

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

1. **Joint Protocols.** Throughout this Exhibit, DFPS references requirements where the SSCC must interact with the “primary caseworker” in Stage I. Prior to Stage II and as part of the Stage II Joint Protocols, the SSCC and DFPS must go through Exhibit B and develop a joint protocol describing how DFPS and the SSCC must interact in Stage II when the SSCC has responsibility for case management. Once the SSCC has entered Stage II, in the event of any conflict between this Exhibit and the Joint Protocols Operation Manual concerning the specific activities of a Caseworker, the Joint Protocols Operation Manual must control.
2. **Office of Community Based Care Transition.** SB1896 of the 87<sup>th</sup> Regular Texas Legislative Session established the Office of Community Based Care Transition (OCBCT), which is administratively attached to DFPS, but whose Director independently reports to the Governor. OCBCT Contracts on behalf of DFPS and works collaboratively with DFPS on certain aspects of this Contract. Its duties and responsibilities are set forth in Texas Family Code Section 264.172
3. **Children and Youth.**
  - 3.1 **Access to Children and Youth.** The SSCC must permit access to DFPS, its employees, its designees, Foster Care Ombudsmen, and properly identified individuals appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction (Volunteer or Court Appointed Special Advocates (“CASA”), guardian ad litem, and attorney ad litem) to all Children and Youth referred by the Department to the SSCC.
    - 3.1.1 All parties must exercise their right of access in a reasonable manner and attempt to plan and coordinate all necessary visits with Children in cooperation with the SSCC and in a manner that minimizes disruption of the care of the Children placed with the SSCC.
    - 3.1.2 No party must construe this section as prohibiting the Department or its designees from making unannounced visits to the SSCC’s facilities or to a foster home verified by a Child Placing Agency (CPA).
    - 3.1.3 In order to determine whether an individual is appropriately appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction, a SSCC or Caregiver should do the following:
      - (A) If such individual is an employee of CASA, review for a valid court order; and
      - (B) If such individual is a CASA volunteer, review for a valid court order and a notification letter of volunteer assignment and acceptance that clarifies the individual's appointment to the Child; or
      - (C) Review to ensure that the individual is named on the Child's Contact List as part of the Child's placement paperwork.
    - 3.1.4 If SSCC or Caregiver cannot readily determine the identity or authority of an individual appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction, then the SSCC or Caregiver should obtain approval from the Child's case worker or chain of command prior to granting the individual access to the Child.
  - 3.2 **Children’s Rights.** The SSCC must:
    - 3.2.1 Cooperate with DFPS Child Protective Services (CPS) to ensure all Children have been given a written copy of the CPS Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care (“Rights”) at the time of placement, review and explain the Rights, and obtain the Child's signature (5 and older), if appropriate;
    - 3.2.2 No later than 72 hours after the initial placement, the SSCC, (in Stage II) must ensure that Children and Youth in foster care are provided with a copy of the CPS Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care (Form 2530). At placement, the placement staff must review these Rights with the Child or Youth. Upon completion of the review, the placement staff must have the Child or Youth and Caregiver sign on the appropriate

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- signature lines, provide a copy to the Child or Youth, and upload a signed copy into OneCase in IMPACT;
- 3.2.3 Support the rights listed in the CPS Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care;
  - 3.2.4 Not deny or restrict, through action or policy, any of the rights listed in the CPS Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care or the Extended Foster Care Rights and Responsibilities.
  - 3.2.5 Develop and implement a process by which Children, Youth, and families may elevate concerns about the provision and/or quality of services provided.
  - 3.2.6 Provide services to Children who are deaf or hard of hearing that ensure effective communication. When providing services to a Child who is deaf or hard of hearing, contact a Deafness Resource Specialist from the Health and Human Services Commission for assistance in determining how best to ensure effective communication:  
<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/deaf-hard-hearing>; and  
<https://dhhs.hhsc.state.tx.us/providers/cssaSSCCs.asp>
  - 3.2.7 Ensure the DFPS hotline's phone number is readily available and displayed prominently in all foster care residential facilities. Foster Children must be allowed telephone access to reach out to this 24-hour system, free from observation. The following link must take you to the Ombudsman poster which must be printed and displayed per instructions above. [Foster Care Ombudsman \(texas.gov\)](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Child_Care_Foster_Care/Foster_Care_Ombudsman/Foster_Care_Ombudsman_texas.gov)
  - 3.2.8 Ensure the compliance of the individual Subcontractor s if SSCC provides services through a network of providers.
- 3.3 Health Care Services for Children in Substitute Care.**
- 3.3.1 The SSCC must access all medical, dental, vision, and behavioral health care for Children in substitute care referred by DFPS through STAR Health and managed care system for Children in substitute care, unless otherwise directed by DFPS.
    - (A) For all Children, an initial Texas Health Steps Medical Checkup within 30 days of entry into DFPS conservatorship;
    - (B) For all Children, unless required more frequently by the Child's medical provider, a subsequent Texas Health Steps Medical Checkup must be scheduled one year after the previous checkup and no later than the Child's next birthday;
    - (C) For Children under 36 months of age, Texas Health Steps Medical Checkups in accordance with the Texas Health Steps Periodicity Schedule: [Texas Health Steps Medical Checkup Periodicity Schedule for Infants, Children, and Adolescents](https://www.dhhs.hhsc.state.tx.us/providers/cssaSSCCs.asp).  
 The SSCC must access Medicaid healthcare related services which are excluded from or carved out of the STAR Health Plan but for which Children are eligible.
  - 3.3.2 The SSCC is financially responsible for providing behavioral health services for Children served by the SSCC when other community resources are not available and/or Medicaid does not cover the cost of the service. The cost of all medically necessary behavioral health services for Children served by the SSCC should be covered through Medicaid.
  - 3.3.3 No later than the third business day after a Child's Caregiver receives a letter denying prior authorization for a Medicaid service, the SSCC must e-mail a scanned copy of the denial letter and the date of such receipt to the assigned primary Caseworker or Caseworker's chain of command and the DFPS regional Well-being Specialist.

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- 3.4 Research/Studies.** Children and families referred to the SSCC for services must not participate in research and/or studies without the prior written approval of DFPS.
- 3.5 Case-Specific Dispute Resolution.** Case-specific disputes between the SSCC and DFPS must be resolved using the following protocol:
- 3.5.1** Step 1: Objective, solution-driven, discussion or meeting between the individual(s) closest to the issue in dispute. If a mutually agreeable solution is not achieved, the individual must notify the other individual that they plan to involve their chain of command.
  - 3.5.2** Step 2: If Step 1 is unsuccessful, either party may proceed to Step 2. Disputes proceeding to Step 2 must be elevated to a knowledgeable, neutral DFPS staff member who understands the philosophy and goals of community-based care and is not a direct supervisor of the individual involved in the dispute. A written decision from DFPS is required within five business days of the neutral DFPS staff member reviewing the dispute and hearing from the disputing parties (as applicable) or as otherwise mutually agreed upon by the parties.
  - 3.5.3** The SSCC must ensure continuity of services and continue performing under this Contract, as defined by DFPS, to the Child or family affected while seeking to resolve case-specific disputes.
  - 3.5.4** The Parties must use the dispute resolution process outlined in Texas Government Code Chapter 2260 if the case specific dispute resolution procedures fail to resolve a dispute arising under this Contract.
- 3.6 Notification of Family/Tribal Affiliation.** During Stage I, the SSCC must notify DFPS in writing within one business day if the SSCC finds a Child's family member(s) during its work with the Child and/or any other individual or entity. The SSCC must immediately notify DFPS in writing upon learning that a Child or a family member may possibly have a tribal family connection.
- 3.7 Evaluation.** The SSCC must participate in and provide information for any DFPS evaluation(s) of Community Based Care which may include any third-party evaluations.
- 3.8 Education.** The SSCC must ensure:
- 3.8.1** Each School-Aged Child is enrolled in a Public School within two school days of placement unless an exception has been granted in writing by the Child's primary Caseworker or Caseworker's Chain of Command;
  - 3.8.2** If the Caregiver plans to educate the Child in a home setting, the SSCC must contact the CPS Caseworker within one business day of receiving notification from the Caregiver;
  - 3.8.3** If a Child has to withdraw from a Public School due to a change in placement that results in the Child being discharged, the Discharging SSCC must notify the Public School within three school days of this discharge, unless an exception has been granted in writing by the Child's primary Caseworker or Caseworker's Chain of Command;
  - 3.8.4** Each School-Aged Child attends a Public School unless the SSCC has received a written exception to this requirement by the Child's primary Caseworker or Caseworker's Chain of Command;
  - 3.8.5** Each Child that is three, four, and five years of age:

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- (A) Attends a pre-kindergarten program offered through the Public School or an early Childhood education program offered through Head Start, if available, in the local community of the Child's Caregiver, unless an exception has been granted by the Child's primary Caseworker or Caseworker's Chain of Command; or
  - (B) May attend a private, early Childhood education program or pre-kindergarten program paid for by the SSCC or Caregiver, if an exception has been granted by the primary Caseworker or Caseworker's Chain of Command;
- 3.8.6** Written verification of the Child's enrollment is provided to the primary Caseworker within five calendar days of the Child's enrollment;
- 3.8.7** Minimal disruptions to a Child's education by scheduling therapy and other appointments outside of school hours, whenever possible;
- 3.8.8** Necessary support is provided to Children to achieve educational goals, including but not limited to, tutoring, help with homework and obtaining necessary school supplies; and
- 3.8.9** Caregiver participates in all Child/Youth Admission, Review & Dismissal ("ARD") meeting(s) and parent/teacher conferences either in person or by telephone.
- 3.8.10** Pursuant to Texas Education Code §29.012, the SSCC must ensure that a school district receives written notice for each instance where a Child aged three (3) or older is placed in a residential facility within the school district rather than a home. The notice must be sent not later than the third calendar day after the date the Child is placed in the facility.
- 3.9 Education Portfolio.**
  - 3.9.1** The SSCC must develop, maintain, and update an Education Portfolio for each school-age Child in the SSCC's care. The SSCC must keep the Education Portfolio where the Child resides while in paid foster care (Stage I) and substitute care (Stage II). The Education Portfolio must contain the current following educational documents and records:
    - (A) School enrollment documentation: Birth certificate, Social Security number, Immunizations, and withdrawal paperwork from the last school;
    - (B) Special education documentation: ARD team meeting notes, Individual Education Plan (IEP), documents related to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding reasonable accommodations, Full Individual Evaluations and/or other diagnostic assessments;
    - (C) Report cards, progress reports, and/or IEP progress reports;
    - (D) Transcripts;
    - (E) Standardized test results;
    - (F) Referrals, notices, or correspondences; and
    - (G) School pictures.
  - 3.9.2** The SSCC must make the Education Portfolio readily available to DFPS for each school-age Child on any visit with the Child or otherwise, if requested.
  - 3.9.3** The SSCC must ensure and document that the report card and progress reports are discussed with each School-Age Child.
  - 3.9.4** The SSCC must provide the Child's Education Portfolio to DFPS at the time a School- Age Child is discharged from the SSCC's care (Stage I).
- 3.10 Post-Secondary Educational and Vocational Activities.** The SSCC must:
  - 3.10.1** Provide or facilitate access to post-secondary education, vocational or technical training, support services and activities, including job readiness, skills training, and internship program opportunities that are required by the Child's Plan of Service and

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

CPS Transition Plan at 14 years of age and include Youth with disabilities, ensuring information is developmentally appropriate, so each Child:

- (A) Has access to appropriate community vocational and technical training programs and volunteer opportunities, including services provided by the local Texas Workforce Solutions offices (if available in the area), Transition Centers (where available), if applicable, vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities provided by the local Health and Human Services Agency (if available in the area), and post-secondary education programs; and
- (B) Receives the assistance needed to maximize the benefit of these activities.

**3.10.2** Guide and assist the Child as needed in accessing and completing documents when required for the State-Paid Tuition Fee Waiver and Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program.

**3.11 Driver's License.** The SSCC must:

**3.11.1** Ensure that the following are made available to Children to facilitate driver license fee waiver-residency affidavit requirements:

- (A) A DFPS Foster Youth Driver License Fee Waiver Letter;
- (B) A Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Texas Residency Affidavit (Form DL-5), which is completed and signed by the Child and a Representative;
- (C) For Children under age 18, a Representative to accompany the Child to the DPS driver license office to provide acceptable proof of residency; and
- (D) Inform Children who have applied for a driver license of the need to notify DPS of a new address change within 30 days of a change in placement.

**3.12 Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) Program.** The SSCC must, for each Child who is younger than three years of age:

**3.12.1** Provide, in compliance with the Texas Education Code §29.012, written notice to the local ECI program not later than the third calendar day after the date a Child is placed in a residential Facility. For this written notice, the SSCC should reference the [Texas Education Code §29.012](#) and include the following minimum information:

- (A) Name and date of birth of Child;
- (B) Name of Caregiver (kinship or foster), CPA or GRO (if applicable);
- (C) Address of location where Child resides; and
- (D) Contact information for the Caregiver or representative of the CPA or GRO (if applicable) who is submitting such notice.

**3.12.2** Notify the primary Caseworker and Primary Care Physician (PCP) if the SSCC has a concern regarding the physical or mental development of a Child under the age of three;

**3.12.3** Ensure that a referral to ECI is made if the primary Caseworker or PCP has determined a referral is necessary;

**3.12.4** Facilitate the continuation of ECI services to each Child who was receiving ECI services prior to placement;

**3.12.5** Ensure the Caregiver fully participates in the Child's ECI evaluation and process for developing an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) for ECI services;

**3.12.6** Ensure the Caregiver performs the following duties related to the Child's participation in the ECI Program:

- (A) To the extent the Caregiver consents to the Child's recommended and additional ECI Program services, the Caregiver fully participates in and supports such services;

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- (B) To the extent the Caregiver declines to consent to any of the Child's recommended and additional ECI Program services, the SSCC must immediately submit a detailed written report to the Caseworker explaining why such declined services are not in the best interest of the Child (Stage I).
- (C) To the extent the Caregiver disagrees or has a concern with any matter related to the identification, evaluation, placement, or provision of ECI services, the Caregiver may exercise the Caregiver's rights under the ECI program of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, which can be found at: <https://hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/early-childhood-intervention-services/eci-how-file-a-complaint>; and
- (D) Ensure the Caregiver provides written consent for:
  - 1) The Child's ECI information to be entered into the Child's HealthPassport; and
  - 2) The Child's primary Caseworker and Caseworker's Chain of Command to directly access ECI records from the ECI program if necessary.

**3.13 Approval for Travel and Visits.**

- 3.13.1** SSCC must develop and maintain a written policy regarding overnight travel and overnight visits. When the SSCC desires to take a Child outside of the state or country, the SSCC must follow DFPS policies and procedures including the completion of the Caregiver Declaration Regarding Out-of-Country Travel (Form 2069). See DFPS Policy [6474](#) When a Child Travels Outside of the U.S.
- 3.13.2** Written approval for travel and visits is not required when:
  - (A) The primary Caseworker arranges for the Child to visit with members of the Child's family; or
  - (B) The primary Caseworker authorizes the Child to travel in specified circumstances (usually routine trips or visits).
- 3.13.3** The SSCC shall provide or arrange all travel to ensure the Child's access to:
  - (A) Behavioral Health, Medical, Dental, Vision, and Pharmacy services;
  - (B) Recreational, educational, and after-school activities, sibling visits, family visits, court hearings, Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) activities, Aging-Out Seminars, Youth Leadership Council activities, Permanency Planning Meetings, local Texas Workforce Solutions offices, Transition Centers (if available in the area); and
  - (C) Any other services necessary to fulfill the orders of a court or the tasks on a Child's Plan of Service.

**3.14 Discipline and Crisis Management.**

- 3.14.1 Discipline.** The SSCC must develop and implement discipline policies consistent with the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) (see [26 TAC, Chapters 743-759](#)) and HHSC Minimum Standards.
- 3.14.2 De-Escalation and Crisis Management.** The SSCC must develop and implement Emergency Behavior Intervention policies consistent with the TAC (see [26 TAC, Chapters 743-749](#)) and HHSC Minimum Standards.

**3.15 Voluntary Extended Foster Care or Return to Foster Care.** The SSCC must offer assistance to the Youth in maintaining documentation such as school transcripts or pay stubs to demonstrate that any such young adult 18 to 22 years of age is qualified to remain in Extended Foster Care or Return to Care. The SSCC must notify DFPS if a young adult no longer meets eligibility criteria for Extended Foster Care or Return to Care (Stage I). The SSCC must assist the young adult in

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

completion of the Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement, Form 2540, during the following time periods:

- 3.15.1** Within the thirty (30) days preceding the young adult's 18th birthday, when possible; or
- 3.15.2** When this is not possible, no later than the 30th day after the Youth's 18th birthday.

**3.16 Basic Living and Social Skills.** The SSCC must ensure for all Children that Caregivers:

- 3.16.1** Teach Basic Life Skills and Social Skills;
- 3.16.2** Maximize opportunities for learning through the use of Basic Life Skills Activities;
- 3.16.3** Provide access to Experiential Life Skills Activities provided by community resources;
- 3.16.4** Promote the ability to appropriately care for themselves and function in the community;
- 3.16.5** Assist Children ages 14 or older who have a source of income to establish a savings plan and, if available, a savings account to manage independently;
- 3.16.6** Provide or assist Children ages 18 up to 22 years of age who have a source of income to obtain a savings or checking account with a Financial Institution in accordance with Texas Finance Code §201.101; and
- 3.16.7** Provide access to age-appropriate Normalcy activities which are suitable for the Child's level of maturity and age including activities not listed in the Child's Service Plan. SSCCs must train Caregivers and use a "Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard" to decide whether a Child may participate in an unsupervised activity. Activities can include, but are not limited to:
  - (A) Participating in academic and non-academic extracurricular activities within the Child's school;
  - (B) Allowing the Child to visit with friends or attend regular social and recreational events;
  - (C) Support a Child's employment efforts; and
  - (D) Participating in other activities agreed upon by the Caregiver and the Child, without the need to seek initial approval from the Department.

**3.17 National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD).** SSCC must ensure that it or its direct service providers support the necessary activities, including on-going computer access for Children or Young Adults selected during a certain reporting periods (October 1 to March 31 or April 1 to September 30) to take the NYTD survey at age 17, 19 or 21. SSCC must ensure that it or its provider network:

- 3.17.1** Maintains contact with regional PAL Staff to determine if a Child has been selected to take the survey. PAL Staff contact information can be found on the Texas Youth Connection website at: [Texas Youth Connection | FosterClub](#);
- 3.17.2** Ensure the Youth register with NYTD on the Texas Youth Connection website at:
- 3.17.3** [Texas Youth Connection | FosterClub](#). Ensure that the Youth maintain an email address to receive NYTD updates;
- 3.17.4** Ensure that the Youth enter NYTD contact updates to the Texas Youth Connection website at: [Texas Youth Connection | FosterClub](#); and
- 3.17.5** Ensure that the Youth complete the NYTD survey within the required timeframe as specified on the Texas Youth Connection website at: [Texas Youth Connection | FosterClub](#).

**4. Fiscal Provisions.**

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- 4.1 Funds Availability.** This Contract depends upon the availability and receipt of state or federal funds. DFPS is prohibited from incurring obligations in excess of amount lawfully appropriated by the Texas Legislature over the course of a biennium. If funds for this Contract become unavailable during any budget period, DFPS may immediately terminate or reduce the amount of this Contract at the discretion of the Department. In the event of cancellation or termination under this Section, DFPS have no liability for any damages or losses caused or associated with such termination or cancellation.
- 4.2 Payments.** The SSCC must seek payment or adjustment to payments in accordance with the time limit specified in 45 CFR 95.1 (Code of Federal Regulations). This subpart establishes a two-year (eight quarter) time limit for a State to claim Federal financial participation in expenditures under State plans approved under Title IV-B, Title IV-E, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Any invoice or amended invoice, which is submitted to DFPS later than seven quarters after the end of the quarter in which the expense is incurred, must not be processed unless DFPS determines that submission for payment of the invoice to the federal government can be completed in a proper and timely fashion.
- 4.3 Debt to State and Corporate Status.** Pursuant to Tex. Gov. Code § 403.055, the Department must not approve, and the Texas Comptroller must not issue payment for non-Title IV-E funds if SSCC is indebted to the State for any reason, including a tax delinquency. If a corporation, SSCC certifies by execution of this Contract that it is current and must remain current in its payment of franchise taxes to the State of Texas or that it is exempt from payment of franchise taxes under Texas law (Tex. Tax Code §§ 171.001 et seq.). If SSCC's tax payments become delinquent during the Contract term, all or part of the non-Title IV-E payments under this Contract may be withheld until all delinquent State taxes are paid in full. If a payment law prohibits the Texas Comptroller from making a payment, SSCC acknowledges that DFPS payments under the Contract must be applied toward eliminating the debt or delinquency. This requirement applies to any debt or delinquency, regardless of when it arises.
- 4.4 Use of Funds.** SSCC must expend funds provided under this Contract only for the provision of approved services and for reasonable and allowable expenses directly related to those services.
- 4.5 Use for Match Prohibited.** SSCC cannot use funds provided under this Contract for matching purposes in securing other funding without the written approval of DFPS.
- 4.6 Program Income.** Income directly generated from funds provided under this Contract or earned only as a result of such funds constitutes Program Income. Unless otherwise required under the Program, SSCC must use the addition alternative, as provided in 45 CFR 75.307 for the use of Project income to further the Program, and SSCC must spend the Program Income on the Project. SSCC must identify and report this income in accordance with the Contract and applicable law. SSCC must refund program income not expended in the term in which it is earned to DFPS. The Department may base future funding levels, in part, upon SSCC's proficiency in identifying, billing, collecting, and reporting Program Income, and in using it for the purposes and under the conditions specified in this Contract.
- 4.7 Non-supplanting.** SSCC cannot use funds from this Contract to supplant, replace, or substitute for existing funding from other sources, but must use funds from this Contract to supplement existing state or local funds currently available. SSCC must make a good faith effort to maintain its current level of support. SSCC may be required to submit documentation substantiating that a reduction in state or local funding, if any, resulted for reasons other than receipt or expected receipt of funding under this Contract.



**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- 4.8 No debt Against the State.** The Contract must not be construed as creating any debt by or on behalf of the State of Texas.
- 4.9 Recapture of Funds.** DFPS may withhold all or part of any payments to SSCC to offset previous overpayments to SSCC. Overpayments, as used in this Section, include payments (i) made by DFPS that exceed the maximum allowable rates; (ii) that are not allowed under applicable laws, rules, or regulations; or (iii) that are otherwise inconsistent with this Contract, including any unapproved expenditures. SSCC agrees that it must be liable to DFPS for repayment of any costs disallowed pursuant to financial and compliance audit(s) of funds received under this Contract. SSCC further understands and agrees that reimbursement of such disallowed costs must be paid by SSCC from funds which were not provided or otherwise made available under this Contract.
- 4.10 Allowable Costs.** DFPS must reimburse allowable costs incurred in performing services under this Contract that are sufficiently documented and in accordance with the Federal Regulations set forth in 45 CFR 75 and the State of Texas Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS). DFPS must determine whether costs submitted by SSCC are allowable and eligible for reimbursement. If DFPS has paid funds for unallowable or ineligible costs, DFPS must notify SSCC in writing, and SSCC must return the funds to the Department within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the written notice. At its sole discretion, DFPS may withhold or take repayment (recoup) from funds available under this Contract in amounts necessary to fulfill SSCC's repayment obligations.
- 4.11 Independent Single or Program-Specific Audit.** If SSCC, within SSCC's fiscal year, expends a total amount of at least seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000.00) in federal funds, SSCC must have a single audit or program-specific audit in accordance with 45 CFR 75, Subpart F. If SSCC, within SSCC's fiscal year, expends a total amount of at least \$750,000.00 in state funds awarded, SSCC must have a single audit or program-specific audit in accordance with UGMS, State of Texas Single Audit Circular. The HHSC Office of Inspector General (OIG) must notify SSCC to complete the Single Audit Status Registration Form. If SSCC fails to complete the Single Audit Status Form within thirty (30) calendar days after notification by OIG to do so, SSCC must be subject to DFPS sanctions and remedies for non-compliance with this Contract. The audit must be conducted by an independent certified public accountant and in accordance with applicable Federal regulations (formerly OMB Circulars), Government Auditing Standards, and UGMS. SSCC must procure audit services in compliance with this section, state procurement procedures, as well as with the provisions of UGMS.
- 4.12 Submission of Audit.** Within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the audit reports required by the Independent Single or Program-Specific Audit section, SSCC must submit one copy to DFPS and one copy to the HHSC OIG, at the following addresses:

Health and Human Services Commission  
Office of Inspector General  
Compliance/Audit, Mail Code 1326  
P.O. Box 85200  
Austin, Texas 78708-5200

## **Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

If SSCC fails to submit the audit report as required by the Independent Single or Program-Specific Audit section within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt by SSCC, SSCC must be subject to the DFPS sanctions and remedies for non-compliance with this Contract.

- 4.13 Compliance with Audit or Inspection Findings.** SSCC must implement all corrections necessary to address any finding of noncompliance with any law, regulation, audit requirement, accounting principle, or deficiency identified in any audit of this Contract. Any such correction must be at SSCC's or Subcontractor's sole expense. Whether SSCC's action corrects any noncompliance must be solely the decision of DFPS. SSCC must provide, at DFPS' request, a copy of those portions of SSCC's and its Subcontractor's internal audit reports relating to this Contract.

## **5. SSCC Responsibilities.**

### **5.1 Legal and Regulatory Requirements.**

- 5.1.1** DFPS is accountable for meeting federal funding requirements outlined in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and in Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The SSCC must follow all applicable state and federal Child welfare laws and regulations when providing the services outlined in this Contract. Information about applicable state and federal Child welfare laws and regulations may be found at:
- (A) Title IV-B - Child Welfare Policy Manual:  
[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cwpm/programs/cb/laws\\_policies/laws/cwpm/index.jsp](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cwpm/programs/cb/laws_policies/laws/cwpm/index.jsp)
  - (B) CAPTA: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/capta-state-grants>
  - (C) Compilation of Titles IV- B, IV- E and Related Sections of the Social Security Act: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/compilation-of-social-security-act>
  - (D) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families:  
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/tanf>
  - (E) DFPS State Plan for IV-B and IV-E:  
[http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About\\_DFPS/reports.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/reports.asp)
  - (F) **Prompt Payment.** The SSCC must comply with the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts prompt payment requirements. Information about these requirements may be accessed by visiting: [File and Pay \(texas.gov\)](http://fileandpay.texas.gov); **Funding Restrictions.** The SSCC may not use funds received from DFPS to replace any other federal, state, or local source of funds awarded under any other Contract.
- 5.1.2 Non-Denial of Services.** A client referred to the SSCC by DFPS cannot be denied or experience a delay in services based on a failure to pay fees or contribute to the cost of any service.
- 5.1.3 Medicaid for Purchase of Service Clients.**
- (A) Individuals referred by DFPS and served through the SSCC may be Medicaid (Traditional or Managed Care) eligible. The SSCC must have a process to verify the Medicaid eligibility of the individual served, initially and on an on-going basis. This process should include requesting a copy of the Medicaid card at the first encounter and periodic verifications of eligibility, as well as being informed and following the process for service providers based on the individual's Medicaid plan.
  - (B) DFPS funding allocated for the SSCC cannot be used for Medicaid eligible services for Medicaid eligible clients except as stated in this Section. The SSCC must use Medicaid (Traditional or Managed Care) as the source of payment for

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

eligible individuals when Medicaid reimburses for the identified service. If the SSCC chooses not to utilize Medicaid for any Medicaid eligible individual, then the SSCC cannot bill DFPS for the service.

- (C) The SSCC must keep documentation of proof of Medicaid and results of Medicaid and Managed Care verification and claims in the client file.
- (D) SSCC's failure to appropriately bill Medicaid for an eligible service must result in the SSCC needing to reimburse DFPS for any payments made by DFPS for those services.
- (E) The SSCC must accept Medicaid or Medicaid Managed Care compensation as payment in full for covered services. The SSCC must not bill DFPS until the Medicaid claim is finalized. If the SSCC bills DFPS for services which are Medicaid eligible and for which the SSCC actually receives payment from Medicaid, the SSCC must reimburse DFPS for the payment, plus interest. Interest on such overpayment amount must be calculated from the date of receipt of DFPS funds by the SSCC of the overcharged amount until the date of payment to HHSC and must be calculated at the Department of Treasury's Median Rate (resulting from the Treasury's auction of 13-week bills) for the week in which liability is assessed, but in no event must exceed the highest lawful rate of interest.
- (F) If Medicaid refuses to pay for a service, except when due to an SSCC error or failure to take appropriate and timely action to include appeals, payment must be made through the Contract with proof of denial from Medicaid.

**5.1.4 Private Insurance (Stages II and III).**

- (A) The SSCC may ask those individuals referred to the SSCC if they are covered by private insurance and request that they utilize their private insurance. If in agreement, the SSCC must request the client file claims through their insurance for services (excluding paid foster care and Preparation for Adult Living Services). Note: Medicaid requires that existing insurance be used first for all eligible clients (excluding Children receiving Foster Care Medicaid). Medicaid must pay what the private insurance does not cover up to the Medicaid fee. If the client refuses to file a claim, then Medicaid must deny the claim and it must be a billable claim against the Contract with the proper documentation.
- (B) The SSCC may claim reimbursement through the Contract allocation for deductibles and/or insurance co-payments for allowable private insurance claims not otherwise paid by the client, so long as such a payment is permitted by federal TANF, and Titles IV-B and IV-E regulations and documentation is maintained to support this claim.
- (C) If the client has insurance and chooses to file a claim, the SSCC may choose to accept and require its service providers to accept the final insurance compensation as payment in full for covered services.
- (D) If the client has insurance but the insurance carrier refuses to pay or fully pay for an otherwise allowable service, the client should be assisted and encouraged to appeal. Claims should be made through the Contract allotment after the denial has been appealed and with proof of denial from the insurance company, when the client follows through with the appeal. When the client does not appeal, documentation of the SSCC's efforts to assist and the client's failure to act should be documented.
- (E) The SSCC must keep documentation of the explanation of benefits for each insurance claim charged to the Contract in the client file. The SSCC must not bill DFPS until the insurance claim is finalized. If the SSCC bills DFPS for services which are covered by private insurance and for which the SSCC actually receives

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

payment from the insurance carrier, the SSCC must reimburse DFPS for the payment, plus interest. Interest on such overpayment amount must be calculated from the date of receipt of DFPS funds by the SSCC of the overcharged amount until the date of payment to DFPS and must be calculated at the Department of Treasury's Median Rate (resulting from the Treasury's auction of 13-week bills) for the week in which liability is assessed, but in no event must exceed the highest lawful rate of interest.

**5.1.5 Sliding Fee Scale / Service Co-Payments (Stages II and III).**

- (A) The SSCC may use a sliding fee scale or otherwise allow individuals DFPS has referred to the SSCC for purchased services (services to families) to be responsible in part for paying fees for purchased service (with the exception of services offered as a part of Preparation for Adult Living).
- (B) DFPS must approve the SSCC's plan for using a sliding fee scale or co-payments prior to implementation.
- (C) The SSCC must make efforts to collect fees and/or co-payments at the point of service; however, the client's failure to pay must not result in denial of services.

**5.1.6 Reimbursement for Vandalism or Damage.** DFPS must not reimburse the SSCC for vandalism or damage caused by deliberate acts of destruction by any individual referred to the SSCC by DFPS.

**5.1.7 General Requirements for All Payments to SSCC.**

- (A) The SSCC must submit bills for purchased services (excluding foster care) in an accurate and timely manner within 15 days of the month following the month of service.
- (B) All payments must be made to the SSCC after deducting any known previous overpayment made by DFPS, plus interest. Interest on such overpayment amount must be calculated from the date of receipt of DFPS funds by the SSCC of the overcharged amount until the date of payment to DFPS and must be calculated at the Department of Treasury's Median Rate (resulting from the Treasury's auction of 13-week bills) for the week in which liability is assessed, but in no event to exceed the highest lawful rate of interest.
- (C) The SSCC must reconcile all claims prior to the most current eight quarters. The SSCC must seek payment or adjustment to payments in accordance with the time limit specified in 45 CFR 95.1. This subsection establishes a two-year (eight quarter) time limit for a State to claim Federal financial participation in expenditures under State plans approved under titles IV-B, IV-E and TANF. Any claim or amended claim, which is submitted to DFPS later than seven quarters after the end of the quarter of the expense, must not be processed unless DFPS determines that submission of payment of the claim to the federal government can be processed in a proper and timely fashion.

**5.1.8 General Fiscal Requirements.**

- (A) The SSCC must file appropriate and applicable forms to the Internal Revenue Service and must provide a copy to DFPS upon request.
- (B) The SSCC must submit quarterly financial statements prepared following an accrual basis.
- (C) The SSCC must maintain all financial and statistical information using the accrual method of accounting in accordance with 40 TAC 700.1753.
- (D) The SSCC must treat its operation under this Contract separately in financial statements to facilitate monitoring and to track the financial performance of the SSCC.

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- 5.2 Required Programmatic Record Keeping.** The SSCC must ensure compliance with all record keeping requirements stated in this Contract as well as HHSC Residential Child Care Minimum Standards and the Texas State Records Retention Schedule. The SSCC must ensure that any records maintained in proprietary systems are able to be provided to DFPS, upon Contract expiration or termination and at no additional cost, in a format that is usable to DFPS or a subsequent SSCC. At a minimum, proprietary system files must be able to be provided to DFPS in a .csv format . The SSCC agrees to work with DFPS on the transfer of all DFPS program files when needed. For information about the please visit: DFPS Records Retention Schedule The SSCC must maintain documentation to support performance measures to allow for testing the validity of the results reported. The SSCC must have policies and procedures for ensuring the development and sharing of accurate and useful client reports. At a minimum, the following must be required:
- 5.2.1 Maintenance of Individual Child (Stages I, II, III) and Family/Client (Stages II-III) Case Files.** Files must include all assessments, evaluations, service plans, and monthly and closing summaries for services provided in Stages I-III.
  - 5.2.2 Referral Tracking System (Stages I-III).** The SSCC must develop and maintain a tracking system to record and document DFPS' referral of Children and families for services to the SSCC, including date of referral and when services were initiated.
  - 5.2.3 Provider Personnel Files.** The SSCC must maintain and ensure Subcontractor's maintain personnel files that include, but are not limited to, the following information:
    - (A) Copy of current professional license(s), as applicable
    - (B) Verification of Medicaid provider number, as applicable
    - (C) Copy of completed Forms 2970c and 2971c or other applicable form as identified by DFPS
    - (D) Copy of Background Check Results
- 5.3 Foster Care Reimbursement Requirements.**
- 5.3.1** DFPS must reimburse the SSCC for the calendar day of placement, but not for the calendar day of discharge.
  - 5.3.2** DFPS must provide the SSCC notice in writing of any change that affects payments to the SSCC, unless court ordered or there is immediate risk to safety.
  - 5.3.3** DFPS must reimburse the SSCC for up to 14 days of foster care in the following circumstances:
    - (A) Psychiatric hospitalization;
    - (B) Medical facility hospitalization;
    - (C) Runaway;
    - (D) Unauthorized placement;
    - (E) Temporary placement/visit in own home;
    - (F) Locked facility, jail, juvenile detention center; or
    - (G) Short-term substance abuse placement.
    - (H) Under the above-referenced circumstances, DFPS must reimburse the SSCC for days of foster care on behalf of a Child who is no longer in that provider's care, in order to reserve space for the Child's anticipated return to the same placement at a date in the near future. The maximum duration of continued payments to the provider during a Child's absence is subject to the limitations set forth in this

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

section. Payments to the SSCC for foster care during a Child's absence must only be made if each of the following conditions are met:

- 1) The SSCC plans to return the Child to the same placement at the end of the absence;
  - 2) The provider agrees to reserve space for the Child's return for as long as payments are made in the Child's absence; and
  - 3) The SSCC is not making foster care payments on behalf of this same Child to any other provider (with the exception of what is required as a part of the minimum pass-through to the Child's foster parent) during the Child's absence.
- (I) In order for the provider to be eligible to receive foster care payments for Children absent from the foster care facility, excluding Children who have run away from placement, the provider must be actively engaged in:
- 1) Giving emotional support to the Child (via active participation in the Child's treatment while hospitalized);
  - 2) Meeting the Child's concrete needs (providing clothing, etc.);
  - 3) Having frequent face-to-face contact with the Child on a regular basis (being physically present with the Child at the hospital as required by some medical facilities, etc.);
  - 4) Facilitating family visits, as appropriate; and
  - 5) Communicating with the medical facility care team regarding the Child's progress and discharge plan.
- (J) In order for the provider to be eligible to receive foster care payments for Children who have run away from the foster care facility, the provider must be actively engaged in working with the primary caseworker to locate the Child.

**5.3.4** DFPS must not reimburse the SSCC for days of foster care and exceptional care when Children and/or Youth reside in a non-IV-E eligible paid placement, including but not limited to:

- (A) Psychiatric hospitals once acute care ends;
- (B) Nursing home placement;
- (C) DFPS approved intensive psychiatric stabilization program/placement
- (D) Intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation (ICFMR);
- (E) State Supported Living Centers (SSLC);
- (F) Placed with a non-licensed relative Caregiver;
- (G) Pre-consummated adoptive placement;
- (H) Texas Youth Commission facility;
- (I) Texas State Hospitals; and
- (J) Home and Community-based Services.

Note: The SSCC may utilize Medicaid paid placements, such as Psychiatric Hospitals, to the extent allowed by Medicaid (usually no more than 15 days). However, the SSCC must seek reimbursement for such instances from Medicaid and not from DFPS).

**5.4 Records Maintenance and Retention.** The SSCC must maintain all records and information concerning a Child served under this Contract.

**5.4.1 SSCC must keep and maintain accurate and complete records necessary to determine compliance with this Contract and applicable laws.**

**5.4.2 SSCC must provide access to its records to DFPS, the Texas State Auditor's Office (SAO), the federal government, and their authorized representatives.**

**5.4.3 Unless otherwise specified in this Contract, SSCC must maintain legible copies of Subcontracts, Memorandums of Understanding(s) or other agreements under this Contract and all related documentation for a minimum of seven years after the**

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

terminate on of this Contract or seven years after the completion of any litigation or dispute involving the Contract, whichever is longer.

**5.4.4 THE SSCC MUST NOT DISPOSE OF RECORDS BEFORE PROVIDING THE DFPS CONTRACT MANAGER WRITTEN NOTICE OF ITS INTENT TO DISPOSE OF RECORDS AND RECEIVING WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM THE DFPS CONTRACT MANAGER.**

**5.4.5** The SSCC must provide access to all records and information concerning a Child served under this Contract to properly identified individuals appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction, including but not limited to: Volunteer or Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), guardian ad litem, Foster Care Ombudsman, attorney ad litem, and anyone else approved by DFPS or another competent person who has a legitimate right to the records.

**5.4.6** Such records and information may include, but are not limited to, documentation of face-to-face visits with the Child by the SSCC's Case Manager staff, the Child's Service Plan, documentation of services provided to a Child, medical and dental information, educational documentation, and narratives.

**5.4.7** In order to assess that an individual who is accessing records and information is appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction, a SSCC or Caregiver should:

- (A) If such individual is an employee of the CASA, have a valid court order; and
- (B) If such individual is a CASA volunteer, review for a valid court order and a notification letter of volunteer assignment and acceptance that clarifies the individual's appointment to the Child.
- (C) If SSCC or Caregiver cannot readily determine the identity or authority of an individual appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction, then the SSCC or Caregiver should obtain approval from the Child's primary caseworker or chain of command prior to granting access to records or information.

**5.5 Reporting Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation.** The SSCC must promptly report any suspected case of abuse, neglect, or exploitation to the appropriate authority as required by the Texas Family Code, Chapter 261. All reports must be made within twenty-four (24) hours of the discovery of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

**5.6 Cultural Competency.** The SSCC must provide services to people of various cultures, races, ethnic backgrounds, and religions in a manner that recognizes, values, affirms, and respects the worth of the individuals and protects and preserves their dignity. The SSCC must:

**5.6.1** Exhibit a clear understanding of the cultural beliefs of Children and families in the distinct communities and population hubs within the designated catchment area.

**5.6.2** Provide ongoing education in the form of orientation, training, workshops, and other educational opportunities to help staff, Caregivers, and Subcontractors understand the unique socio-economic and cultural backgrounds as well as experiences of families and how they impact services to Children and families.

**5.6.3** Ensure that caregivers and Subcontractor understand the impact of disproportionality and disparities in the Child welfare system. Disproportionality is the over representation of a particular race or cultural group in a program or system and is an issue DFPS remains committed to addressing.

**5.6.4** Coordinate and deliver services in a manner that is relevant to the culture of Children and families served in the distinct communities and population hubs within the designated catchment area.

**5.6.5** Provide services in the client's primary language either directly by the SSCC or by a translator.

**5.7 Testimony in Proceedings.** In accordance with Exhibit A Statement of work of the Contract the SSCC must require its employees, agents, volunteers, consultants, or Subcontractor to testify in judicial and

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

administrative proceedings at the request of the court or DFPS. The SSCC must make reasonable efforts to locate former employees, agents, volunteers, consultants, or Subcontractor's when required to appear and testify.

- 5.8 Removal of Access.** The SSCC must immediately remove access capabilities to any DFPS automated systems or internet-based application(s) or immediately notify DFPS that access to such systems or applications needs to be terminated for an employee, Subcontractor, or volunteer whose employment, subcontract, or volunteer term with the SSCC has ended for any reason.
- 5.9 Personnel.** SSCC must assign only qualified personnel to this Contract. SSCC, in its reasonable discretion, may substitute appropriate key personnel to accomplish its duties so long as the substituted personnel are equally qualified and skilled in the tasks necessary to accomplish the tasks and services required. SSCC must provide to DFPS prior written notice of any proposed change in key personnel who must be involved in providing services under this Contract. The Texas Penal Code (Section 32.52) prohibits the use of fraudulent or substandard degrees. SSCC must include a process to verify the education and degree requirements of all employees in its human resources policy.
- 5.10 Subcontracting.** SSCC must be responsible to DFPS for any Subcontractor's performance under this Contract. Subcontractors providing services under the Contract must meet the same requirements and level of experience as required of SSCC. No subcontract under the Contract must relieve SSCC of responsibility for ensuring the requested services are provided. SSCC must monitor any Subcontractor providing services described in this Contract in accordance with SSCC's DFPS approved Contract monitoring policies and procedures. The SSCC must not subcontract out any Child welfare legal case management duties described in this Contract. All Case Management requirements must be performed by employees of the SSCC. If SSCC uses a Subcontractor for any other work required, the following conditions must also apply:
- 5.10.1** SSCCs planning to subcontract all or a portion of the work to be performed must identify the proposed Subcontractor and provide this information to DFPS upon request.
  - 5.10.2** Subcontracting must be solely at SSCC's expense.
  - 5.10.3** DFPS retains the right to check Subcontractor background, qualifications, and experience and to approve or reject the initial use or continued use of Subcontractor who provide direct client care services, including residential Childcare.
  - 5.10.4** SSCC must be the sole contact for DFPS and SSCC must list a designated point of contact for all Department inquiries regarding its Subcontractor and subcontracted services.
  - 5.10.5 Subcontracts.** SSCC must include a term in all subcontracts that incorporates this Contract by reference and binds Subcontractor to all the requirements, terms, and conditions of this Contract that relate to the service being provided by the Subcontractor, as well as explicitly hold that this Contract controls in the event of any conflict with the subcontract between the SSCC and the Subcontractor. DFPS approval of SSCC's use of any Subcontractor is conditioned upon the extent that any subcontract does not conflict with any requirements of the Contract between DFPS and SSCC.
  - 5.10.6 Payment to Subcontractor** Pursuant to Chapter 2251 of the Texas Government Code, SSCC must make any payments owed to Subcontractor within ten (10) calendar days of SSCC's receipt of funds from DFPS. The SSCC must maintain records that account for funds expended separately for each subcontracted agency which provides care or services under the continuum.
  - 5.10.7 Insurance.** DFPS must not require any uniform insurance requirement for SSCC Subcontractor. A single source continuum SSCC providing community-based care services must maintain minimum insurance coverage, as required in the contract with the department, to minimize the risk of insolvency and protect against damages. The SSCC must ensure adequate protection for all funds expended and all clients served under this contract. If the SSCC subcontracts with a governmental entity, the SSCC must waive any insurance



**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

requirements related to this contract for the governmental entity.

- 5.10.8 Reporting.** SSCC must require Subcontractor, as a condition of the subcontract agreement, to report critical incidents, licensing investigations, Licensure Board reports and investigations, suspected fraud or fraud investigations, and Minimum Standards violations to the SSCC. For said circumstances in particular, and at all times in general, the SSCC must have operational procedures and mechanisms in place to respond immediately to conditions or situations that may pose a threat to Child or Youth safety. The SSCC must notify DFPS of Subcontractor disclosure. Failure to disclose and report may be regarded as a breach of this Contract. Additionally, SSCC must obtain a waiver from each of its Subcontractor which allows DFPS to disclose information to the SSCC relating to background checks, prior contract performance history and monitoring, and licensing investigations of a Subcontractor, or a Subcontractor employees, agents, and volunteers.

5.10.8.1 Reporting serious incidents is also a condition and requirement of subcontracted residential providers outside the State of Texas when Children and Youth are placed by the SSCC through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC). A Serious Incident is any non-routine occurrence that has an impact on the care, supervision, or treatment of a Child. This includes, but is not limited to suicide attempts, injuries requiring medical treatment, runaways, commission of a crime, and allegations of abuse or neglect or abusive treatment.

Each Serious Incident must be reported within 24 hours to all of the following individuals/areas at DFPS and the SSCCs.

- 5.10.8.1.1 DFPS or SSCC Caseworker
- 5.10.8.1.2 DFPS or SSCC Caseworker's Chain of Command;
- 5.10.8.1.3 DFPS or SSCC Contract Manager, once the SSCC is in Stage II, and the following DFPS areas;
- 5.10.8.1.4 DFPS Statewide Intake at (800) 252-5400 or online at <https://www.txabusehotline.org>; and
- 5.10.8.1.5 DFPS Interstate Compact for Placement of Children by email at [ICPCHS@dfps.texas.gov](mailto:ICPCHS@dfps.texas.gov).

- 5.10.9** The SSCC must include, as a part of all subcontract agreements, a provision stating that DFPS or its designee must become the primary contracting entity with the Subcontractor the event that the SSCC contract with DFPS is terminated or not renewed.

- 5.10.10 Subcontract Dispute Resolution.** The SSCC must have a clearly defined approach and protocol for addressing both case-specific and contract disputes which may arise between the SSCC and a Subcontractor .

- 5.10.11 Residential Child Care Subcontractor.** If a Subcontractor must provide residential Child-Care Services under this contract, then SSCC must explicitly state in its subcontract that the Subcontractor must be responsible for meeting all HHSC residential Child Care licensing minimum standards and requirements, regardless of any terms or conditions of the subcontract. Additionally, SSCC must submit necessary information of its Subcontractor to DFPS prior to placement so that DFPS can enter that information into the DFPS system IMPACT.

- 5.10.12** Prior to entering into a subcontract for services described in this Contract, the SSCC must consider (1) the strength of the Subcontractor's operational plan and all required components of the Subcontractor's operational plan that must be submitted for licensing purposes, (2) the regulatory history of the Subcontractor, and (3) the history of the Subcontractor's performance in meeting any performance measures, goals or outcomes defined in previous contracts with DFPS.

- 5.10.13** SSCC must ensure that all Subcontractors, including foster parents, participate and provide information to be used in Evaluation of Community Based Care activities as directed by DFPS.

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- 5.11 Background Checks.** The Department reserves the right to conduct background history checks on the SSCC, the SSCC's employees, Subcontractors, volunteers, agents, and other individuals who interact with DFPS Clients or have access to Clients' records. If the SSCC chooses to provide services under this Contract through a residential Subcontractor licensed by HHSC, then HHSC must conduct background checks on the residential licensed Subcontractor through the residential licensing process. If SSCC provides services for families in Stage II of the implementation model under this Contract through a Subcontractor who is not licensed by HHSC, then SSCC must verify and ensure that such Subcontractor's and their employees, agents, and volunteers undergo DFPS background checks by using the DFPS Automated Background Check System (ABCS) according to the instructions in the user guide located at: [DFPS - Automated Background Check System \(ABCS\)](#).
- 5.12 Disclosure and Release.** The SSCC must disclose and release, or cause its employees, Subcontractor's and volunteers with direct client contact and/or access to client records to disclose and release, any allegation made against that employee, Subcontractor or volunteer alleging the commission of any act noted in either: (1) the DFPS Purchased Client Services (PCS) Background Check Criminal History Chart or (2) the DFPS Purchased Client Services (PCS) Background Check DFPS Central Registry Chart, both of which may be accessed using the below link: [DFPS - Automated Background Check System \(ABCS\)](#).
- 5.12.1 Method of Disclosure and Release.** This disclosure and release are required of all individuals who have, or must have, direct contact with clients and/or access to client records, prior to such contact or access and must be accomplished through the use of:
- (A) a criminal history background check;
  - (B) a DFPS abuse and neglect history check; and
  - (C) if the ABCS system is used to conduct the background check, a signed disclosure and release by each person attesting to this information, which must be maintained by SSCC, available for review by the Department, and renewed at intervals not to exceed 24 months while the Contract is in effect.
- 5.12.2 Contact with Clients.** The SSCC must prevent or promptly remove any employee, agent, volunteer, Subcontractor's employee, Subcontractor's agent, or Subcontractor's volunteer from direct client contact and/or from access to client records who are identified by the HHSC Centralized Background Check Unit or the DFPS Background Check Program. If HHSC or DFPS determines that the person in question has not committed the acts or offenses alleged, that person may again be assigned to direct client contact and/or access to client records. However, the SSCC must notify the Department of its intent to do so no later than ten (10) business days and receive Department approval prior to the reassignment. SSCC must provide HHSC or DFPS with further information concerning the reasons for the reassignment upon the request of the Department. If the person in question is found to have committed any of the acts or offenses listed in this Contract, that person must not be reassigned to duties involving any direct contact with clients and/or access to client records.
- 5.12.3** The SSCC must ensure initial and subsequent Background History Checks (Checks) are performed in compliance with Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards or DFPS Background Check Policy, including:
- (A) Submitting initial Checks timely;
  - (B) Submitting subsequent Checks before their due date;
  - (C) Ensuring employees, volunteers, SSCCs, and Caregivers are not present at the facility if the Checks are submitted past the due date; and
  - (D) Timely complying with any HHSC or DFPS Background Check requirements when there is a relevant Check for a particular employee, volunteer, SSCC, or Caregiver, which includes but is not limited to restrictions on employee actions like not transporting Children or not being the sole Caregiver for Children, or submitting complete requests for risk evaluations timely.

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

**5.12.4 Background Checks for Principals.** In addition to the requirements in Subsection 5.11 through 5.12.3 anyone who is a Principal must follow the Purchased Client Services Background Check Policy. A Principal is defined as any person who has the ability to make unilateral fiscal decisions on behalf of the SSCC. The following positions are assumed to have such ability: Executive Director, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Comptroller, and Chief Financial Officer. This policy also applies to situations where a Subcontractor performs any portion of SSCC's financial or accounting operations. In such situations, SSCC must require Subcontractor's principals to follow the Purchased Client Services Background Check Policy. Any person or entity this policy applies to must conduct Background History Checks and submit them through the DFPS Automated Background Check System (ABCS) in accordance with the Purchased Client Services Background Check Policy, which can be found at: [DFPS - Automated Background Check System \(ABCS\) \(texas.gov\)](http://www.texas.gov/DFPS-ABCS).

**5.12.5 Background Checks for IMPACT, TARE, and CLASS.** No person may have access to IMPACT, TARE, or Child Care Licensing Automated Support System (CLASS) without completing a DFPS Form 4047 and receiving prior approval from the Department. The SSCC must provide DFPS with a list of each employee who the SSCC proposes to have access to IMPACT or CLASS and require each such employee to complete a DFPS Form 4047. The SSCC must ensure that DFPS has a current list of all SSCC employees with IMPACT, TARE, or CLASS access at all times. If this list changes at any time for any reason, the SSCC must notify DFPS immediately and take any necessary precautions to ensure the protection of Confidential Information and IMPACT, TARE and CLASS system security.

**5.12.6** If, during a Federal audit, there is a finding that Checks are not being performed by the SSCC or its network within the timeframes required by Minimum Standards and Contract, this finding can result in a disallowance of Title IV-E funds claimed on behalf of the Child. In addition to any other remedy under this Contract, DFPS can require the SSCC to reimburse DFPS for such disallowances, including disallowed costs related to foster care maintenance payments, administrative costs, and interest.

**5.13 Limitation on Use of DFPS Seal and Name.** The SSCC may not use the DFPS seal in any form or manner without the prior written approval of the Department. The SSCC also may not use the name of DFPS to imply any endorsement, approval, or sponsorship of the SSCC's goods or services by DFPS.

**5.14 Taxes.** DFPS is not responsible for any state, local, or federal taxes. The SSCC must comply with all federal, state, and local tax laws.

**5.15 Prohibition on Non-compete Restrictions.** The SSCC must not require any employees or Subcontractors to agree to any conditions, such as non-compete clauses or other contractual arrangements that would limit or restrict such persons or entities from employment or contracting with other providers (including DFPS). This Section does not limit or preclude the SSCC's ability to require employees or Subcontractors to enter into binding nondisclosure or confidentiality agreements.

**5.16 Insurance.** The SSCC must maintain the following minimum insurance requirements throughout the Contract term.

**5.16.1** DFPS must require the SSCC to provide evidence of insurability within forty-eight (48) hours prior to contract execution. The SSCC must provide DFPS with documentation that it meets or exceeds the applicable insurance coverages and limits in this subsection. Documentation can include, but is not limited to, insurance policies, accords, certificates or binders.

**5.16.2** DFPS reserves sole discretion to determine whether a document provided to DFPS meets the minimum insurance requirements, coverage, and/or limits.

**5.16.3** If the coverage must be provided through an insurance policy(ies) or other similar insurance document(s), The SSCC represents and warrants that the issuing insurance company is licensed and authorized to do business in the State of Texas and has a "B" or higher rating by

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

Best's Insurance Guide and Key Ratings.

**5.16.4** Insurance requirements for Subcontractors of the SSCC are listed in the UTCs Section 5.10.7

**5.16.5 Commercial General Liability Insurance.**

(A) In Stage I, The SSCC must maintain coverage including, but not limited to, liability with minimum combined bodily injury (including death) and property damage limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence, and \$2,000,000 general aggregate.

(B) In Stage II-III, The SSCC must maintain coverage including, but not limited to, liability with minimum combined bodily injury (including death) and property damage limits of \$2,000,000 per occurrence, and \$4,000,000 general aggregate.

(C) In Stages I-III, the Commercial General Liability Insurance policy must afford Sexual Molestation and Abuse coverage of \$1,000,000 aggregate.

**5.16.6 Professional Liability Insurance.** If the SSCC's employees must be providing professional services, the SSCC must maintain professional liability for these employees, including coverage for the rendering of, or failure to render, professional services with minimum limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence, \$2,000,000 annual aggregate.

**5.16.7 Business Automobile Liability Insurance.** The SSCC must obtain business automobile liability insurance covering owned, hired, and non-owned vehicles, with a minimum combined bodily injury (including death) and property damage limit of \$1,000,000 aggregate.

**5.16.8 Commercial Crime Insurance.** The SSCC must maintain commercial crime insurance to cover losses from fraudulent and dishonest acts with a minimum limit of \$250,000 per occurrence endorsed to cover third party property/funds and deletion of the conviction clause.

**5.16.9 SSCC Notice to DFPS of Any Material Changes.** The SSCC must provide written notice to DFPS of any material changes to any document submitted under this subsection within one business day after it knows, or should have known, of the material change; such notification also includes cancellation of coverage before the expiration date (i.e., end of policy period) of the applicable document.

**5.16.10 Renewals or New Coverages during Contract Period.** The SSCC must always have available documentation for DFPS that required coverages under this Section are current and in full force and effect. If the document has a period of coverage, then the SSCC must ensure that after each renewal, it provides the new coverage document to DFPS within one business day of receiving the new coverage document. In the event that the SSCC obtains coverage from a new issuer or insurer, then the SSCC must immediately provide the new coverage document to DFPS.

**5.16.11 Notice of Cancellation Endorsement Requirement.** For the insurance coverage in Sections 5.16.5 A-C above, The SSCC agrees that it must request for any insurance policies, or other similar documents, that an endorsement be included which states that if the Insurer cancels the coverage before the end of the policy's period, then the Insurer must provide notice to DFPS' named individual with a 30-day notice of cancellation.

**5.16.12 Insurance Requirements for Governmental Entities.** Entities considered governmental entities as defined in Texas Government Code 2252.001(2) may provide self-insurance to meet the insurance requirements of this Contract.

5.16.12.1 If the coverage must be provided through a self-insurance plan, then the submitted plan must demonstrate that it can provide DFPS with the required coverages and limits.

5.16.12.2 If the coverage must be provided through a bond or other financial instrument, then the issuer must be authorized to do business in the State of Texas.

**5.17 INDEMNIFICATION. THE SSCC MUST DEFEND, INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS THE STATE OF TEXAS, THE DEPARTMENT, ITS OFFICERS, AND EMPLOYEES, FROM AND**

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

**AGAINST ALL CLAIMS, ACTIONS, SUITS, DEMANDS, PROCEEDINGS, COSTS, DAMAGES, AND LIABILITIES INCLUDING, WITHOUT LIMITATION, ATTORNEY'S FEES AND COURT COSTS ARISING OUT OF OR RESULTING FROM:**

**SSCC'S OR ANY AGENT, EMPLOYEE, SUBCONTRACTOR , OR SUPPLIER'S PERFORMANCE UNDER THIS CONTRACT INCLUDING ANY NEGLIGENT ACTS OR OMISSIONS OF THE SSCC, OR ANY AGENT, EMPLOYEE, SUBCONTRACTOR , OR SUPPLIER OF THE SSCC, OR ANY THIRD PARTY UNDER THE CONTROL OR SUPERVISION OF THE SSCC, IN THE EXECUTION OR PERFORMANCE UNDER THIS CONTRACT;**

- (A) ANY BREACH OR VIOLATION OF A STATUTE, ORDINANCE, GOVERNMENTAL REGULATION, STANDARD OR RULE OF CONTRACT BY THE SSCC OR ANY AGENT, EMPLOYEE, SUBCONTRACTOR , OR SUPPLIER OF THE SSCC, OR ANY THIRD PARTY UNDER THE CONTROL OR SUPERVISION OF THE SSCC, IN THE EXECUTION OR PERFORMANCE UNDER THIS CONTRACT;**
- (B) EMPLOYMENT OR ALLEGED EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION, INCLUDING CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST SSCC, ITS OFFICERS, OR ITS AGENTS; OR**
- (C) WORK UNDER THIS CONTRACT THAT INFRINGES OR MISAPPROPRIATES ANY RIGHT OF ANY THIRD PERSON OR ENTITY BASED ON COPYRIGHT, PATENT, TRADE SECRET, OR OTHER INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS.**

- 5.18 NOTHING IN THIS CONTRACT MUST BE CONSTRUED AS A WAIVER OF DFPS' SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY.**
- 5.19 IF DFPS IS A NAMED DEFENDANT IN ANY SUIT INVOLVING THIS CONTRACT, THE SSCC MUST COORDINATE ANY DEFENSE WITH THE TEXAS ATTORNEY GENERAL. SSCC MAY NOT AGREE TO ANY SETTLEMENT REGARDING SUITS INVOLVING THIS CONTRACT IF DFPS IS A NAMED DEFENDANT WITHOUT FIRST OBTAINING THE CONCURRENCE OF THE TEXAS ATTORNEY GENERAL.**
- 5.20 E-Verify. By entering into this Contract, SSCC certifies and ensures that it utilizes and must continue to utilize, for the term of this Contract, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's e-Verify system to determine the eligibility of all persons employed during the Contract term to perform duties within Texas and all persons (including Subcontractor s) assigned by the SSCC to perform services, deliverables and work pursuant to the Contract.**

## **6. Data Use**

- 6.1 Disclosures under the Public Information Act.** All Contracts and other information submitted to DFPS may be subject to the Texas Public Information Act, Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code ("the Act"). If the SSCC submits proprietary or otherwise Confidential Information to DFPS, then the SSCC should clearly identify that particular information and the specific exception to disclosure in the Act. Making a blanket claim that an entire submission is protected from disclosure because it contains some proprietary information is not acceptable and must not render the entire proposal confidential. DFPS assumes no responsibility for asserting legal arguments for the SSCC. The SSCC should consult with legal counsel concerning disclosure issues and take precautions to safeguard trade secrets and other proprietary information.
- 6.2 Confidential Information.** The provisions of this Section remain in full force and effect following termination, non-renewal, or any cessation of the services performed under this Contract. All records received or created by the SSCC that include Confidential Information may be disclosed to third parties only with the prior written consent of the Department or within the scope of consents specifically permitted under this Contract (i.e. - Medical Consenter or Approved Subcontractor . SSCC must not use any Confidential Information supplied by DFPS or generated as the result of this Contract except for the purposes described in this Contract. If SSCC stores, collects, or maintains any confidential data, SSCC must only use such data in the performance of this Contract.
- 6.2.1** SSCC must establish a method to ensure the protection and security of Confidential

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

Information in compliance with applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations and the IT security requirements of this Contract. This provision does not limit the Department's right of access to client case records or other information relating to clients served under this Contract. The Department must have an absolute right to access such information upon request.

**6.2.2** If SSCC receives any request or demand for disclosure of Confidential Information by oral questions, documents, subpoenas, civil investigative demand, interrogatories, requests for information, or other similar legal process, SSCC must provide DFPS with at least 2 business days' notice of such request so that the Department may seek an appropriate protective order and/or consent to SSCC's disclosure of the requested records.

**6.2.3** **Research and Publication.** SSCC may not use any Confidential Information supplied by DFPS for any research purposes, training, or publication without the prior written approval of the Department.

**6.2.4** SSCC must require all of its Subcontractors or agents that receive or have access to DFPS Confidential Information to agree to the same restrictions and conditions on the use and/or disclosure of the information that apply to SSCC under this Contract; specifically, the "Data Use and IT Security" Section.

**6.2.5** The SSCC may release or otherwise use a photo or image of a Child under the following circumstances:

- (A) SSCC has made a good faith determination that releasing an image of the Child poses no threat to the Child's health or safety, supports the best interests of the Child, and the use is not for any commercial use, publicity, pecuniary benefit, or similar gain for the SSCC or any other party;
- (B) SSCC must ensure that no reference is made to the fact that the Child is in the conservatorship of DFPS or in foster care, and the use does not stigmatize the Child in any way.
- (C) When appropriate, the Child approves of the release or use;
- (D) Permission is received from DFPS prior to release or other use of a photo or image; and
- (E) The SSCC is not required to receive prior written permission from DFPS when the following conditions are in effect:
  - 1. The photo or image is released or otherwise used by the Child or Caregiver to the Child's friends or to the Caregiver's friends or family, including but not limited to school pictures traded with peers or a family photo sent in a holiday card;
  - 2. The photo or image is released by the Child or Caregiver to the Child's biological family; or
  - 3. The photo or image is used as a normal part of a school or extracurricular activity, including but not limited to photos published in the school yearbook or a church newsletter, photos of Honor Roll students published in the local newspaper, a group photo of a scout troop distributed to all the troop members and posted on a community Youth center bulletin board, photos of the sports team posted in a school showcase, or other similar publication.

**6.3** **Access to IMPACT, TARE, and CLASS.** DFPS authorization for SSCC access to IMPACT, TARE, and CLASS is contingent on the SSCC's good faith business need for casework information in order to accomplish the tasks, services, and deliverables described in this Contract. SSCC understands that DFPS and the State of Texas consider any access of the IMPACT, TARE, or CLASS IT Systems for a reason not related to performing the tasks, services, and deliverables described in this Contract to be unauthorized and unlawful. SSCC must report any use or suspected misuse of the IMPACT, TARE, or CLASS system to DFPS and must cooperate in any investigation related to improper access or use of either system.

**6.3.1** In addition to the IT Security Requirements of this contract, SSCC must establish comprehensive policies, procedures, and processes to ensure the confidentiality of the DFPS IMPACT, TARE, and CLASS IT Systems, including all information contained



**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

in those systems or otherwise used by SSCC.

- 6.3.2 SSCC understands and must inform its staff, volunteers, or other authorized agents that unauthorized or unlawful use of IMPACT, TARE, or CLASS can lead to civil or criminal liability.
- 6.3.3 **Information Security Requirements.** SSCC must comply with: [http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Doing\\_Business/documents/SSCC\\_Data\\_and\\_System\\_Security\\_Requirements.pdf](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Doing_Business/documents/SSCC_Data_and_System_Security_Requirements.pdf) and agrees to periodically check for any updates made to this document and comply with any updates made to these requirements.
- 6.3.4 The SSCC must submit to an initial IT Security Audit performed by DFPS Office of Information Security (OIS) and must resolve any critical and high-risk items identified by OIS prior to being certified for readiness.
- 6.3.5 Security and Management Control Outsourcing Standard for Non-Channelers (issued by the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact Council, eff. May 16, 2018)
- 6.3.6 The FBI Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Security Policy, now incorporated into this Contract as Attachment I: Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Security Policy.

**7. Contract Administration.**

- 7.1 **Notifications.** The SSCC must notify the Department immediately of any significant change affecting the SSCC or this Contract, including, but not limited to, change of the SSCC's name or identity, ownership, control, governing board membership, key personnel, any problem or potential problem associated with performance or services, or payee identification number. The SSCC must also provide DFPS with any documentation or information related to a notification provided for under this section. The SSCC must also notify DFPS of any lawsuit brought against the SSCC related to the services provided under this Contract. Unless otherwise noted in this Contract, the SSCC must provide all notices in writing to the Department within ten (10) business days of the event occurring that requires the notice.
- 7.2 **DFPS Monitoring.** The SSCC must cooperate fully in any review conducted by DFPS or its authorized representatives related to services provided under this Contract. DFPS has the authority to monitor, inspect, assess, and review the fiscal, contractual, or program performance of the SSCC, including all information related to any services provided under this Contract or invoiced to DFPS. The SSCC must remedy in a timely manner, any weaknesses, deficiencies, program noncompliance, or audit exceptions found as a result of a review by DFPS or its authorized representatives. Such remedy can include a refund of invoiced amounts, or any other appropriate actions deemed necessary by DFPS, including the recoupment of funds for failing to comply with court orders. Acceptance of funds under this Contract acts as acceptance of the authority of the State Auditor's Office, HHSC Office of Inspector General, or any successor agency, to audit or investigate the expenditure of funds under this Contract or any subcontract. The SSCC must ensure that this clause concerning the authority to audit funds received indirectly by Subcontractor s through the SSCC and the requirement to cooperate is included in any subcontract it awards.
- 7.3 **Reporting.** SSCC must submit all reports requested by the Department in appropriate format and within the time limits specified by DFPS. If DFPS has not specified a time limit for the reporting request, then SSCC must have ten (10) business days to respond to the request. If SSCC cannot respond to a reporting request within ten (10) business days, it must promptly notify DFPS of the time within which it can respond to the request and the parties must establish a reasonable time limit. The SSCC must accurately complete time studies, contract monitoring surveys, and any other reports required by this Contract or requested by the Department. SSCC must also make client records and any other programmatic or financial records, books, reports, and any other supporting documents available for reviewing and copying by the Department, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or their authorized representatives within the time limits specified by DFPS.

- 7.3.1 **Cost Report Training.** The SSCC acknowledges and agrees that individual(s) responsible

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

for preparing the SSCC's cost reports, when applicable shall attend HHSC cost report training in compliance with 1 TAC § 355.102(d) prior to submitting an annual cost report.

**7.3.2 Legislative Requests.** If DFPS requires information from SSCC in order to respond to a request from the Texas Legislature, Federal Agency, or any other applicable governmental entity, then the Department must contact SSCC and identify the needed information required by DFPS. SSCC must provide a report to DFPS with the requested information within eight (8) hours of the time the SSCC receives the request, unless DFPS and SSCC have agreed to a different timeframe. If DFPS and SSCC do agree to a different timeframe, SSCC must obtain written confirmation via e-mail of the agreement.

**7.3.3 Media Requests.** SSCC must inform DFPS of all third-party journalism-based media requests and interactions regarding this Contract. SSCC must involve DFPS prior to publication of any media story involving this Contract. If DFPS requires information from SSCC in order to respond to a media request, then the Department must contact SSCC and identify the needed information. SSCC must provide a report to DFPS with the requested information within two (2) calendar days unless DFPS and SSCC have agreed to a different timeframe. If DFPS and SSCC do agree to a different timeframe, SSCC must obtain written confirmation via e-mail of the agreement.

**7.3.4 Open Records Requests.** If DFPS requires information from SSCC in order to respond to an open records request, then the Department must contact SSCC and identify the needed information. SSCC must provide requested information within twenty-four (24) hours of the time the SSCC receives the request, unless DFPS and SSCC have agreed to a different timeframe. If DFPS and SSCC do agree to a different timeframe, SSCC must obtain written confirmation via e-mail of the agreement.

**7.4 Authority of Department Staff.** DFPS staff are not authorized to sign non-DFPS forms unless those forms have received prior approval by the Department. DFPS is not bound by unauthorized staff actions in signing such forms.

**7.5 Vendor Performance.** Pursuant to Section 2155.089 and 2262.55 of the Texas Government Code, state agencies are required to report vendor performance for all contracts upon completion or termination. DFPS reports vendor performance by means of the Vendor Performance Tracking System (VPTS), which can be accessed online at: [http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/vendor\\_performance/](http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/vendor_performance/). DFPS may use the VPTS to determine best value when awarding contracts in instances where past performance is included as a factor in the evaluation of a vendor for award.

**7.6 Complaint Reporting.** Unless otherwise noted in this Contract, DFPS must contact the SSCC when a complaint about the SSCC is received and advise the SSCC whether DFPS must conduct an investigation or must coordinate with the SSCC for an investigation and a response. When DFPS requires the SSCC to conduct any part of the complaint investigation, the SSCC must respond in writing to DFPS with all information and according to DFPS requirements and specified time frames. If the SSCC is unwilling or unable to provide any information within the time required, the SSCC must provide a written explanation for any information that the SSCC does not submit, any applicable date by which the SSCC must provide the information, and the detailed reasons why the SSCC is unwilling or unable to provide such information.

**7.7 Independent SSCC.** SSCC must serve as an independent SSCC in providing services under this Contract. SSCC's employees must not be construed as employees of DFPS or the State of Texas. SSCC has sole authority and responsibility to employ, discharge, and otherwise control its employees and SSCCs. SSCC is responsible for providing all necessary unemployment and workers' compensation insurance for the SSCC's employees.

**7.8 Force Majeure.** DFPS must excuse SSCC from obligations of this Contract to the extent that



**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

performance is delayed or prevented by any circumstances (except financial) reasonably beyond the SSCC's control. Such delays or failures to perform shall extend the period of performance at the discretion of DFPS. The SSCC must inform the Department in writing of proof of force majeure within three business days or otherwise waive this right as a defense. The SSCC agrees that breach of this provision entitles DFPS to any and all available remedies.

- 7.9 No Waiver of Provisions.** Neither failure to enforce any provision of this Contract nor payment for services provided under it constitute waiver of any provision of the Contract.
- 7.10 No Waiver of Sovereign Immunity.** Nothing in the Contract must be construed as a waiver of sovereign immunity by DFPS.
- 7.11 Assignment.** SSCC may not assign all or any portion of its rights under, interests in, or duties required under this Contract without prior written consent of DFPS, which may be withheld or granted at the sole discretion of DFPS. Except where otherwise agreed in writing by DFPS, assignment must not release SSCC from its obligations under the Contract.
- 7.12 Warranty.** SSCC warrants that all services and work done under this Contract must be completed in a manner consistent with generally accepted standards in the applicable trade, profession, or industry and conform to or exceed the specifications set forth in the Contract.
- 7.13 DFPS Information Transfer.** Upon expiration or termination of this Contract, the SSCC agrees to work collaboratively with DFPS to provide all information gathered or developed under this Contract to DFPS in a usable format. This includes providing DFPS any and all electronic records in a "csv" or other agreed to application format that DFPS can use.
- 8. Governing Law and Regulations.**
- 8.1 Governing Law and Venue.** This Contract must be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas (State). Venue must be in a court of competent jurisdiction in Travis County, Texas.
- 8.2 Federal and State Requirements.** The SSCC must comply with all applicable federal and state regulations as well as the Department's policies and procedures regarding services delivered under this Contract.
- 8.2.1 Civil Rights.** The SSCC agrees to comply with state and federal anti-discrimination laws, including without limitation:
- (A) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. §2000d *et seq.*);
  - (B) Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. §794). and Texas EIR Accessibility Requirements described in Title 1, Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 206, Subchapter B and Chapter 213, Subchapters A and B. The SSCC must comply with HHS EIR Accessibility requirements located at: <https://accessibility.hhs.texas.gov/policy.htm/default.htm>;
  - (C) Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*); Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. §§6101–6107);
  - (D) Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §§1681–1688); Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. §2011 *et seq.*); and
  - (E) The HHS agency's administrative rules, as set forth in the Texas Administrative Code, to the extent applicable to this Agreement. The SSCC agrees to comply with all amendments to the above-referenced laws, and all requirements imposed by the regulations issued pursuant to these laws. These laws provide in part that no persons in the United States may, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, political beliefs, or religion, be excluded from participation in or denied any aid, care, service or other benefits provided by federal or state funding, or

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

otherwise be subjected to discrimination.

- 8.2.2** The SSCC agrees to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and its regulations at 45 CFR. Part 80 or 7 CFR. Part 15, prohibiting the SSCC from adopting and implementing policies and procedures that exclude or have the effect of excluding or limiting the participation of clients in its programs, benefits, or activities on the basis of national origin. Applicable state and federal civil rights laws require the SSCC to provide alternative methods for ensuring access to services for applicants and recipients who cannot express themselves fluently in English. The SSCC agrees to ensure that its policies do not have the effect of excluding or limiting the participation of persons in its programs, benefits, and activities on the basis of national origin. The SSCC also agrees to take reasonable steps to provide services and information, both orally and in writing, in appropriate language other than English, in order to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency are effectively informed and can have meaningful access to programs, benefits, and activities.
- 8.2.3** The SSCC agrees to comply with Executive Order 13279, and its regulations at 45 CFR. Part 87 or 7 CFR. Part 16. These provide in part that any organization that participates in programs funded by direct financial assistance from the United States Department of Agriculture or the United States Department of Health and Human Services must not, in providing services, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion or religious belief.
- 8.2.4** Upon request, the SSCC must provide HHSC Civil Rights Office with copies of all of the SSCC's civil rights policies and procedures. The SSCC agrees to post applicable civil rights posters in areas open to the public informing clients of their civil rights and including contact information for the HHSC Civil Rights Office. The posters are available on the HHSC website at <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/about/your-rights/civil-rights-office/civil-rights-posters>.
- 8.2.5** The SSCC must notify HHSC's Civil Rights Office of any civil rights complaints received relating to its performance under this Agreement. This notice must be delivered no more than ten (10) calendar days after receipt of a complaint. Notice provided pursuant to this section must be directed to the address below.

HHSC Civil Rights Office  
701 W. 51<sup>st</sup> Street, Mail Code W206 Austin,  
Texas 78751  
Phone Toll Free: (888) 388-6332  
Phone: (512) 438-4313  
TTY Toll Free: (877) 432-7232  
Fax: (512) 438-5885

- 8.2.6** The SSCC must comply with:
- A. Health and Safety Code Section 85.113 (workplace and confidentiality guidelines regarding AIDS and HIV);
  - B. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 and any subsequent immigration laws related to employment verification and retention of verification forms for any individuals performing any labor or services under this Contract; including The Immigration Act of 1990 and The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 ("IIRIRA) enacted on September 30, 1996;
  - C. All state and federal licensing and certification requirements and regulations prescribed by the United States Department of Health and Human Services;
  - D. The Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. §7401 *et seq.*) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. §1251 *et seq.*);
    - 1. All mandatory standards and policies relating to energy efficiency contained in the state energy conservation plan related to the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (Pub.L.94-163);
    - 2. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) (29 U.S.C. § 201 *et seq.*) regarding minimum wages, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and Child labor; and

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- E. 42 U.S.C. §675(4) (Foster care maintenance payments must be expended for items that are provided by foster parents and facilities).
- F. Contract Cost Principles and Procedures. 45 CFR 31.
- G. Uniform Administrative Requirements for HHS Awards. 45 CFR 75.
- H. Uniform Grant Management Standards (UGMS) issued by the State of Texas.
- I. Tex. Gov't Code, Chapter 411 Department of Public Safety of the State of Texas.

**9. Intellectual Property.**

**9.1 Intellectual Property.** Except as otherwise provided in this Contract, all products produced by the SSCC using State funds received through this Contract become the sole property of DFPS, including, without limitation, all plans, designs, software, and other contract deliverables.

**9.1.1** If The SSCC develops any copyrightable material in the course of performing this Contract, then the SSCC must grant the State of Texas, DFPS, and any federal awarding agency a royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, the work for governmental purposes.

**9.1.2** This section does not apply to any report, document, or other data, or any invention of the SSCC which existed prior to, or was developed or discovered independently from, its activities related to or funded by this Contract.

**10. Intervention, Contingencies, Termination and Transition.**

**10.1 Progressive Intervention Plan.** DFPS and the SSCC must implement a continuous quality improvement process (CQI) that provides continuous data and information collection which DFPS must analyze for the early identification of issues with the SSCC system of care as well as areas of potential Contract non-compliance. Whenever DFPS identifies performance concerns or compliance issues, the Department must intervene by requiring the SSCC to develop and submit a plan that details the steps that the SSCC must take to reverse the trend or address the area of non-compliance. In instances where DFPS and the SSCC cannot correct an identified issue through the Data Monitoring Process or in instances of more serious Contract noncompliance issues, DFPS reserves the right to implement Contract remedies. The use of the data monitoring process, informal remedies, and formal remedies is entirely at the discretion of DFPS. Failure to enforce any provision of this Contract does not constitute a waiver of that provision, or any other provision, of the Contract.

**10.1.1 Data Monitoring Process.** In instances where DFPS determines that available data indicates a negative trend, the Department must communicate with the SSCC to discuss the identified data and offer information and technical assistance in correcting the issue. If the negative data trend continues and becomes a systemic issue, DFPS must request a formal Contract action plan from the SSCC that must contain specific steps to be taken to correct identified deficiencies. Under the standard data monitoring process, DFPS must use the following mechanisms to bring the SSCC back into Contract compliance:

- (A) **Technical Assistance.** The Department must provide informal support, guidance, clarification, and other forms of technical assistance via phone, email, and fax in order to resolve minor Contract or performance compliance issues. The SSCC must document all such instances of technical assistance in writing, including any implementation work.
- (B) **Technical Resolution.** DFPS and the SSCC must enter into a joint technical resolution process. Both parties must hold face to face meetings or scan calls where both parties must identify issues, barriers, potential solutions, and implementation strategies to fix noncompliance and performance issues. DFPS must document these sessions and provide SSCC with a final technical guidance document to aid in implementation.
- (C) **Contract Action Plan (CAP).** DFPS must provide the SSCC with a CAP that identifies

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

areas of noncompliance, poor performance, or other deficiencies. The SSCC must respond in writing within the timeframes required in the CAP, address each identified defect, and provide an appropriately thorough response to DFPS for review and approval. After a CAP receives Departmental approval, it is incorporated into the Contract by this reference. Upon receipt of DFPS approval, the SSCC must implement and maintain compliance with the requirements of the Contract CAP. Failure to appropriately implement or maintain compliance with the CAP must serve as grounds for the exercise of any additional remedies under this Contract.

- 10.2 Remedies.** DFPS must utilize formal remedies as a means to address serious issues of Contract noncompliance and poor performance. DFPS retains sole discretion in selection of which remedy to implement. The Department may require the SSCC to take specific corrective actions in order to maintain compliance with applicable federal or state regulations and the terms and conditions of this Contract. The SSCC's failure to comply with the specific corrective actions may be grounds for DFPS to suspend or terminate the Contract, in whole or in part.

**10.2.1 Financial Remedies for Actual Damages.** DFPS reserves the right to implement fiscal remedies based on monitoring or audit findings of violations of Contract requirements; including recovery for any and all actual damages DFPS accrues as a result SSCC's noncompliance with this Contract.

**10.2.2 Abeyance of Staff.** DFPS reserves the right to require SSCC to remove any employee, volunteer, or agent of the SSCC or any Subcontractor from the provision of services under this Contract or to prohibit any employee, volunteer, or agent of the SSCC or any Subcontractor from having direct contact with DFPS referred clients or client records.

**10.2.3 Health Screening.** As required by Texas Human Resources Code §42.0432(b), DFPS must assess liquidated damages in instances where the SSCC fails to ensure that an early and periodic screening, diagnosis, and treatment (EPSDT) checkup is completed as specified in this Contract. The SSCC must develop and implement a review process that ensures each individual Child who is in the managing conservatorship of DFPS and is placed with the SSCC for a minimum of 30 days receives a complete EPSDT checkup. The SSCC-developed review process must be submitted to DFPS for review and approval prior to being implemented.

**10.2.4 Liquidated Damages for No Eject/No Reject.** The SSCC acknowledges that its failure to comply with timeframes associated with placement of Children as described in this Contract must cause DFPS to incur economic damages of types and in amounts which are impossible or difficult to ascertain. If the SSCC cannot place a Child or Youth in accordance with the timeframes described in this Contract, then such failure, at the sole discretion of DFPS, may be deemed as a violation of the No Eject/No Reject mandate of Community Based Care. Accordingly, in lieu of actual damages for such noncompliance, the SSCC agrees that DFPS may recover liquidated damages if the SSCC cannot comply with the no eject/no reject sections of the Contract. The SSCC must be liable to DFPS for payment of liquidated damages in the amount of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) for each instance of noncompliance with the Contract's no eject/no reject requirement. The liquidated damages represent the best, reasonable, and most appropriate estimate of the Department's loss for each instance of noncompliance and are not considered by either Party to be a penalty. After DFPS has found placement for Children and Youth covered by no eject/no reject provisions of the Contract, the SSCC must also be liable to DFPS for actual damages in the amount of what the substitute provider bills DFPS for the Child's or Youth's care.

**10.3 Termination.**

**10.3.1 Termination by DFPS for Convenience.** DFPS may terminate the Contract, in whole or in part, at any time with at least 30 days' notice to the SSCC when, in its sole discretion, DFPS determines that termination is in the best interests of the State of Texas. The termination must be effective on the date specified in DFPS' notice of termination.

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- 10.3.2 Termination by DFPS for Cause.** If the SSCC fails to provide the services or goods required by this Contract or fails to comply with any terms or conditions of it, DFPS may terminate the Contract in whole or part with at least 30 days' notice to the SSCC.
- 10.3.2.1 SSCC Responsibility.** In addition to any other remedy allowed by law, SSCC must be responsible to DFPS for all costs incurred by DFPS and the State of Texas to replace the SSCC. These costs include, but are not limited to, the costs of procuring a substitute SSCC and the cost of any claim or litigation that is reasonably attributable to SSCC's failure to provide services or goods.
- 10.3.3 Equitable Settlement.** Any early termination under this Contract must be subject to the equitable settlement of the respective interests of the Parties up to the date of termination.
- 10.3.4 Termination by SSCC.** The SSCC may terminate this Contract prior to the SSCC's date of termination by providing at least 60 days' notice to DFPS.

**10.4 Contingencies.** Upon notification of Contract termination, the SSCC and DFPS must meet to develop a plan of action within 10 days of notification of Contract termination. This plan must be completed within 30 days and must include a timeline and process for reassignment of responsibilities. In the event that another DFPS SSCC fails to perform according to the terms and conditions of its Contract, DFPS reserves the right to enter into negotiations with the SSCC in order for the SSCC to provide the services performed by the failed SSCC on a temporary basis until such time as DFPS can procure the services for that contracted service area. DFPS must provide resources commensurate with the additional tasks and temporary responsibilities to the SSCC to support the function.

**10.5 Transition after Termination.** At the end of the Contract term or other Contract termination or cancellation, SSCC must aid in the transition to any new arrangement or provider of services. The respective accrued interests or obligations incurred to date of termination must also be equitably settled. Upon termination or expiration of this Contract, DFPS must work with SSCC to transfer all services as efficiently as possible with the goal to have all necessary services transferred by the effective date of the expiration or termination of the Contract. However, in the event that a transfer of all necessary services is not possible, SSCC and DFPS must continue to perform in accordance with all terms and conditions of this Contract until DFPS determines that all necessary client services are completely transferred.

**10.6 Survivability.** Termination for any reason does not release the SSCC from performance, liability or obligation in the Contract that is expressly stated to survive such termination or by its nature would be intended to be applicable following any such termination, which includes but is not limited to confidentiality, indemnification, transition, records, audit, dispute resolution, invoice, and continuing to provide care for a Child after termination of this Contract.

**11. DFPS Required Certifications.**

**11.1** The certifications enumerated below represent material facts upon which DFPS relies when accepting a bid for this solicitation. If the Department later determines that the SSCC knowingly rendered an inaccurate certification, DFPS may pursue all available remedies in accordance with Texas and U.S. law. The SSCC further agrees and acknowledges its on-going duty to provide immediate written notice to DFPS if, at any time, the SSCC learns that any of the certifications provided for below were inaccurate when submitted or have since become inaccurate by reason of changed circumstances. If the SSCC cannot certify the accuracy of all the statements contained in this section, SSCC must provide written notice to DFPS detailing which of the below statements it cannot certify and why. SSCC acknowledges its continuing obligation to comply with the requirements of the following certifications contained in its Proposal, and must immediately notify DFPS of any changes in circumstances affecting these certifications.

**11.1.1 Federal Certification Regarding Lobbying.** Federal law places restrictions on the use of federal funds in regard to lobbying. The SSCC certifies, to the best of its knowledge and belief, that:

11.1.1.1 In accordance with 31 U.S.C. § 1352, no federal appropriated funds have

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

been paid or must be paid, by or on behalf of the SSCC, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal Contract, the making of any federal grant, the making of any federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any federal Contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

- 11.1.1.2 If any funds other than federally appropriated funds have been paid or must be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any federal agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this federal Contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the SSCC agrees that it must complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying.
- 11.1.1.3 The SSCC must require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for subcontracts and that all Subcontractors must certify and disclose accordingly.

**11.1.2 Drug-Free Workplace Certification.** The SSCC certifies that it must or must continue to provide a drug-free workplace by:

- 11.1.2.1 Publishing a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the SSCC's workplace and specifying the actions that must be taken against employees for violation of such prohibition;
- 11.1.2.2 Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:
  - 11.1.2.2.1 The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
  - 11.1.2.2.2 The SSCC's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
  - 11.1.2.2.3 Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
  - 11.1.2.2.4 The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace;
- 11.1.2.3 Making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of the Contract be given a copy of the statement;
- 11.1.2.4 Notifying the employee in the statement that, as a condition of employment under the Contract, the employee must:
  - 11.1.2.4.1 Abide by the terms of the statement; and
  - 11.1.2.4.2 Notify the SSCC in writing of his or her conviction for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace no later than five calendar days after such conviction;
- 11.1.2.5 Notifying DFPS in writing, within ten calendar days after receiving notice from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction. SSCCs of convicted employees must provide notice, including position title, to every Contract manager or other designee on whose Contract the convicted employee was working. Notice must include the identification number(s) of each affected Contract;
- 11.1.2.6 Taking one of the following actions, within 30 calendar days of receiving notice, with respect to any employee who is so convicted:
  - 11.1.2.6.1 Taking appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination, consistent with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; or
  - 11.1.2.6.2 Requiring such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

purposes by a federal, state, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency; and

11.1.2.7 Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace.

**11.2 Additional Federal Assurances.** The SSCC certifies, to the best of its knowledge and belief, that:

- 11.2.1 SSCC has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance and the institutional, managerial, and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project cost) to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the project described in the Contract.
- 11.2.2 SSCC must give DFPS, the Comptroller General of the United States and the State of Texas, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award, and must establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
- 11.2.3 SSCC must establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
- 11.2.4 SSCC must initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the Department.
- 11.2.5 SSCC must comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).
- 11.2.6 SSCC must comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to:
  - 11.2.6.1 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin;
  - 11.2.6.2 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §§ 1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex;
  - 11.2.6.3 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities;
  - 11.2.6.4 The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age;
  - 11.2.6.5 The Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse;
  - 11.2.6.6 The Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism;
  - 11.2.6.7 Sections §523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. §§ 290 dd-3 and 290 ee- 3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records;
  - 11.2.6.8 Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. §§ 3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental, or financing of housing;
  - 11.2.6.9 Any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and
  - 11.2.6.10 The requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s).
- 11.2.7 SSCC must comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.



**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- 11.2.8** SSCC must comply, as applicable, with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§ 1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.
- 11.2.9** SSCC must comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. §§ 276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. § 276c and 18 U.S.C. §874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§ 327-333), regarding labor standards for federally assisted construction sub-agreements.
- 11.2.10** SSCC must comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
- 11.2.11** Must comply with the requirements of Section 106(g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. 7104) which prohibits grant award recipients or a sub-recipient from: (1) Engaging in severe forms of trafficking in persons during the period of time that the award is in effect; (2) Procuring a commercial sex act during the period of time that the award is in effect; or (3) Using forced labor in the performance of sub-awards under the award.

**11.3 Conflict of Interest.** In accordance with [Texas Government Code Section 572.069](#), SSCC certifies that it did not receive assistance, either directly or indirectly, from a former DFPS employee who (1) was directly concerned with or had administrative responsibility related to the subject of this contract, and (2) may not accept employment before the second anniversary of the date the Grant Agreement is signed or the procurement is terminated or withdrawn.

**11.4 State of Texas General Affirmations.** By entering into this Contract, SSCC affirms, without exception, as described in **Exhibit A- HHS and DFPS Affirmations and Grant Opportunity Acceptance** and as follows:

- 11.4.1** SSCC represents and warrants that these General Affirmations apply to SSCC and all of SSCC's principals, officers, directors, shareholders, partners, owners, agents, employees, Subcontractors , independent SSCCs, and any other representatives who may provide services under, who have a financial interest in, or otherwise are interested in this Contract.
- 11.4.2** SSCC represents and warrants that all statements and information provided to DFPS are current, complete, and accurate. This includes all statements and information relating in any manner to this Contract and any solicitation resulting in this Contract.
- 11.4.3** SSCC has not given, has not offered to give, and does not intend to give at any time hereafter any economic opportunity, future employment, gift, loan, gratuity, special discount, trip, favor, or service to a public servant in connection with this Contract.
- 11.4.4** Under Section 2155.004, Texas Government Code (relating to financial participation in preparing solicitations), SSCC certifies that it is not ineligible to receive this Contract and acknowledges that this Contract may be terminated, and payment withheld if this certification is inaccurate.
- 11.4.5** Under Section 2155.006, Texas Government Code (relating to convictions and penalties regarding Hurricane Rita, Hurricane Katrina, and other disasters), SSCC certifies that it is not ineligible to receive this Contract and acknowledges that this Contract may be terminated, and payment withheld if this certification is inaccurate.
- 11.4.6** Under Section 2261.053, Texas Government Code (relating to convictions and penalties regarding Hurricane Rita, Hurricane Katrina, and other disasters), SSCC certifies that it is not ineligible to receive this Contract and acknowledges that this Contract may be terminated, and payment withheld if this certification is inaccurate.
- 11.4.7** Under Section 231.006, Texas Family Code (relating to delinquent Child support), SSCC certifies that it is not ineligible to receive the specified grant, loan, or payment and acknowledges that this Contract may be terminated, and payment may be withheld if this certification is inaccurate.
- 11.4.8** SSCC certifies that: (1) the entity executing this Contract; (2) its principals; (3) its Subcontractors; and (4) any personnel designated to perform services related to this Contract are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared



**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal Department or Agency. This certification is made pursuant to the regulations implementing Executive Order 12549 and Executive Order 12689, Debarment and Suspension, 2 C.F.R. Part 376, and any relevant regulations promulgated by the Department or Agency funding this project. This provision shall be included in its entirety in SSCC's Subcontracts if payment in whole or in part is from federal funds.
- 11.4.9** SSCC certifies it is in compliance with all State of Texas statutes and rules relating to procurement; and that (a) the entity executing this Contract; (b) its principals; (c) its Subcontractors; and (d) any personnel designated to perform services related to this Contract are not listed on the federal government's terrorism watch list described in Executive Order 13224. Entities ineligible for federal procurement are listed at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>, which SSCC may review in making this certification. SSCC acknowledges that this Contract may be terminated, and payment withheld if this certification is inaccurate. This provision shall be included in its entirety in SSCC's Subcontracts if payment in whole or in part is from federal funds.
- 11.4.10** In accordance with Texas Government Code Section 669.003 (relating to contracting with the executive head of a state agency), SSCC certifies that it (1) is not the executive head of DFPS; (2) was not at any time during the past four years the executive head of DFPS; and (3) does not employ a current or former executive head of DFPS.
- 11.4.11** SSCC represents and warrants that it is not currently delinquent in the payment of any franchise taxes owed the State of Texas under Chapter 171 of the Texas Tax Code.
- 11.4.12** SSCC represents and warrants that payments to SSCC and SSCC's receipt of appropriated or other funds under this Contract are not prohibited by Sections 556.005, 556.0055, or 556.008 of the Texas Government Code (relating to use of appropriated money or state funds to employ or pay lobbyists, lobbying expenses, or influence legislation).
- 11.4.13** SSCC represents and warrants that it must comply with Texas Government Code Section 2155.4441, relating to the purchase of products produced in the State of Texas under service Contracts.
- 11.4.14** Pursuant to Section 2252.901, Texas Government Code (relating to prohibitions regarding Contracts with and involving former and retired state agency employees), SSCC must not allow any former employee of DFPS to perform services under this Contract during the twenty-four (24) month period immediately following the employee's last date of employment DFPS.
- 11.4.15** SSCC understands that DFPS does not tolerate any type of fraud. The Department's policy is to promote consistent, legal, and ethical organizational behavior by assigning responsibilities and providing guidelines to enforce controls. Violations of law, agency policies, or standards of ethical conduct must be investigated, and appropriate actions must be taken. All employees or SSCCs who suspect fraud, waste or abuse (including employee misconduct that would constitute fraud, waste, or abuse) are required to immediately report the questionable activity to both the Health and Human Services Commission's Office of the Inspector General at 1-800-436-6184 and the State Auditor's Office. SSCC agrees to comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and DFPS policies regarding fraud.
- 11.4.16** SSCC represents and warrants that it has not violated state or federal antitrust laws and has not communicated its bid for this Contract directly or indirectly to any competitor or any other person engaged in such line of business. SSCC hereby assigns to DFPS any claims for overcharges associated with this Contract under 15 U.S.C. § 1, et seq., and Texas Business and Commerce Code § 15.01, et seq.
- 11.4.17** SSCC represents and warrants that it is not aware of and has received no notice of any court or governmental agency proceeding, investigation, or other action pending or threatened against SSCC or any of the individuals or entities included in 9.4.1 of these General Affirmations within the five (5) calendar years immediately preceding the

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

execution of this Contract that would or could impair SSCC's performance under this Contract, relate to the contracted or similar goods or services, or otherwise be relevant to DFPS's consideration of entering into this Contract. If SSCC is unable to make the preceding representation and warranty, then SSCC instead represents and warrants that it has provided to DFPS a complete, detailed disclosure of any such court or governmental agency proceeding, investigation, or other action that would or could impair SSCC's performance under this Contract, relate to the contracted or similar goods or services, or otherwise be relevant to DFPS's consideration of entering into this Contract. In addition, SSCC represents and warrants that it shall notify DFPS in writing within five (5) business days of any changes to the representations or warranties in this clause and understands that failure to so timely update DFPS shall constitute breach of Contract and may result in immediate termination of this Contract.

- 11.4.18** SSCC understands, acknowledges, and agrees that any false representation or any failure to comply with a representation, warranty, or certification made by SSCC is subject to all civil and criminal consequences provided at law or in equity including, but not limited to, immediate termination of this Contract.
- 11.4.19** SSCC represents and warrants that it must comply with all applicable laws and maintain all permits and licenses required by applicable city, county, state, and federal rules, regulations, statutes, codes, and other laws that pertain to this Contract.
- 11.4.20** If the SSCC is a "Company" under Texas Government Code §808.001, at the time of executing this Contract, the SSCC verifies that it does and must not boycott Israel during the term of this Contract.
- 11.4.21** Under Section 2155.0061, Government Code regarding prohibition on certain Contracts related to persons involved in human trafficking, SSCC certifies that the individual or business entity named in this Contract is eligible to receive the specified Contract and acknowledges that DFPS may terminate this Contract and withhold payment if this certification is inaccurate."
- 11.4.22** SSCC represents and warrants that the individual signing this Contract is authorized to sign on behalf of SSCC and to bind SSCC.
- 11.4.23** Under Texas Government Code §2252.152, the SSCC warrants that it is not engaged in business with Iran, Sudan, or a foreign terrorist organization.
- 11.4.24** The requirements of Texas Government Code 552, Subchapter J may apply to this Contract, and the SSCC agrees that this Contract can be terminated if the SSCC knowingly or intentionally fails to comply with a requirement of this Subchapter.
- 11.4.25** SSCC represents and warrants that it is in compliance with Section 161.0085(c) of the Texas Health and Safety Code and is eligible pursuant to that section to receive a grant or enter into a contract with DFPS payable with state funds.
- 11.4.26** For Contracts entered into on or after September 1, 2021, if SSCC is a Company under Texas Government Code § 2274.002 at the time of executing this Contract, SSCC certifies that it is exempt under that section, or it does not have a practice, policy, guidance, or directive that discriminates against a firearm entity or firearm trade association and must not discriminate during the term of the Contract against a firearm entity or firearm trade association.
- 11.5** **Abortion Provider and Affiliate Transactions Prohibited.** SSCC certifies that this Contract is not a taxpayer resource transaction prohibited by Texas Government Code §2273.002 made by DFPS to the SSCC and SSCC's Receipt of appropriated funds under this Contract are not prohibited by Article IX, Section 6.24 of the General Appropriations Act.
- 11.6** **Protection of Rights of Conscience.** The SSCC certifies that it must comply with Texas Human Resources Code, Chapter 45. The SSCC must not take any adverse action or otherwise discriminate against a Child welfare provider who:
  - 11.6.1** has declined or must decline to provide, facilitate, or refer a person for Child welfare services that conflict with, or under circumstances that conflict with, the providers

**Exhibit B: DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS,**

- sincerely held religious beliefs;
- 11.6.2** provides or intends to provide Children under the control, care, guardianship, or direction of the provider with a religious education, including through placing the Children in a private or parochial school or otherwise providing a religious education in accordance with the laws of this state;
- 11.6.3** has declined or must decline to provide, facilitate, or refer a person for abortions, contraceptives, or drugs, devices, or services that are potentially abortion-inducing;
- 11.6.4** refuses to enter into a Contract that is inconsistent with or would in any way interfere with or force a provider to surrender the rights created by Chapter 45 of the Texas Human Resources Code; or
- 11.6.5** declines in any other way to provide any good or service that conflicts with the Child welfare service providers sincerely held religious beliefs.

This certification and Chapter 45 of the Texas Human Resources Code does not in any way limit or rescind the duty of the SSCC to locate a secondary provider for any services necessary for a Child, Youth, or family in its care.

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