



Quarterly Update

WINTER 2018

CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL UPDATE

Children's Residential Licensing Program Mission:

The Children's Residential Licensing Program licenses and monitors Adoption Agencies, Foster Family Agencies and Certified Family Homes, Foster Family Homes, Resource Family Homes, Group Homes, Crisis Nurseries, Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelters, Small Family Homes, Transitional Housing Placement Programs, and Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs in an effort to ensure that they provide a safe and healthy environment for children who are in residential care.

A Note from Pamela Dickfoss, Deputy Director

As we begin a New Year in 2018, the Children's Residential Program of Community Care Licensing would like to thank the many families, licensees, providers and stakeholders for their continued involvement in the Continuum of Care Reform and the many activities involved. The collaboration between our federal, state, county and local partners has been phenomenal and we will continue our partnerships in the new year as our reform efforts continue to move forward. We are very excited as new standards and policies continue to be implemented in out-of-home care to improve the young lives and families we serve in the Child Welfare System.

Our Regional Offices statewide have been working closely with licensees as they submit their revised plans of operation/program statements to the Department for review and approval. We have also been certifying out-of-state programs as they submit their revised plans of operation to convert to a Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program. Technical Assistance and trainings have been happening around the state to help everyone better understand the new requirements and how

they can be implemented to better serve the youth and build upon their existing support systems. We have been conducting additional inspections to specified providers to ensure adequate oversight of youth who receive [psychotropic medications](#) and for licensees who [contact law enforcement](#). The County Liaison program continues to train and provide technical assistance to the counties for the statewide implementation of the [Resource Family Approval Program](#).

We have completed two regulation packages this past year for [Law Enforcement Contacts](#) (Assembly Bill 388, Statutes of 2014) and [Cultural Competency](#) (Assembly Bill (AB) 1856, Statutes of 2012 and Senate Bill (SB) 731, Statutes of 2015). There have been several [Provider Information Notices](#) published, in addition to our first [report](#) for the psychotropic medication inspections. We have also been assisting in the development of the [Interim Licensing Standards](#) for Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs and Resource Family Homes. Next year, the Program will begin implementing the licensure of a new licensing category for Private Alternative Boarding Schools.

This is a time of year when we are reminded about the importance of our family and friends. I hope each of you had an opportunity to spend quality time with all of those important in your lives during this holiday season. This year promises to be another year of change, growth and better outcomes for the people we serve.

Encouraging Youth to Read

Encouraging youth to read can be a difficult task. Reading is a very important piece in their cognitive development. It should excite the child and capture their imagination. The caregiver can encourage the child to read about topics and subjects they are interested in, which can help alleviate the feeling of it being work.

Keep in mind that the act of reading does not need to be confined to books or newspaper articles. Other options may include:

- Reading comics
- Memorizing jokes or popular song lyrics
- Reading recipes to a favorite dish
- Following instructions for games or electronics.

Recommended Regulatory Review and Further Reading:

- [§84079\(a\)\(4\) – Planned Activities](#)
- [§87079\(a\)\(5\) – Planned Activities](#)
- [§88487.14\(a\) – Extracurricular, Enrichment, Cultural, and Social Activities](#)
- [§89379\(a\) – Activities](#)
- [Tips for Encouraging Kids to Read](#)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
Encouraging Reading	2
Youth Knowledge and Crisis	3
Emergency Disaster Plan	3
Changes to Exemption Criteria	3
Fingerprint Clearances	4
Child Care Bridge Program	4
Effective Documentation	4
New System News	5



Knowledge of Youth Issues and Crisis Prevention

A key element to preventing a behavioral crisis from escalating is careful preparation on the part of the care staff and facility management. In addition to knowing one's own triggers, knowledge of each youth's unique issues and evolving needs is critical to the effectiveness of the intervention used. More than just observing the youth, care staff must also maintain a working knowledge of the information presented in the youth's Needs and Services Plan. Active participation in case conferences with the clinical and social work staff can be particularly helpful in getting to understand the youth. As a key member of the treatment team,

the care staff must be ready to communicate their observations to the rest of the team. A clear understanding of the youth's needs and sensitivities may not prevent the onset of a crisis, but it prepares the care staff in being able to provide the appropriate response.

Recommended Regulatory Review:

- [PIN 17-11-CRP](#)
- [§84365 – Emergency Intervention Staff Training](#)
- [§87095.65 – Emergency Intervention Staff Training](#)

Safety Reminder: The Emergency Disaster Plan

As the new year begins, caregivers are reminded to review their Emergency Disaster Plans ([LIC 610B](#) or [LIC 610C](#)) and to update any information, as needed. The recent fires in Northern and Southern California are a powerful reminder of the importance of being prepared with a plan that is both realistic and regularly practiced. A key ingredient to developing an effective emergency disaster

plan is knowledge of the types of emergencies that are common to your area. Two helpful sources for such information are your local [Red Cross](#) chapter and [Emergency Management Agency](#). For more information, please visit: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response](#).

Senate Bill 213 (Mitchell), Chapter 733, Statute of 2017

[Senate Bill 213](#) amended section 1522 of the Health and Safety Code to revise the criteria for criminal record exemptions for foster caregivers, resource family applicants, relative caregivers and nonrelative extended family members (NREFM). These changes include:

- Amend criteria for granting criminal record exemptions to foster caregivers, resource family applicants, relative caregivers and NREFM.
- Expand simplified exemptions for placement of foster care youth by expanding the categories of crimes and the number of convictions that are presumptively exemptible.



- Allow emergency placement before an exemption is granted under specified circumstances.
- Remove the following crimes from the non-exemptible crimes list for foster care providers:
 - Misdemeanor indecent exposure
 - Misdemeanor financial abuse against the elderly
 - Require that CDSS convene a stakeholder work group to streamline the exemption process for prospective employees of children's residential facilities.

Group Home Fingerprint Clearance

During recent [Title IV-E](#) foster care eligibility reviews (specific to federal assistance to states for the maintenance of foster care placements), it was noted that there were numerous systemic concerns/deficiencies found in group homes. It has been noted that there are employees with pending fingerprints that are several years old, employees working in the facility prior to obtaining clearances and missing fingerprints. These deficiencies will result in the foster care case being classified as an “error” during the Federal Title IV-E audit. This can put the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) in fiscal penalties if noted during the Federal review. It is imperative that all group home and Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP) placement providers check and update their

staff rosters and communicate with the CDSS Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD). Group homes and STRTPs must ensure background clearances prior to work and that regulations are strictly adhered to for all staff as set forth in Title 22 CCR [§80019\(a\) & \(e\)](#), [§80065\(i\)](#), and §87019 of STRTP Interim Licensing Standards.

Violations of [§80019\(e\)](#) will result in a citation of a deficiency and an immediate assessment of civil penalties of one hundred dollars (\$100) per violation per day for a maximum of five (5) by the Department. Subsequent violations within a twelve (12) month period will result in a civil penalty of one hundred dollars (\$100) per violation per day for a maximum of thirty (30) days (Title 22 CCR [§80019\(g\)](#)).

Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Care

As of January 1, 2018, counties choosing to participate will begin implementing the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program (Bridge Program). Senate Bill 89 (2017) allocates \$15.5 million for the Bridge Program for the Fiscal Year 2017-2018.

The Bridge Program will consist of three components:

1. Emergency Child Care Vouchers: Eligible families may receive time-limited vouchers or payment for child care costs for foster children ages birth to 12 years old, children with exceptional needs, and severely disabled children up to age 21.

2. Child Care Navigator: The navigator, provided by the local Resource & Referral agency, will assist with finding child care providers, completing applications, as well as other services.

3. Trauma-informed care training and coaching: Child care providers will receive training (such as infant and toddler development care practices) and coaching to assist them in caring for the needs of each child.

Additional information is located at the Department of Social Services [website](#) .

Best Practice Guidelines to Effective Documentation

The level and quality of the documentation maintained by our licensed providers play a key role in ensuring compliance. Deficiencies

resulting from incomplete or missing documentation serve as vivid reminders of this. Documentation is one of the principal means

by which a licensee can demonstrate their compliance with statutes and regulations. The aim of good documentation is to write a complete and accurate story with as much descriptive and detailed information about a youth or a situation from the viewpoint of health and safety. As critical as it is, effective documentation is one of the most “doable”

steps providers can take in maintaining compliance, and one which they can exercise direct quality control over. At the heart of this practice is creating a climate that values, encourages, and even recognizes good documentation—from producing quality “high-end” documents to the notes jotted down during staff meetings.

The following are key components of effective documentation:

- **Clarity:** Accuracy and thoroughness minimize the chances of confusion or misunderstanding on the part of its reviewer. The reviewer should not be left guessing, entertaining doubts, or feeling frustrated after searching folder after folder for a single document.
- **Purposeful:** Files on record reflect an organized “system” of documents that collectively “completes the picture,” as opposed to a set of randomly filed documents with no logical connection to one another.
- **A “Connecting of the Dots”:** The wording and organization of the documents clearly reflect the level of thoughtfulness and attention that went into them. As complete and accurate as they are, they are also reader-centered.

The preceding guidelines were developed over the course of our work in providing training and support. For more information, please contact the Technical Support Program at:

TechnicalSupportProgram@dss.ca.gov

New System News

The Child Welfare Digital Services (CWDS) is developing the Child Welfare Services-New System (CWS-NS) to gradually replace the “legacy” databases currently in use.

The Certification, Approval, and Licensing Service (CALs) of the New System will provide an integrated, user-friendly statewide database for use by Counties and the Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD).

This system will eventually be adapted for the Adult and Senior Care Program and the Child Care Program as well. For more information:

- Reach out to the CWDS CALS Team with questions or ideas directly at: CWDSCALS@osi.ca.gov.
- Stay informed: [Subscribe](#) to the CWDS Stakeholders mail list.
- Visit the website: <https://cwds.ca.gov/>. (“[Dashboard](#)” has links to each team’s work; “[For Stakeholders](#)” has links to events including the Monthly Solutions Demos, Quarterly Stakeholder Forums, Reports, and much more.)
- Following CWDS on social media, including: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), and [GitHub](#).



Child Welfare Digital Services

Please remember to check for new [Provider Information Notices \(PINS\)](#).

IMPORTANT INFO AND PHONE NUMBERS

Centralized Complaint Information Bureau (CCIB)	1-844-538-8766
Foster Care Rates	916-651-9152
Caregiver Background Check Bureau (CBCB)	1-888-422-5669
Foster Care Ombudsman	1-877-846-1602
CCL Public Inquiry and Response	916-651-8848
Technical Support Program	916-654-1541

Notes and Credits

The Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) publishes the Children's Residential Program Quarterly Update for the benefit of Licensees, Parents, Youth, Residents, and Stakeholders.

Pamela Dickfoss, CCLD Deputy Director

Jean Chen, Acting Children's Residential Program Administrator

This Issue's Editor
Renee Kurjiaka

Assistant Editors
Alison Newkirk, Stephen Kim and Alison Harris

Additional Contributors

*Phoebe DeMund, Child Welfare Digital Services,
Rebekah Aguirre, Funding and Eligibility Unit*