

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P. O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

January 24, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: CHILDREN'S DIVISION AND CONTRACTED STAFF

FROM: DAVID KURT, DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: FIELD SUPPORT TEAMS

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this memorandum is to introduce Field Support Teams.

Overview

Field Support Teams were initially developed in July 2018. The idea behind these teams is to get assistance from central office to the field proactively. The Field Support Team concept encourages open flow of strategies, support, and communication between the field and central office. The main goals of Field Support Teams are to enhance staff support and satisfaction across each region of the state and to resolve issues at the local level. This fosters mutual accountability for outcomes and practice between the field and central office. The work of the field support teams are guided by the following principles of engagement:

- ***WE** are ALL leaders with something to contribute
- ***WE** share a common vision
- ***WE** build trusting working relationships and are stronger together
- ***WE** are interdependent
- ***WE** are mutually accountable
- ***WE** don't blame or make statements, instead we ask learning questions

Field Support Teams are made up of 10 to 15 central office staff across all program areas. This includes but is not limited to Program Development Specialists, Unit Managers, Quality Assurance staff, and divisional leadership. A designated central office lead is assigned to each regional team. Click [here](#) to see Field Support Team membership for each sub region/region. Click [here](#) to see a short video about Field Support Teams.

Field Support Successes

To date, Field Support Teams have been invited to a variety of field activities such as Foster Parent Appreciation dinners, foster family holiday celebrations, regional meetings and more. They have also been involved in providing technical assistance in specific program areas. Activities thus far include but are not limited to assistance with:

- Supervision and consults
- Overdue Child Abuse and Neglect reports
- Worker visits with children
- New hire interviews
- Data entry
- Office moves

Field support assistance is not just helpful to the field, central office staff have also benefited as a result of participation in these activities. Firsthand knowledge of what is happening on the ground allows central office staff to embed what they have learned in program and policy decisions.

Accessing Field Support

Careful prioritization and coordination is key to effective field support. For this reason, all field support requests should be directed through normal supervisory channels to the respective regional director. The regional director will then reach out to the lead for their Field Support Team to discuss data trends and details of the field support request.

<p>NECESSARY ACTION</p> <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:
<p>Susan Savage, MSW Deputy Director Susan.K.Savage@dss.mo.gov</p>
<p>CHILD WELFARE MANUAL REVISIONS N/A</p>
<p>FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS N/A</p>
<p>REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES N/A</p>
<p>RELATED STATUTE N/A</p>