



January 5, 2009

The Honorable Thomas F. Hogan  
Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court  
for the District of Columbia  
333 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 4012  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Judge Hogan:

The enclosed report is provided to update the Court on the progress of the District of Columbia in meeting the requirements of the Stipulated Order dated October 6, 2008 regarding LaShawn A. v. Fenty. The stipulation outlined a series of actions the District of Columbia would complete between October 15 and December 31, 2008 to stabilize the operations of the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA/the Agency) and move toward compliance with LaShawn A. v. Fenty. The report includes information received and verified by the Monitor as of December 31, 2008.

Over the past three months, the Child and Family Services Administration, with the assistance and support from the Executive Office of the Mayor, the Attorney General and the City Administrator has worked diligently to successfully meet each of the agreements of the Stipulated Order. This includes focused and intensive work to dramatically reduce the backlog of investigations incomplete after 30 days – which was an essential step to restore the Agency’s equilibrium and ability to function. Other improvements discussed in the report include hiring additional social workers to reduce the unacceptably high number of social worker vacancies; moving forward to revitalize efforts to achieve permanency for children in foster care and expanding the array and number of available out-of-home placements. The District should be commended for the success of its work during the past three months.

We look forward to answering any additional questions at the status hearing on January 29, 2009.

Sincerely,

Judith W. Meltzer  
Deputy Director  
Court-appointed Monitor, LaShawn A. v. Fenty

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**Meeting the Requirements of the  
October 6, 2008 LaShawn A. v. Fenty Stipulated Order**

**January 5, 2009**

**INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY**

This report is provided to update the Court on the progress of the District of Columbia in meeting the requirements of the Stipulated Order dated October 6, 2008 regarding LaShawn A. v. Fenty. The stipulation outlined a series of actions the District of Columbia would complete between October 15 and December 31, 2008 to stabilize the operations of the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) and move toward compliance with LaShawn A. v. Fenty.

CFSA has successfully completed each of the requirements of the Stipulation through focused and intensive work and collaboration with its public and private partners. One of the goals of the requirements included in the stipulation was to immediately address some of the most glaring problems that were contributing to the downward spiraling down of performance at the Child and Family Services Agency in the summer and early fall of 2008. The ability of the Child and Family Services Agency, with support from the Executive Office of the Mayor, the City Administrator and the Attorney General to effectively implement the stipulation agreements has created an opportunity to move forward again to achieve the goals of child welfare reform which are at the heart of the LaShawn decree.

The remainder of this report provides information on the District's performance as of December 31, 2008 with each requirements of the Stipulated Order.

**Requirement 1: Contracting with Public Catalyst Group**

*Stipulation Requirement: By no later than October 15, 2008, Defendants shall execute a contract with Public Catalyst Group, a Program Support Consulting Team.*

Public Catalyst Group (PCG) began work in the District on October 17, 2008 and has worked closely with District leaders and CFSA staff throughout the three month period. PCG was contracted to provide support and consultation in the following areas:

1. Assessing the organizational components listed below and developing recommendations for organizational and performance improvement; providing short-term consultation and support to implement any recommendations made.
  - The existing CFSA management and organizational structure;
  - The Child Protective Services management, organizational structure, and staffing levels; and,
  - Activities to retain and to recruit social workers and supervisors to fill vacant positions.

2. Assisting with the development of a Strategy Plan.
3. Assisting the Mayor of the District of Columbia to recruit a permanent Director of CFSA and a qualified leadership and management team.
4. Providing guidance and consultation on how best to successfully meet the stipulation requirements regarding elimination of the investigation backlog and reducing social worker vacancies.

The PCG staff team of four experienced child welfare administrators worked with the CFSA leadership team, providing support in key areas including work to reduce the investigations backlog and increase the hiring of additional social workers.

PCG was responsible for assisting the Mayor and the City Administrator in conducting a national search for a permanent CFSA director and candidates for the leadership team. As of the end of December, the candidate search and review process is ongoing and no candidates have been presented by the Mayor for the permanent CFSA Director. Dr. Roque Gerald has been serving as the Interim Director and continues in that position at this time.

On December 23, 2008, PCG issued a final report with recommendations based on their assessment of Agency functioning and performance. (A complete copy of the report is included as Appendix A). PCG's analysis confirms many of the concerns that have been raised by the Monitor and others over the past year. At this critical time, PCG's report emphasizes the importance of effective and stable leadership for CFSA and the rebuilding of a leadership team and stable workforce to focus on good outcomes for children and families.

Given the importance of a permanent leadership team, PCG recommends that the parties negotiate another six month "bridge plan" to set focused, realistic and measurable goals for improvement which can be pursued while the work to hire and orient persons to fill key leadership vacancies occurs. Following the six month bridge period, PCG recommends that a full implementation plan to achieve LaShawn outcomes within expeditious but realistic timeframes be developed.

During the six month bridge period, PCG recommends that the work be focused on supporting the building of sound and high quality case practice with families and children. They specifically recommend a more focused list of outcomes for this bridge period than the current Amended Implementation Plan<sup>1</sup> (AIP), with an emphasis on particular AIP outcomes related to Child Safety, Child Permanency, Child Well-being and Resource Development and System Accountability (see pp. 2-3 in full report, Appendix A).

With regard to organizational structure, PCG recommends that no structural changes occur in the immediate 6 month period but that following that period, CFSA consider developing a neighborhood-based approach, aligning much of the work of staff geographically. In addition to facilitating effective partnerships with the community, the PCG report argues that geographic

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<sup>1</sup> LaShawn A. v. Fenty Amended Implementation Plan. Center for the Study of Social Policy, February 2007.

alignment of staff with a single manager can help to create an Agency culture that builds critical relationships across program areas to improve the delivery of service to families and increases overall accountability for results.

Other specific recommendations in the PCG report are:

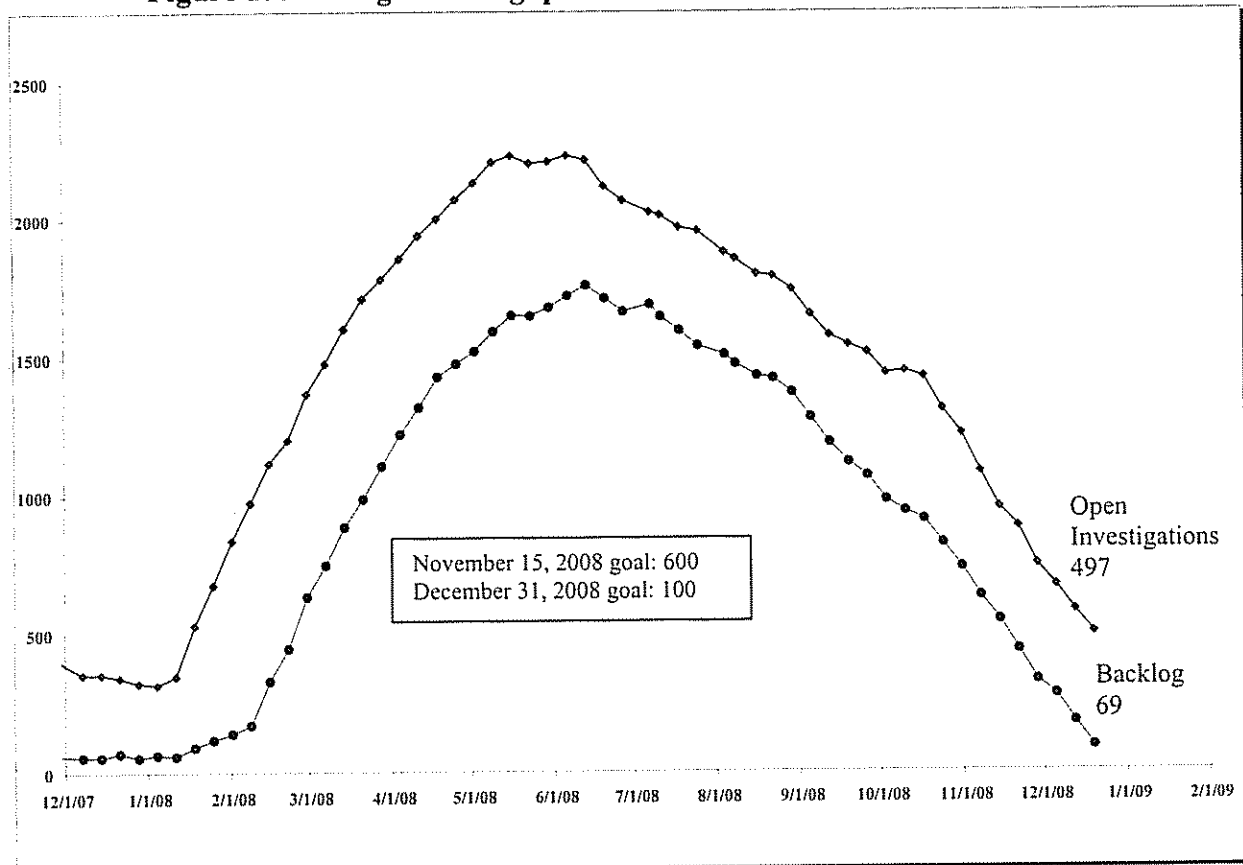
- Continued investment in the front door of the child welfare system by improving the staffing, training and practice in Child Protective Services (CPS). PCG also recommends that CFSA not go forward with a tentative plan to split up the hotline staff into different units with different program managers on the grounds that this will diffuse accountability.
- Greater use of performance measurement internally with a focus on a smaller set of measures for data tracking and reporting. PCG recommends the creation of a single set of performance measures that are used internally and are sufficient to meet the needs of the Monitor, the *LaShawn* Plaintiffs, the District Council and the Mayor's CapStat process. It is further recommended that information on performance routinely be published on CFSA's website.
- Immediately hiring a qualified permanent Director for CFSA contracting.

**Requirement 2: Reductions in the Backlog of Investigations**

*Stipulation Requirement: The number of investigations open longer than 30 days (the "backlog") will be reduced to 600 by November 15, 2008 and 100 by December 31, 2008. For all investigations open in December 2008 and continuing thereafter, there shall be no backlog, except for specific cases where there is documentation of good cause to exceed 30 days as verified by the Court Monitor.*

CFSA met the stipulation target of no more than 100 investigations open longer than 30 days. As of December 26, 2008, the backlog of investigations was 69 investigations open beyond 30 days, dramatically reduced from the highpoint of 1759 in mid-June 2008 (see Figure 1). CFSA staff devoted tremendous resources and effort to meet this requirement including detailing staff from across the Agency, refining management practices and engaging the community Collaboratives for support. In addition CFSA successfully enlisted the support and help of school system and the police department to provide necessary information to determine if children were safe. The PCG report noted that the process to resolve the investigations backlog necessitated that the Agency remove some of the long held operational silos, allowing staff from various areas of operations – CPS, In-Home and Permanency, Counsel's Office, Training, Policy and others – to work together more effectively to reach a common goal.. Beyond the obvious importance of insuring children's safety, eliminating the investigations' backlog is a crucial step to regaining equilibrium for the system as a whole.

**Figure 1: Backlog from Highpoint to Current as of December 26, 2008**



Source: CFSA

**Requirement 3: Reducing the Vacancy Rate**

*Stipulation Requirement: The vacancy rate for case carrying social workers will be reduced from 23 percent (September 2008) (58 vacancies in relation to currently budgeted Full Time Equivalents ("FTEs")) to as low as 15 percent (35 vacancies in relation to currently budgeted FTEs) by December 31, 2008.*

CFSA met the Stipulation target for reducing the social worker vacancy rate. As of December 18, 2008, CFSA reported the vacancy rate at 6% with 16 case carrying social worker positions vacant out of the total 251 case carrying social workers. The Monitor reviewed the monthly list of new social work hires and social work staff vacating positions. Between October 15 and December 19, CFSA hired 34 social workers and 4 social services associates. During the same period, 11 social workers and 2 social work associates left the Agency.

One of the factors contributing to the agency's ability to hire workers in the past three months is an agreement with the Board of Social Work to allow CFSA to provisionally hire social workers who do not have a District license with an agreement that the worker will secure their license within one year. In addition, the District has begun to hire social workers with their Bachelor's of Social Work as well as social workers with their Master's of Social Work degree. The parties to the LaShawn Order agreed to this change several years ago but with few exceptions, the

District did not move forward to hire BSW-level social workers until very recently. The PCG report recommends a continuing focus on social work recruitment and as importantly, retention and specifically highlights the need for regular, quality training to help all staff develop the skills necessary to deliver on the promise of the case practice model. With respect to hiring, PCG recommends that Human Resources continue to recruit and screen candidates and maintain a roster of ready candidates for entry level positions who can be selected as soon as a vacancy occurs.

**Requirement 4: Improving the Hotline Telephone System**

*Stipulation Requirement: The CPS hotline staff will be trained and the new telephone system for the CPS hotline will be fully operational by no later than December 31, 2008. The Court Monitor will assess the functionality of the system.*

The Monitor received an on-site demonstration of a test station for the hotline call management system and the recording components of the new telephone system in late November, about 10 days before the system was to become operational. All the elements of a functional system and the supporting technology are available through this new system. The system's technology allows supervisors and managers to listen to calls in real time, to record calls and to retrieve individual calls for future review. It also provides aggregate reports about the hotline (for example, call volume, number of dropped calls, time waiting etc.) The system became operational on December 10, 2008. Since that date, the Monitor has called the Hotline at random times to verify the system is functional.

As of December, CFSA was still developing its plans and protocols to use the functionality of the new system to monitor the quality of hotline functioning and to implement the management and quality improvement capacities of the new system. Once the system has been operational for a few months, the Monitor will conduct an additional on-site assessment and a more in-depth review of how the supervisory and quality improvement protocols have been put in place.

**Requirement 5: Co-Locating In-Home Staff at the Collaboratives**

*Stipulation Requirement: The first two units of in-home staff will co-locate with the Healthy Families Thriving Communities Collaboratives as soon as September 30, 2008 but no later than October 15, 2008. The remaining eight units of in-home staff will co-locate with the Collaboratives as soon as October 30, 2008 but no later than November 15, 2008.*

As of November 2008, all of CFSA's in-home service units have been relocated to the seven neighborhood Healthy Families Thriving Communities Collaboratives. The Monitor made site visits to two of the Collaboratives and conducted interviews with Collaborative and CFSA managers, social workers and family support workers. At each site, CFSA staff offices are interspersed with offices of collaborative staff. Methods for teaming on designated cases and sharing information about community and neighborhood resources are in place and are continuing to evolve as workers gain more experience with this new arrangement. Although it is clearly too soon to assess the impact of the changes on services to families and children, all of the initial reports are extremely positive both in terms of CFSA and Collaborative staff experiences and anecdotal evidence of greater ease and ability to serve families.

Consistent themes were identified during each of the site visits.

- Both CFSA and Collaborative workers like the new community-based approach; communication and information sharing among CFSA and Collaborative workers is more efficient and effective and all of the workers and managers believe that it will likely result in better service and improved outcomes for families and children .
- Teaming is occurring; CFSA and Collaborative workers are visiting families as a team, sharing relevant information and making joint decisions about case assignment and case planning. CFSA workers reported greater ability and ease of visiting families on their caseload.
- Joint supervision is beginning to occur among CFSA and Collaborative staff; training and coaching/mentoring is also more readily available.
- Transportation is easier as workers do not have to wait for government cars, have access to Zipcars and are more likely to use their own cars.
- Most of the concerns raised by collaborative and worker staff focused on operational snafus which are being identified and will hopefully be soon resolved. These include: computer connectivity and security problems which have resulted in lack of consistent access to the FACES system for CFSA workers and difficulty of printing documents from the system. Another operational difficulty concerns quick access to service referrals for those services that need to be processed centrally. Whereas previously workers would track down the results of referrals personally, the outstationing is requiring that a more efficient referral processing and tracking system be developed.
- The original co-location design called for workers to have local access to flexible funds to assist families with urgent and immediate needs. Currently, workers have limited or no access to flexible funds and have limited access as well to such things as clothing vouchers, transportation tokens and rapid housing funds. The easiest way to handle this would be to set up flexible fund accounts within each Collaborative so that CFSA and Collaborative workers can access funds quickly for families.
- The original co-location design called for Collaborative – CFSA teaming on all cases where families have intensive needs. In those cases, families would also be assigned a Family Support Worker. There are currently fewer family support workers than is desirable or needed and this is limiting the number of cases on which there is full teaming. (Approximately 90% of the cases carried by CFSA workers in the out stationed units are not jointly assigned to an FSW.) All workers interviewed believe that having additional FSW staff would be an improvement. In addition, some in-home service units still had vacancies as of the end of December, leading to higher caseloads than required or desirable.

The community out-stationing and co-location of CFSA and collaborative staff has considerable potential to improve services and outcomes for children and families. During this period, the District took the first important steps. Continuing work will be needed to fine-tune the approach,

work out the operational problems and insure that adequate resources are in place for the model to succeed.

**Requirement 6: Implementing Family Involved Meetings and Requiring Director Approval before Recommending APPLA (Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement) Goal**

*Stipulation Requirement: Beginning November 15, 2008 and continuing thereafter CFSA and private agency staff shall conduct a family-involved meeting and secure the approval of the CFSA Director prior to recommending the goal of APPLA for any youth. The family-involved meeting shall assess all permanency options for the youth and seek commitment from the youth and the youth's family team on the permanency recommendation.*

This requirement of the stipulation was intended to begin the work to dramatically reduce the number of children in foster care in the District who never achieve permanency. Currently over 800 children in the District's custody have an assigned permanency goal of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) which is the default goal for children not expected to be reunified or achieve permanency through adoption or guardianship. A change in a child's permanency goal may be requested or recommended by any party in a case. However, the Judge in each case makes the final decision about or assignment of child's permanency goal.

The agreement in the stipulation is designed to provide greater oversight of the process and increase the youth's involvement in decisions about their permanency goal. To accomplish this agreement, CFSA committed to requiring that a family-involved meeting be held for any youth for whom an APPLA goal is under consideration. The meeting is to be structured to ensure that all permanency options are fully explored prior to an APPLA goal being recommended and approved by the Director. Additionally, the involvement of family, friends and others that the youth identifies as supportive is designed to ensure that a permanent connection with a caring adult is made in those cases where APPLA is being considered as an option for the youth.

CFSA issued an Administrative Issuance on October 24, 2008, which outlines steps to be completed prior to a CFSA or private agency social worker recommending the permanency goal of APPLA to the Court for any youth. The steps include conducting a decision-making meeting with the youth and persons involved in his or her life, facilitated by staff from CFSA's Office of Clinical Practice, to discuss the goal change. Further, a worker must obtain the approval of their supervisor, manager and the CFSA Director prior to recommending the permanency goal of APPLA for any youth.

As of December 23, 2008, CFSA reports that two meetings have been held with youth to determine the best permanency option. An additional four requests were made for a facilitated meeting but in each case, the goal of APPLA will not be pursued and the request for the meeting was cancelled. Since late October, the CFSA Interim Director has not received any requests to approve a goal change to APPLA. However, there have been several instances of a youth being assigned an APPLA goal by the Court. The Agency is reviewing how this occurred and if necessary, will create additional "firewall" mechanisms to end the practice of assigning APPLA goals outside of the new process. This process must also include efforts to encourage other parties to utilize the family-involved meetings prior to making a request of the Court, in order to encourage full dialogues about planning for the child's future. Beginning in January 2009,



CFSA will provide the Monitor with monthly data on the results of this policy and practice change.

**Requirement 7: Convening IMPACT Teams for 60 Youth with an APPLA Goal**

*Stipulation Requirement: By December 31, 2008, a CFSA impact team will convene family-involved team meetings for 60 youth who currently have a goal of APPLA. These meetings will result in the review of legal permanency options (adoption, guardianship, and reunification), the identification of potential resources for permanent, legal relationships, and recommendations and action steps for at least 30 of the reviewed youth. By December 31, 2008, CFSA will develop a plan and schedule to complete reviews of all children with the APPLA goal for inclusion in the 2009 Strategy Plan.*

While the procedures discussed above in relation to Requirement 6 are designed to prevent additional children from inappropriately receiving APPLA goals, this requirement is designed to review the status of the 800 plus children who already have an APPLA goal and for whom permanency work has not occurred or is stalled. During this period, CFSA continued to receive technical assistance and guidance from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Strategic Consulting Group and the Casey Center for Effective Child Welfare Practice to implement an approach to re-engage these youth in permanency planning and to connect or re-connect youth with family or other adults who can be a permanent resource.

From late October to mid-December, CFSA held meetings with over 60 youth, professionals who work with these youth and others involved in their lives to discuss a range of topics including the youth's permanency goal. In approximately 30 cases, these meetings resulted in concrete plans to explore another permanency option, such as legal guardianship or adoption.

In many cases, discussing another option besides APPLA or "aging out" of foster care at age 21 is a new idea for all parties involved. CFSA believes that successfully developing new permanency plans for these youth may take multiple attempts and intensive work with the youth, birth parents, relatives, and guardian ad litem to sort out a feasible plan. One of the lessons learned in the early reviews is that youth and their families have incomplete and often erroneous information about the availability of services and benefits post-permanency.

CFSA is developing an overall plan and schedule to begin reviews for all remaining children with the APPLA goal. In developing this plan, CFSA is paying particular attention to the lessons learned from the work over the past months. Importantly, CFSA is developing a comprehensive list of the barriers to permanency for these youth and will be simultaneously working to resolve these barriers system-wide.

**Requirement 8: Creation of Additional Placement Options**

*Stipulation Requirement: By December 31, 2008 CFSA will add 90 placements in an appropriate mix to address placement needs.*

By December 31, 2008, CFSA successfully added 90 additional placements to expand its placement array. Many of the types of placements created were identified as needed in the last CFSA Needs Assessment and CFSA reports that these additional resources have already had a

positive impact on placement practice. For example, CFSA reports these additional placements made it possible to replace 14 young children from St. Ann's Infant and Maternity Home into family foster homes.

The Monitor verified that the placements were created by reviewing CFSA-provided data. CFSA used the following criteria before determining the availability of a new placement. In order for CFSA to certify a new placement as available, the placement had to be (1) licensed; (2) social work staff needed to be available to support the placement and (3) the placement was ready and available for a child. Appendix B includes the types of placements created, the number of additional placements, the categories of placements and the date the placements became available.

The 90 new placements include the following types of services for children and youth:

- Emergency foster care: 10 children
- Specialized foster care: 30 children
- Traditional foster care: 22 children
- Teen parent care: 14 children (9 in independent living)
- Developmental disabilities care: 17 children (all in group care)
- Group care: 4 children
- Independent living: 4 children

These 90 placements were created through a variety of mechanisms including:

- Developing new contracts with private partners: 33 placements
- Licensing new CFSA placements: 15 placements
- Using Medicaid funding to purchase new placements: 13 placements
- Redeploying funding from under-utilized contracts to expand capacity with providers who had or could develop additional placement resources: 40 placements

**Requirement 9: Convening Impact teams to review the status of 40 children with a goal of adoption**

*Stipulation Requirement: By October 30, 2008, CFSA will identify 40 children with a goal of adoption (including children who have no identified permanency resource and children who are placed in a pre-adoptive home, but have not achieved legal permanency). By no later than November 15, 2008, CFSA will identify and hire an external contractor to lead impact teams to review the status of these 40 children and identify and address barriers to achieving permanency. By no later than December 15, 2008, the impact teams will be in place and will work in collaboration with CFSA staff to achieve identified goals. There will be monthly monitoring of the progress of the impact teams in achieving permanency for these children.*

CFSA contracted with Adoptions Together, a qualified private provider with experience in adoptions practice, to help lead and support the work of the Impact Teams charged with helping identified children achieve permanence. Staff members from Adoptions Together work on location at CFSA in partnership with designated CFSA workers. The work being undertaken by Adoptions Together and CFSA is informed by successful work being done in other jurisdictions, particularly that of Cuyahoga County, Ohio. Staff from Project Cuyahoga are coaching, mentoring and providing support to the Impact Teams to ensure there is consistent

implementation of the work and to encourage innovation. This support will be provided to the Impact Teams for the next year.

As of December 18, 2008, 24 of the 40 identified children are in the first phase, Assessment and Planning, of a six-phase process anticipated to end with Post Placement and Finalization Services. Other phases of the process include: Child Preparation, Family Location and Preparation (both of which are generally addressed concurrently with Assessment and Planning), Placement Preparation, and Placement Services.

**Requirement 10: Provision of adoption services to 25 children with a permanency goal of adoption but no adoptive resource**

*Stipulation Requirement: By November 15, 2008, CFSA will enter into a contract with a private agency with evidence of effectiveness in adoptions practice and acceptable to the monitor to provide adoption services for 25 children who have a permanency goal of adoption and no adoptive resource. The contract shall require that the provision of services begins by January 1, 2009.*

CFSA entered into an additional contract with Adoptions Together for this work. The contract was signed in November and planning has begun although the provision of services is not expected to begin until January 1, 2009. Some of the work with these 25 children will be similar to that described above. Since these children have no adoptive resource identified, the work will also include child-centered recruitment and case-mining, a process that includes reviewing all of the child protection system's records of a child and family to identify and contact persons who could serve in a supportive role with the child or who may be interested in being a permanent placement resource for the child.

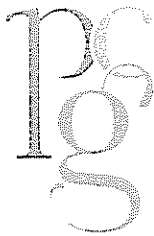
**Requirement 11: CY2009 Strategy Plan**

*Stipulation Requirement: By January 15, 2009, the Defendants, in consultation with the Plaintiffs, shall complete a proposed annual strategy plan for the 2009 calendar year acceptable to the Court Monitor that contains specific action steps and benchmarks to move Defendants toward compliance with all MFO and AIP final requirements.*

A joint decision was made by the Parties to postpone the development of the 2009 Strategy Plan until after receiving the assessment report from Public Catalyst Group. The Parties are meeting on January 8, 2009 and will review and consider the recommendation from PCG to initiate a "bridge period" of six months to further stabilize the Agency and to begin negotiations on the Strategy Plan in April or May 2009, once a permanent leadership team is selected and in place.

APPENDIX A

Report and Recommendations  
Pursuant to *LaShawn v. Fenty*  
Stipulated Order of October 2008



public catalyst group

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December 23, 2008

Report and Recommendations  
Pursuant to *LaShawn v. Fenty*  
Stipulated Order of October 2008



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December 23, 2008

## **OVERVIEW**

The Public Catalyst Group (PCG) was retained in October 2008 by the District of Columbia pursuant to the most recent stipulation between the parties in *LaShawn v. Fenty*, a federal class action lawsuit brought by Children's Rights seeking wide-ranging reforms of the District's child welfare system. PCG helps leaders in government, foundations, and non-profits across the country design, plan and implement major reforms of child welfare and human services systems. We focus on the fundamentals of organizations, using data as a tool to drive change. PCG focuses on building infrastructure and refining business practices to improve these important public systems. Our goal is to strengthen families, keep children safe and well, and create new opportunities for youth. The parties to the litigation asked PCG to undertake a variety of tasks, including an independent assessment of the District of Columbia's Children and Family Services Agency (CFSA)'s existing management and organizational structure in general and the Child Protective Services (CPS) management and organizational structure in particular. During this assessment, PCG reviewed hundreds of pages of documents, including internal and external reports about the agency, budget documents, and caseload and staffing information; interviewed CFSA leadership; conferred with the Fenty administration, a member of the City Council, the *LaShawn* monitor and Plaintiffs' counsel; interviewed key stakeholders, including birth families, youth, attorneys for children, parents and caregivers; met with foster parents and community providers; observed CFSA practices; and engaged with former officials and consultants to CFSA.

We conclude that CFSA is at a critical crossroads. Mayor Fenty is undertaking a national search for a permanent leader of CFSA, a search with which PCG has been assisting, and we underscore here that the agency needs a permanent leader with a full leadership team as soon as possible. That leadership team must tackle the challenge of an agency with much potential, which is still in the process of delivering on the promise of sound case practice and good outcomes for children and families. This year was a particularly troubling one for CFSA with its crisis in investigations followed by significant turnover in leadership and throughout the agency, setting back even further its progress on well-being and permanency outcomes for children and youth. In the past several months, interim leadership took the helm, the stipulation was signed, and the agency has been regaining its feet, aggressively reducing the investigations backlog, beginning training in good practice, and expanding services. The Public Catalyst Group (PCG) expects CFSA will resolve the stipulation period having made important progress. Significant work lies ahead. That work should build on the successes of this recent period with a strong focus on improving outcomes for children and families.

To summarize:

- The District of Columbia must select a permanent leader with ample support from the administration to rebuild the agency, deepen case practice, and focus on good outcomes for children and families. Those outcomes depend on stable leadership and staffing.
- That leader must have time to build a team, including making permanent appointments to such critical roles as deputy directors of operations, community services, and administration.
- Planning and implementation should involve a two part process:
  - first a bridge period comprised of realistic, measurable and clear goals for six months. The bridge period is necessary to get permanent leadership resolved, the team in place, and build a plan in partnership with the Community that can be successful. It is crucial that the Community of stakeholders in the District – including families; attorneys for children and parents; foster and adoptive parents; providers and advocates – be engaged in this process. CFSA has demonstrated through this stipulation period that a discrete bridge plan is apt to be successful when the agency is clear about its course and encouraged to be focused. The bridge plan should build on the gains in the stipulation period and relate to critical areas of practice including investigations and permanency.
  - the bridge period should be followed by a full implementation plan designed to achieve results expeditiously but realistically.
- The attention of all parties should be squarely on supporting the building of sound case practice with performance targets and goals focused on outcomes. In February 2007, the parties agreed on a series of goals outlined in the **Amended Implementation Plan (AIP)** ([http://cfsa.dc.gov/cfsa/frames.asp?doc=/cfsa/lib/cfsa/frames/reports/LaShawn\\_A\\_v\\_Fenty\\_Amended\\_Implementation\\_Plan\\_Feb\\_2007.pdf](http://cfsa.dc.gov/cfsa/frames.asp?doc=/cfsa/lib/cfsa/frames/reports/LaShawn_A_v_Fenty_Amended_Implementation_Plan_Feb_2007.pdf)). The commitments laid out in the AIP were chosen because the parties believed those to be the means to the important end of achieving better outcomes for children and their families. PCG suggests CFSA be encouraged to focus for the next six month period on the following aspects of the AIP:
  - **Child Safety** (AIP 1 & 2)
    - Conducting timely, thorough, and sound investigations.
  - **Child Permanency** (AIP 8, 9, 12, 13, 15,16)
    - Placing children in family-like settings and ensuring that young children in particular are not placed in group settings;

- Stabilizing the placement experience by ensuring that the first placement is the best placement. The research is clear that a child whose foster care experience is stable experiences better outcomes; and
    - Concentrating on ensuring children have a safe permanent home as quickly as possible whether through reunification, guardianship or adoption, and beginning to reverse the historical trend of long lengths of stay in care.
  - **Child Well-Being** (AIP 23, 24)
    - Investing in services which help keep children safe and stable no matter their family setting – in their original home, in foster care, post-reunification, and post-adoption. This necessarily includes ensuring preventive services. We also understand this to mean that CFSA will build upon its important work during the stipulation period and ensure a sufficient number of appropriate placement options for children.
    - Ensuring children in placement receive medical and dental care.
  - **Resource Development & System Accountability** (AIP 28, 29, 33)
    - Keeping worker caseloads to the levels required by the Modified Final Order (MFO) and adhering to supervisor to worker ratios to ensure robust oversight and support.
    - Honing the investment in quality assurance to ensure it helps improve the practice in the field.
- CFSA should continue to invest in the front-end of the system and make further improvements in the staffing, training, and practice at Child Protective Services (CPS). It should grow its present corps of investigators (including supervisors), and provide additional, advanced investigative training for all CPS staff. This is essential to ensure child safety and to prevent unnecessary removals of children from their homes and families.
- The parties should reach agreement on a set of performance measurements that can be utilized internally, by the monitor, by the federal court, by Plaintiffs' counsel, by the City Council, for the Mayor's CapStat process, and for the public. That information should be published on CFSA's website, and the vast rest of CFSA's current data tracking and reporting which the parties deem extraneous should be pruned back.
- CFSA should continue to focus on improvements to the child abuse and neglect reporting Hotline. CFSA should analyze the current Hotline staffing pattern to ensure adequate coverage. CFSA currently has 16 staff assigned to the Hotline and should reallocate more staff to this function.



The Hotline should be centralized and a tentative plan to split up Hotline staff into different units and under different program managers should be re-examined in favor of ensuring a single point of accountability for staff. Hotline supervisors should be trained to utilize the newly enhanced call system and begin to monitor routinely the quality of responses to callers. Additionally, Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) staff should be integrated into the Hotline to build a routine quality assurance process.

- CFSA has made important gains in hiring, which are recent, and hiring must continue. CFSA is aware that it must protect that investment by improving retention. CFSA can build a high quality, experienced workforce able to deliver on positive outcomes for children and families if it preserves low caseloads, ensures stable staffing, improves training by incorporating recent lessons learned, and invests in quality supervision.
- CFSA's service delivery system depends heavily on private agencies to provide case management services for almost half of its placement population. The contracting system must be responsive to the needs of children and families by working closely with direct care staff in both CFSA and private agencies. CFSA must hire a talented director of contracts (the position is temporarily being filled by an interim appointee) who can help build a customer-service oriented contracting system that is both efficient and effective. CFSA must fill vacant positions in its contracting unit with qualified staff during the next several months to implement this system.
- CFSA made important strides in uniting staff to achieve the common goal of reducing the backlog of investigations. The permanent director, once named, must focus the agency to ensure that all of its work is in service to the field – the staff who serve children and families every day.
- There should be no structural changes during the next 6-month bridge period, but following that period, CFSA should consider a neighborhood-based approach to its work, aligning the work of staff geographically. Investigations, for example, are much easier and more efficient to conduct if done in neighborhoods well known to the investigators where they can establish relationships with the local schools and providers – and time lost to travel is minimized. Additionally, building critical relationships across CFSA program areas is critical to ensure accountability, deepen case practice, and keep the focus on seamlessly serving families and achieving positive outcomes. If staff working in all program areas are geographically assigned and they report to one local manager (responsible for one geographic area, as is the practice in other jurisdictions) who oversees the full continuum of care from investigation through to permanency, CFSA's commitment to serving families through neighborhood based, timely and quality intervention may be enhanced.

- The important work begun during the stipulation period, reviewing the cases of youth with an APPLA goal, must continue and be expanded to include more children and youth, so that more of them obtain permanency.
- As part of its structural review, CFSA should consider eliminating the Office of Youth Development. Its existence creates an unintentional incentive against permanency for youth and adds an unnecessary silo to an agency striving for better organizational unification.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

***1. CFSA should focus on building and deepening case practice and driving to good outcomes for children and families.***

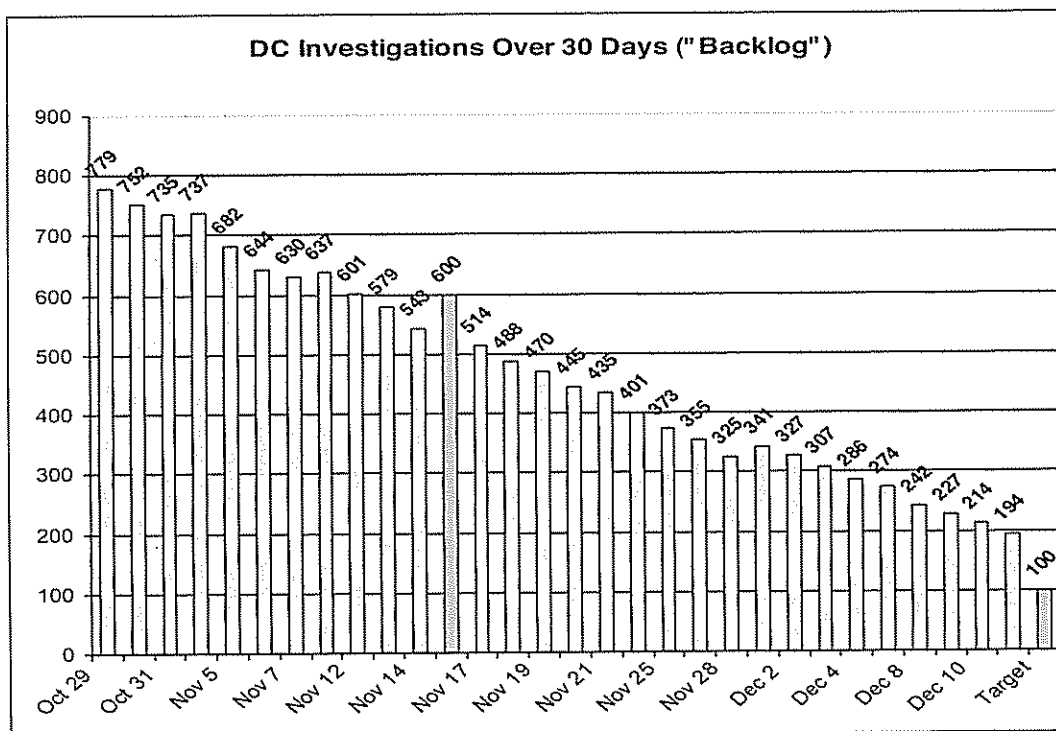
***CFSA made strides over the recent stipulation period and PCG suggests building on the work done in the stipulation period to shape the goals for the next six months.***

The stipulation period has had the virtue of allowing the agency to focus on a few important areas of work – reducing the number of overdue investigations, expanding the pool of available placements, and engaging in concrete planning for a select group of adolescents with APPLA goals, among other initiatives. While the stipulation came from a crisis which necessarily demanded laser-like focus in a few areas, the abatement of the crisis should not mean a return to business as usual – and that means noticing what worked from this period and leveraging that for success going forward.

During this period, agreement on a select, critical set of goals among the parties to the litigation has proven crucial for the agency. Everyone inside and outside the agency knew precisely what they were supposed to be doing – with concrete, measurable, reasonable and very public targets. It is important that the CFSA be able to build upon this success and focus all staff on a case practice model that strives for positive child and family outcomes. The agency has in fact developed a mission statement and a case practice model, and has been working with the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Strategic Consulting Group to deepen the quality of its case practice, but in general, there is significant work still to do.

Over the past several months, CFSA built upon its pre-stipulation momentum and has responded well to the stipulation targets focused on the outcome of resolving outstanding investigations. The stipulation made two commitments for resolution – an interim goal of November 15<sup>th</sup> by which time the agency had to have no more than 600 outstanding investigations remaining, and a target of reducing that backlog even further to 100 by December 31, 2008. As of November 15<sup>th</sup>, the

agency had not only met, it had exceeded that target. CFSA achieved a reduction to 543 investigations as of November 14<sup>th</sup>, which further dropped to 514 on November 17<sup>th</sup> (the 15<sup>th</sup> fell on a weekend). And as of the beginning of December, the agency was very much on track for meeting the ultimate target of no more than 100 open investigations pending beyond 30 days by the end of the year. Even as these recommendations were being finalized, the agency reported that it had met the target early, achieving a reduction of the backlog to 92 on December 18, thirteen days ahead of schedule. The chart below depicts CFSA's progress during the stipulation period, with the targets identified in red.



The backlog targets were aggressive but reasonable – they were developed based on some intensive diagnostic work by the agency. Because they were reasonable and founded in facts, staff could get on board because they were not being asked to do the unattainable. As each day ticked by and progress was made over the past several months, critical staff who had been disengaged became more engaged because they could see progress. The targets were concrete – they allowed the agency a clear definition of what success would be and for the first time in a long time, the agency had an experience of success.

The focus on a goal brought staff together even as many stakeholders within and without the agency have commented on how deeply siloed staff in different units within CFSA have been. While that siloing is still present, in the context of resolving the investigations backlog, it dissolved, allowing staff from various areas of operations – CPS, In-Home and Permanency, Counsel's Office, Training, Policy and others – to come together without regard for the confines of the traditional bureaucratic structure and roles, and they worked very well together. Preserving a focus on goals – and choosing a few purposeful, high-impact goals that are meaningful across units – can help CFSA build on their success from this period and continue to develop a culture that further rewards teamwork and accountability.

Moreover, the focus on a goal over the past several months put the agency's attention where it should be – on the outcome rather than simply on the process. As the cross-unit leadership worked hard and conferred, they moved away from rigid adherence to rote process and realized that the organizational commitment to the goal gave them the freedom to try different approaches to solve the challenge of moving the backlog responsibly. Leadership blossomed with the possibilities once they realized they were free to problem-solve and brainstorm and, in a very important departure from some previous practices, change course and try new things when the proposed approach did not work. The leadership team had important conversations about the critical elements of an investigation and then used those principles as their lodestar when they needed to reassess and change direction.

In this next period, the fact that the agency has a myriad of challenges before it in order to achieve success will make it tempting to advance a laundry list approach to planning. Stepping back from the immediate period, while the agency has made significant and important progress towards achieving success on process measures – caseworker visits, timely production of case plans, and even (before the current crisis), on timely investigations – the consistent observation was that all those processes were not producing the intended results, including quality investigations to keep children safe and gain permanency. The focus for this next 6 month period should be on developing targets and defining goals that relate clearly to positive outcomes for children and families.

***2. The parties should build on the success of the past several months with concrete, reasonable, measurable, and public targets that focus CFSA on outcomes during a six month bridge period, beginning in January 2009, modeled on the stipulation period. Negotiations to build a plan to achieve the overall goals of the AIP, building a successful, well-functioning system that delivers good outcomes for children and families, should begin between April and May, with a goal of finalizing the plan by the end of June.***

The temptation to build a comprehensive plan immediately is strong. PCG recognizes that time is pressing, and we believe that it is possible to stage a

process that develops a path to create and sustain a successful system without requiring immediate resolution of every step along that way now. For example, we recommend the next stipulation period spans January through June. The attention of all parties during this period should be squarely on supporting the building of sound case practice with performance targets and goals focused on good outcomes for children and families. There is evidence throughout the agency that, over time, process has been elevated above outcome, an issue the interim leadership has identified and targeted for reform. Certain processes of the agency are critical and need continued vigilance. At the same time, we cannot say emphatically enough that an emphasis on tangible, positive outcomes for children and families is in order. In February 2007, the parties agreed on a series of goals outlined in the **Amended Implementation Plan (AIP)**.<sup>1</sup> The commitments laid out in the AIP were chosen because the parties believed those to be the means to the important end of achieving better outcomes for children and their families. PCG suggests CFSA be encouraged to focus for the next six month period on the following aspects of the AIP:

- **Child Safety** (AIP 1 & 2)
  - Conducting timely, thorough, and sound investigations.
- **Child Permanency** (AIP 8, 9, 12, 13, 15,16)
  - Placing children in family-like settings and ensuring that young children in particular are not placed in group settings;
  - Stabilizing the placement experience by ensuring that the first placement is the best placement. The research is clear that a child whose foster care experience is stable experiences better outcomes; and
  - Concentrating on ensuring children have a safe permanent home as quickly as possible whether through reunification, guardianship or adoption, and beginning to reverse the historical trend of long lengths of stay in care.
- **Child Well-Being** (AIP 23, 24)
  - Investing in services which help keep children safe and stable no matter their family setting – in their original home, in foster care, post-reunification, and post-adoption. This necessarily includes ensuring preventive services. We also understand this to mean that CFSA will build upon its important work during the stipulation period and ensure a sufficient number of appropriate placement options for children.
  - Ensuring children in placement receive medical and dental care.
- **Resource Development & System Accountability** (AIP 28, 29, 33)

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<sup>1</sup>([http://cfsa.dc.gov/cfsa/frames.asp?doc=/cfsa/lib/cfsa/frames/reports/LaShawn\\_A\\_v\\_Fenty\\_Amended\\_Implementation\\_Plan\\_Feb\\_2007.pdf](http://cfsa.dc.gov/cfsa/frames.asp?doc=/cfsa/lib/cfsa/frames/reports/LaShawn_A_v_Fenty_Amended_Implementation_Plan_Feb_2007.pdf)).

- Keeping worker caseloads to the levels required by the Modified Final Order (MFO) and adhering to supervisor to worker ratios to ensure robust oversight and support.
- Honing the investment in quality assurance to ensure it helps improve the practice in the field.

The parties should commence negotiation on an overall strategy plan beginning by April or May and produce a draft plan with significant community input by no later than early June (with the dates contingent on the resolution of the question of the permanent director). In this scenario, there could be substantial progress made within the following year. PCG urges this two stage process because we believe the transition period out of the crises of 2008 into the next phase of reform presents CFSA with some real opportunities to move its practice forward and to engage more successfully with the community in designing the reform strategies. But there are risks that the creativity and glimpses of culture change sparked over the past several months will be drowned out if the solutions are prescribed now rather than allowed to develop through intensive work over the next several months internally and with community participation throughout the District. The bridge period will permit meaningful engagement with the wide range of stakeholders, including community providers, families, foster and adoptive parents, lawyers for parents and children, the courts, those most directly involved in this litigation and others, all of which is time-consuming but is critical. All must own the plan because success or failure does not rest with CFSA alone. Others must do their part and pull together with CFSA to achieve the outcomes DC's children and families so richly deserve.

***3. The Mayor should select a permanent director as soon as possible. The director should be afforded time to build a stable leadership team, diagnose the current strengths and challenges of the agency, and then, based on the diagnostic work, build a plan for success.***

All stakeholders – internal and external – agree on the need to resolve the permanent leadership of the agency with a qualified director who has the support necessary to maintain the position for at least several years in order to ensure stability and success for the reform effort. The Mayor's search process has extended across the country and has been exhaustive; the administration understands that making the right choice is critical. The turnover in leadership (both at the director and deputy director levels) was a theme in every conversation PCG had internally and externally. The turnover has led to a series of starts and stops around initiatives; changes in structure that are begun but not completed before further changes occur; pilot programs that do not blossom into implementation; and changes in direction and goals that are confusing to staff and to stakeholders and prevent progress towards outcomes for children and families. The cumulative effect over several years appears to be a squandering of good will within and beyond the agency, and worse, a jaundiced view held by

some of the prospect for genuine reform. A permanent director will confront the weight of that history on day one.

Internally, changes in CFSA directors (there have been five CFSA directors in eight years) have triggered turnover at every other level of the agency – some of which was deliberate as interim leadership made their assessments of existing staff. The strains of the fallout from highly publicized cases in 2008 and widespread staff turnover fostered a culture of wariness in which some staff tried to keep their heads low, take few risks, define their responsibilities narrowly, and attribute accountability elsewhere. Interim leadership has identified this as an issue, and CFSA's focus on the backlog over the past several months did allow some staff to come together and experience success as they made steady progress against clearly defined goals. But staff necessarily remains somewhat unsettled while the question of permanent leadership stays open, so resolving that issue will help the agency move forward.

While much of the discussion has necessarily focused on finding a permanent director as a pre-requisite, the need to build a leadership team only begins with the director. CFSA currently lacks permanent leadership in several critical roles, including the deputy directors of operations, contracts, community services, and administration. The interim leadership has drafted consultants and interim appointees to fill several of these roles. Sustainable systemic reform requires the appointment of a permanent director and sufficient time to recruit qualified and competent leaders to fill these important roles.

***4. With regard to their child protective services (CPS) practice, CFSA should continue to build their capacity to provide timely investigations and expand their efforts to ensure quality investigations.***

The focus on timely investigations should be maintained but balanced by a renewed and necessary focus on quality as well. Beyond the focus on timeliness, integrating continuous quality improvement (CQI) into the daily practice and building it into routine supervisory review in CPS is a goal for current CPS leadership and one that should be supported. The sequencing of such work matters. The current CPS leadership has proposed staggered training for Hotline and investigative staff beginning after the New Year. The training will be staggered in order to ensure coverage as the District is expected to receive an increased volume of calls in the first three months. As conceived by CPS leadership, the training will draw on best investigative practices as well as lessons learned from its own intensive review of recent practice in the context of the backlog.

CFSA leadership intends to engage in a debriefing on lessons learned from this past year as well as drawing on the myriad of reports related to CFSA's Hotline and investigative practice. That debriefing is critical as important issues came to light in the midst of the crisis that need to be addressed. For example, some in

CFSA leadership and attorneys for children and parents have observed that staff needs clarification about CFSA's practice model with respect to investigations. Because so many staff are trained MSWs or BSWs and so have received schooling in family assessment, not surprisingly, they bring that assessment approach to bear in their investigations. But going straight to assessment skips the critical threshold question of whether the District has jurisdiction to intervene – can an allegation of abuse or neglect be substantiated?

Good investigation work is a delicate balancing act requiring astute observation, strong engagement and interviewing skills, close attention to the proof required to determine the finding, and informed judgment about safety. The net must not be cast too narrowly lest children be left in unsafe situations nor must it be cast too widely or families without fault becomes involved with the system unjustly and children placed unnecessarily. There is always the danger that a system which over-reaches, becomes strained under the widened nets, and then misses those in critical need because it is trying to do too much. External stakeholders, including attorneys for parents and children, observed that in DC, a significant number of children are removed from their families on an emergency basis, but returned within ten days when the agency determines with its counsel it cannot proceed in court on the proofs. CFSA recognizes it needs to refine its investigative practice and explore other avenues for helping families tap into services when there is not an issue of abuse or neglect. DC has the advantage of a robust collaborative network that could help provide that alternative avenue to services. It takes skill and knowledge and trust to utilize it – and DC needs stable and well-trained investigative staff who have earned the trust of the stakeholders or the staff will not be able to fully utilize the network.

The investigative training proposed by CPS leadership will be an opportunity to focus staff and improve their skill level. It is PCG's suggestion that managers and supervisors attend the training first or, at the very least, concurrently with their own staff, so as to ensure leadership is in front of the practice change. CFSA might even consider a leadership orientation as a kick-off to the training. The CQI staff who will be integrated into CPS (and/or who will train and coach the supervisors and managers on how to utilize CQI tools themselves) should participate in the training. Once the training is complete, the CQI work can begin. Current CPS leadership understands that the training of hotline and investigative staff must be continuous and ongoing with a healthy iterative process that recognizes how challenging this work is and how expertise can only be built over time. With the increased staffing planned for CPS described elsewhere in this report and support from training and CQI, the goal should be to stabilize the staff and develop them into real experts in investigative practice. PCG cautions that it will take time and support from management to build that expertise.

***5. Once permanent leadership is in place and the agency's plans are solidified, CFSA should develop a plan to realign the organizational structure to improve the opportunities for the agency to be successful.***



***Most importantly, structural decisions should flow from a commitment to orient all elements of the agency to be in support of the field.***

***There should be no structural changes during the next 6 month bridge period, but following that period, CFSA should consider a neighborhood-based approach to its work, aligning staff geographically in the community.***

***CFSA should also consider eventually eliminating the Office of Youth Development as part of a structural realignment.***

PCG consulted with the parties to the litigation and they agree that no structural changes should be made until the six month bridge period is completed. Any structural changes should be organic and flow from an analysis of what will help the agency best produce good outcomes for children and families. Structure is not a panacea, but it can help an agency focus. And all of CFSA should be focused on helping the staff who help the children and families directly.

Turning to suggested opportunities for structural realignment, the bottom-line is that decision-making needs to move closer to those working directly with children and families. Units can be integrated, and remaining central office functions can be reoriented to operate in service to the staff working directly with children and families. Structural change is unlikely to yield meaningful benefits if it is not embraced as an opportunity by the CFSA leadership, which is why the agency should develop its own plan in light of these recommendations. Structural change should not be imposed from beyond the agency; rather, it should be implemented by the agency based on intensive diagnostics and a commitment to unify the organization toward effective implementation of CFSA's mission.

PCG suggests that CFSA consider a neighborhood-based approach to its work, aligning the work of staff geographically. Investigations, for example, are much easier and more efficient to conduct if done in neighborhoods well known to the investigators where they can establish relationships with the local schools and providers – and time lost to travel is minimized. Additionally, building critical relationships across CFSA program areas is critical to ensure accountability, deepen case practice, and keep the focus on seamlessly serving families and achieving positive outcomes. If staff working in all program areas are geographically assigned and they report to one local manager (responsible for one geographic area, as is the practice in other jurisdictions) who oversees the full continuum of care from investigation through to permanency, CFSA's commitment to serving families through neighborhood based, timely and quality intervention may be enhanced. But structure is not magical, and CFSA should be afforded time to develop its own plan to address the current siloing of job responsibilities and the difficulties that staff and administrators have operating cross-administration.

The changes in direction over the past several years have left some staff with change fatigue and confusion about their goals. The current structure reflects some of that confusion. So any new structural changes need to be made thoughtfully and be shaped by clear common goals that drive decision-making across all areas of the agency to common ends focused on improving outcomes for children and families. Fundamentally, the ability and responsibility to problem-solve, brainstorm, and take initiative to create solutions must be moved down in the organization closer to the field and in partnership with the children and families the agency serves, its community partners, and the neighborhoods where families live in order to make the agency's stated mission and case practice model come alive in practice.

The stipulation requires that PCG assess the existing CFSA management and organizational structure in general and the CPS management and organizational structure in particular. It is PCG's assessment that the District starts with advantages that would be the envy of most other systems in the country. CFSA has more than 800 staff to serve an annual population of more than 5000 children in home or placement and touch equally as many children through investigations. Fifty percent of the children in placement are supervised by community-based agencies, many of which also offer a variety of preventive and wraparound services through an \$80 million investment by CFSA in the private sector. CFSA has a total budget of more than 280 million dollars. The agency has an impressive information system, FACES. (Note: people complain about elements of FACES, but in comparison with SACWIS systems in other jurisdictions and even most other information systems, FACES is well-functioning and has impressive capacity.) They have well resourced Information Systems (CIS) and Policy, Planning and Program Support (PPP) units that produce a breadth of management reports, assessments and quality reviews. They have their own separate contracting and procurement staff which allows them to direct and control the disposition of their own resources. And the District is ranked in the "Best" category for foster care payment rates in the national report, "Hitting the MARC: Establishing Foster Care Minimum Adequate Rates for Children" (2007).

This level of organizational investment and capacity has developed over time. As noted in the most recent federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), CFSA made enormous progress with respect to all of the federal measures related to system improvement. (Note that the federal CFSR has two sets of measures – a set related to outcomes for children and families and a set related to organizational infrastructure and capacity or system improvement.) The report on that progress, which became public even as the fallout from the Jacks case erupted, was understandably lost as the public dialogue focused necessarily on investigations. But the CFSR pointed out some systemic strengths that illustrate this system's potential – potential that represents promise for the future if sustained and deployed to the right ends.

With the CFSR, CFSA met the federal standards with regard to all seven systemic measures. The first looked at the information system and the reviewers recognized DC's investment in FACES. The next five indicators assessed performance with regard to the case review systems, and CFSA met the federal standard on all five, including findings that in DC case plans were consistently established for children; cases were consistently reviewed at least every 6 months and permanency hearings were held in a timely manner; foster parents, relative caretakers and pre-adoptive parents were consistently notified of reviews or hearings pertaining to the children in their care and had the opportunity to provide their input during the hearings and reviews, either in person or through written communications although with the caveat that parents, particularly fathers, were not consistently involved in the case planning process.

The federal reviewers also noted that CFSA complied with the requirements regarding the policy and process for the filing of termination of parental rights petitions (TPRs) but noted reluctance on the part of judges to terminate parental rights unless an adoptive family had been found for the child. The *LaShawn* monitor goes even further, observing that CFSA and the judiciary in DC are especially slow to proceed to termination of parental rights when compared with other jurisdictions and sees that as a significant barrier to permanency for children in DC. Finally, DC met the federal standards for the creation and support of a quality assurance system, with the reviewers noting the use of the Quality Service Reviews and the breadth of tools and reporting at the disposal of the agency. In short, at the time of the CFSR, DC had every systemic element the federal government required. But the positive observations by the federal reviewers from one year ago should be tempered by pre-Jacks observations of the *LaShawn* monitor that progress was slowing, and recent observations of the *LaShawn* monitor that the progress reported by the federal government with respect to systemic reforms was set back due to the crises of 2008. CFSA has work to do to rebuild and sustain that infrastructure, particularly with respect to integrating its quality assurance processes into practice.

Returning to the federal assessment, the reviewers believed that where DC fell far short on the CFSR was in the more important arena of child and family outcomes. In particular, the CFSR focused on the District's need to improve its permanency outcomes for children and youth. Even before the 2008 investigations crisis, the fact that DC's case practice needs sustained attention is well documented in the federal CFSR, the Quality Service Review (QSR) of a year ago, the federal monitoring reports and the reports of many of the other experts and consultants deployed in DC over the past several years. Suffice it to say here that there is consensus among these experts that DC needs to improve its safety outcomes, the quality of its investigations, its provision of health and mental health services to children in care, improve stability while children are in placement, and ensure many more of its children and youth achieve permanency and achieve it in a timely fashion. Two examples illustrate the challenge. The District drastically overuses the permanency goal of APPLA ("another permanent

planned living arrangement” which is not reunification, guardianship or adoption). For youth 21 and under, fully 36% of DC’s placement population is goal APPLA, compared to 14% nationally, 12% in New York City, and 12% in Detroit (Wayne County). Moreover, practice has actually slipped in the last couple of years with more and more youth given a goal of “emancipation” at a younger and younger age. The current crossroads for DC is that it has made the investments in infrastructure – it must sustain those and turn them into better outcomes.

Over this next period of time, the District, like nearly every other jurisdiction in the United States, is going to be under tremendous financial pressure. The lawsuit provides substantial protection but it will be challenging to maintain a robust level of taxpayer support in the face of a public dialogue that emphasizes only failure. It is PCG’s experience that a well-functioning system can achieve efficiencies that a more dysfunctional system cannot. CFSA has some work to do to achieve efficiencies – but any targeted efficiencies should be strategic and be driven by the goal to produce better outcomes. As described in this document, PCG suggests that an intensive diagnostic period provides the opportunity to surface opportunities to realign structurally and leverage existing resources to produce outcomes – and the efficiencies will follow.

A striking theme among the discussions within and without the agency was the observation of how deeply siloed are the units in the agency, meaning each unit tends to operate as an island without routine partnership across units, and then the units are organized into administrations. The orientation of the structure is vertical – not horizontal. Units are organized by function. Children and families are transferred among units depending on the designated service and so the lack of partnership is a real problem.

For example, a youth entering care starts the experience with the CPS staff, who report to one administration. Placement is handled by a different unit reporting to a different administration. With placement, the child then becomes the responsibility of an in-home and permanency unit – which reports to yet a third administration. If the child is deemed not to be eligible for reunification, responsibility might then partially shift to adoption staff (who were only semi-integrated into the permanency units just before Jacks, and now that is being reversed) or moved to the Office of Youth Development. So vertical is the structure that resolution of cross-unit functions (and as the example suggests, virtually every case requires some cross-unit functionality) has no natural point of resolution close to the field. This structure forces routine decision-making up the chain of command to the deputy director level, and even, to a striking degree, the director.

Moreover, this structure actually creates incentives to move responsibility and cases onto the next unit, particularly in a culture which focuses strongly on compliance with timeframes and which lacks support for decision-making and accountability nearer to the field. Naturally, the unintended consequence is that

the last unit in the chain is left holding the bag – and in DC, that unit is too often OYD, which partially explains the enormous growth in the number of APPLA goaled youth, a growth that is disproportionate to that in other jurisdictions and which is not good practice. Structure must support, not impede, the continuum of services from initiation through permanency. CFSA should consider creating a structure that is more horizontal where all the functional areas report to a single manager closer to the field. That structure should decrease the incentive to hand off cases and improve efficiency, which is why we recommend the elimination of OYD as a matter for CFSA's consideration.

The stipulation period has been a natural experiment in creating cross-unit cooperation and functionality. The interim leadership has emphasized the need for all staff to pull together to achieve the goals in the stipulation. The experience of these past several months suggests there is an opportunity for realignment, but as all the parties recognize, changes must not be made precipitously, the permanent leadership must be appointed and allowed the opportunity to assess current staffing, and the bridge period can be used as a planning period to assess what structure will best support achievement and design an implementation strategy which will not disrupt any progress that has been made but rather help propel progress forward.

***6. CFSA should continue to focus on improvements to the child abuse and neglect reporting Hotline. CFSA should analyze the current Hotline staffing pattern to ensure adequate coverage. CFSA currently has sixteen staff assigned to the Hotline and should consider reallocating more staff to this function.***

***The Hotline should be centralized and a tentative plan to split up Hotline staff into different units and under different program managers should be re-examined in favor of ensuring a single point of accountability for staff, rather than spreading that reporting among several investigative supervisors.***

As recounted in recent reports from the *LaShawn* monitor, CFSA is undertaking a significant effort presently to improve its child abuse and neglect Hotline screening. During the stipulation period, CFSA accessed an enhanced Hotline system that allows simultaneous supervisory review and recording of calls for quality assurance purposes. CFSA should build on that investment in this next period and utilize these enhancements to help improve the quality of Hotline practice. The Hotline should be centralized and a tentative plan to split up Hotline staff into different units and under different program managers should be re-examined in favor of ensuring a single point of accountability. Placing all of the staff under a single management structure, conducting further training to clarify DC's child protection philosophy as applied through screening, and incorporating a robust Continuous Quality Improvement element will help improve quality, consistency, clarity, and accountability.

CFSA should consider reallocating more staff to this function. Call volume is not stable and staffing should be built to handle the peak call periods and not driven by an average. The number of supervisors should also be reviewed. Coverage has to be adequate to account for vacations and leaves. In particular, investigations will improve and be made more efficient if screeners have adequate time and training to thoroughly screen, conduct all the necessary information and background checks, consult with supervisors about which cases should be accepted, and record information thoroughly and completely. Supervisors need to be trained on how to utilize the newly enhanced call system to access recordings and engage in simultaneous listening to provide real-time feedback to staff. CFSA CQI staff need to be integrated into the Hotline to help build routine quality assurance processes. An investment on this front end can yield a high return for the rest of the system.

#### ***7. CFSA should increase investigations staffing and training.***

When it comes time to address the issue of structure, we recommend CFSA consider decentralizing the investigations function as described in the structural component of this assessment, but in the interim, Child Protective Services (CPS) does need to increase its staffing to the level recently proposed by CFSA. The agency has proposed raising the number of investigators to 80 and the number of supervisors to 15 (there are 2 additional supervisors who appear to be assigned only to the hotline). [Note: it can be confusing looking at caseload reporting over the past several months as several staff have been detailed over to investigations – but those staff should not be confused with the staff permanently assigned to investigations.] PCG believes this decision should be supported.

Moreover, we suggest re-examination of the number of supervisors allocated to investigations to ensure there are enough to cover vacations, leaves and turnover. Supervisors can play a critical role in deepening the quality of practice, ensuring timeliness, building a sense of responsibility, developing consistency of decision-making, and accountability. Several key supervisor roles, which had been vacant in CPS, have recently been filled – and there is a plan by agency leadership to provide additional support and training to those supervisors moving forward into 2009. PCG appreciates how challenging it can be to juggle day-to-day operations and the need to set time aside in a thoughtful way to train and supervise supervisors. Ensuring the optimal level of staffing at the supervisory level in CPS will help CFSA achieve that goal.

In previous agency plans, there is reference to “over-staffing” investigations at staffing levels almost 30 percent below the number currently proposed, but that characterization is based on a misunderstanding of the investigations flow. Like call volume, investigations surge and ebb. As with an emergency room, it is critical to staff to the peaks as no one can be turned away or investigations

delayed. Staffing must take into account coverage for vacations and leaves, turnover, and the time necessary for new staff to get up to speed. New staff cannot and should not carry caseloads at the same level as experienced staff – and if that experiential curve is not taken into account, one of two bad things happens. Either new staff are overloaded, or older staff are. In either scenario, staff are more apt to turnover and the quality of investigations can be negatively affected, so building the turnover rate and the learning curve into the staff analysis is critical. Turnover in investigations can be particularly problematic for an agency because it is work that requires critical decision-making that can only be honed with experience and exposure to strong supervision. Most systems try to steer their most experienced staff into investigations, as should CFSA.

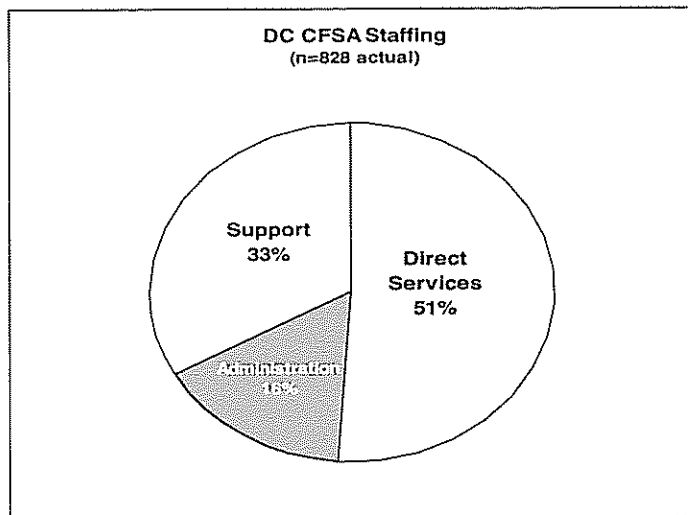
Robust investigations staffing in CPS is also necessary because DC's timeframes are especially demanding as noted in the CFSR and as compared with other jurisdictions. Several recent reports by the monitor and others noted that DC (prior to the crisis this year) had done well on investigative timeliness but observed a problem with thoroughness and quality. CFSA must make an investment on the front end as good and thorough investigations pay off in priceless ways (safety and child well-being) as well as in the prevention of unnecessary and expensive removals of children from their birth families into placement.

CFSA should reassess the staffing analysis at regular intervals and modify them in the event that new patterns in demographics, volume, turnover, etc. emerge.

***8. CFSA should focus support and administration staff on supporting the field. Improve integration of administrative and support functions with field functions.***

***The parties should reach agreement on a set of performance measurements that can be utilized internally, by the monitor, by the City Council, for the Mayor's CapStat process, and for the public. That information should be published on CFSA's website, and the vast rest of CFSA's current data tracking and reporting which the parties deem extraneous should be pruned back.***

Turning to the role of the support and administrative positions at CFSA, there are challenges in connecting that work to the field staff working directly with children and families and coordinating among those units. For the purposes of this document, support functions include such critical areas as training, information services, policy, planning and program support, placement, and licensing. Administration includes contracting, revenue, human resources, facilities management, and the offices of the director and inter-agency affairs, among others. The chart below illustrates the investment CFSA has made in support and administration.



While exploring the scope and role of every one of these units is not possible given the limited period of time allowed for this assessment, focusing on a few critical areas helps to illustrate the challenges of the whole. DC has the advantage of robust Policy, Planning and Program Support (PPP) and Child Information Services (CIS) units. These units produce abundant numbers of reports and information that could be useful to the field. But in many respects, this system actually produces too many reports and tries to measure too many things, which leads to information overload and creates an absorption problem for the field.

DC produces one of the most comprehensive set of management reports PCG has ever seen (more than 600 in all). There is a great deal of information in those reports, for sure, but internal and external conversations reveal that in practice, only a few are utilized. The perception within CFSA is that the monitoring staff need most of those reports, but in checking with them, it is evident they focus on a much smaller set, and would welcome the opportunity to review fewer reports if the trade-off was the ability to improve the quality of select information and catalyze the agency's utilization of that data set as a management tool. CFSA leadership indicated to PCG they believe that much of this reporting is required by the *LaShawn* monitor. But the *LaShawn* monitor is equally clear that she does not demand, require or even see all but a fraction of these reports. Since CFSA also provides data to the City Council and the Mayor's CapStat process, there is an important opportunity now to bridge these interests and secure agreement on a streamlined set of reports to serve the administration, the City Council, stakeholders, the federal court, federal funding agencies, the monitor, CFSA and the public at large.



In PCG's experience, DC's information dilemma is understandable. It is natural that left unchecked, reporting commitments grow because the agency and stakeholders worry about eliminating anything, even as new metrics are added. But as is reflected in the Mayor's CapStat process, the gold standard of performance measurement is to focus on a discrete set of measures and reports. (See Kaplan's work on the Balanced Scorecard or the Harvard Business School publications on performance measurement). CFSA is currently obligated to report on measures and outcomes in the *LaShawn* order that are necessary for Plaintiffs, the *LaShawn* monitor and the federal court to assess progress and integrate those into the Mayor's CapStat process and the information reviewed by the City Council. But it must prune back the vast rest and not produce reports it does not use.

PCG recognizes that it will be a challenge to coordinate all the internal and external stakeholders' needs for information, but securing agreement on a critical set of measures and reports will have enormous benefits. As with the stipulation, such an agreement allows everyone to focus and helps create a clear definition of success. The set can be revised periodically but when revised, there may be trade-offs and some other measures and reports eliminated. If done correctly, the quality of the data should then improve because with the quantity reduced and the focus clear, everyone is looking at the same information. With everyone looking at the same information, the incentives to improve input quality and timeliness increase, particularly if the data input shrinks to a more manageable workload. If demands for data input and data reporting decrease, that could potentially free up some resources for field work, including the possibility of integrating even more closely PPP staff and/or CIS with operations units. If the quantitative and qualitative work could be even more closely integrated into the field, social work staff could get the reporting they need and the PPP and CIS staff could get the data they need. And if done correctly, capacity will increase while yielding efficiencies.

If a discrete, agreed-upon set of information can be produced, it should be published regularly on the CFSA website in a format that is easy for the community to locate and download. This transparency will help counter the perception that CFSA is a closed book, and while much recent attention has focused on what the agency has failed to do, would make it possible to see equally as clearly areas in which the agency is successful on behalf of children and families.

Beyond PPP and CIS, the theme of PCG's suggestions with respect to specific units above carries over to all units of administration and support. Success depends on everyone in the agency – absolutely everyone – sharing the same goals and operating to support the field. Often the issues that hold good practice back are not about policy, they are about the need for support from contracting staff or human resources or facilities or payments. Child welfare field work is complex and challenging and the strongest agencies across the country are

typically defined by a culture where everyone has to work together to help the staff who help the children.

***9. Hire a permanent director for CFSA contracting who understands the critical nature of the services provided to children and families through the contracting process and who has the skills to assemble a team and build a plan to support an efficient, effective, and customer service oriented contracting process.***

CFSA interim leadership, the administration, and the monitor have all highlighted to PCG the importance of improving the current CFSA contracting process. Furthermore, Plaintiffs' counsel emphasized to PCG that the agency has not been able to implement performance based contracting. We acknowledge the challenges of good contracting practice in the child welfare field. Contracting in this context requires an intensive partnership between program and the technical work of contracting. Too often the roles are seen as a trade-off or given short shrift altogether or contracting staff and program staff are discouraged from the necessary intense cooperation with each other. In other jurisdictions, the contracting and procurement functions are centralized outside the child welfare administration, and it can be very difficult to integrate the programmatic and contracting expertise with both program staff and providers complaining about the need to compete for time with sanitation contracts, etc.

In DC, there is a CFSA contract and procurement unit within the agency but it does not handle all aspects of the agency contracts, and it appears to lack critical capacity. That unit had a vacancy rate of 45% in November 2008 - five vacant positions out of eleven, including the critical position of contracting director (an interim director has recently been named). It is not clear that eleven would be the ideal number - that would take further analysis than was possible during this limited engagement - but most critically, it would first require a decision about the process for contracting within CFSA. Currently, contracting responsibilities are spread throughout the agency - including congregate care programs, placement services, clinical practice, operations, inter-agency affairs, and others. Leadership reports that all of those contracts do flow through the contracting unit before they are finalized - but given the number of staff in that unit, it is not possible for them to provide robust support with each contract.

Given the limited period of this engagement, PCG could not undertake an in-depth analysis of the contracting process. Still, we repeatedly heard concerns about the timeliness of execution; struggles to embed performance requirements; struggles to provide oversight; worries about the ability to communicate, support and embed the case practice model within the provider community; worries about the capacity to grant access to critical supplementary funding streams such as Medicaid; and worries that the CFSA process places the agency at a competitive disadvantage compared with Maryland and Virginia. As it is currently constructed, it is difficult to get a clear view of the contracting process, much less

attempt to diagnose its challenges and improve performance. There have been attempts to move to a performance based contracting system, but before that can be successfully implemented, CFSA's contract structure must first be addressed.

CFSA needs consistent and sophisticated leadership of its contracting unit. The leader hired to oversee contracting should embrace the message that contracting work must be done in service to the field – which in this case is both internal CFSA staff and the community of providers – as well as grasp the challenges of implementing a performance based contracting system, a process that should be implemented thoughtfully and begin simply. PCG suspects that contracting responsibility has been diffused throughout CFSA both because there is not sufficient capacity in the contracting unit and because there has not been solid alignment between program and contracting which makes it appear easier to handle contracts with program staff. Program staff should help drive the development of deliverables in contracts, help monitor performance, and be responsible for communicating with the provider agencies (it can be done in tandem with contracting staff) but they need the technical support of expert contracting staff. CFSA should either centralize contracting within the agency or provide the necessary contracting technical support directly to all of the designated units with oversight of those technicians by the contract director.

PCG suggests that one of the goals for the bridge period should be to hire a contracting director and have the director develop a plan to better align contracting responsibilities, permit that director to fill vacancies and hire the expert assistance she or he needs to support a healthy contracting process, and work closely with permanent leadership to ensure the contracting process delivers the supports needed to achieve the outcomes for the reform.

***10. DC has made substantial progress in its hiring over the stipulation period, but the gains are recent and hiring must continue. Moving forward, with its new human resources director now in place, it needs to examine its historical hiring practices to consider changes designed to build a stable staff who will stay at the agency and acquire the expertise necessary to create a culture of good case practice and deliver positive outcomes for DC's children and families.***

DC has a tradition of hiring staff with advanced degrees, largely MSWs, for its entry level direct service investigator and casework and requiring that those staff be licensed social workers in the District of Columbia. It should be noted that this two part requirement sets DC apart from most other jurisdictions. In its effort to improve staffing levels throughout this last period of crisis, CFSA has addressed the requirements for practicing social work in the District of Columbia as applied to CFSA. The licensing board has agreed that CFSA can hire staff working towards licensure and those new staff would have up to one year to become licensed. CFSA was also permitted to hire BSWs rather than strictly MSWs.

Subsequently, some outside stakeholders have raised a question about whether making this exception was wise, while others have applauded it. PCG believes that making this exception was necessary and that CFSA should be routinely permitted to hire staff with related bachelor's degrees for its direct service work, recognizing that those staff (as with all new staff) will need to be trained to do the work well.

On paper, the requirement to hire MSWs and require licensure sounds like the right decision as it brings to bear a more educated staff to do the work. In practice, however, it has not had the intended effect. As noted in the most recent CFSR, monitor's reports, and reports from other experts, DC's safety and permanency practice is not up to standards and so the investment in a more educated staff is not yielding the expected results. The reasons lie outside of DC. In virtually all other jurisdictions, while some newly minted MSW staff might do some of the direct service work, most investigators and caseworkers do not have an MSW. In fact, attainment of an MSW is almost always linked with promotion – and movement into supervisory and managerial positions and away from investigator and casework roles. While a terrific theoretical argument could be made for why the social work field as a whole should not reward people the farther away they move from direct service, the fact remains that it does. DC has been trying to be an island of excellence but that makes the agency vulnerable to losing its staff to surrounding jurisdictions.

Turnover this year is canceling out any advantage that might have been attained by having a more highly educated staff. Even with caseloads that (absent the recent investigative crisis) are routinely lower than in other jurisdictions and salaries that are generally higher, the incentives to move to another jurisdiction into a supervisory or managerial role are substantial. Salaries can be matched in those roles and it is an opportunity to move to positions with more status and away from some of the stress and long hours of being in the field. In short, while PCG believes CFSA has engaged in a noble experiment, the price it is paying is too high. Stable staffing is critical if DC is to grow its expertise in investigations and permanency and bring to life its case practice model. Investing in bachelor's level staff, training them intensively in the CFSA case practice model, and then assisting a group of them to attain an MSW in exchange for a time commitment to the agency is more likely to yield the returns DC seeks.

Furthermore, PCG wants to emphasize that all staff, regardless of their background (BSW, MSW or otherwise) need to have access to regular, quality training to help them develop the necessary skills to deliver on the promise of the case practice model. CFSA has a relatively new training director. During the stipulation period, the training director worked very closely with leadership to help support the achievement of the stipulation period goals. The training plan for the bridge period should seek to build on the gains achieved over these past several months. PCG recognized that it can be very challenging to deliver training in the pressurized, stress-filled environment of child welfare. It is tough to persuade

staff and supervisors that time spent in training is time well spent, when they are worried about the children they need to visit, the paperwork they need to complete, and the data they need to input into the computer. Keeping caseloads low, filling staff vacancies promptly, and ensuring staff have the resources they need to do their jobs are all steps that a well-functioning system takes to help staff concentrate on their work in the field. But delivering quality training, training that staff enjoy and that clearly connects to their work in the field, is perhaps the most important step a system can take to help support and retain staff. During these past several months, PCG heard some exciting ideas from CFSA staff about the type of training they were doing in permanency and the type of training they could do in investigations to move their practice forward. PCG applauds CFSA's reported experimentation, most robustly prior to the crisis, with training units and training mentoring and encourages CFSA to institutionalize these practices. With the abatement of the current crisis, CFSA has the opportunity to pause and think through both the content and the logistics of building a sustainable training process, one that cycles through core competencies and balances operational demands with time set aside for learning. In child welfare, training is not a luxury, it is a necessity – and it is PCG's experience that retention improves with wise investments in training.

In addition, DC can also further streamline its hiring process to ensure vacancies are routinely filled quickly (much as they have been in the past few months). CFSA, through its Office of Human Resources, should maintain a roster of ready candidates for the entry level Social Worker position from which new hires can be selected as soon as a vacancy occurs. The roster would consist of candidates who have met all the requirements for the Social Worker position and who have successfully completed the required criminal history and child abuse registry background checks. The number of candidates on the roster at any given time should be commensurate with the turnover rates experienced by the agency in this position title.

CFSA may be able to effectively maximize its recruitment efforts by regularly hosting job fairs in the region where applicants could be oriented to the agency's work, submit a resume, complete an employment application and receive a panel interview with program and human resources staff. Following the job fair, Human Resources staff would complete the necessary document verification and background screening of suitable applicants, who could then be moved to the ready candidate roster if satisfactory.

CFSA should continue to expand its partnerships with schools of social work in the area to serve as a source from which qualified candidates can be drawn. DC is exploring an avenue utilized by other jurisdictions which have had success offering a child welfare baccalaureate program that permits students to apply in their junior year of college to take child welfare specific classes in their senior year, while completing an internship of a designated number of hours in the child welfare agency and agreeing to work in the field of public child welfare at the

agency for a period post-graduation. The program provides students the opportunity to enhance their knowledge base to include specialized knowledge of the public child welfare system and to develop both generalist practice skills and skills specific to child welfare practice. Upon graduation, participants would have advanced work-readiness thus expediting their ability to assume their role in the agency. Similar programs have been eligible for federal Title IV-E funding, and CFSA is seeking to maximize its Title IV-E funding for training.

**11. Prioritize stabilizing the staff and supervisors in field positions. Maintain a low vacancy rate and focus on strategies to improve retention.**

With regard to staffing, as it was during the past several months, the focus overall must continue to be on the field and on keeping stable staffing in those positions which most directly touch children and families and the supervisors for those positions. In CFSA, those positions are generally filled by social workers and supervisory social workers (although some of the staff in those titles work elsewhere in the agency). The turnover rate post-Jacks from February 2008 through October 2008 was devastating, with a rate of 33% for social workers and a social work supervisor turnover rate of 21%. Those rates are annualized below.

*Social Workers*

Month	Head Count	Separations	Turnover
Nov-07	257	3	1.17%
Dec-07	256	0	0.00%
Jan-08	257	1	0.39%
Feb-08	252	5	1.98%
Mar-08	255	3	1.18%
Apr-08	247	6	2.43%
May-08	244	5	2.05%
Jun-08	243	5	2.06%
Jul-08	246	4	1.63%
Aug-08	239	15	6.28%
Sep-08	248	9	3.63%
Oct-08	265	9	3.40%
<b>Annualized</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>25.92%</b>

*Supervisory Social  
Workers*

Month	Head Count	Separations	Turnover
Nov-07	69	1	1.45%
Dec-07	69	1	1.45%
Jan-08	68	2	2.94%
Feb-08	66	3	4.55%
Mar-08	63	0	0.00%
Apr-08	62	1	1.61%
May-08	63	1	1.59%
Jun-08	64	0	0.00%
Jul-08	61	2	3.28%
Aug-08	64	0	0.00%
Sep-08	65	1	1.54%
Oct-08	62	2	3.23%
Annualized	65	14	21.65%

The most challenging month for loss of social work staff was August, when 15 staff left, but much of that turnover was deliberate and at the request of interim leadership. Since August, the number dropped to nine in each of the months of September and October. During this same period, the agency strove to fill the social work positions, increasing the net number of social workers from 239 up to 265 between August and October, an increase of almost ten percent in that workforce. The current vacancy rate for social work staff is under ten percent, which is good. If the agency can keep the net staffing stable at around 265 individuals and lose no more than an average of 3 staff each month, that would result in a turnover rate of under 14%. A turnover rate at that level is within the norm of good performance nationally and is low enough to ensure the majority of practitioners are stable.

With the focus during the past several months on social workers, the agency can next turn next to analyzing its need for social work supervisors. The net number of supervisors has gone up and down over recent months, for a total of 62 in October compared to 65 in both August and September. With regard to supervisors, the turnover rate should be lower, ideally well under ten percent. On this front CFSA has work to do, but any haste to hire or promote in this respect should be tempered by the need to fill these positions with qualified staff who reflect the case practice values of the agency as these supervisors should be the primary source for nurturing improved case practice. (Note: CFSA is investing in some important case practice related training. It will be important to ensure supervisors have intense exposure to this training – so either any additional supervisors need to be hired soon or there must be a plan for additional training as they are appointed.)

**APPENDIX B:**  
**Additional Placement Resources Created by CFSA as Part of**  
**October 6, 2008 LaShawn A. v. Fenty Stipulation**

<b>COMPLETED RESOURCE ADDITIONS AS OF 12/31/2008</b>						
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>	<b>Prior Placements</b>	<b>Total Placements</b>	<b>Total New Placements</b>	<b>Contract Date</b>	<b>Availability Date</b>
<b>New Placements</b>						
<i>Emergency Foster Care</i>						
CFSA	STAR Emergency Foster Care	9	15	3	10/1/2008	10/1/2008
CFSA	STAR Emergency Foster Care	9	19	7	12/19/2008	12/19/2008
<i>Specialized Foster Care</i>						
Helping Children Grow	Medically Frag. Foster Care	5	7	2	8/13/2008	8/13/2008
Seraaj	Specialized Foster Care	33	49	16	8/13/2008	8/13/2008
Kids Peace	Specialized Foster Care	24	28	4	8/13/2008	8/13/2008
Seraaj	Specialized Foster Care	10	18	8	12/1/2008	12/1/2008
<i>Traditional Foster Care</i>						
Seraaj	Traditional Foster Care	0	10	10	8/13/2008	8/13/2008
Seraaj	Traditional Foster Care	10	4	4	12/1/2008	12/1/2008
Kids Peace	Traditional Foster Care	9	12	3	8/13/2008	8/13/2008
Board of Child Care	Traditional Foster Care	60	65	5	8/13/2008	8/13/2008
<i>Teen Parent Placements</i>						
CFSA	Teen Parent Foster Care	5	10	5	N/A	9/1/2008
FCS, Bright Futures Program	Teen Parent ILP	10	14	4	7/28/2008	11/7/2008
St. Ann's	Teen Parent ILP	4	9	5	12/1/2008	12/1/2008
<i>Development Disabilities</i>						
Center for Social Change	Therapeutic Group Care - Children with Developmental Disabilities	12	25	13	10/1/2008	10/1/2008
SAGA	Therapeutic Group Care - Children with Developmental Disabilities	17	21	4		
<i>Group Care</i>						
Children's Guild	Therapeutic Group Care	4	8	4	10/1/2008	10/1/2008
<i>Independent Living</i>						
Catholic Charities	Independent Living Program	18	22	4	7/8/2008	10/21/2008
<b>Mechanisms Used to Create New Placements</b>						
<i>Placements created with redeployed funding from under-utilized contracts</i>				40		
<i>Placements created with new Medicaid Funding</i>				13		
<i>New contracts</i>				33		
<i>New CFSA licensed placements</i>				15		
<b>Total New Placements</b>				<b>101</b>		
<b>Existing Placements Eliminated for Fund Redeployment</b>				<b>-11</b>		
<b>GRAND TOTAL NEW PLACEMENTS</b>				<b>90</b>		