these roles, as well as expecting everyone in the organization to be a leader in their area of responsibility.

Clarity of practice models and approaches that are based on the best evidence about what works.

Purposeful and deliberate professional development, supervision, and coaching focused on increasing knowledge, skills, and performance.

Regular feedback loops to identify strengths, barriers, and development areas for individuals, teams, and the organization.

Use of technology to make complex work more manageable and increase efficiency and effectiveness.

Engagement and collaboration with partners who share a common interest and have the potential to support and sustain positive changes.

With all of this in mind, a variety of strategies are being implemented to support Missouri's child welfare workforce such as the career ladder, mobility (iPad) project, additional supports to reduce the impact of secondary traumatic stress, and development of regionalized professional development and field support teams.

In order to further strengthen these efforts, the Children's Division is partnering with the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI) in a variety of areas including:

- University traineeships through the University of Missouri-Kansas City and Missouri State University to more effectively recruit and prepare the child welfare workforce
- Leadership Academies for Middle Managers (LAMM) and Supervisors (LAS)
- Comprehensive Organizational Health Assessment (COHA) as a structured approach to assessing organizational culture and climate, and developing specific and targeted change initiatives in four workforce excellence sites, and
- Access to extensive research, resources, and best practice ideas, many of which can be accessed through the NCWWI website: www.ncwwi.org.

NCWWI has developed a [competency framework](#) that was initially utilized by the Children's Division as a resource for the Career Ladder program. The competencies include knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired by staff acquire to strengthen job performance and achieve agency goals.

In the initial stage of the Career Ladder, an employee's PERforM appraisal and the assessment of demonstrated competencies were separate processes. In order to further align, simplify, and focus workforce development and support, the NCWWI competencies have been integrated into the PERforM appraisal expectations for Children's Service Workers I, II, III, IV, Children's Service Supervisors, and Children's Service Specialists. The new objectives are available on the Children's Division Intranet [PERforM](#) page. Objectives for the management positions and above are currently under development.

NCWWI supports the philosophy that staff members at all levels of a child welfare organization are leaders. Competencies associated with effective leaders are similar across job levels; however, proficiency levels vary by position. As leaders increase their job responsibilities, proficiency will improve and their scope of duties may change. The NCWWI competency approach provides a developmental framework illustrating how competencies manifest at progressively higher levels: caseworker, supervisor, manager, and executive.

Implementing the competency framework and proficiency indicators forms a solid foundation consistent with our organizational values and promising approaches to leadership and practice in child welfare. This approach strengthens job performance assessment and coaching, career planning and progression, and the development of professional development and training programs.

Under the PERforM system, supervisors present 2014 appraisals and 2015 expectations to employees between February 13 and March 6, 2015. During this process, supervisors and

managers are expected to use the new PERforM objectives that were adapted from the NCWWI competencies framework as the 2015 employee expectations for all Children’s Service Workers I, II, III, IV, Children’s Service Supervisors, and Children’s Service Specialists.

We look forward to many great opportunities in the year ahead, including maximizing the benefits of various workforce initiatives, and the initial implementation of leadership academies and workforce excellence sites.

Please let us know if you have questions, suggestions for improvement, or need additional support related to the competency framework or other initiatives.

Thank you for your commitment to families and passion for this work. You are making a difference in the lives of so many.

NECESSARY ACTION	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review this memorandum with all Children’s Division staff. 2. All questions should be cleared through normal supervisory channels and directed to: 	
PDS CONTACT	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER Judy Kleffner 573-751-8955 Judith.A.Kleffner@dss.mo.gov
CHILD WELFARE MANUAL REVISIONS N/A	
FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS N/A	
REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES N/A	
RELATED STATUTE N/A	
ADMINISTRATIVE RULE N/A	
COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION (COA) STANDARDS N/A	
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW (CFSR) N/A	
PROTECTIVE FACTORS N/A	

FACES REQUIREMENTS

N/A