



**B. J. Walker, Commissioner**

Department of Human Resources • Division of Family and Children Services • Carol Hall, Kenny A. Project Director  
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Greetings Georgia Child Welfare Providers,

As promised, some of the responses to questions received at the Kenny A “*Success Through Collaboration*” conference have been posted. You may go to [www.gahsc.org](http://www.gahsc.org) or [www.galocweb.com](http://www.galocweb.com) to view and print them.

We were impressed with the quantity and depth of the inquiries we received. Currently, Director Mary Dean Harvey is finalizing research and developing responses to the numerous questions related to training. We expect to have a list of those responses posted soon.

If your question is not posted on the site, one of the following reasons may explain why:

- 1) duplicate questions were consolidated and/or reworded into one inquiry
- 2) all training-related questions, along with a few others are being researched
- 3) several questions lacked sufficient detail, and
- 4) some questions were left off because they were determined to be outside the scope and context of the Kenny A. work

Even if your question did not receive a direct response, please know that all questions received (over 100 hundred them) were read and given attention.

If you need further guidance or would like to re-submit your question, you may contact the social services director in your county in writing or by phone.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carol Hall".

Carol Hall, Kenny A. Project Director  
Division of Family and Children Services  
Georgia Department of Human Resources

## Responses to Questions from Provider Forum

**1. Question:** Exactly what supports and or programs are in place for the birth families under the Kenny A Project?

**Response:** There are no specialized supports or programs created under the Kenny A. Consent Decree. Birth families receive full support and services through the foster care and CPS programs currently in place and are outlined in our policy manual. These services were available prior to the Consent Decree.

**2. Question:** Is the maximum caseload of 12 for SCM for 12 children or 12 families?

**Response:** For foster care and adoptions, it means 12 children; for CPS, it means 12 families.

**3. Question:** Please clarify group care restrictions in terms of capacity.

**Response:** In terms of capacity, the definition of group care can be found on Page 16 - Item f of the Consent Decree. It reads as follows: *The capacity of a group care setting shall include all beds on the entire grounds of the setting, and includes the total number of beds in multiple cottages.*

**4. Question:** What happens when you have a CCI designed to specifically care for sibling groups and the DFCS counties are interpreting the consent decree to mean that children under 6 or ages 6 to 12 cannot be placed in the facility. Whether with a sibling group or not?

**Response:** These instances are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and determinations are made in the best interest of the child. Special cases warranting special consideration must be cleared through the Kenny A. Director and the Social Services Director via a waiver and sign-off process prior to the child's placement. Justification for placement is required, and not all requests are approved.

**5. Question:** Is the capacity limits "3 foster children" in a foster home currently in place?

**Response:** As of the signing of the Consent Decree on 10/27/2005, the capacity limitation for foster children in both private and DFCS foster homes is 3. Special cases warranting special consideration must be cleared through a waiver and sign-off process through the Kenny A. Director.

**6. Question:** Will caseload sizes apply to private providers? This is currently an LOC requirement.

**Response:** LOC will cease to exist at June 2007 month-end. Specific parameters and guidelines will be stated in the 2008 contract or contract addendum. Current LOC senior staff is assisting the contract department with developing new language to ensure appropriate requirements are carried over into the new contracts.

**7. Question:** How would we get information about any upcoming Emergency Safety Intervention Training classes in Georgia? Are such classes currently scheduled?

**Response:** The ORS website offers access to 13 nationally approved training curricula for Emergency Safety Intervention. Each provider should select and participate in one of the offered courses.

**8. Question:** I've been asked to submit demographic information on my families to Myra Josey (Kenny A). Should I also be submitting all new families as they are certified to this same person?

**Response:** Providers will receive instructions regarding to whom to submit this information. In anticipation of this upcoming request, all private providers should have this information in an accessible format that can be readily obtained by DFCS.

**9. Question:** What is the status of the LORE data base implemented by the TSU? Is it still in use by DHR?

**Response:** Yes, it is still in use.

**10. Question:** Will providers have a uniform reporting data base like SACWIS to ensure same data is collected?

**Response:** At this point, SACWIS will only be for DFCS internal use. There will be some read-only access, as well as some screens to enter specific information, but the primary function of SACWIS is for internal management.

**11. Question:** Where can forms be found that are required by Kenny A, especially medical forms?

**Response:** There are no special Kenny A. forms. Proof should be obtained from the physician's office upon completion of medical examination, health screen or other service. The same holds true for follow-up treatments. Proof that medication was provided as prescribed can be validated via documentation obtained at the time that the prescription is filled.

**12. Question:** Are the providers' representatives invited to the 13<sup>th</sup> month permanency review or at least be given an opportunity for input?

**Response:** This can be arranged through the county administrators.

**13. Question:** What can we do when private provider workers and foster parents are often not informed of reviews, particularly when handled as a court review (w/ judges)?

**Response:** Approximately 2 months prior to the review, the juvenile court panel coordinator notifies the case manager to secure an address list of those parties who should attend the panel. In response, the case manager's list should include caregivers, relatives, foster parents, private provider and school representatives. If providers are not being notified, they should notify the social services program director of that county. To assist with improving communication along these lines, Kenny A. county liaisons will inform case manager supervisors that they should emphasize to case managers the importance of adhering to this protocol.

**14. Question:** Can some type of notification system be devised to ensure private agencies are invited to FTM's and MDT's? (We are invited to some, but not all and often only when we persist to be invited.)

**Response:** Kenny A. county liaisons will request that case manager supervisors convey to case managers the importance of improving communication with private providers, including informing them of MDT's and FTM's.

**15. Question:** Will ORS revise the rules and regulations to be in compliance with Kenny A guidelines?

**Response:** Some rule changes may result, but not necessarily. Each rule would have to be considered on a case-by-case basis to determine if the rule should be changed for the Minimum Rules and Regulations. Both ORS and DFCS will continue to have dialogue regarding any changes to the rules.

**16. Question:** Who supersedes when there are conflicting regulations, ORS or Kenny A?

**Response:** If it is DFCS children that are in Placement, then the stricter of the two regulations always supersedes. Meeting the Kenny A. requirements is a condition for contracting with DFCS. If they are private placements and not in DFCS custody, then ORS' Rules and Regulations are the only rules that apply.

**17. Question:** Unannounced visits conducted in provider foster homes? Concern: Provider home expected to allow unknown person in their home. How does DHR verify they are who they purport to be?

**Response:** This is a valid concern; however, all DHR (including ORS) employees have a picture ID. Foster Parents can require that the employee present that ID prior to allowing entry.

**18. Question:** Will we get any information on the results of the visits ORS has conducted?

**Response:** Yes. Licensed agencies receive a survey report upon the completion of each survey that is conducted. If there are no citations resulting from the unannounced foster home monitoring visits, then the closing comments of the agency survey report will indicate that there were no citations. If there were citations resulting from the foster home monitoring visits, then the citations would be included in that same survey report.

**19. Question:** Will ORS be limiting the number of CPA's and CCI's approved to ensure capacity stays constant and does not continue to increase due to the significant growth over the last 6 years?

**Response:** ORS has no current plans of restricting the number of providers that can apply. Similarly, ORS has no current plans to deny applicants that meet the requirements for licensure.

**20. Question:** When will the revision of RCC rules regarding approved nationally recognized behavior management training models and curricula occur?

**Response:** The rules were revised to incorporate the revisions in September of 2006. All submitted ESI models have been reviewed and a list of nine approved models has been posted on the ORS website. ORS continues to review new submissions.

**21. Question:** How or when will these models/curricula be made available and has a deadline been established for CCI implementation of this training?

**Response:** The models that are approved have been made available and the licensed providers were given a deadline of January 1, 2007 to train on one of those models.

**22. Question:** What time frame is required for the counties to comply (just not report)?

**Response:** Compliance and reporting go hand-in-hand and usually fall within a pre-determined timeframe. In other words, the Consent Decree mandates that certain standards and measures are to be achieved by certain dates or within a certain timeframe. When that date or when the end of that timeframe arrives, progress toward achievement is measured. Let's use Outcome 31 which is found on Page 38 of the Consent Decree as an example. Here, the State is required to ensure that by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> reporting period (December 31, 2006) and thereafter, no more than 10% of both DFCS and private foster homes exceed the capacity limits of 3 foster children and a total 6 children in the home. In preparation, the State began looking at homes that exceeded these capacity limits to determine if a special circumstance existed which qualified that home as an exception. When the reporting period ended, the monitors measured our progress and are now compiling their report detailing the State's progress toward attaining all the standards and measures established for that period. Outcome 31 is one such example. Please reference Page 38 of the Decree for the exact language pertaining to Outcome 31.

There are 4 reporting periods; the 2<sup>nd</sup> reporting period ended on December 31, 2006. Again, the State's progress for the 2<sup>nd</sup> period is now being measured by the 2 court-appointed monitors. Next, they will prepare their report based on their findings. In some instances, continuous improvement is expected to occur over a specified period of time. We are now in the 3<sup>rd</sup> reporting period which ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**23. Question:** If private providers are accountable for ensuring the DFCS standards are being met (as well as ORS standards, LOC standards and Kenny A standards), then can DFCS ensure that private providers have updated manuals?

**Response:** Agencies may request a manual. DFCS will supply and forward the initial manual to the agency making the request. After the first copy, providers will be responsible for making all additional copies. Also, DFCS policy is available on line at:

<http://www.odis.dhr.state.ga.us/home.htm>. The updated foster parent manual should also be on ODIS soon.

**24. Question:** Do all DFCS foster care policies apply to private providers?

**Response:** Yes.

**25. Question:** If there is a licensed child care agency for ages 12-17 and a 17 year old child turns 18, does that agency discharge the 18 year old or can that child remain with the agency without penalty?

**Response:** There are still some CPA's and CCI's with licenses that reflect ages 12 – 17; however, in September 2006, ORS rules changed to reflect through the child's 18 year. The child can remain at the facility. After that (age 19), the child can remain at the facility but must get a criminal record check. Every licensed entity should be aware of the most current rules. This information can be obtained via the ORS website or by calling ORS direct.

**26. Question:** Will private agency foster parents be considered for adoption (this question applies to a foster parent who is not currently caring for the child, but is part of the same agency)?

**Response:** Social Services Case Managers are encouraged to explore all registered, approved prospective adoptive parents.

**27. Question:** How will the Foster Parent Bill of Rights be synchronized with Kenny A. and DFCS policy?

**Response:** The Foster Parent Bill of Rights is currently synchronized with DFCS policy.

**28. Question:** What are the changes with LOC and contract CPAs?

**Response:** Beginning July 1, 2007, the Georgia Department of Human Resources will be working with Georgia's providers of *residential* and *foster care* to purchase placement services based upon a child's need for Room, Board, and Watchful Oversight (R.B.W.O.). At that time, Level of Care (LOC), as it is now known will cease to exist. Child Caring Institutions (CCIs) and Child Placing Agencies (CPAs) will be paid a base rate and substantiated premiums in order to cover necessary watchful oversight for a child. R.B.W.O. is the provision of lodging, food, as well as attentive and responsible care to children. Providers shall be responsible for the provision or acquisition of services to ensure that each child's physical, social, emotional, educational, vocational, nutritional, spiritual, cultural and permanency needs are met.

There are 3 types of R.B.W.O. care for all children whether they are served in *residential care* or in *purchased foster care* with CPAs.

For *residential*, there are:

- a) Base
- b) Additional Watchful Oversight, and
- c) Maximum Oversight

For *placement*, there are:

- a) Traditional
- b) Base Watchful Oversight, and
- c) Maximum Oversight

Additionally, a waiver process is in place to address unique situations for those children placed by Child Caring Institutions that receive special services.

**29. Question:** When will we be notified of new contract requirements?

**Response:** The Georgia DHR/Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) has begun notifying contracted providers of new contract requirements. New contracts will be rolled out effective July 1, 2007.

**30. Question:** Is Georgia accepting applications for new providers? If so, what is the best route for partnering with DHR by the fiscal year? What will be the new requirements for agencies who would like to contract with DHR in Georgia?

**Response:** Georgia DHR/DFCS is accepting applications for new providers. There are general requirements that apply to all prospective providers and specific requirements for Child Caring Institutions and Child Placing Agencies. Providers must be properly licensed by the Office of Regulatory Services (ORS) for services to children and must maintain substantial compliance with the ORS rules and regulations. Baseline requirements are currently being developed for FY08 contracts. The Provider Application Process is being revised to reflect R.B.W.O.

**31. Question:** What is the process of transitioning from LOC to RBWO for each child? What about children with MR/DD and Medical fragile children who have VERY high supervision needs?

**Response:** Each child's level of need will be evaluated as it relates to the type of oversight required.

**32. Question:** What is the new approval process for DFCS RBWO?

**Response:** The new approval process for DFCS RBWO is answered in Question 31.

**33. Question:** LOC standards are leaving as of 7/1/07. What will be the standard expectations that replace them and how will they be communicated?

**Response:** The current Level of Care (LOC) process will cease to exist on 6/30/07. A formal communication of new basic contract-based requirements is forthcoming in the current quarter. As necessary changes are identified and implemented within this continuum, appropriate information will disseminated.

**34. Question:** When is Youth Villages coming to Georgia?

**Response:** Youth Villages' presence at the forum was not intended to showcase an agency coming to Georgia; instead, it was intended to offer a provider's perspective that has provided and is currently providing services in a state that was under a Consent Decree. We do not know when or if Youth Villages will ever come to Georgia.