Ms. Freed,

I’m just following up on the below request. I also left you a couple of voicemails. Just wondering where we are on the process of an on-camera interview for the questions discussed in the below emails and previous KORA requests.

Thanks!

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From: Rachel Sommerfeld
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2015 8:06 AM
To: Todd Fertig; Theresa Freed
Cc: Rachel Sommerfeld
Subject: RE: follow up questions regarding CINC response

Ms. Freed,

Thanks for taking my call yesterday regarding an on-camera interview. After our conversation, I found an organizational chart regarding the supervision/chain of command for DCF, linked here: http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Documents/PPSORGChart.pdf

If this online chart is still accurate with correct names/positions, I would like to formally request an on-camera interview at the soonest possible date with one (or more) of the following individuals: Michael Myers, Dianne Keech, Maryann Peerboom. As we discussed last night, I believe it would be appropriate to issue these questions on why policies are the way they are, how they were developed, etc. with an individual in the Topeka office, as I am looking for more information than a simple explanation of a policy, as I have been able to do extensive research on the policies on the online policy database, located here: http://content.dcf.ks.gov/PPS/robohelp/PPMGenerate/ (Thanks for your help in directing me towards this helpful document!)

As we also discussed last night, I would like the opportunity to discuss and ask questions on the DCF/Kansas Protection Report Center’s procedures and policies that I’ve been discussing in my KORA requests including, but not limited to, the process of Initial Assessment, Preliminary Inquiry, Investigation; policies on timely responses, how those policies work, why they are what they are, what the procedures are for following up, failure to respond in a timely matter, how those determinations of what is “timely” are made, on-time percentage rates and their further documentation, what the follow-up procedure is for failing to have timely responses in cases, how a case is handled after it has not had a
timely response, etc. I would also like to discuss the process of contact with victim, family, alleged perpetrator, how the case progresses, what elements are involved in an investigation, etc. As the flow of my KORA requests has shown, I am interested in cases involving children/child abuse & neglect, child protective services, etc. not adult protective services.

I’m also interested in finding out more about the DCF staffing and workload. I understand from a variety of your press releases in the past, that DCF can struggle with finding qualified social workers willing to take on the challenging position of working in DCF. Your March 6, 2015 press release said that “DCF typically has approximately 50 vacant social worker positions, which it struggles to fill.” (Source: http://www.dcf.ks.gov/Newsroom/Pages/03-06-2015.aspx) I’d like to discuss more on that concern and how the agency works under the constraints of staffing shortages and the effort to fill those positions, such as through the Recruitment and Retention Workgroup.

Thanks again for your continued help with the additional KORA questions listed below, and in setting up an on-camera interview. I look forward to your response and an opportunity to schedule that interview as soon as possible.

Thank you.

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From: Rachel Sommerfeld
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2015 12:06 PM
To: 'Todd Fertig'; 'Theresa Freed'
Cc: Rachel Sommerfeld
Subject: RE: follow up questions regarding CINC response

Mr. Fertig, Ms. Freed,
Thanks for following up. I do have several additional questions with reference to my original KORA request.

1) You indicate that “of all child and adults reports received through the Kansas Protection Report Center (KPRC)”, 97% of initial assessment decisions were completed by the end of the next half working day. Do all reports go through the KPRC? Would this include reports from the public, reports from law enforcement, etc.? Are there other ways that DCF receives reports? If that is the case, what is the percentage of on-time responses for initial assessment to those cases that do not go through the KPRC?

2) You indicate that in both 2014 and 2015 through January, “of all reports assigned for abuse/neglect concerns with either a same day or 72 hour response time,” 97% had a timely contact with victim/family. What is the response time for reports that were *not assigned for abuse/neglect concerns with either a same day or 72 hour response time?
a. Additionally, I would like further clarification on what “timely contact with the victim/family” means. I have looked through the policy manual online and have been unable to locate the policy that states what the timeframe is to be considered “timely.” Is this 24 hours, 72 hours, etc.? I presume the requirements are different for a same-day response time and a 72 hour response time. What are those specific requirements to be considered “timely” contact with the victim or family?

b. Additionally, what are the requirements to be met for the deadline of “same day” or “72 hour” response time? Is contact with victim/family the only thing considered to ensure that the reports are being handled in a timely matter? Are there other factors that are included in that same day/72 hour response time? If so, what are those on time responses for those other factors, beyond contact with victim/family?

c. In reference to question 2) above, would cases that do not meet the criteria for same day or 72 hour response time, be applicable for a 20-day response time? What is the on-time percentage and documentation for those CINC/NAN with a 20-day response time?

3) I would also like to see documentation of the response times listed, for preliminary inquiry, initial assessment and reports assigned for abuse/neglect. I would like to formally request the documentation process for how DCF tracks these policies.

4) The original response to my KORA said “DCF does not track the time from the beginning of the report to the completion of each step.” It is unclear to me how DCF does not track this time, but has percentages on how many are done on time. Can you better explain to me the process of how DCF tracks its policies on timely responses? What documentation exists that shows the progression of timely responses?

5) You state in a previous email that “The maximum time allowed to make an Initial Assessment decision or request a Preliminary Inquiry is the end of the next half work day from the time the report is received.” You have also previously stated that “The Preliminary Inquiry information shall be obtained as soon as practical and should not exceed three (3) working days from the date the report is received by the agency.” What is the on-time percentage and documentation regarding when Preliminary Inquiries are completed? I would like to also formally request the documentation for determining the response time for Preliminary Inquiries.

6) There are places in the DCF policy manual that make reference to PPS forms. A google search led me to this link: http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/PPSFormsandAppendices.aspx Am I correct in understanding that these are blank copies of the forms required to document various stages of an investigation/inquiry, etc.?

Thank you for your continued help with this KORA request. Please contact me directly with any questions.

Thank you.

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Dear Ms. Sommerfeld:

We hope the following information will address the questions you sent us via email in follow up to our initial response to your KORA request.

- In SFY 2014, of all child and adults reports received through the Kansas Protection Report Center (KPRC), 97% of the Initial Assessment Decisions were completed by the end of the next half work day from the time the report was received.

- In SFY 2015, through February, of all child and adults reports received through the Kansas Protection Report Center (KPRC), 99% of the Initial Assessment Decisions were completed by the end of the next half work day from the time the report was received.

- In SFY 2014, of all reports assigned for abuse/neglect concerns with either a same day or 72 hour response time, 97% had a timely contact with victim/family.

- In SFY 2015, through January, of all reports assigned for abuse/neglect concerns with either a same day or 72 hour response time, 97% had a timely contact with victim/family.

Any information about disciplinary actions taken is regarded as personnel matters and is protected by employee employment confidentiality.

We hope this information will help you. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Theresa Freed
Director of Communications
Kansas Department for Children and Families
785-296-0537
Theresa.freed@dcf.ks.gov
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