



Attachment D-Training Plan 2020 – 2024 Child and Family Services Plan

**Administered by
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Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services
Professional Development
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Training Plan

MDCPS Employee Training

The Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services' Office of Professional Development (OPD) is a part of the administration arm of the agency. The OPD administers training and professional development designed to prepare MDCPS employees to assume their job responsibilities and enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities.

The OPD continues to be led by Jennifer Walker as the Director of Professional Development. There are Training Coordinator (TC) positions in each region who support the field through on-the-job training and training delivery. In March 2018, MDCPS discontinued the contract with the University of Mississippi who was a partner in delivering classroom training for the agency. Through this process the agency Practice Model Coaches (PMC) joined the OPD to assist with training delivery and consistency across the state. This added additional positions in each region to support newly hired staff in the training process as well as support following the completion of training and the beginning of case carrying work. As of March 2018, the OPD began delivery of all classroom training as well. This shift has been extremely positive as the staff providing training are embedded in the regions, are knowledgeable of changes within the agency, and able to support staff throughout the training process while avoiding a breakdown between an external provider and agency staff.

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING

Pre-Service Training is a critical foundation for the Agency's employees. All newly hired frontline and supervisory staff are required to attend 270 hours of Pre-Service Training prior to obtaining a caseload. Pre-Service training continues to be delivered in a model that is a combination of on-the-job training (OJT) and classroom instruction. In addition, during the OJT weeks there are portions of the material delivered through online learning. The matriculation of training flows starting with week 1 of OJT followed by a week of classroom training. This cycle continues for a total of four weeks of OJT and 4 weeks of classroom training. In the 2018 year, MACWIS training was incorporated into each of the 4 classroom training weeks. Previously this training was not delivered until the final week of training and this was a burden. Trainees did not feel adequately prepared to use the system with this instruction delivered at the end of their training process. The incorporation of MACWIS into each training week gives trainees the opportunity to learn each step of MACWIS while learning the practice components in the classroom. This has been a positive shift with supervisors reporting staff being more prepared to enter the workforce with an increased knowledge of the data system.

During the OJT weeks, staff are partnered with a more experienced caseworker as well as their supervisor and a training liaison. The liaison is either a TC or a PMC. This team works to ensure the experiences assigned in the OJT material are completed and shadowing opportunities are in place. We believe this combination of learning strategies gives a new hire the opportunity to see the casework being done while they are in a protected learning environment. Training liaisons and field supervisors share the major responsibility for this task. Training new hires is a partnership with the front-line supervisor, the new hire, a more experienced caseworker and the training

liaison. Frequent communications during this time among the new hire, the liaison and the supervisor promotes the best learning experience possible.

Each week of classroom training concludes with a competency-based exam that must be passed with a score of 70% or higher. If the new hire is unable to pass the test on the first attempt, he or she can retest. Failure to pass the test on the second attempt is grounds for separation from the Agency.

The training curricula was reviewed by Public Catalyst during the 2018 year and is the material that will be used during the 2019 year. In the event a change if made, materials will be submitted to Public Catalyst for approval before delivery.

The topics covered in each week of training are as follows:

Week 1 OJT

- Building the Worker's Support Systems
 - This includes, but is not limited to, learning the Agency's overall structure, mission, employee's roles, and duties as well as orientation to basic programs, community resources, professional and ethical behavior, worker and office safety. In this week, the new hire begins the case observation process.
- Online training
 - Ethics; Strengths Based and Family Centered Practice; Child Maltreatment (Safety/Risk); Child Development

Week 2 Classroom

- Orientation to the Field of Child Welfare
 - Agency information; Reporting; Safety assurance, risk management and the investigation process; Gathering information; Protective capacities; Safety planning;

Week 3 OJT

- Building the Worker's Support Systems
 - Development of a community resource files, orientation to family centered practice, core conditions of the helping relationship, being culturally competent; interviewing skills and assessment are integrated into this week of OJT. Observation of initial assessment/investigation; completing a safety assessment; observation of a family team meeting. A home visit with a training buddy are also integrated during this week.
- Online training
 - Engagement; Strengths and Needs Assessment; Timely Case Planning; Eco-Maps, Genograms and Lifelines

Week 4 Classroom

- Prevention and In-Home Services
 - Assessment; Documentation; Mental Health; Safety and risk; Case planning; Quality visits; Tasks and goals; Supervision

Week 5 OJT

- Building the Worker's Support Systems
 - Orientation to family engagement; documentation; case planning/management and court processes; observation of parent/caseworker engagement; child/caseworker engagement; resource parent/caseworker engagement; a home visit with a more experienced case worker; attendance at a shelter hearing and adjudication/disposition hearing.
- Online Training
 - Documentation; Cultural Competency; Overview of Court

Week 6 Classroom

- Placement and Foster Care
 - Placement; ICPC; Expedited Placements; Permanency Goals; Visitation; Court

Week 7 OJT

- Building the Worker's Support Systems, continued
 - Orientation to engaging fathers, meeting the needs of children in care, foster care review; adoption; time management; observation of service provider and worker engagement; resource home evaluation; shadowing visit in the home; independent living; attend a review and permanency hearing and after-hours call.
- Online Training
 - Time Management; Father Involvement

Week 8 Classroom

- Permanency
 - Permanency goal options; Termination of parental rights; Preserving and maintaining connections; Adoption; Mobilizing appropriate services timely; Court; Transitional Living; Working with service providers.

In the 2020-2024 CFSR year OPD is working with our partners with the Children’s Advocacy Centers of Mississippi to explore the incorporation of simulation training in Pre-Service training. In 2019 MDCPS began talks with Illinois who is currently using a simulation model for training. The CAC has partnered with Mississippi State Hospital to develop a simulation house that can be used for multi-disciplinary trainings.

CLINICAL SUPERVISORY TRAINING

For newly hired or promoted casework supervisors, OPD provides Clinical Supervisory Training (CST) within 90 days of hire or promotion prior to obtaining a supervision caseload. CST is a 40-hour classroom training directed specifically at preparing the newly hired or promoted supervisor of child welfare caseworkers for supervision prior to assuming any supervisory responsibilities. It is based on identified competencies that culminate in competency-based testing which must be passed with a 70% for training to be credited.

The CST curriculum includes training for skill building in group activities to facilitate effective case consultation, build self-awareness, focus on content of cases and issues presented by individual caseworkers, and create a safe and accepting atmosphere so that caseworkers will meaningfully participate in group processes. Training also includes methods and models for providing supervision and building self-awareness of caseworkers by review, evaluation, feedback, guidance, direction and coaching.

During the 2018 training year MACWIS training was incorporated into the classroom training. This was in response to new supervisors not having knowledge of how to perform the required duties in MACWIS. The 40 hours training includes training on the following:

- Supervisor responsibilities in newly hired staff; investigation and assessment; family service plans; indirect/direct observation; quality visits; documentation; court; ICPC; termination of parental rights; reunification; supervisory administrative review; administrative duties of supervisors; independent living; trauma; PTSD; and self-care

ONGOING TRAINING

Beginning January 2019, all frontline staff are required to receive 40 hours of ongoing training and supervisory staff are required to receive 24 hours annually. The PDU fully implemented the use of Cornerstone as our Learning Management System in January 2018. This system delivers online training as well as tracks the delivery of online and classroom training for each person in the agency. In addition, the system will allow supervisors to view the transcript of their teams to maintain oversight of their training hours. This process was improved in 2018 with a system update between Human Resources and Information Technology to ensure all transactions are communicated through each office to maintain consistency.

The following ongoing training sessions have been, and will continue to be, delivered:

- Active Shooter - Training to teach staff how to respond to an active shooter situation
- Adoption Competency - This training is designed for newly hired Adoption staff. The training consists of two days of intensive focus on building knowledge and skills in writing thorough child assessments to make accurate placement decisions and develop better service plans. Also, the training will utilize a variety of tools and techniques to assist the workers as they facilitate an understanding of adoption and engage, assess and prepare children and youth for present and future life experiences
- CARA Training Guide - Training and guidance on how to implement the new guidelines of this federal legislation.
- Childhood/Adolescent Mental Health Issues and the Child Welfare Professional - This two-day training provides a deeper understanding of the need to be aware of children and

adolescent mental health issues, diagnosis, treatment and medications as well as methods of engaging clients and professionals who need services.

- Clinical Supervisory Training - This training is for entry level supervisors. Emphasis is placed on the clinical, supportive and educational supervision as opposed to just administration. Participant will be able to identify styles and traits of a manager and supervisor; develop a personal plan of transition to supervision; explore strengths and needs regarding supervisory practice; assess worker skills and ability to engage; learn direct and indirect observation skills; learn tools to perform case reviews; understand the purpose of performance appraisals and improvement plans; and learn effective use of the Family Team meeting and Comprehensive Family Assessment.
- Don't Take My Baby! Exploring Protective Capacities in Parents and Caretakers - This training provides participants an opportunity to explore the meaning of Protective Capacities (Cognitive, Behavioral, and Emotional) as outlined in current MDCPS Policy. This training will demonstrate how Protective Capacities is a critical element to understand when assessing for child safety. This training will offer the fundamentals of Protective Capacities as well as provide participants with an opportunity for practical application.
- Engaging Families/Building Relationships where there are Challenges - Overview of the challenges families face after trauma and how to help build or rebuild those relationships.
- Ethics and Accountability in Child Welfare - Training related to specific ethical boundaries as it relates to child welfare
- Family Service Plan - This training will heighten participants awareness of importance of professionally documenting information gathered on family. It will help to build knowledge and skills in documenting accurate information in all required screens of the CFA/FSP. Additionally, they will gain an understanding of the importance of a quality FSP.
- ICPC - An overview of the processes and policies for ICPC
- Independent Living: Adolescent Brain Development - Discusses the various stages of adolescent development.
- Independent Living: Family Team Meeting - Discusses the importance of a youth's involvement in family team meetings and how to structure family team meetings for older youth in care.
- Independent Living: Healing Comes First - Healing Comes First addresses the trauma of children/youth who enter foster care.
- Independent Living: MDCPS Foster Youth - Discusses the rights and responsibilities of youth in foster care
- Independent Living: Permanence - Permanence addresses the importance of a youth's need to be connected to family, peers and the community supports.

- Independent Living: Population Needs and Services - Discusses needs and services provided by Youth Transition Support Services to address the unique individual plans of foster youth ages 14-21.
- Independent Living: Stable Housing - Discusses permanent solutions to affordable and safe housing for youth transitioning out of custody.
- Independent Living: Successful Connections - Successful Connections discusses how MDCPS Workers can support youth in developing, maintaining and preserving connections to family, peers and community supports.
- Independent Living: Transition Planning - Transition Planning discusses how MDCPS Workers can support youth in transition to the next phase.
- Independent Living – Young Parents - Discusses the barriers and additional needs of parenting youth.
- Independent Living – Youth Assessment/Appraisal - Discusses the barriers and additional needs of parenting youth.
- Independent Living – Youth Engagement - Discusses how to effectively engage youth in all aspects of their case planning.
- Ins and Outs of Confirming Placements - Training on how to complete eligibility information for staff
- Is your Professional Etiquette Enough - This training discusses the most appropriate way to carry one's self while on the job. All professionals should have good etiquette skills to utilize while both in the office as well as out in the field. Is your professional etiquette enough covers many of these delicate issues.
- Keep It Safe - This training is designed to enhance our perception regarding safety in the workplace. Emphasis is placed on defining and formulating a personal safety plan. The training also focuses on what staff are to do if an event occurs.
- LEP Policy - Training for staff on how to work with clients with limited English-speaking abilities.
- Licensure Policy and Procedure Manual - Training on updates to the licensure policy
- Ongoing Safety - An overview of safety issues our staff and resource parents need to aware of while having children in their homes or lives. Car seat safety, water safety, hot cars, gun safety, sleep safety, poison storage solutions and electrical safety are all addressed in the online training.
- PMLC 1 Overview and Trauma-Focused - Preparation Guiding Your Staff's Development; Virtual Overview of Practice Model Learning Structured Application Trauma Focused Learning

- PMLC 2 Involving Children and Families in Case Planning and Decision Making - Preparation Involving Children & Families; Virtual Involving Children & Families; Structured Application Involving Children & Families
- PMLC 3 Assuring Safety and Managing Risk - Preparation Assuring Safety & Managing Risk; Virtual Assuring Safety & Managing Risk; Structured Application Assuring Safety & Managing Risk
- PMLC 4 Strengths and Needs Assessment - Preparation Strengths & Needs Assessment; Virtual Strengths & Needs Assessment; Structured Application
- PMLC 5 Case Planning- Preparation Case Planning; Virtual Model Case Planning; Structured Application Case Planning
- PMLC 6 Mobilizing Services Timely- Mobilizing Services Preparation Mobilizing Services Virtual Mobilizing Services Structured Application
- PMLC 7 Preserving and Maintaining Connections - Maintaining Preparation Virtual Model Maintaining Structured Application
- Pre-Service Training - This an 8-week training designed for professionals who are entering the field of Child Welfare. It is based on the Mississippi Child Welfare Practice Model components: Mobilizing Appropriate Services Timely, Safety Assurance and Risk Management, Involving Children and Families in Case Planning and Decision-Making Strengths and Need Assessments of Children and Families, Preserving Connections and Relationships, and Individualized and Timely Case Planning.
- Preserving and Maintaining Connections - Maintaining Connections to family, culture and community are vitally important to children in the child welfare system. This training will help identify those connections and the benefits to the child and family to preserve them, as well as provide an opportunity to create a plan to overcome barriers preventing these connections
- Quality Visits - There is a direct correlation between quality visits with children in foster care and quality outcomes related to safety, stability, permanency and well-being. This training will provide information to help understand that relationship and the skills necessary to conduct a purposeful visit with children in foster care, as well as the state/federal policies that govern those visits.
- Reasonable Efforts Practice Scenarios MODULE 3- The Reasonable Efforts materials have been developed in response to requests for Reasonable Efforts Training. The training consists of general resources, practice scenarios and additional information targeting each module.
- Reasonable Efforts Practice Scenarios: MODULE 1 - The Reasonable Efforts materials have been developed in response to requests for Reasonable Efforts Training. The training consists of general resources, practice scenarios and additional information targeting each module. All modules can be completed in their entirety, virtually by MDCPS staff using their tablets

- Reasonable Efforts Practice Scenarios: MODULE 2 - The Reasonable Efforts materials have been developed in response to requests for Reasonable Efforts Training. The training consists of general resources, practice scenarios and additional information targeting each module.
- Secret Slavery: A Child Welfare Professional's Response to Human Trafficking - This training session will educate child welfare professionals on the basics of human trafficking. As professionals, we need to know the definition of human trafficking as well as the signs and symptoms of the existence of trafficking behaviors. Once we have a better understanding of the definition and signs, we will discuss what makes children in the foster care system more vulnerable. Lastly, we will begin to assess the special needs of the victims as they relate to treatment.
- Self-Care – Filling out Buckets - Develop an understanding of the ethical importance of self-care and learn strategies to combat compassion fatigue.
- Termination of Parental Rights - Training related to the policy, procedure and law surrounding Termination of Parental Rights
- Youth Transition Support Services Policy

UPCOMING ENHANCEMENTS

As part of the plan we have been working to develop position-specific outlines for training that would be more directive based on the job titles. The first step of this process required us to identify a new job title that would define the work of each job class. Historically, a substantial portion of staff fell into the Family Protection Specialist or Family Protection Worker job series. While many of these were case carrying staff, as well as adoption and licensure staff, other staff were in these positions as well. This required the agency to create new job titles and descriptions with the State Personnel Board and once approved, complete transactions on all staff who were affected by this change in all the record keeping systems. In 2019, OPD can begin work to develop position-specific outlines for staff based on the new position categories. This process was completed in all systems in the final quarter of 2018. A cross walk of the positions is listed in the grid below.

Unit	Old Title	New Title
Frontline	Family Protection Worker I	Child/Family Protection Specialist I
	Family Protection Specialist	Child/Family Protection Specialist I
	Family Protection Worker II	Child/Family Protection Specialist II
	Family Protection Specialist, Senior	Child/Family Protection Specialist III
	Family Protection Specialist, Advanced	Child/Family Protection Specialist IV
Adoption	Family Protection Worker I	Adoption Specialist I
	Family Protection Specialist	Adoption Specialist I

	Family Protection Worker II	Adoption Specialist II
	Family Protection Specialist, Senior	Adoption Specialist III
	Family Protection Specialist, Advanced	Adoption Specialist IV
Licensure	Family Protection Worker I	Licensure Specialist I
	Family Protection Specialist	Licensure Specialist I
	Family Protection Worker II	Licensure Specialist II
	Family Protection Specialist, Senior	Licensure Specialist III
	Family Protection Specialist, Advanced	Licensure Specialist IV

OPD is working with the Center for Support of Families for the continued delivery of the Practice Model Learning Cycle in the remaining regions. In addition, plans are being made to deliver training on the Families First Resource Centers statewide. In early 2019, OPD rolled out Professionalism training statewide. OPD and Field Operations have scheduled time monthly for discussion of training needs that need to be addressed. This keeps a fluid stream of training delivery across the state.

Foster Parent Training

The MDCPS licensure process is aligned with and has been accepted through the Children’s Bureau according to the model foster home licensure standards.

The licensure process begins with orientation after a family has expressed interest in becoming a foster parent. Orientation is held at least twice each month in each MDCPS region. It may be taught in a classroom setting or with individual applicants, at MDCPS offices or in an applicant’s home. All adults residing in the home who will engage in the care of the child must attend an Orientation. When a married couple applies, both spouses must participate in the orientation.

The purpose of orientation is to ensure the foster parent applicants understand the licensure process. During orientation, the licensure process is thoroughly discussed with the family and information is provided related to the following items below. The function of the licensure specialist is to carry out the tasks related to the processes described below.

- Required background checks for all adults and children in the home 14 years old and older. Background checks include criminal history checks through law enforcement systems and agency data bases including the sex offender registry.
- Once an applicant has completed orientation, they can move forward with pre-service training. Pre-service training can be administered in person or through our online learning system. All caretakers in a home must complete the pre-service training curriculums that includes Mississippi PATH (Parents as Tender Healers), a child safety course, cultural diversity, CPR

training or certification, and travel and finance training. Foster parents are encouraged through discussions and educational material on the benefits of and expectation to work with the birth families of the children they foster in an effort to promote reunification.

- When all the orientation requirements are satisfied, the home study process can commence. This process is designed to evaluate and educate the foster family about how to care for foster children. MDCPS must complete the home environment checklist at the beginning of the home study. The home environment checklist must be updated annually from the date the license is issued, within two (2) weeks of a reported change in a foster family's residence, or when the licensure specialist and ASWS determine that it is necessary. During the home study process, the licensure specialist must conduct several home visits for the purposes of detailing the physical structures on the property and interviewing the caretakers and household members about themselves and their understanding of fostering process. Additionally, contact information for references is obtained and their statements about the family is documented and considered during the final approval process.

Considering the processes detailed above, when the home study is completed and all required information is submitted for action, the supervisor will make a final decision to issue a license or not to the family for the purpose of providing foster care placements. Once approved, a certificate will be issued to the family denoting their approval to provide foster care placement and the number of children the home is approved for. For relatives, this will occur within 90 days and for non-relatives this will happen within 120 days. Foster homes will be licensed for no more than 5 children including biological children of the foster parents at any time except for sibling groups in excess of 5 children.