

Standard 1.10

SUPERVISION

PHILOSOPHY

County PCSAs recognize that a well-functioning organization requires effective and competent, regular and timely staff supervision. Administrative, educational and supportive supervision are requisite to fulfilling the agency's mission. Employees look to management to provide them with guidance and support as they seek to competently fulfill their job responsibilities. Effective supervision is essential to successful professional development. Supervisors are responsible for modeling and teaching effective engagement skills, and positive professional work habits and job content. Effective supervision is necessary if the PCSA is to expect confidence and competence among the employee population. Supervision of staff is critical for PCSA systems maintenance and the overall mission of increasing the safety of children, stability of families, and the support of communities.

OUTCOME

Staff will achieve increased job satisfaction and feelings of support in PCSA Agencies that provide regularly scheduled/on-going individual and unit supervision systems for their staff. When staff receive on-going support, guidance, and technical assistance on their very complex cases and job duties, agencies assure that their staff will be better prepared and ready to intervene quickly and effectively with at-risk children and their families. Quality, competent, effective supervision ensures workers are working to achieve the Agency's Mission and all activities for protecting children and will be demonstrated in the quality of their professional judgements and their overall work product.

APPLICATION

I.) Supervision of Employees: Direct and Indirect Services

1.) Roles Supervisors Play

The PCSA supervisor will understand the key and essential roles that they play in managing people, systems, cases, and data towards the enhanced protection and safety for their community's at-risk children and families. The activities of supervisors that are directed towards this end fit into three key categories: Administrative, Educational, and Supportive activities and behaviors. Two elements that cut across all three categories and merits special attention is the need for modeling and cultural responsiveness in effective casework and supervisory practice. In summary, these three categories and their respective activities and behaviors are:

- A. Administrative Supervision
 - Foster ownership of Agency Vision, Mission, goals, values, policies, and procedures.
 - Assure cohesion and high performance of the work unit.
 - Encourage maximum performance of individual staff.
 - Facilitate open communication between staff and upper management to achieve Agency and unit goals.
 - Foster collaborative relationships within the Agency and with community agencies and organizations.

- B. Educational Supervision
 - Provides/assures orientation of new staff.
 - Creates and implements a training and/or development plan with each staff member.
 - Encourages personal and professional growth and advancement.
 - Provides technical assistance, case supervision, and consultation.

- 3. Supportive Supervision
 - Establishes a positive work climate in the work unit.
 - Develops/supports a team work approach
 - Facilitates successful resolution of conflict within and outside the Agency.
 - Develops self-awareness of one's own attitudes, needs, and behaviors and their effect on the supervisory and worker relationship.
 - Promotes cultural responsiveness within and outside of the Agency.

2.) **Supervision and Employee Probation**

Employees of the PCSA are informed of their job responsibilities and job expectations at the time of hire. These are reviewed annually with the employee's supervisor. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to make sure that new employees are provided with a job description, training, guidance, and on-the-job opportunities to learn and succeed in their new roles.

- Upon hire, the supervisor provides the employee with a copy of the job description. A copy is signed by the employee and placed in the employee's permanent file.

- PCSAs have a policy on the supervision and evaluation of new employees who are on probation. The supervisor has a structured orientation process for introducing employees to their job responsibilities and for monitoring their progress in learning the position.

- PCSA supervisors provide new employees with a formal mid-probation performance review which examines the employee's ability to adapt to the new position. The

supervisor documents the employee's progress. When a problem is identified the employee, with the supervisor, develops a corrective action plan.

- PCSA supervisors provide new employees with a final probation performance review which examines the employee's success in adapting to the new position. The supervisor documents the employee's progress. If a problem has been identified which can be corrected, the supervisor with the employee develops a formal plan with time frames. When it is found that the problem cannot be corrected, the supervisor with support from the PCSA, counsels the employee out of the position as part of the final probationary process.
- When the end of the probation review finds the employee successful in meeting job requirements, the supervisor with the employee develops performance objectives for the next review period.

3. Skill Development and Training

Supervisors are responsible for supporting the skill development of staff. Identifying and tracking skill deficits, training needs, and on-the-job skill building opportunities are necessary to develop a confident and competent employee population.

- PCSAs have a policy on staff training and required annual training hours which identifies the supervisor's role in assuring that training needs are met and the new employee utilization of these newly acquired knowledge and skills on the job..
- Completed training is documented by the PCSA for the duration of employment
- The supervisor makes arrangements to cover the employees workload while in training.
- The supervisor, the annual performance evaluation, identifies skill deficits and develops performance objectives for supporting the development of staff.

4. Monitoring Performance

- PCSAs have a policy on the annual evaluation of employees which includes but is not limited to the following:
 - review of the employee's work;
 - development of performance objectives for the new reporting period;
 - narrative summary by the supervisor of the employee's strengths and weaknesses

- Supervisors provide regular feed-back, both positive and negative, to employees to assure the employee is meeting job expectations and annual performance objectives. Feedback is provided at weekly supervision, mid-year and annual performance evaluations. The supervisor documents having provided performance-based feed-back to the employee.
- Supervisors complete a mid-year performance review in conjunction with the employee, to check the employee's performance and to discuss the employee's progress in meeting established performance objectives for the review period.
- In cases where it is determined that an employee is not meeting job expectations, the supervisor, in conjunction with the employee, develops a corrective action plan with time frames. The supervisor is responsible for assisting the employee in implementing the plan, for following-up and providing regular feed-back until which time the employee successfully meets activities as delineated in the corrective action plan.
- In cases where the employee is unable to successfully meet job and performance expectations, the supervisor follows the PCSA's policy on employee reassignment or employment termination.
- Supervisor complete an annual performance evaluation on each employee. This performance evaluation is completed in conjunction with the worker based on an established and documented protocol.

Performance evaluations include a review of the employee's work, the performance objectives for the review period, and development of performance objectives for the next review period. Performance evaluations may be based on a PCSA sanctioned evaluation form but must include a written evaluation summary by the supervisor completing the evaluation.

5. Employee Discipline

- The PCSA has a policy on employee discipline. The policy addresses agency protocol on assessing verbal and written discipline and under what circumstances formal discipline is used.
- The PCSA provides each supervisor with guidelines on working with employees prior to conducting disciplinary procedures.

II.) Supervision of Employees: Direct Service Workers

The direct service supervisor is responsible for providing guidance, clinical input, and monitoring cases. They are responsible for coaching workers in their attempt to engage the family in resolving presenting and underlying problems. This can be accomplished through regular individual and group case conferencing, random home visits with workers, and attending periodic court hearings and case staffings.

- PCSAs have a back-up supervisor system whereby back-up supervisors are designated to answer questions, provide feed-back, and make decisions when workers' immediate supervisors are unavailable.
- Direct service supervisors post daily in-office time to be available to assist staff, answer questions, and provide support on an as-needed basis.
- New workers require twice weekly face-to-face contact with their supervisor during the first six months of employment. The supervisor meets with the new worker twice per week to provide direction and support. The supervisor documents the twice weekly meetings to provide information for review during the mid and final probationary reviews.
- Supervisors accompany each new worker on a minimum of one home visit per month for the first six months of their employment. The home visit constitutes one of the two twice weekly face-to-face contacts during the week the home visit is made. The supervisor documents appropriate casework process.
- Supervisors attend all adjudications and dispositions with new workers during the first six months the employee is on the job.
- The supervisor is responsible for reviewing with workers all their case plans, case activities, and case notes at least monthly, following the probationary period to assess the movement of the family in meeting their case goals and objectives.
- Following the probationary period, the supervisor accompanies each worker annually on two home visits.
- The supervisor annually critiques and documents one case file review for each worker. The supervisor uses this information to help the individual worker and the unit identify skill strengths and weaknesses which require corrective action.

Summary:

There is no substitute for a PCSA Agency that provides its front-line and indirect support staff with

regularly scheduled, on-going, quality supervision and technical assistance. The complex nature of the job and the types of cases that come to the attention of our organization make it a critical element in the overall Mission of the Agency in providing quality, timely service to at-risk children and their families. The major portion of these human services is provided by front-line staff who have to feel well-trained, valued, and supported in their child protection efforts in the community. Especially during times of turnover, the supervisor's role is critical in developing new talent into seasoned child protection professionals prepared and ready to provide and monitor cases and services to at-risk children and families. These standards come from PCSAO Standards for Effective Supervisory Practice and from similar standards published by the Colorado Department of Human Services in conjunction with the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Management and Administration (1994).

Developed by Marion County Children Services and PCSAO's Standards for Effective Practice