

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES
STANDARDS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE
STANDARDS FOR ADMINISTRATION

10.7 STAFF ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Council on Accreditation Standards

The Council on Accreditation Standards G7.1 (Orientation of New Personnel), G7.2 (Personnel Development and Training Program); G7.3 (Training Content); G7.4 (Risk Management Training) and G7.5 (Supervision) link to and support Standard 10.7 *Staff Orientation and Training*.

Administrative Code

The Ohio Administrative Code Rules 5101:2-33-55 (Training Requirements for Newly Hired Public Children Services Agency Caseworkers); 5101:2-33-56 (Ongoing Training Requirements For Public Children Services Agency Caseworkers Who Have Completed One Year of Continuous Employment); 5101:2-33-57 (No Exclusions to Mandatory Training Requirements for PCSA Caseworkers); and 5101:2-33-58 (Maintenance of PCSA Training Records for Caseworkers) address Standard 10.7 *Staff Training and Orientation*.

I. Philosophy

Highly functioning organizations require, at all levels, a knowledgeable, confident, and competent work force. Demands placed on staff require that they be prepared and skilled. Staff preparation and readiness to competently carry-out job duties are demonstrated through organizational supports. CFSAs provide staff with new job orientation, training opportunities, and support in their preparation of, participation in, and practice of newly acquired knowledge and skills.

CFSAs provide all staff with in-service training opportunities to introduce specific knowledge needed to perform job duties within the agency and county jurisdiction. Additional training is offered to augment and enhance staff's knowledge and skills. CFSAs support the use of the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP) in training professionals who work in the field. The OCWTP provides content and skill building opportunities to support the development of a competent and confident staff. Inter-agency cross-training is an additional preparatory and ongoing skill development vehicle that directly addresses the need for inter-system collaboration critical to serving the community's children and families. Whatever the orientation or training vehicle used, CFSAs believe that the protection of children and stabilization of families necessitates a knowledgeable and skilled staff.

II. Outcome

Children and families are served by knowledgeable, skilled and prepared employees of the child protection system.

III. Evaluation

FACSIS events, CPOE and the Federal Health and Human Services outcomes may be considered when evaluating this standard. In addition, the CFSA may consider the following:

- number of times per year staff orientation was conducted;
- evaluations from staff participating in Orientation and Agency Response;
- number of supervisors covering policies and procedures in Unit meetings during the year;
- effectiveness of policy and procedures review using staff evaluation tool;
- number of staff completing legally required training hours per year;
- number of staff completing the ITNA annually;
- ratio between training requests made and link to ITNA approved.

IV. Standards for Implementation

A. Staff Orientation - Provided Within First Five Days on the Job

CFSAAs provide formal and uniform orientation activities for new employees. The purpose of providing new staff with formal orientation is fourfold. CFSAAs orient new staff to prepare them to transition into the organization successfully; create a favorable impression of the agency; reduce new job anxiety; and provide technical information regarding the agency, job expectations and performance. The structured orientation program is time-limited and is provided by designated staff. Consistency and accuracy of information provided during staff orientation should be assured. CFSAAs provide on-the-job orientation activities through the employee's supervisor and direct program staff.

- 1) The CFSA should have a policy, process and procedures for orienting all new employees to the organization.
- 2) A general orientation program should be provided to all new employees within their first five working days. The general orientation program should include, but not be limited to, the following elements:
 - a. CFSA Overview
 - i. mission, philosophy, values;
 - ii. annual goals and objectives;
 - iii. organizational structure including key administrators;
 - iv. program areas and functions;
 - v. agency tour;
 - vi. list/location of relevant CFSA materials and manuals;
 - vii. employee safety; and
 - viii. funding sources.
 - b. Personnel
 - i. time sheets;
 - ii. benefits;
 - iii. professional expectations;
 - iv. required annual training;
 - v. job description, performance expectations, probation, annual evaluation;
 - vi. confidentiality policy with employee sign-off;
 - vii. reimbursement procedures, when applicable; and
 - viii. personnel handbook.

B. Staff Orientation - Provided Within First Three Months on the Job

The CFSA should have job-specific orientation activities designed to orient new employees to their particular job functions and responsibilities. Job-specific

orientation activities should be provided to the new employee within the first three months on the job by the training unit or program area to which they are assigned. Orientation activities may be individualized or group.

- 1) Job-specific orientation activities should include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. child protection services history, mission;
 - b. forms completion, time restrictions;
 - c. job responsibilities including detailed information regarding
 - d. intra-agency information including purpose, functions, contacts, on-site visits;
 - e. policies, procedures;
 - f. inter-agency specialized services which interact with specific job function and responsibilities; and
 - g. confidentiality (see Standard 10.4, *Confidentiality*).

C. Training: CFSA Policies/Standards, State and Federal Mandates

CFSA's expect staff to be informed and knowledgeable regarding organizational policies, procedures and standards of effective child welfare practice. To assure staff are well informed, CFSA's have the responsibility to provide regular, uniform, and consistent education and training regarding the organization's policies, procedures and standards, and state and federal mandates. This is critical if staff is to be held accountable for knowing and using these tools in carrying out their job responsibilities on a daily basis.

- 1) Staff should be provided training that addresses federal and state laws and rules applicable to their job duties, and should be instructed regarding how these relate to their individual daily activities.
- 2) The CFSA should have a method for assuring that all new employees are introduced to, and trained on, the use of the agency's policy manuals and handbooks. This should be documented by the CFSA for each new employee.
- 3) The CFSA should have a structured format for introducing new and revised policies, procedures, and standards for effective practice with staff as is appropriate to the employee's job classification. Completion of this review should be documented by the CFSA for each new employee.

D. Intra-Agency Training

Developing a confident, knowledgeable work force requires that staff have an understanding of program services and activities within the organization. Staff should be informed of, and know, all of the functions, services, and programs of the agency. Knowing the agency functions, and how to access services and programs, allows staff to serve children and families with greater efficiency. The CFSA has a responsibility to educate and cross-train staff regarding all program activities and services of the agency.

- 1) The CFSA should provide, at least biannually, a structured and documented process for informing and/or training staff on newly developed and existing services and program activities.

E. Ohio Child Welfare Training Program

CFSA's rely on knowledgeable and competent staff who are well versed in Ohio child protection standards and practices. CFSA's make a commitment to implement activities that support and complement comprehensive competency-based training. This includes a commitment that social service staff receive the mandated Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP) training, utilization of the Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA), and regular communication with the Regional Training Center.

- 1) The CFSA should have a policy regarding the need for all social service staff to complete the recommended CORE within the first 12 months of employment. Staff who were hired prior to the availability of CORE should be required to participate in the series.
- 2) The CFSA should have a policy regarding annual completion of the appropriate OCWTP Individual Training Needs Assessment Tool by caseworkers and supervisors at the time of the employee's performance evaluation.

F. Transfer of Learning

The CFSA's responsibility to prepare staff to carry out their job functions with confidence and competence does not end at the close of a training session. Staff training and skill building is an ongoing responsibility of CFSA's. Transfer of Learning (TOL) begins prior to the training session, follows through the event and continues after the participant returns to the job. CFSA's are responsible for assuring TOL activities are actively pursued and are implemented agency-wide. TOL activities are the responsibility of management, line supervisors, workers, and the trainers who provide the training. Because resources are limited, as is staff time, TOL activities are critical to the effective development of staff and make best use of limited resources.

- 1) The CFSA should have a policy regarding agency TOL activities. TOL activities should include, but not be limited to, the following.
 - a. Management should demonstrate the value it places on training by:
 - i. allowing the trainee to attend scheduled training events;
 - ii. providing back-up staff support for individuals in training so that the trainee is undisturbed during the training session.
 - b. Supervisors should support the professional development of their staff by:
 - i. reviewing the annual ITNA findings and/or annual performance objectives to assure the requested training meets a training need as discussed with the individual;
 - ii. having a discussion with the individual regarding what s/he hopes to learn from the session;
 - iii. holding follow-up discussions regarding newly acquired knowledge and understanding based on the training content;
 - iv. requesting the individual share the materials with staff at staff meetings.
 - c. Training Participant

Staff who participate in training events should take the responsibility of transferring the content of the training session back on the job. Staff may accomplish this by:

 - i. assuring their work is covered for the day;
 - ii. giving full attention to the trainer;

- iii. developing and implementing an action plan which identifies how s/he plans to use the information;
 - iv. sharing the training content with staff.
- 2) Prior to, and following a training event, the staff member should meet with the supervisor to discuss the training and review the action plan. The supervisor should provide the support needed for staff to implement the action plan and document having done so.
 - 3) The supervisor and staff should discuss implementation of the plan. At subsequent meetings, the supervisor should address the action plan and document progress made in implementing the action plan activities. Documentation of the staff member's progress in meeting learning objectives should be part of the annual performance evaluation.

G. Inter-Agency Training

Cross training of staff with other community service providers, both private and public, strengthens the community's ability to effectively and efficiently serve children and families. It is the responsibility of these system administrators to jointly develop and implement a plan for orienting, training and sharing information among staff across systems.

- 1) The CFSA should agree to participate in the development and implementation of inter-agency cross training.
- 2) The CFSA should provide information and resources regarding agency philosophy, policies, consumer population, services, and program activities to community service providers upon request.
- 3) The CFSA should provide updated and ongoing information regarding its services, program activities, and program partnerships to the wider community.

*For more information on Human Resources and the CFSA, see Standard 11.4, *Staff Orientation and Training* of the Human Resources Standards.

V. Financial Implications

The assumption is made that staff training and orientation is necessary for worker competence, therefore, wages associated with attendance of staff at training sessions have not been included. Costs are on a professional staff person per year basis.

Direct services workers (20 days the first year) mileage days @100 miles/day round trip @ .32/mile = \$640/agency worker.

Direct services workers (second and following years) mileage: 6 days @100 miles/day round trip @ .32/mile = \$192./agency worker.

Supervisors (12 days of core training)- mileage days @ 100 miles/day round trip @ .32/mile = \$384/agency supervisor.

Supervisors (6 days of training second and following years) mileage: 6 days @ 100 miles/day round trip @ .32/mile = \$192/agency supervisor.

ITNA Completion- two hours for the worker to complete, plus one hour for discussion with supervisor to develop annual training plan = \$57.50/agency worker.