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RBWO Minimum Standards FY24 Updates



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Division of Family & Children Services



Partnership in Action

- 54 providers participated in the survey sent out via GA+SCORE.
- 55%- CPA
- 31%- CCI
- 11%- ILP
- 2%- Other

The *Minimum*

RBWO Minimum Standards are focused on securing positive permanency, health and education outcomes for children and to reduce risks to their welfare and safety. Providers must aim to provide the best care possible for the children in their care; observing the Standards is an essential part, but only a part, of the overall responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of each individual child placed. The Standards are presented as “minimum” requirements rather than as best practices. Thus, providers should strive to exceed these minimum requirements.



Tips for Success

- Read from cover to cover at least quarterly.
- Use sections to train staff members frequently to ensure compliance across the agency.
- Develop processes for improvement when deficiencies are identified.
- Remain informed of updates.



Revised STANDARD 1.3

1. Revised Minimum Standard 1.3 Providers must ensure that employees in positions or classes of positions that have direct care, treatment, custodial care, access to confidential information of clients or any combination thereof (to include administrative support staff, janitorial/housekeeping staff, maintenance/grounds keeping staff and security guards) shall undergo a criminal history investigation prior to being hired and every five years thereafter (based upon hire date anniversary). This requirement became effective July 1, 2014. Staff hired prior to July 1, 2009 but before July 1, 2014 must have their 5-year criminal records check completed by their anniversary date as they reach their fifth (5th) year of service. The criminal history investigation shall include fingerprint record check pursuant to the provisions of Section 49-2-14 of the Official Code of Georgia, Annotated (O.C.G.A). Providers shall maintain and upon request, provide DHS with evidence of a satisfactory criminal record check of any members of its staff or a subcontractor's staff assigned to or proposed to be assigned to any aspect of the performance of this contract. Providers must utilize the Georgia Applicant Processing Services (GAPS) identified vendor to comply with this requirement. Visit the GAPS [website at https://fieldprintgeorgia.com/businesses](https://fieldprintgeorgia.com/businesses) for complete details on the background check process, print site locations, and to register your agency.



Revised STANDARD 1.9

Providers must have a policy on bullying which includes the following: a definition of bullying, types of bullying, an annual training plan for staff and caregivers, measures to prevent bullying, responses to and reporting of bullying. Providers should regularly assess incidents and trends to determine when additional trainings are warranted.



Minimum Standard 1.8

1. Revised STANDARD 1.20 Revised Minimum Standard 1.20 Providers must develop a policy on water safety and assessment procedures. For CCIs and CPA foster homes that have swimming pools, spas, or other large bodies of water nearby, a water safety assessment must be completed. The age, special needs, and number of children in a home should guide decisions around placement in such homes. Water safety assessments must be completed annually. The water safety assessment can be found at www.gascore.com. Guidelines include, but are not limited to:
 - • Caregivers must always provide direct adult supervision of children around bodies of water.
 - • Caregivers must complete basic water rescue training to learn how to recognize, prevent, and respond to water emergencies using non-swimming rescue methods. Training for foster parents should occur within the first year of approval. Training for Childcare Workers must occur within 30 days of the employee's hire date.
 - • Caregivers should know or learn how to swim within the first 60 days of approval or within 60 days of acquiring a swimming pool. CCI providers may satisfy this requirement through the regular utilization of a certified lifeguard during swimming activities.
 - • Caregivers should enroll children age three years and older in a swimming/water safety course taught by a certified instructor within the first year of placement. Any challenges that could impact a child's ability to complete the course should be assessed and discussed with DFCS.
 - • Fences used as a safety barrier must be at least four feet in height, surround all sides of the pool, and have a gate that locks. Fences must be constructed in such a manner that a young child cannot climb through or under the fence.
 - • Ladders must be removed to make above-ground pools inaccessible when not in use. Pool covers must be kept free of standing water and be completely removed when the pool is in use.
 - • Kiddie pools must be emptied and stored away when not in use.



Minimum Standard 2.1

Revised Minimum Standard 2.1 Providers must have a behavior support and intervention policy that reinforces the banning of all physical or emotional punishment. Providers must ensure, through appropriate training, that staff and caregivers are aware of the corporal punishment prohibition and follow the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment with any child in the Division's custody. Providers should regularly assess incidents and trends to determine when additional trainings are warranted.



Minimum Standards 2.13, 2.19, 6.5, 6.22, 6.27,
11.3, 11.4, 11.6, 13.23, 13.29, 13.33, 13.42, 18.4,
33.2, and 40.2

1. Providers should regularly assess incidents and trends to determine when additional trainings are warranted.



Revised Minimum Standard 6.0

Providers must regularly assess the behavioral, social, emotional, psychological and physical needs of children placed and develop an initial ISP to address the child's needs. This plan should include identifying individual triggers, coping behaviors, calming measures, interventions, and effective behavior management / prevention strategies for each child in order to de-escalate and avoid full-blown crises. This plan should be regularly assessed and monitored for effectiveness on an ongoing basis. Providers must ensure that all well-being services identified in the ISP are provided and must document the frequency and results of the services.



Revised Minimum Standard 6.6

1. Revised Minimum Standard 6.6 Providers must ensure that the following apply to the dispensing of psychotropic medications and follow the Guidelines for Psychotropic Medication Use in Children and Adolescents located on GA+SCORE:

* Note* Providers should obtain authorization from the County Director prior to administering psychotropic medication to children in foster care, except in emergency situations. Authorization shall be provided to the prescribing physician within two business days of request. EXCEPTION: When children are receiving in-patient treatment (e.g. Crisis Stabilization Unit, Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility), the consent decision is to be provided within 24 hours of the request from the facility.



Revised Minimum Standard 6.24

CCI staff are required to maintain First Aid and CPR certification. Initial training must be obtained within the first 30 days of employment, if the employee is not already certified. First Aid and CPR certification does not count toward annual training requirements. CPA providers must verify that caregivers maintain current certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid throughout the approval period for their foster home.



Revised Minimum Standard 9.2

The Discharge Summary must be provided to the DFCS case manager at the time of notification but no later than 1 Business day. The Discharge Summary must include general information covering the child's placement, progress, efforts to preserve the placement, challenges, and recommendations for services and supports the child will need to be successful at home or in the next placement.



Revised Minimum Standard 10.2

Providers must upload a monthly Independent Living report on each youth's progress on their Individualized Skill Plan, **into the SHINES Portal**, by the 10th day of the following month.



Revised Minimum Standard 11.15

CPAs must ensure that the number of children placed or approved to be placed in a foster home will not displace the foster family's children or other members living in the household from reasonable and expected accommodations (i.e., bed, personal space and privacy). CPAs must ensure that placements also comply with the following requirements:

- a. Caregivers must provide a safe sleeping space including sleeping supplies, such as a mattress, a set of linen, and comforter/quilt, for each individual child, as appropriate for the child's needs and age.
- b. Each non-related child must have a separate bed.
- c. Any collapsible (pack and play), sofas, cots or other such temporary sleeping structures may not be used as the planned bed space for children.
- d. A maximum of two (2) children may sleep in a double or larger bed if they are siblings, the same sex and under age 5 years. Preferably all children will have separate beds, however, infants must always be in a separate bed or crib.
- e. No child shall sleep in a bed with an adult. Infants may not sleep in a bed with anyone.
- f. Preferably, a maximum of three (3) children will share a bedroom. The suitability of children sharing a room must be thoroughly assessed and based on the background/history of the children and the space.
- g. Children age five (5) years and older and of different sexes shall not share a bedroom.
- h. Cameras should not be used in a manner that violates privacy of youth. Cameras in bedrooms and bathrooms are prohibited. In all instances, the suitability of children sharing rooms or beds (as in item C) must be thoroughly assessed and re-assessed as circumstances dictate.



Revised Minimum Standard 11.23

Caregivers must have access to respite care, both planned and crisis. Foster homes only serving respite placements must be entered as fully approved foster homes in SHINES by OPM Resource Development Staff. Respite homes must be in approval status prior to accepting respite placements.



Revised Minimum Standard 11.35

1. Revised Minimum Standard 11.35 CPA Providers must ensure that foster parents maintain a home environment that provides for the safety and well-being of children placed in their care. Foster parents are required to comply with the following safety requirements for children in foster care placement.
 - a. The foster home and surrounding property must be kept reasonably clean and uncluttered, properly maintained, and free of safety and health hazards, and uncontrolled rodents and insects.
 - b. All hazardous substances including, but not limited to, flammable and poisonous substances, medications, industrial cleaning supplies and alcoholic beverages are stored out of the reach of children.
 - c. Ceilings, walls, and floors will be maintained and kept clean and free from graffiti, dirt, or stain buildup.
 - d. Foster parents must have a plan for regular maintenance and upkeep of the living environment, furniture, and grounds.
 - e. Each child placed must have a suitable bed, bedding (i.e. a set of linen, and comforter/quilt) and storage for personal items.
 - f. Children must be able to personalize their bedrooms to the extent possible.
 - g. Bath, showers and toilets must be of a number and standard to meet the needs of the children placed and must be free of mold, mildew and debris.
 - h. Kitchen should be maintained with operable appliances and reasonably clean. i. The home must have proper water heater temperature.
 - j. Ammunition must be removed from firearms for storage purposes. Firearms and ammunition must be stored under lock and key. Keys to locked storage devices containing firearms or ammunition must remain in the possession of an adult or be reasonably secured from children.
 - k. Pets must be vaccinated in accordance with state, tribal and/or local law.
- Note* Animals with any history of violence or aggressiveness toward people should be safely secured in a cage, fence, or similar enclosure.



Revised Minimum Standard 12.6

1. Revised Minimum Standard 12.6 Each child placed must have a suitable bed, mattress, bedding (i.e. a set of linen, and comforter/quilt), and furniture designed for the storage of personal items (i.e., dresser or chest of drawers). Plastic bins may be used only as additional storage. Children must be able to personalize their bedrooms to the extent possible.



Final Questions?



Division of Family & Children Services