



Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

**DFPS STATEMENT OF WORK
FOR
SINGLE SOURCE CONTINUUM CONTRACTOR
CATCHMENT AREAS 7A and 7B**

RFA HHS0016842

Exhibit I: Statement of Work

ARTICLE I: DEFINITIONS

As used in this Agreement, the following terms and conditions have the meanings assigned below:

Adoptive Placement: Begins when a Child is placed with an adoptive Family and includes post-placement supervision and assistance in completing the adoption consummation process. It ends when the adoption is consummated, and the case is closed.

Alternative Caregiver: A person who is not the foster parent of the Child and who provides temporary care for the Child for more than twelve (12) hours but less than sixty (60) days.

At-Risk Youth (Trafficked): Youth in DFPS conservatorship who have indicators of trafficking according to the CSE-IT or worker suspicion are At-Risk of being trafficked. These Youth are not currently missing and are not on current runaway status but do exhibit behaviors that exposed them to the dangers of being trafficked and are likely to be experiencing trafficking.

Authorized Service Level (ASL): A Basic, Moderate, Specialized, or Intense service level determined by the third-party Contractor or, a Basic service level determined by the DFPS Caseworker and supervisor in the Legacy System.

Awaiting Adoption: A Child who is legally free for adoption; the Child's Permanency Goal is Adoption; and the Child is not in an Adoptive Placement or own home placement.

Billing Service Level (BSL): Determined by the third-party Contractor or DFPS; establishes the reimbursement rate to a Childcare facility in the Legacy System.

Blended Foster Care Rate: Foster Care rate paid to the SSCC for each day of service provided to a Child or Youth in paid Foster Care, equal to the weighted average rate paid across all placement types.

Care Coordination Teams (CCT) - A CCT is made up of professional organizations in a local community who provide services or who investigate and prosecute Trafficking cases. A CCT provides Child Youth victims of sex trafficking with a continuum of care. In most communities across Texas, Children's Advocacy Centers lead the CCT development process and serve as the local Care Coordinator.

Capacity Sharing: the statewide process of non-CBC and CBC catchment areas to be used as placement options by an SSCC or DFPS in any Designated Community Area if a Child in Foster Care is best served by placement into that Designated Community Area.

Caregiver: A Caregiver is a person, including an employee, foster parent, contract service provider, or volunteer, whose day-to-day responsibilities include direct care, supervision, guidance, and protection of a Child/Youth in care. This includes employees and contract staff who provide twenty-four (24) hour awake night supervision. Generally, and in furtherance of a Child/Youth having as normal of a life experience as possible while in Substitute Care, "Caregiver" does not include individuals who are not routinely responsible for direct care, supervision, guidance, and protection of a Child/Youth in care, such as school personnel, mentors, tutors, and chaperones. Instead, determining what information to provide an adult involved with a Child/Youth's normalcy activity (e.g., extra-curricular activity, part-time job, church activities, school field trip, visit to friend's house) must be considered on a case-by-case basis, keeping in mind the confidential nature of the information and the need to balance the Child/Youth's privacy concerns. Depending on the

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history, age of the Child/Youth, and situation in which the Child/Youth may be when engaging in a normalcy activity, the involved adult may not need to know of the Child/Youth's history, for example a tutor periodically at the Child/Youth's placement or an adult chaperone on a school field trip.

Case Information: Case information is all abuse and neglect records, including records relating to reports, investigations, legal actions, and the provision of services to adults, Children, and families.

Case Management: In accordance with [Texas Family Code §264.152](#), provision of Case Management services to a Child for whom the department has been appointed Temporary Managing Conservator or Permanent Managing Conservator or to the Child's Family, a Young Adult in Extended Foster Care, a relative or Kinship Caregiver, or a Child who has been placed in the Designated Community Area through Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children, and includes, but is not limited to:

1. Caseworker visits with the Child, Family, and Caregivers;
2. Convening and conducting Permanency Planning meetings;
3. Development and revision of Child and Family plans of service, including a permanency plan and goals for a Child or Young Adult in care;
4. Coordination and monitoring of services required by the Child and the Child's Family or caregivers including:
 - a. pre-adoption and post-adoption assistance;
 - b. services for children in the conservatorship of the department who must transition to independent living; and
 - c. services related to family reunification, including services to support a monitored return.
5. Assumption of court-related duties regarding the Child; and
6. Any other function or service that the department determines necessary to allow an SSCC to assume responsibility for Case Management.

Case Management Conflict of Interest: Any situation where an individual's official duties with the SSCC to move Children and Youth from Substitute Care to permanency under this contract could be reasonably perceived as conflicting with the SSCC financial interests to an extent where it could impair the individual's judgement when trying to determine the proper course of action.

Casey Life Skills Assessment: An assessment of a Youth's independent living skills designed to be completed by both the Youth and the Caregiver. The Youth and Caregiver results are combined into a report which provides an indication of the skill level and readiness of the Youth to live independently and creates the opportunity for the Caregiver and Youth to talk about the Youth's strengths and challenges.

Caseworker: A DFPS or SSCC employee who provides Case Management services to Children and Youth in Substitute Care under the conservatorship of the State.

Caseworker Turnover: Regular full- and part-time SSCC Caseworkers who voluntarily and involuntarily separate from the SSCC agency during the fiscal year.

Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS): A type of comprehensive and developmentally appropriate Child welfare assessment required by [Texas Family Code §266.012](#). It is a multi-purpose tool that links the assessment and Service Planning process with the goal of improving permanency, safety, and improved quality of life.

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Child Full Time Equivalent (Child FTE): The number of days of care provided divided by the number of days in the fiscal year.

Child(ren)/Youth: An eligible person(s) who is referred by DFPS to the SSCC for services under this Contract from birth through the end of the month in which the individual turns twenty-two (22) years of age.

Children/Youth in DFPS Legal Responsibility: All Children for whom a court has appointed DFPS legal responsibility through temporary or permanent managing conservatorship or other court ordered legal basis. DFPS legal responsibility terminates upon court order or when a Youth turns eighteen (18), whichever comes first.

Child-Care Services: Services that meet a Child or Youth's basic need for shelter, nutrition, clothing, nurture, socialization and interpersonal skills, care for personal health and hygiene, supervision, education, and Service Planning.

Child Placing Agency: A person, including an organization, other than the natural parents or guardian of a Child who plans for the placement of or places a Child in a Child-care facility, agency foster home, agency group home, or adoptive home.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool (CSE-IT): A validated screening tool to aid in accurately detecting sexual exploitation.

Community-Based Care (CBC): As required by the [Texas Family Code Chapter 264, Subchapter B-1](#), a Community-Based model where DFPS purchases (through a staged implementation) Substitute Care, Case Management and Family Reunification services from a Single Source Continuum Contractor (SSCC) to meet the individual and unique needs of Children, Youth and Families in Texas. Substitute care includes both Foster Care and relative / Kinship Placements. The SSCC is responsible for ensuring individual Children achieve safe and timely permanency.

Confidential Information: Personally Identifiable Information (PII), Protected Health Information (PHI), Case Information, Criminal History Record Information (CHRI), or Sensitive Personal Information.

Contracting Conflict of Interest: when an employee, acting in the employee's official capacity with their employer, participates in or makes a decision that impacts upon or could reasonably be perceived as having a substantial impact upon the employee's own personal or financial interests or those of certain other persons such as the employee's spouse, minor Child, general partner, or an organization in which the employee serves as an officer, director, trustee, general partner or employee, or a person with whom the employee is negotiating for or has an arrangement concerning prospective employment.

Consortium: A group of providers who propose to jointly develop and implement a Single Source Continuum Contract proposal with different providers responsible for different parts of the proposal and resulting network. DFPS will only contract with one of the providers of a Consortium who will be directly responsible to DFPS for all services and performance outcomes under the SSCC Contract. DFPS will also contract with a separate business entity formed by Consortia that all members have an ownership interest in.

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Contract: A promise or a set of promises, for breach of which the law gives a remedy, or the performance of which the law in some way recognizes as a duty. It is an agreement between two or more parties creating obligations that are enforceable or otherwise recognizable at law. The term also encompasses the written document that describes the terms of the agreement. For state contracting purposes, it generally describes the terms of the purchase of goods or services from a vendor or service provider.

Contractor: A person, including an organization, who is awarded a Contract pursuant to this solicitation.

Criminal History Record Information (CHRI): is arrest-based data and any derivative information from that record, such as descriptive data, FBI number, conviction status, sentencing data, incarceration, and probation and parole information.

Decision Memo: A document submitted to DFPS, completed by the SSCC when a Child requires Treatment services as defined below.

Deliverable: A unit or increment of work required by the Contract, including such items as services, reports, or documents.

Designated Community Area (DCA): A geographic area (also known as catchment area) for providing Child protective services that is identified as part of Community-Based Care. The designated area in which the SSCC will provide all services described in this Contract. The SSCC will be responsible for ensuring services described in this Contract for all eligible Children and their families who are from the agreed to geographic area.

Designated Victim: A Child determined as such by an investigation resulting in a disposition of Reason to Believe (RTB).

Disproportionality: The over representation of a particular race, ethnicity or cultural group, or socio-economic group in a program or system.

eCANS: The eCANS portal is an online system that will be able to house CANS assessment results, deliver a suite of reports containing aggregate data, and provide system functionality that ties Texas Health and Human Services (HHSC) and DFPS efforts together.

Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program: A federally funded (Chafee) and state-administered program. Under this program, Youth, and Young Adults ages sixteen (16) to twenty-three (23) years old may be eligible for up to \$5,000.00 financial assistance per year to help them reach their post-secondary educational goals.

Education Portfolio: The updated and maintained separate education binder that contains important school documents and is designed to follow school-age Children and Youth to each placement. This allows for the review of the most current educational records and documentation by school officials, residential child-care Contractors, foster parents, Family Caregivers, Children, and Youth.

Emergency Behavior Intervention (EBI): An intervention used in an emergency situation, including personal restraint, mechanical restraint, emergency medication, or seclusion.

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Exceptional Care Utilization Management (ECUM): The process and justification for authorizing the use of exceptional care days.

Exceptional Foster Care Rate: Based on a pro forma approach which involves using historical state costs of delivering similar services, where appropriate data are available, and estimating the basic types and costs of products and services necessary to deliver services meeting federal and state requirements.

Experiential Life Skills Activities: Activities which engage Children and Youth in learning new skills, attitudes, and ways of thinking through hands-on learning opportunities [Experiential Life Skills Activities](#) is tailored to the Child or Youth's skills and abilities and may include training in practical activities that include grocery shopping, meal preparation and cooking, using public transportation, performing basic household tasks, balancing a checkbook, and managing personal finances.

Extended Foster Care: A program for Young Adults ages eighteen (18) to twenty-two (22) years old that are eligible, and have signed an agreement to participate in this program. A Young Adult who turns 18 years of age while in the conservatorship of DFPS who is continuing to receive Extended Foster Care services is eligible for services through the end of the month in which the Young Adult reaches the age limit referenced in below in numbers one (1) through six (6). There must be sufficient documentation provided on a periodic basis as required by the terms of the Young Adult's Extended Foster Care Agreement to demonstrate that the Youth or Young Adult is:

1. Regularly attending high school or enrolled in a program leading toward a high school diploma or GED up to the Youth or Young Adult's 22nd birthday;
2. Regularly attending an institution of higher education or a post-secondary vocational or technical program up to the Youth or Young Adult's 21st birthday. These can remain in care to complete vocational-technical training classes regardless of whether or not the Youth or Young Adult has received a high school diploma or GED certificate;
3. Actively participating in a program or activity that promotes, or removes barriers to employment up to the Youth or Young Adult's 21st birthday;
4. Employed for at least 80 hours per month up to the Youth or Young Adult's 21st birthday;
5. Incapable of doing any of the above due to a documented medical condition up to the Youth or Young Adult's 21st birthday; or
6. Accepted for admission to a college, or vocational program that does not begin immediately. In this case, the Youth or Young Adult's eligibility is extended three and a half months after the end of the month in which the Youth or Young Adult receives his/her high school diploma or Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED) certificate.

Face-to-Face Contact: An in-person, (at least) monthly meeting or visit that is well-planned and focused on issues pertinent to case planning and service delivery to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the Child/Youth and do not require video conferencing or similar technology. Frequency of face-to-face visits are based on the needs of Child(ren) or circumstances of case situation. Quality of visits with Child(ren), include alone time with (each) Child for at least part of every visit, with a majority of visits being at the Child's placement/residence.

Faith-Based Organization: a religious or denominational institution or organization, including an organization operated for religious, educational, or charitable purposes and operated, supervised, or controlled, in whole or in part, by or in connection with a religious organization. See [Texas Family Code §264.152](#)

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Family: Parents or other relatives (including fictive kin) of Children in DFPS conservatorship who are referred by DFPS to the SSCC for services.

Family Preservation Services: means time-limited, family-focused services [service], including services [a service] subject to the Family First Prevention Services Act (Title VII, Div. E, Pub. L. No. A115-123) and services approved under the Title IV-E state plan provided to the family of a child who is:

1. a candidate for foster care to prevent or eliminate the need to remove the child and to allow the child remain safely with the child's family;
2. a pregnant or parenting foster youth; or
3. a member of a household that is subject to an order rendered under Texas Family Code Section 264.203. See Texas Family Code §262. 401

Fictive Kin: An individual who has a longstanding and significant relationship with a Child in DFPS conservatorship, or with the Child's Family and provides, or is anticipated to provide, care to the Child.

Financial Literacy Education Program: Education, training and experiential support that includes:

1. Obtaining and interpreting a credit score;
2. Protecting, repairing, and improving a credit score;
3. Avoiding predatory lending practices;
4. Saving money and accomplishing financial goals through prudent financial management practices;
5. Using basic banking and accounting skills, including balancing a checkbook;
6. Using debit and credit cards responsibly;
7. Understanding a paycheck and items withheld from a paycheck; and
8. Protecting financial, credit, and identifying information in personal and professional relationships.

Form 2054: DFPS Form which initiates invoicing process and contains, at a minimum the following information:

1. Name of the Contractor and Contract number;
2. Service Code;
3. Names of client or Family members who are to receive services;
4. Types services requested;
5. Number of units for each service requested; and
6. Time limit for the service.

Foster Care: A placement paid by DFPS or other public facility. Placements include foster homes, Temporary Emergency Placement (TEP), Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP), and General Residential Operation (GRO) including basic Childcare facilities, those offering multiple services, Residential Treatment Center (RTC), shelters, treatment Family Foster Care, and Supervised Independent Living (SIL). This is a subset of Children in Substitute Care.

Foster Care Case Rate: For purposes of the Contract, this references the average length of stay for Children

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and Youth in paid Foster Care in the Designated Community Area.

Full Continuum of Care: An array of least restrictive, most family-like placement services that meet the residential and treatment service needs of all Children and Youth in the care of a Contractor.

General Residential Operation (GRO): A child-care facility that is licensed to provide care for at least thirteen (13) or more Children for twenty-four (24) hours a day, including facilities known as Children's homes, Residential Treatment Centers, and emergency shelters.

Graduated Case Load: Policy that caseload's managed by a Caseworker start at a minimum threshold and correspondingly increase with greater tenure and experience.

High Risk Youth (Trafficked): Youth in DFPS Conservatorship who are in missing or on runaway status are considered to be at High Risk for Human Trafficking because they are exposed to perpetrators when they are missing or have run away.

Human Trafficking Advocate Agency (HTAA): An entity that provides Child Sex Trafficking Advocates who are specifically trained to offer a variety of services to victims of sex trafficking. Advocates may provide support in crisis intervention, ongoing Case Management, and healthy, supportive long-term relationships for survivors. HTAA includes Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth (CSEY) Advocate Agencies.

IMPACT: Information Management Protecting Adults and Children in Texas, a computer application used by DFPS staff for Case Management and serves as the State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS).

Initial Coordination Meeting (ICM): Convened by DFPS and held within seven (7) days of referral to the SSCC for placement and/or services to a Child or Youth (Stages I-III) and/or Family (Stages II-III). Purpose of the ICM is to review Child or Youth/Family's history and identify service needs to be included in the Child or Youth and/or Family plan(s) of service.

Intensive Psychiatric Stabilization Program (IPSP): is a time limited program in a psychiatric hospital that assists Children in DFPS conservatorship who have a history of placement instability due to psychiatric hospitalizations. The goal of this program is to stabilize and transition the Child or Youth to a less restrictive setting or divert them from hospitalization. Children are often placed in acute psychiatric hospitals or other psychiatric inpatient settings to stabilize serious mental health disturbances that pose a risk of harm to themselves or others. There is an option for the Child/Youth to exit the program early if they have successfully completed it and met their treatment goals. The program's typical length of stay is ninety (90) days.

Intermittent Alternate Care: A planned alternative twenty-four (24) hour care provided for a Child or Youth by a licensed Child-Placing Agency or independent Foster Family Home as part of the agency or home's regulated Childcare and that lasts more than seventy-two (72) consecutive hours.

Kinship Care: Relatives or other people known as "Fictive Kin" who have a significant relationship with the Child or the Child's Family, such as a godparent or Family friend, and provide residential care for a Child.

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Kinship Payment: A part of the Relative or Other Designated Caregiver Program, a monthly payment per Child of up to half of the daily basic Foster Care reimbursement rate paid directly to eligible Kinship Caregivers with a household income that is at or below 300% of the federal poverty level. The kinship payment is based on legislative appropriation. Other eligibility criteria and rules apply. See [Texas Family Code §264.755](#).

Kinship Placement: Placement of a Child for whom the Department has been appointed Temporary Managing Conservator, Joint Temporary Managing Conservator or Permanent Managing Conservator with a Kinship Caregiver, including relatives or Fictive Kin. A Kinship Caregiver may also be verified as a foster parent to provide residential care in accordance with Childcare licensing and through a licensed Child Placing Agency.

Least Restrictive Placement: Most family-like setting (e.g., parent or legal Family of origin, non- custodial parent, Kinship Care, Foster Family Home, adoptive home, or cottage-style GRO) based on the Child's or Youth's individual needs.

Legacy System: Foster care system where DFPS delivers placement, Case Management and Purchased Client Services to Children, Youth and Family members and utilizes the service level system (please note that beginning in 2025, it is anticipated that all Children will begin to transition to the Texas Child Center Care System) as the method in which to pay for residential services for Children and Youth in DFPS conservatorship or who voluntarily agree to remain in care.

Level(s) of Need: Array of services (including both licensed Childcare and Treatment Services) required by an individual Child who resides in Substitute Care, and are designed to support the achievement of safety, permanency, and well-being.

Legal Conservator: Also known as the managing conservator, is an entity responsible (either temporarily or permanently) for a Child or Youth as the result of a district court order as described by [Texas Family Code §153.074](#).

Luggage: A suitcase, duffel bag, backpack, or similar container designed to hold an individual's personal belongings as described by [Texas Family Code §264.1078](#).

Material Subcontractor: Any subcontractor who performs all or a portion of program component services (direct services) procured by DFPS in this solicitation. Subcontractors who perform indirect services which incidentally support program component services are not material subcontractors.

Minimum Standards: HHSC standards to protect the health, safety, and well-being of Children and Youth. HHSC provides publications that contain the Minimum Standards and guidelines for compliance for each type of operation.

National Youth in Transition Database: The data collection system developed by the [Administration for Children and Families \(ACF\)](#) to track the independent living services provided to Children and Youth and to develop outcomes that measure the States' performance in preparing Children and Youth for their transition from Foster Care to independent living. More information is available at: https://www.dfps.texas.gov/Child_Protection/Youth_and_Young_Adults/Transitional_Living/nytd.asp

No eject/no reject: Contract requirement that a Contractor may not refuse to accept a properly referred client for services under this Contract nor may a Contractor cease to serve, or request DFPS remove, an

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eligible Child, Youth, or Family from its referred client list.

Office of Community-Based Care Transition. Senate Bill 1896 of the 87th 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.

Outcome: A measure that reflects or reveals change or impact.

Performance-Based Contract: A Contract that ties payment, financial incentives, and remedies to performance.

Permanency Care Assistance (PCA): The Permanency Care Assistance program gives financial support to eligible Kinship Caregivers who want to provide a permanent home by assuming permanent managing conservatorship of eligible Children who can't be reunited with their parents.

Permanency Goal: The Department's permanency goals are subcategories of the four goals identified by the [Texas Family Code Chapter 263](#). The categories are as follows:

1. Family Reunification;
2. Adoption by a relative or suitable individual (Relative Adoption or Unrelated Adoption);
3. Permanent Managing Conservatorship to a relative or suitable individual (Relative Conservatorship or Unrelated Conservatorship); and
4. Another planned permanent living arrangement (Foster Family - DFPS Conservatorship, Other Family DFPS Conservatorship, Independent Living or Community Care).

Permanency Planning: The identification of services for a Child or Youth (and usually to the Child or Youth's Family), the specification of the steps to be taken and the time frames for taking those steps so as to achieve the following goals:

1. A safe and permanent living situation for the Child or Youth;
2. A committed Family for the Child or Youth;
3. An enduring and nurturing Family relationship that can meet the Child or Youth's needs;
4. A sense of security for the Child or Youth; and
5. A legal status for the Child or Youth that protects the rights of the Child or Youth.

For more information please see: [Texas Family Code §263.3025](#) and [40 TAC §700.1201](#).

Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC): When a court orders DFPS PMC of a Child, it can be either with a Child's parental rights terminated or parental rights intact. The rights and duties of DFPS and the SSCC are generally the same as with TMC.

Person Identification Number (PIDs): a number used in DFPS systems that is unique to a person to identify who the person is without a name.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII): Any information that can be used alone or in conjunction with any other personal information to identify a specific individual. PII includes any information that can be used

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to search for or identify individuals or can be used to access their records. Examples include name, SSN, DOB, Social Security benefit data, and state or government issued driver's license number.

Placement Change: Any change in placement location except for temporary breaks in service as further defined in the Contract.

Possessory Conservator: A court-ordered appointment that specifies the right to possess and have access to a Child or Youth with general terms and conditions described by [Texas Family Code §153.316](#).

Preparation for Adult Living (PAL): The Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) program prepares Youth for adult life when they leave Foster Care. The program provides services, benefits, resources, and supports to help Youth become healthy, productive adults. The program makes efforts to connect Youth to community resources they will need in their transition to a successful adulthood. Services and benefits may include:

1. Casey Life Skills Assessment to assess strengths and needs in life skills;
2. Life Skills training in core areas including but not limited to, financial literacy, insurance, and civic management;
3. Job readiness and life decisions/responsibility;
4. Educational/vocational services;
5. Coordination of the Transitional Living Allowance (TLA) up to \$1000 (distributed in increments up to \$500 per month for Children and Youth who participate in PAL Life Skills training, to help Children and Youth with initial start-up costs in adult living);
6. Coordination of After Care Room and Board (ACRB) assistance, based on need, up to \$500 per month for rent, utility deposits, food, etc. (not to exceed \$3000 of accumulated payments per Child or Youth);
7. Case management to help Children and Youth with self-sufficiency planning and resource coordination;
8. Teen conferences;
9. Leadership development activities; and
10. Additional supportive services, based on need and availability of funds, such as mentoring services and driver's education.

Pre-Placement Visit: Occurs before placement and allows the Child or Youth to visit with potential Caregivers in an effort to determine if the Child or Youth feels that the placement is a good fit and allows time to process the change.

Primary Case Worker – a Caseworker who is assigned as primary and has responsibility for Case Management activities. There can only be one primary Caseworker per case.

Protected Health Information (PHI): individually identifiable health information that is transmitted or maintained in any form or medium. Individually identifiable health information is data, including demographics, that relates to:

1. The individual's past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition;
2. The provision of health care to the individual, or the past, present, or future payment for the provision of health care to the individual; and
3. Information that identifies the individual or for which there is a reasonable basis to believe it can be used to identify the individual.

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As a general rule, health information linked with any one of the following direct or indirect identifiers of the individual, relatives, employers, or household members is considered Protected Health Information:

1. Name;
2. Street address, city, county, precinct, zip code, and equivalent geocode;
3. All elements of dates (except year) for dates directly related to an individual and all ages over 89;
4. Telephone number;
5. Fax number;
6. Electronic mail address;
7. Social Security number;
8. Medical record numbers;
9. Health plan ID numbers;
10. Account numbers;
11. Certificate and license numbers;
12. Vehicle identifiers and serial numbers, including license plate numbers;
13. Device identifiers and serial numbers;
14. Web addresses (URLs);
15. Internet IP addresses;
16. Biometric identifiers, including finger and voice prints;
17. Full face photographic images and any comparable images; and
18. Any other unique identifying number, characteristic, or code.

Purchased Client Services: Services designed to remedy abuse, neglect, and exploitation of DFPS clients. For purposes of this Contract, these services are purchased by the SSCC (through an allocation of funds) and offered to Children and Youth in the Department's conservatorship or in Extended Foster Care and their families to support the achievement safety, permanency, and well-being.

Qualified Residential Treatment Program (Q RTP): are providers who are accredited and licensed as General Residential Operations (GROs) and provide time-limited clinical intervention and treatment services to Children and Youth in DFPS conservatorship with the most complex emotional, mental, and behavioral health needs.

Readiness: The activities the SSCC must perform in order to demonstrate that it is sufficiently prepared to receive its first referral from DFPS for the applicable stage of implementation.

Reason to Believe: A finding that abuse or neglect occurred based on a preponderance of the evidence. This means when all evidence is weighed, it is more likely than not that abuse or neglect occurred.

Referral: Process by which DFPS notifies the SSCC of need to initiate placement and/or other services to eligible Children, Youth and/or Families.

Residential Child Care: The care, custody, supervision, assessment, training, education, or treatment of a Child or Youth for twenty-four (24) hours a day that occurs in a place other than the Child or Youth's own home.

Residential Treatment Center (RTC): an operation that exclusively provides care and treatment services for emotional disorders for children up to eighteen (18) years old.

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Return to Foster Care: A program designed for Youth and Young Adults eighteen (18) to twenty-two (22) years old that are eligible and sign an agreement to participate in this program. Eligible participants must have been in DFPS conservatorship at the time they turned 18 years old (or were on run away status at the time they turned 18 years old, and their conservatorship case had not been dismissed), and want to Return to Extended Foster Care, and:

1. Regularly attending high school or enrolled in a program leading toward a high school diploma or GED up to the Youth or Young Adult's 22nd birthday;
2. Regularly attending an institution of higher education or a post-secondary vocational or technical program (minimum six hours per semester) up to the Youth or Young Adult's 21st birthday. These can remain in care to complete vocational-technical training classes regardless of whether or not the Youth or Young Adult has received a high school diploma or GED certificate.
3. Actively participating in a program or activity that promotes, or removes barriers to employment up to the Youth or Young Adult's 21st birthday;
4. Employed for at least 80 hours per month up to the Youth or Young Adult's 21st birthday;
5. Incapable of doing any of the above due to a documented medical condition up to the Youth or Young Adult's 21st birthday [40 TAC §700.316](#); or
6. Return on a break from college or a technical or vocational program for at least one month, but no more than four (4) months and have not reached their 21st birthday ([40 TAC §700.316](#)).

Reunification: Identification of a Child's own home as the safe and permanent living situation towards which services are directed. Reunification means that (1) DFPS has removed the Child from the home and (2) DFPS has determined that the Child's parent(s) are willing and, after completing services, able to provide the Child with a safe living environment. Reunification occurs when the Child has returned to the home.

School of Origin: The same school the Child was attending at the time of removal or any subsequent Placement Change, unless it is not in the Child's best interests to remain in that school.

Secondary Caseworker: A Caseworker who has a secondary assignment of a case and does not have primary responsibilities of the case but is assisting with case activities (e.g., courtesy contacts with a Family or Child out of the primary Caseworker's area).

Sensitive Personal Information: Sensitive personal information means an individual's first name or first initial and last name in combination with any one or more of the following items, if the name and the items are not encrypted:

1. Social Security number;
2. Driver's license number or government-issued identification number; and
3. Account number or credit or debit card number in combination with any required security code, access code, or password that would permit access to an individual's financial account.

Sensitive Personal Information also includes data revealed directly or indirectly relating to:

1. Natural persons concerning their racial or ethnic origin;
2. Political opinion;
3. Trade union membership;

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4. Religious or philosophical beliefs;
5. Physical and mental health including state of health, illness, handicaps, pathological defects, or medical treatments;
6. Sexual orientation or activity;
7. Criminal records, including convictions, decisions of penalties and fines, or other information collected in judicial or administrative proceeding to ascertain an offense or regarding an alleged or suspected commission of an offense;
8. Biometric or genetic data; and
9. Social welfare needs or benefits or other social welfare assistance received.

Sensitive information does not include publicly available information that is lawfully made available to the public from the federal, state, or local government.

Serious Incident: Any non-routine occurrence that has an impact on the care, supervision, or treatment of a Child or Youth. This includes, but is not limited to, suicide attempts, injuries requiring medical treatment including psychiatric hospitalizations, runaways, commission of a crime, and allegations of abuse or neglect or abusive treatment.

Service Plan: The Contractor's developed plan that is tailored to address the services that will be provided to a Child or Youth to meet the Child, Youth and/or Family member's specific needs while served by the Contractor.

Sexually Aggressive Behavior: Sexually aggressive behavior occurs when a Child takes advantage of another person who is less powerful through seduction, coercion, and/or force.

1. Less powerful: Differences in developmental level, physical stature, cognitive ability, and/or social skills;
2. Seduction: The use of charm, manipulation, promises, gifts, and flattery to induce a person to engage in sexual behavior;
3. Coercion: The exploitation of authority or the use of bribes, threats, threats of force, and/or intimidation to gain cooperation or compliance;
4. Force: Threat or use of physical or emotional harm towards a person, and/or someone and/or something a person cares about; and
5. Sexual orientation or gender identity are not indicators of sexual behavior problems or sexually aggressive behavior.

Sexual Behavior Problem: A sexual behavior problem is when a Child exhibits sexual activities or actions that are outside the range of those which are developmentally appropriate. This behavior may indicate that the Child should be referred for services, but it does not rise to the level of sexually aggressive behavior that would require checking the sexually aggressive behavior box in the IMPACT system. Sexual orientation or gender identity are not indicators of sexual behavior problems or sexually aggressive behavior.

Sex Trafficking: The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act.

1. Knowingly causing, permitting, encouraging, engaging in, or allowing a Child to be Trafficked in a manner punishable as an offense under §20A.02(a)(7) or (8), Penal Code, or the failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent a Child from being Trafficked in a manner punishable as

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- an offense under any of these sections. - [Texas Family Code §261.001\(1\)\(L\)](#); and
2. Compelling or encouraging the Child in a manner to engage in sexual conduct that constitutes an offense of Trafficking of persons under §20A.02(a)(7) or (8), Penal Code, prostitution under §43.02(b), Penal Code, or compelling prostitution under §43.05(a)(2), Penal Code. - [Texas Family Code §261.001\(1\)\(G\)](#).

Siblings: Children, Youth, and Young Adults who have one (1) or more parents in common either biologically, through adoption, or through the marriage of their parents. For purposes of the performance measure, this is counted as any Child in the same CPS case with another Child.

Sibling Group: Any CPS case with two (2) or more Children in substitute (foster and relative/kinship) care.

Single Source Continuum Contract/Contractor (SSCC): Entity, as described in [Texas Family Code §264.154](#), with whom DFPS enters into a Contract for the provision of the full continuum of Substitute Care, Case Management, and Reunification services in a Designated Catchment, as required in this Contract.

Standard Terms and Conditions: The terms and conditions applicable to any Contract resulting from this RFP 530-13-0070FCR that govern the response and any resulting Contract.

STAR Health: Statewide managed care program that provides comprehensive health care to Children and Youth in Foster Care and relative care, including medical, behavioral health, dental and vision care.

Start-Up Period: Up to a six (6) month period prior to Stage I and Stage II implementation during which the Contractor will perform necessary Readiness activities and build its system of service prior to the first Client referral from DFPS.

Subrecipient: An entity that expends awards received from a pass-through entity to carry out a project program. As defined by 45 CFR 75, a subrecipient relationship exists when funding from a pass-through entity is provided to perform a portion of the scope of work or objectives of the pass-through entity's award agreement with the federal awarding agency. Throughout this Contract, the SSCC is referred to as a provider, Contractor, grantee, and subrecipient. Regardless of the term used, DFPS classifies SSCC agreements as subrecipient relationships.

Substitute Care: All Children who are living in a DFPS out of home placement (kinship or paid foster care). It does not include Children living in a return and monitor placement. Unless noted otherwise, it does include Youth over eighteen (18) who are in Extended Foster Care but are not in DFPS custody.

Supervised Independent Living (SIL): A type of voluntary Extended Foster Care placement where Young Adults can live on their own, while still getting Caseworker and support services to help them become independent and self-sufficient. The SIL program allows Young Adults to live independently under a supervised living arrangement provided by a contracted provider. A Young Adult in SIL is not supervised twenty-four (24) hours a day by an adult and has increased responsibilities. Through SIL a Young Adult has increased responsibilities, such as:

1. Managing their own finances,
2. Buying groceries or personal items, and
3. Working with a landlord.

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SIL also helps transition Young Adults to independent living by teaching them to:

1. Achieve identified education and employment goals,
2. Access community resources,
3. Engage in needed life skills training, and
4. Establish important relationships.

Temporary Managing Conservatorship (TMC): When a court grants DFPS TMC of a Child, DFPS can exercise specific rights including but not limited to the right to have physical possession of the Child along with specific responsibilities, including but not limited to the duty of care, control and protection of a Child, the right to designate the primary residence of the Child and the right to make decisions concerning the Child's healthcare and education.

Temporary Emergency Placements Program (TEP): is designed to provide highly-structured quality residential care and services for high needs Children for whom DFPS is working to identify a safe and suitable longer term placement to meet their unique needs as described by [40 TAC §700.1337](#).

Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE): TARE website is a recruitment tool for prospective adoption homes for DFPS. The purpose of TARE is to expedite permanency for available waiting Children by increasing the number of prospective adoptive home resources.

Transitional Living Services: The Transitional Living Services program provides transition planning, services, and benefits to both older Youth in Foster Care and those who have aged out. Transitional Living Services are available to Youth aged fourteen (14) to twenty-three (23). The Transitional Living Services program includes:

1. Preparation for Adult Living (PAL);
2. Health care coverage for Youth and Young Adults that age out of Foster Care;
3. STAR Health Program;
4. Transition center information;
5. Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program;
6. College tuition and fee waivers for Youth who were in DFPS conservatorship, adopted Youth, and Youth in the Permanency Care Assistance program;
7. Extended Foster Care program;
8. Supervised Independent Living program;
9. Trial Independence and Young Adults Returning to Care; and
10. Preparation for long-term care and support in adulthood for Youth with disabilities.

See the for [Transitional Living Services Resource Guide](#) more information.

Trauma Informed Care: An approach to understanding the biological, developmental, relational, and social effects of trauma and violence on Children, Youth and families which integrates the understanding of the impact of trauma into the provision of services and supports through a child-centered, strength-based perspective to care.

Trafficking or Human Trafficking: The transporting, soliciting, recruiting, harboring, providing, or obtaining another person for transport.

1. It is a crime for any person to knowingly engage, or attempt to engage, in human trafficking

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with the intent or knowledge that the Trafficked person will be subjected to force labor or services; or to benefit financially by receiving anything of value from participation in a venture that has subjected a person to forced labor or services.

2. Children can be victims of human trafficking regardless of their citizenship, residency, or alien or immigrant status.

Treatment Services: A specialized type of Child-Care Services designed to treat and/or support Children or Youth with Emotional Disorders, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Pervasive Developmental Disorder, and Primary Medical Needs as described in [Understanding Clinical Recommendations Evaluations and Treatment services](#).

Turnover Plan: The activities that the SSCC is required to perform prior to or upon termination of the Contract, in situations where the SSCC will transition data and documentation to DFPS or a subsequent Contractor.

Verified Kinship Care: A Kinship Caregiver who has become verified as a foster parent to provide residential care in accordance with Childcare licensing regulations.

Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement (Form 2540): The Department's form which documents the Young Adult's agreement to voluntarily remain in Foster Care and outlines the categories of activity which qualify to remain in Foster Care.

Voluntary Return to Foster Care Agreement (Form 2560): The Department's form which documents the Young Adult 's agreement to voluntarily return to Foster Care and outlines the categories of activity which qualify to return to Foster Care.

Young Adults: a person aged 18 or older.

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ARTICLE II: SCOPE OF WORK

Section 2.01 Introduction to Community-Based Care Model

In February 2018, the United States Congress passed the [Family First Prevention Services Act \(FFPSA\)](#). This law restructures Child welfare funding, particularly Title IV-E and Title IV-B of the Social Security Act that pays for services for Children in Foster Care and other services for families. DFPS is taking a deliberate approach to analyzing the effects of this law and is focused on ensuring continuity in the areas of Child safety, quality of care, and services for Children in their own homes whenever possible. Depending on the direction of state leadership and the Texas legislature, implementation of FFPSA may directly impact the services outlined in this Contract.

DFPS reserves the right to alter or make any changes to the Contract, including payment, administration, program, and direct services, in whatever manner necessary that may be subsequently required under the law in order to achieve the goals and objectives of Community-Based Care and the best interests of Children.

Section 2.02 Need for Service

DFPS has identified the need to provide Community-Based Care services in a designated community that includes services to all Children and Youth in its legal conservatorship and their Families as well as Young Adults in Extended Foster Care or who have exited Foster Care at or after the age of eighteen (18), that supports safety, permanency, and well-being. DFPS views a service delivery model that fully engages communities in serving Children, Youth, and Families and that is provided through a performance-based Single Source Continuum Contract (SSCC), as an approach that can most effectively meet this need in a manner that achieves better outcomes for Children and Youth in its legal conservatorship. As set forth in the Contract and associated state and federal requirements, the SSCC will ensure the full continuum of Substitute Care (Foster and Kinship Care), purchased client services and Case Management services for Children and Youth in DFPS legal conservatorship including: Reunification services from the Designated Community Area and who are referred to the SSCC by DFPS, those placed in the Designated Community Area through Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) and through inter-regional agreements. As also set forth in the Contract and state and federal requirements, the SSCC will also ensure the delivery of Purchased Client Services, with necessary service coordination, to the Families and/or any other individual or entity that is significant to the achievement of safety, permanency, and well-being of Children in conservatorship. The SSCC must use a service delivery model that at a minimum:

1. Ensures the effective and efficient delivery of a full array of services to improve outcomes for Children and their Families;
2. Develops and maintains residential capacity to meet the placement needs of the Children served under the continuum of care;
3. Serves Children in the least restrictive, most appropriate setting and minimizes moves in care;
4. Ensures continuity of care provided to Children and their Families;
5. Ensures the provision of timely and appropriate services to Children and their Families;
6. Ensures services that engage communities in meeting the diverse and individual needs of referred Children, Youth, and Families in each particular community within the Designated Community Area;
7. Promotes Reunification of Children with the biological parents of the Children;
Promotes placement of Children with Kinship Caregivers; and

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8. Meets the statutory duties of DFPS in connection with the delivery of substitute care (Foster and Kinship Care) services, and transitional living services in the Designated Community Area.

Section 2.03 Stage Implementation

Implementation of the SSCC will occur in three stages in the Designated Community Area. Progression from Stage I to Stage II will depend upon the SSCC's demonstrated Readiness. Stage II Start-Up Period will commence upon receipt of all necessary approvals and occur for six (6) months thereafter.

Progression from Stage II to Stage III will occur no earlier than eighteen (18) months from the date DFPS makes the first referral for Case Management services to the SSCC as a part of implementation Stage II. All three stages are included as a part of the procurement. The provisions of the Contract applicable to a particular Stage will not apply until the SSCC has progressed to such applicable Stage.

Section 2.04 Stage I Placement Services and Services to Children/Youth

Stage I begins the day the first referral for paid Foster Care and/or Purchased Client Services for a Child/Youth is made to the SSCC following the Start-Up Period. For all Children entering paid Foster Care and referred by DFPS, the SSCC must provide the full continuum of paid Foster Care in a manner that eliminates (to the degree possible and based on the Child's individual needs) the necessity for change of placement as service needs evolve to ensure stability and reduce the number of moves a Child or Youth must make while in care and that provides necessary, individualized services within the Child's own community and placement. Additionally, DFPS will refer Children from the Designated Community Area placed in paid Foster Care to the SSCC in the event that they require a change of placement. As more particularly described in Article III of this Contract, DFPS will reimburse the SSCC using a single Blended Foster Care Rate for each Child served through this Contract (excluding Youth who are residing in a Supervised Independent Living (SIL) program, Children/Youth who the Department has approved for the Exceptional Foster Care Rate, or those being served under the Texas Child-Centered Care System for each day of service. The SSCC must provide Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) Life Skills training, Purchased Adoption Services, and coordination of Foster Care Day Care during Stage I for Children and Youth who are served by the SSCC and meet appropriate criteria for these services.

Section 2.05 Stage II Case Management

Stage II begins the day the first referral for Case Management services occurs following the Stage II Start-Up Period and DFPS Stage II certification of Readiness. In addition to the requirements outlined in Stage I, the SSCC must also provide Case Management services to all referred Children and Youth in DFPS conservatorship, as well as Young Adults who were in care on the day before their 18th birthday and/or transitioning from substitute care from the Designated Community Area and their families. The SSCC will receive funding to provide:

1. Family preservation services as required by [Texas Family Code §264.158](#), and is subject to determination by the DFPS. Services may also be transferred in Stage III.
2. Case Management services for Children and Youth, relative and Kinship Caregivers, Young Adults and Families;
3. Family reunification support services provided after a Child receiving services from the Contractor is returned to the Child's Family; and
4. All SSCC data use, data sharing, or other type of data agreements and any related underlying

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subcontractor(s) Contracts must be provided to DFPS for review and approval as part of the readiness and implementation process. If this does not occur, DFPS may withhold funding or not approve readiness, or both. Section 2.05(3) also applies to Section 2.04 Stage I Placement Services and Services to children/Youth.

The SSCC is also required to provide services for Family members and other individuals that support the achievement of safety, permanency, and well-being for Children in DFPS conservatorship.

Section 2.06 CSE-IT Assessment

As required by Texas Family Code §266.012, no later than the 45th day after the date a child enters the conservatorship of DFPS, the SSCC must use the Commercial Sexual Exploitation-Identification Tool (CSE-IT).

1. The SSCC's must ensure that staff conducting the assessment are trained.
2. The SSCCs must use the CSE-IT tool in IMPACT once the upgrade is complete in IMPACT.

The CSE-IT Monthly Completion Report is a required report for SSCCs that opted not to be included in the joint agreement with DFPS and WestCoast. **See Exhibit G, SSCC Required Reports.**

Section 2.07 (Stage III All Services with Incentives and Remedies)

The SSCC must provide the services outlined in Stages I and II. In addition, DFPS will begin to hold the SSCC financially accountable through the use of incentives and remedies as described in Article III of this Contract for the timely achievement of permanency for served Children. This section does not waive the Department's right to seek any and all available remedies, including financial remedies, for breach of Contract in Stages I - III including failure to meet established performance measures.

Section 2.08 Designated Geographic Catchment area

Contractor must demonstrate a clear understanding of service demand, available resources, and service gaps within the Designated Community Area and develop specific strategies for meeting the unique needs of the stakeholders and communities within the Designated Community Area. The Designated Community Area for this Contract, in no particular order of roll-out, consists of; Region 7A - Central Texas/Waco includes 20 counties: Bell, Bosque, Brazos, Coryell, Falls, Freestone, Grimes, Hamilton, Hill, Lampasas, Leon, Limestone, Llano, Madison, McLennan, Milam Mills, Robertson, San Saba, and Williamson, and Region 7B - Capital Area includes 10 counties: Bastrop, Blanco, Burleson, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Lee, Travis, and Washington. Also, see a map of the [DFPS Administrative Regional Boundaries](#).

Section 2.09 SSCC Model Assumptions

- (A) The SSCC may deliver all services outlined in Stages I-III as a single entity or through the formation of a network or Consortium of providers, which may include itself. DFPS will only Contract with the SSCC. The SSCC must establish and maintain any network or Consortium of services in the identified Designated Community Area through subcontracts, community resources and/or service agreements.
- (B) The SSCC cannot subcontract any Case Management duties described in this Contract.

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(C) All Case Management requirements must be performed by casework employees of the SSCC.

(D) All SSCC and DFPS decisions will be made based on the best interests of the individual Child.

1. If DFPS reclaims case management authority over a case(s) or transfers that case(s) to another SSCC, the SSCC must return or transfer the resources associated with that case or case(s).

(E) In accordance with Texas Family Code §264.155, DFPS, at its sole discretion, may reclaim case management authority or transfer such case management authority to another SSCC over any and all cases in a catchment area.

(F) IMPACT, CLASS, and TARE and New Case Management System.

1. The Data Access and Standards Governance Council is charged with developing protocols for the electronic transfer of data from SSCC to the Department to allow the Contractors to perform Case Management functions;
2. The SSCC is required to participate in the DFPS Data Access and Standards Governance Council;
3. During Stage I, all SSCC data use, data sharing, or other types of data agreements and any related underlying subcontractor(s) Contracts must be provided to DFPS for review and approval as part of the readiness and implementation process;
4. The SSCC's access and documentation requirements in IMPACT will be different in each stage of implementation and will be based on the roles and responsibilities and requirements outlined in this Contract;
5. DFPS will make a pre-defined and scheduled data export available for use in the approved SSCC information system;
6. The SSCC will have limited access to CLASS, the state's licensing database system, and the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE). DFPS will only grant access to CLASS and/or TARE to the direct employees authorized by the SSCC. The SSCC will only request authorization for CLASS and/or TARE access for those of its employees who have demonstrated a business justification to review or retrieve such information;
7. The SSCC will enter and update the IMPACT system based on the documentation requirements in each stage of implementation. DFPS will provide the SSCC with one training session regarding use of IMPACT, after which the SSCC will maintain responsibility for training its staff on using IMPACT. DFPS will provide the SSCC with documentation of any changes to IMPACT, so that the SSCC can appropriately train its staff. If DFPS makes fundamental, major changes to IMPACT, DFPS will provide the SSCC with one training session regarding the changes, after which the SSCC will maintain responsibility for training its staff;
8. The SSCC must demonstrate that its IT system can accommodate data imports into IMPACT (Stage II) and exports from IMPACT;
9. The SSCC must have policies and procedures related to the protection of DFPS Confidential Information and a Data Back-up and Disaster Recovery plan;
10. In Stage II, IMPACT will have limited ability to accept uploaded data from another system specific to Family service invoicing process. As such, full interoperability between IMPACT and private systems will not be available. Therefore, in Stage II, the SSCC will have to enter data directly and manually

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- into the IMPACT system;
11. DFPS provides support to external users who report problems and issues related to IMPACT and other DFPS casework applications. Staff monitor tickets created through the Help Desk and various application associated mailboxes. Tickets are prioritized and assigned for review and resolution based on specified criteria. It is estimated that within three days, DFPS staff respond with a resolution, status of ticket resolution, or a request for further information. Several steps and possible assistance from other DFPS areas may be required to process a ticket, which could impact timeframes for ticket resolution; and
 12. As part of IMPACT training, SSCC staff will undergo the same training protocol as CPS on handling criminal history, Criminal Justice Information Security (CJIS). The SSCC employees must take this training. The SSCC must adopt policies and procedures to minimize risk of data breaches in the final Operations Manual. DFPS will work with SSCC to determine a training schedule;
 13. SSCC's and subcontractors must use DFPS' new case management system to record all case management and placement activities once it's operational.
 14. DFPS is ultimately responsible for the proper operation of the Foster Care system and all applicable requirements. DFPS and the Court (when applicable under certain circumstances) is the final authority on all planning, placement, and service decisions. The SSCC will have latitude to make placements and determine services as specified in the Child and Family Service Plans, relevant to the stage of implementation (see Chart 7 and Chart 8); and
 15. The SSCC must authorize their perspective or existing residential subcontractors, as a term in those agreements, to contract with DFPS so that it may ensure the appropriate placement for a Child. As part of this authorization, the SSCC shall not prohibit or interfere with DFPS contracting with one of its residential subcontractors.

Section 2.10 Eligible Population

In Stages I - III, the SSCC must ensure the full continuum of paid Foster Care and services for Children, Youth, and Young Adults referred by DFPS. In Stages II - III, the SSCC must ensure the full continuum of Substitute Care (paid Foster Care and Kinship Care), Case Management, Family Reunification and Purchased Client Services for the Children, Youth, Young Adults, Family members and Caregivers referred by DFPS.

Section 2.11 Client Characteristics

The SSCC must be prepared to serve individuals with characteristics including, but not limited to, the following:

- (A) Children in DFPS' legal conservatorship and in Kinship Care, paid Foster Care, or Children who have been reunified with parents whose county of conservatorship is within the Designated Community Area and their families (including individuals that require services that have been determined essential to the achievement of safety, permanency, and well-being for the individual Child and for whom resources have been allocated, including parents and relatives that reside outside of the Designated Community Area). Some families may continue to require the SSCC services (funded through purchased client services) once the Child has

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- exited Substitute Care (see above);
- (B) Children from the designated community who have been legally removed from their homes but for whom an ex parte hearing has not yet been held;
 - (C) Children for whom DFPS has joint managing or Possessory Conservatorship with Family or any other individual or entity and require Substitute Care or other services that support the achievement of safety, permanency, and well-being;
 - (D) Children of Youth who are in DFPS conservatorship or in Extended Foster Care and the Youth (parent) and Child are placed together in Substitute Care;
 - (E) Young Adults who are eligible for Substitute Care through an Extended or Return to Care Foster Care Agreement;
 - (F) Young Adults who are eligible for Substitute Care and require Supervised Independent Living (SIL) services; this population includes all Young Adults who need this service within the Designated Community Area;
 - (G) Young Adults who aged out or were transitioning from substitute care and require assistance with SIL or TLS this population includes all Young Adults who need this service within the Designated Community Area;
 - (H) Youth and Young Adults who are eligible for the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program; this population includes all Young Adults who need this service within the Designated Community Area;
 - (I) Young adults who aged out or were transitioning from substitute care and require assistance with transitional housing programs including to but not limited to the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) voucher program;
 - (J) Children and Youth who are no longer in DFPS conservatorship and require Post-Adoption services;
 - (K) Parents, relatives, and other significant adults that DFPS, the court and/or the Youth in care have determined have a long standing or significant relationship with the Child or Youth and who are important to the resolution of the case;
 - (L) Children and Youth who are legally from another part of the state, but are placed in the Designated Community Area and in need of courtesy supervision;
 - (M) Person(s) to whom a court has ordered DFPS to provide services that support safety, permanency, or well-being of the Child referred within the context of an open conservatorship case, including parents who reside outside the Designated Community Area;
 - (N) Children and Youth referred through Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), including but not limited to courtesy supervision of out-of-state Children placed in the Designated Community Area; completion of home screenings, electronic record on status of home studies, adoption studies, kinship home assessments, etc.; coordination and communication with Texas Interstate Compact Office; and required documentation.
 - (O) Child, Youth and Young Adult characteristics may include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Active exhibition of psychotic behavior
 - a. ADD/ADHD
 - b. Autism
 - c. Anxiety Disorder
 - d. Assaultive behaviors or homicidal
 - e. At-Risk Youth (Trafficking)
 - f. Behavioral problems
 - g. Chronic Health Conditions
 - h. Criminal Background

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- i. Danger to Self or others
- j. Depression
- k. Developmental Disorders
- l. Diabetes
- m. DSM-IV Axis I & II Diagnosis
- n. Eating Disorder
- o. Emotional Disorders
- p. Enuresis/Encopresis
- q. Fire Setting
- r. Gender Identity Issues/ Sexual Orientation
- s. High Risk Youth (Trafficking)
- t. Impulse Control Disorder
- u. Low to Moderate Risk of harming self or others
- v. Maladaptive Behaviors
- w. Medically Fragile
- x. Intellectual Developmental Disability
- y. Oppositional Defiant
- z. Pregnant
- aa. Primary Medical Needs
- bb. PTSD/Complex PTSD
- cc. Runaway Behavior
- dd. Self-Abuse
- ee. Sexual Aggression or Behavior Problems
- ff. Substance Abuse/Use
- gg. Substance Abuse or dependence with the need for medical detoxification
- hh. History of Attempted Suicide
- ii. Suicidal Gestures
- jj. Suicidal Ideation
- kk. Other Special Needs, (e.g., dietary, language, etc.)
- ll. Additionally, Children may:
 - i. Be victims of commercial sexual exploitation;
 - ii. Have experienced physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse, neglect and/or other severe trauma;
 - iii. Have a history of multiple placement disruptions;
 - iv. Have limited English-language proficiency;
 - v. Have been or currently are involved in the criminal justice system and are currently on probation and/or parole; and
 - vi. Have been or are currently involved in gang activity/ affiliation.

(P) Family characteristics may include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Chronic unresolved conflicts between parental figures;
- 2. Frequent unresolved conflicts between parental figures and Children;
- 3. History of Attempted Suicide;
- 4. Suicidal Gestures;
- 5. Suicidal Ideation;
- 6. Chronic economic distress;

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7. Frequent changes in residence;
8. History of substance abuse or current dependence;
9. Untreated and/or diagnosed mental illness;
10. Victims of commercial sexual exploitation;
11. Poor parenting skills;
12. Criminal Background;
13. Involuntary participant;
14. Limited English-language proficiency;
15. Domestic violence/Family violence; and
16. Limited cognitive functioning.

Section 2.12 Staffing Qualifications

Notice: [Texas Penal Code §32.52](#) prohibits the use of fraudulent or substandard degrees. Contractor must include a process to verify the education and degree requirements of all employees in its human resources policy. Education and degree information represent material facts upon which DFPS relies when entering into a Contract. DFPS reserves the right to exercise all available remedies if Contractor submits fraudulent or substandard education information, including termination of any Contract and other appropriate civil and criminal legal action.

- (A) The SSCC must ensure compliance with minimum staffing requirements in applicable Minimum Standards for Child Placing Agencies serving Children requiring both Childcare and Treatment Services.
- (B) The SSCC must ensure that Residential Child Care and other providers responsible for providing services are appropriately licensed in the State of Texas to perform the type of service being provided.
- (C) The SSCC must ensure that direct delivery staff have the necessary knowledge, skills and experience and training to deliver required Case Management and Family reunification support services to Children, Youth, Kinship Caregivers and Families.
- (D) The SSCC must ensure sufficient staff capacity to deliver:
 1. intake, placement, and coordination of services to Children, Youth, and Young Adults in the Designated Community Area;
 2. Case Management services (in Stage II) to Children, Youth, Kinship Caregivers, and families in the Designated Community Area; and
 3. Family reunification support services (in Stage II) to a Child who is receiving services from the Contractor is returned to the Child's Family.
- (E) The SSCC must give employment preference to an employee of DFPS whose position is impacted by the implementation of Community-Based Care and who is considered to be an employee in good standing.
- (F) The SSCC cannot hire or place in a position within the SSCC, a staff member that would either directly or indirectly create a Contracting Conflict of Interest with a relative employed by DFPS or the SSCC.
- (G) Prior to hiring a former or current DFPS/OCBCT employee whose position is/was not impacted by the implementation of Community-Based Care, the SSCC must obtain a review for potential Conflict of Interest from DFPS.

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Section 2.13 Workforce Training

- (A) All verified Caregivers providing services to SSCC Clients must have completed **Trauma Informed Care (TIC)** training appropriate to their role. Caregivers must have TIC training that prepares the verified Caregiver to understand the impact of trauma exposure on a Child or Youth and provides strategies to effectively care for the Child or Youth in a manner that promotes healing from the trauma. This training must be completed prior to any verified Caregiver being alone with the Child. In addition, the SSCC must ensure all verified Caregivers complete an annual refresher of TIC training. This training must be at least two- hours in duration.
1. All SSCC non-clinical providers serving SSCC Clients must have completed TIC training appropriate to their role. Non-clinical providers must have TIC training that prepares them to understand the impact of trauma exposure on a Child or Youth and provides strategies to effectively care for the Child or Youth in a manner that promotes healing from the trauma. This training must be completed prior to any non-clinical provider being alone with the Child. In addition, the SSCC must ensure all verified Caregivers complete an annual refresher of TIC training. This training must be at least two-hours in duration;
 2. Clinical providers must have received training in trauma treatment appropriate to their clinical licensure or certification. If providing Targeted Case Management and/or Rehab Services, clinical providers must be credentialed to deliver the services;
 3. The SSCC can use the approved DFPS TIC online training to meet the training requirements of this Section; however, DFPS encourages the SSCC to use its own curriculum/model to build upon the training their non-direct delivery staff and Caregivers have already received. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) has developed training materials for all stakeholders who serve foster Children and their parents/Caregivers; and
 4. All direct delivery staff and Caregivers providing services through the SSCC must have completed Trauma-Informed Care training.
- (B) All direct delivery staff and Caregivers must be trained using a DFPS approved training curriculum to recognize and report sexual abuse, including child-on-child sexual abuse. This training must be completed prior to providing services to Children/Youth. On an annual basis thereafter, direct delivery staff and Caregivers must re-take this DFPS approved training relating to sexual abuse. During readiness, specific instructions will be provided to the SSCC for staff attendance, tracking and timeframes. The SSCC must maintain and ensure that each direct delivery staff or Caregiver maintains a copy of the certificate of completion in their file.
- (C) Anyone recommended by the SSCC as a medical consentor must receive and complete Medical Consent training offered by DFPS prior to DFPS designation as a Medical Consentor. The on-line training may be accessed by visiting: [DFPS Medical Consent Training](#).
- (D) All SSCC employees must complete Human Trafficking training “created by the Human Trafficking prevention task force under [Section 402.035\(d\)\(6\)](#), Government Code”. The SSCC must use the approved DFPS Human Trafficking training to meet the training requirements of this Section, located at the Attorney General of Texas website: [Be The One | Office of the Attorney General](#).

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For additional resource information on Human Trafficking, visit the DFPS Public website:
[DFPS - Human Trafficking](#).

- (E) The SSCC must ensure that all foster parents, prospective adoptive parents, and relatives or other designated Caregivers who provide care for Children ten (10) years or older through the SSCC must complete the runaway prevention training as described by [Texas Family Code §264.015](#) which is located on the DFPS Public Website. The on-line training may be accessed at [DFPS - Runaway Prevention \(texas.gov\)](#).

Section 2.14 Major Deliverable # 1 - Achievement of Service Objectives/Quality Indicators.

The SSCC must perform the development, operation, oversight, and provision of the full continuum of Substitute Care, Case Management and Purchased Client Services in a manner that provides services in the least restrictive, most Family-like setting appropriate for the Child or Youth, which reduces the number of moves a Child or Youth must make while in care, and engages communities to assist Children and Youth in achieving safety, permanency, and well-being, specifically, the service objectives inherent in the following quality indicators:

- (A) The safety of Children in their placements;
- (B) The placement of Children in each Child's home community;
- (C) The provision of services to Children in the least restrictive environment possible and, if possible, in a Family home environment;
- (D) Minimal Placement Changes for Children;
- (E) The maintenance of contact between Children and their families and other important persons;
- (F) The placement of Children with Siblings;
- (G) The provision of services that protect each Child's culture;
- (H) The preparation of Children and Youth in foster care for adulthood;
- (I) The provision of opportunities, experiences, and activities for Children and Youth in foster care that are available to Children and Youth who are not in foster care;
- (J) The participation by Children and Youth in making decisions relating to their own lives;
- (K) The reunification of Children with the biological parents of the Children when possible; and
- (L) The promotion of the placement of Children with relative or Kinship Caregivers if reunification is not possible.

Section 2.15 Major Deliverable #2: Development and Management of a Continuum of Care and Service Delivery Model

The SSCC must develop and manage a continuum of care and service delivery model designed to facilitate achievement of the service objectives and quality indicators using the staged implementation model. The SSCC must notify DFPS any time one or all of the plans referenced below may change/modify or impact the SSCC service delivery model. DFPS must review and approve any such changes/modifications prior to the implementation of these plans.

The SSCC must implement a Community-Based model that fully engages stakeholders in achieving desired outcomes and, at a minimum, ensures:

1. The effective and efficient delivery of a full array of services provided in the least

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restrictive, most appropriate placement setting that minimizes moves in care to improve outcomes for Children, Youth, and their Families;

2. Continuity of care provided to Children, Youth, and their Families; and
3. The provision of timely and appropriate services to Children, Youth, and their Families in their home communities. The SSCC model must address the diverse and individual needs of the particular local communities within the Designated Community Area.

(A) Start-Up Period

The SSCC will have a Start-Up period prior to the start of Stages I and II:

1. **Stage I:** The effective date of the SSCC contract with the Department and end date no later than the first day of the seventh month from the effective date of the contract, or sooner with demonstrated Readiness. During the Start-Up Period, the SSCC must actively engage communities in building the infrastructure and competencies necessary to provide the full continuum of paid Foster Care and Purchased Client Services required in Stage I of implementation and demonstrate Readiness to implement the approved plans. The SSCC must employ and maintain sufficient staff during Start-Up Period to implement the selected service model and conduct necessary Community Engagement activities and ensure Readiness.
2. **Stage II:** The effective date of the SSCC contract with the Department and end date no later than the first day of the seventh month from the Contract effective date, or sooner with demonstrated Readiness.
 - a. During the Start-Up Period, the SSCC must actively engage communities in building the infrastructure and competencies necessary to provide the full continuum of Substitute Care, Case Management and Purchased Client Services required in Stage II of implementation and demonstrate Readiness to implement the approved plans.
 - b. The SSCC must employ and maintain sufficient staff during Start-Up to implement the selected service model and conduct necessary Community Engagement activities and ensure Readiness.
 - c. Stage II Readiness must include plans to implement reasonable caseloads for all Caseworkers as well as graduated caseloads for newly hired staff. The SSCC must comply with the DFPS Generally Applicable Internal Caseload Standards which implement a guideline of fourteen (14) - seventeen (17).
 - d. Children per conservatorship worker. This is not a “caseload cap” or an “enforced caseload range”. A new CVS Caseworker must be assigned to no more than six (6) Children in the first month of becoming case assignable and no more than twelve (12) Children in the second month after they are deemed case assignable. In the third month after being determined eligible for case assignments, the Caseworker may receive a full caseload. The SSCC must use its approved graduated caseload plan to inform its hiring goals as well as ensure that SSCC Caseworker Supervisors use the SSCC’s graduated caseload plan in handling caseload distribution. In instances where an SSCC Caseworker will have a daily caseload over the fourteen (14) – seventeen (17) range, the SSCC must use and complete the Exception form DFPS uses to document the

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reason.

3. Please see **Article IV** for more information regarding Start-Up Requirements.

(B) Administrative Management

The SSCC's administrative management of the continuum of care and service delivery system must, at a minimum, include the following:

1. An integrated continuum of service providers to ensure the effective management and coordination for availability of an array of quality services necessary to meet the diverse and unique needs of Children and Youth in least restrictive settings and effectively reduce the number of moves for Children and Youth in Substitute Care and families of those Children who require services to support safety, permanency, and well-being.
2. Based on the stage of implementation the necessary organizational structure, staff, capacity, policies, and procedures to manage, oversee, coordinate, and deliver all of the following:
 - a. A continuum of services to arrange, conduct, and coordinate the Child/Youth's placement within the continuum of care;
 - b. Case Management services for all Children, Youth and Families who are referred to the SSCC by DFPS;
 - c. A timely array of services, support, and oversight to Kinship Caregivers and Families;
 - d. Family reunification support services and oversight to be provided after a Child receiving services from the Contractor is returned to the Child's Family;
 - e. Quality Assurance and Utilization Management (QA and UM) practices which continuously monitor operations and services in order to ensure quality services, progress towards Service Plan goals, and compliance with all Contract terms, performance expectations, outcomes, and outputs;
 - f. The SSCC must be able to demonstrate the validity of the Utilization Management Process to DFPS as an accurate reflection of the level of care provided to Children and Youth referred under the Contract. DFPS or a designated third party will review the SSCC Utilization Management process and results at regular intervals to ensure that the SSCC is complying with its approved Exceptional Care policy and process;
 - g. The capacity to develop and maintain qualified staff that have the skills, education, experience, and training for the services they provide;
 - h. A system for tracking and reporting Serious Incidents as well as other safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes and mechanisms;
 - i. A system that alerts the SSCC of situations or issues that require immediate response, including issues which are likely to pose a threat to Child safety;
 - j. Designated Community Area specific disaster recovery and business continuity practices which ensure rapid, effective response and re-

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establishment of system operations and service delivery in the event of unplanned system outages or catastrophic occurrences. This must include response to situations in all areas of the state or nation where the SSCC has Children, Youth or Young Adults placed;

- k. Create a single process for the training and use of Alternative Caregivers for all Child-Placing Agencies in the Designated Community Area to facilitate reciprocity of licenses for Alternative Caregivers between agencies, including respite and overnight care providers;
- l. A financial system that ensures timely payment, appropriate utilization, and on-going management of financial resources so that needed services are provided within the allocated funds; and
- m. Capacity to collect, manage, and report data on client services, network service providers, subcontractors, hospitalizations, foster homes, outcomes, and outputs.

(C) SSCC Management Plan

At least thirty (30) days prior to entering a new Stage of implementation, the SSCC is required to submit an updated version of the SSCC Management Plan for DFPS approval. The SSCC Management Plan must clearly identify all tasks and activities associated with each deliverable, dates of completion, and key staff responsible for, at a minimum, the following key elements:

- 1. The schedule, processes, and procedures for transition **by agency** of the Children and Youth from the Designated Community Area who are already being served by the providers in the SSCC network in the Legacy System to the SSCC model. DFPS anticipates all Children in legacy paid Foster Care will fully transition to the SSCC within twelve (12) months of contract effective date;
- 2. Describe the process, procedure, and schedule for the transition of Children pending emergency or planned placement;
- 3. The process and procedures for recruitment and transition of agency staff, the timeline and employment information to include but not limited to; tenure, salaries, benefits, and additional information requested by potential employees and requested by the Department;
- 4. The schedule, processes, and procedures for transition of legacy cases and DFPS foster homes from DFPS to the SSCC. Include plan for communicating with providers, foster parents, judiciary, and the community. DFPS anticipates a full transition of legacy paid Foster Care placements between systems within twelve (12) months of contract effective date;
- 5. The schedule, processes, and procedures of the transition of the verification of kinship homes to the SSCC;
- 6. Consistent with [Texas Family Code §264.155](#) the schedule, processes, procedures, and sequential plan for the implementation of Community-Based Care in the Designated Community Area, including a sequential plan for implementing the following in an order determined by DFPS based upon community needs, readiness, and capacity:
 - a. Family Preservation Services;
 - b. Case Management services for Children, Youth, Young Adults, Families,

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- and relative and Kinship Caregivers receiving services in the Designated Community Area;
 - c. Family reunification support services to be provided after a Child receiving services from the SSCC is returned to the Child's Family; and
 - d. Intake and placement services for Children, Youth, and Young Adults from the Designated Community Area.
7. Ongoing development of services network/continuum, including plan for assessing need, recruiting, communicating with, and training network providers;
 8. Quality management plan that documents the necessary information required to effectively manage service quality from project planning to delivery. The plan must define a service's quality policies, procedures, criteria, areas of application, roles, responsibilities, and authorities;
 9. Workforce development and training, which must include a plan for ensuring that all Caseworkers, supervisors, Caregivers, and other direct care staff providing services through the SSCC complete training to support attainment of safety, permanency, and well-being for the Children in their care. Trauma-Informed Care, Child Sexual Aggression/Abuse, and Human Trafficking training (as previously specified) as well as training on Disproportionality and Cultural Competency are required;
 10. Designated Community Area specific risk and management plans;
 11. A Disaster Recovery and business continuity plan that is specific to the Designated Community Area as well as plans for ensuring the safety and well-being of all Children, Youth and Young Adults that are placed in other parts of Texas and other parts of the country should a disaster occur including and a data backup and recovery plan;
 12. Policy and procedures to support all aspects of service delivery, finance, and administration of the SSCC model;
 13. Policy and procedures to protect Confidential Information and data security;
 - a. The SSCC shall promptly destroy any genetic material and delete any genetic information obtained from an individual for the purpose of a genetic test after the purpose for which the sample was obtained is accomplished.
 - b. The SSCC shall retain the results of a genetic test to determine paternity as part of DFPS's suit affecting the parent child relationship in IMPACT only. The results of a genetic test are confidential under Human Resources Code Section 40.005.
 14. Plan for how the SSCC will address situations in which a Child referred to the SSCC is placed in the same home as a Child in the DFPS Legacy System or vice versa;
 15. Case Management Conflicts of Interest. Policy and procedures detailing how the SSCC will identify, manage, track, and resolve potential Case Management conflicts of interest throughout the life of the contract;
 16. Contracting Conflicts of Interest. Policy and procedures detailing how the SSCC will identify, manage, and track potential contracting conflicts of interest throughout the life of the contract. After identifying a potential Contracting Conflict of Interest, the SSCC must notify DFPS with a memorandum describing the potential conflict in addition to methods of mitigation. DFPS reserves the right to make a final

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- determination regarding any potential conflict, up to and including prohibiting SSCC staff involved in a Contracting Conflict of Interest from working on this Contract;
17. The SSCC must require Continuous twenty-four (24) Hour Awake Supervision in all placements housing more than six (6) Children, inclusive of all fosters, biological, and adoptive Children. The SSCC must participate in DFPS oversight and enforcement activities to ensure provider compliance with the continuous twenty-four (24) hour awake supervision requirements. DFPS will not approve any subcontracted provider of the SSCC until DFPS has approved the provider's continuous twenty-four (24) hour awake supervision policies and procedures submitted to DFPS. DFPS and the SSCC must review the provider's continuous twenty-four (24) hour awake supervision policies and procedures and assess them for adequacy and compliance with the continuous twenty-four (24) hour awake supervision requirements based on the ages, needs, living arrangements, physical environment, facility layout, and levels of service required for the Children and Youth at the provider's facility; and
 18. Plan for implementing graduated Caseloads for Caseworkers in Stage II.

(D) SSCC Community Engagement Plan (CEP)

1. The SSCC must develop and implement a Community Engagement Plan for each stage of implementation that demonstrates that the SSCC understands the role of the distinct communities and population hubs within the Designated Community Area in meeting the unique and diverse needs of Children, Youth, Young Adults, and families;
2. As required by [Texas Family Code §264.155](#), the SSCC must implement and submit a Community Engagement Plan that has been developed with community stakeholders within sixty (60) days of Stage II Readiness. The plan must include strategies, activities, and timelines for engaging the community preliminarily; during the Start-Up Period, during initial implementation, and on an ongoing basis. The plan must include the establishment of a community advisory committee that:
 - a. meets at least quarterly;
 - b. maintains, as the majority of the committee's membership, members not employed by or contracted with the SSCC; and
 - c. includes representatives from any of the following:
 - i. community faith-based organizations
 - ii. the judiciary
 - iii. court-appointed special advocates
 - iv. child advocacy centers
 - v. service providers
 - vi. foster families
 - vii. biological parents
 - viii. foster and former foster youth
 - ix. relative or kinship caregivers
 - x. child welfare boards, if applicable
 - xi. attorney's ad litem
 - xii. attorneys that represent parents involved in suits files by the department
 - xiii. any other stakeholders, as determined by the SSCC

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(E) Faith Based Requirements

In accordance with [Texas Family Code §264.155](#), the SSCC must develop a program to recruit and retain foster parents from Faith-Based Organizations, and must:

1. Collaborate with Faith-Based Organizations to inform prospective foster parents about:
 - a. The need for foster parents in the community;
 - b. The requirements for becoming a foster parent; and
 - c. Any other aspect of the foster care program that is necessary to recruit foster parents;
2. Provide training for prospective foster parents; and
3. Identify and recommend ways in which Faith-Based Organizations may support people as they are recruited, are trained, and serve as foster parents.

(F) DFPS and SSCC Joint Operations Manual

During a Start-Up period, the SSCC and DFPS senior regional management staff will collaborate to develop joint operational processes for implementation of the SSCC's model and to establish Designated community-specific joint protocols, including but not limited to, methods and frequency of communication, jurisdictional expectations, and clarification of DFPS and the SSCC roles and responsibilities. The SSCC must ensure that staff participating in the joint protocol sessions have a thorough understanding of Community-Based Care, the SSCC model and Contract, and the communities served. The operations manual update must be completed at least sixty (60) days prior to the go live date.

1. The SSCC will work in collaboration with DFPS and stakeholders within the Designated Community Area to develop and maintain exemplary relationships that support achievement of improved permanency outcomes for Children, Youth, and families;
2. DFPS will work in collaboration with the SSCC to identify, develop, and expand needed services and resources within the Designated Community Area in order to achieve the common goal of providing quality services to Children and families; and
3. The SSCC will work in collaboration with DFPS to establish the roles; and responsibilities of working with victims of Human Trafficking and organizations that work with them, including DFPS, law enforcement, Care Coordination Teams (CCT), Human Trafficking Advocate Agencies (HTAA), community organizations, and contracted Community-Based Care providers. In Texas Counties where DFPS has established an MOU with HTAA and other similar stakeholders for the purposes of prevention and response to Human Trafficking and Child Exploitations, the SSCC will adopt the same responsibilities, functions, and duties under the MOU as CPS. This section does not prohibit the SSCC from working with MOU stakeholders to modify MOU language subject to the agreement of all parties, as long as the general purpose and goals of the MOU that existed with DFPS is accomplished.

(G) SSCC Provider Manual

The SSCC Provider Manual will serve as the guiding document for SSCC employees and its

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network providers and outline the roles, responsibilities, and processes to implement Community-Based Care and the achievement of safety, permanency, and well-being of Children in the SSCC continuum of care. The SSCC must provide copies of the SSCC Provider Manual to DFPS for review and approval during readiness forty-five (45) days prior to go live date of each Stage implementation. The SSCC will regularly update the SSCC Provider Manual as necessary. Each update must be provided to DFPS. DFPS reserves the right to disapprove of any changes.

Section 2.16 Continuum of Substitute Care and Purchased Client Services (Stages I-III)

The SSCC must build and maintain the infrastructure necessary to support the full continuum of Substitute Care, Case Management and Purchased Client Services for all Children and Youth originating from the Designated Community Area. Those placed in the Designated Community Area through Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) and through inter-regional agreements and their Families who are referred to the SSCC by DFPS. The infrastructure must be sufficient to ensure services are safely provided in the Child's or Youth's home community, in the least restrictive, most family-like setting appropriate for the Child or Youth and must reduce the number of moves Children or Youth make while in care while working towards positive permanency for the Child. These services must be contracted services.

- (A) **Coordinated Purchased Client Service Delivery (Stages II-III).** The SSCC must maintain the capacity to coordinate and deliver a timely array of services to families and/or individuals that DFPS determines eligible and refers to the SSCC according to agree upon Service Plans and within Purchased Client Services funding. Families of Children who enter Substitute Care and who are referred by DFPS to the SSCC are eligible for services. Families may continue to remain eligible for the SSCC service coordination and delivery after their Child has returned home so long as DFPS is still the Legal Conservator. The SSCC must also demonstrate its compliance with performance measures and outcomes.
1. In accordance with Texas Family Code Section 263.1021, the SSCC must adopt similar requirements relating to the way noncontracted service providers are reimbursed that is consistent with Texas Administrative Code (state.tx.us) Section 700.905 Reimbursement of Noncontracted Service Providers.
- (B) **Case Management Services (Stages II-III).** In addition to Stage I responsibilities, the SSCC must build and maintain the infrastructure and staff capacity necessary to implement graduated caseloads for newly hired staff and to deliver Case Management services for all Children who are referred to the SSCC by DFPS. During Stage II Readiness, the SSCC must develop a Case Management Manual that provides detail on how the SSCC will accomplish the following:
1. Conducting a minimum, of monthly face-to-face visits with the Child, Family, and Caregivers.
 2. Convening and conducting service planning and Permanency planning meetings.
 3. Development and revision of Child and Family service and visitation plans, including permanency plans and goals for a Child or Young Adult in care.
 4. Ensuring Parent-Child visitation occurs twice per month to address case planning and service needs.
 5. Ensuring Sibling visitation of at least one visit per week for Siblings not placed together.

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6. Coordination and monitoring of services required by the Child and the Child's Family or Caregivers including:
 - a. Pre-adoption and post-adoption assistance;
 - b. Services for children in the conservatorship of the department who must transition to independent living; and
 - c. Services related to family reunification, including services to support a monitored return.
7. Assumption of court-related duties regarding the Child, including but not limited to:
 - a. Providing any required notifications or consultations;
 - b. Preparing court reports;
 - c. Attending judicial and permanency hearings, trials, and mediations;
 - d. Complying with applicable court orders; and
 - e. Ensuring the Child is progressing toward the goal of permanency within state and federally mandated guidelines.
8. Conducting Family finding and engagement activities, including conducting background checks and searches for relatives, non-custodial parents, and other persons significant to the Child's safety, permanency, and well-being.
9. Coordination and monitoring of reunification support services to a Child or Youth and Family after the Child is returned to the Child's Family; including Face-to-Face Contact with the Child and Family a minimum of once a month to ensure stability, safety, well-being.
10. Coordination and provision of all Transitional Living Benefits including, but not limited to, the Education Training Voucher to eligible Youth and Young Adults.
11. The SSCC must build and maintain sufficient staff capacity to deliver direct Case Management services to Kinship Caregivers and Families, including but not limited to:
 - a. Completion of required kinship home assessments and/or home studies verification or adoption purposes;
 - b. Regular contact with the Caregiver;
 - c. Coordination and delivery of a timely array of services to Caregivers;
 - d. Identification of local resources to meet the Child's and Caregiver's needs;
 - e. Provision of training, individually or in groups, to help the Kinship Caregiver meet the Child's needs;
 - f. Provision of resources or referrals to resources to ensure placement stability; for example, providing or referring the Family to financial assistance, Childcare, counseling, remedial educational programs, and academic enrichment programs;
 - g. Assessment of kinship Families, continually, to determine their strengths and needs;
 - h. Service and Permanency Planning for the Child;
 - i. Necessary tracking and reporting of Kinship Placements to be used to verify and pay kinship providers (when applicable);
 - j. Provision of support for the Kinship Caregiver Family in reaching the
 - k. Child's goals; and

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1. Development and implementation of a risk evaluation and approval process to be used in determining appropriateness of Kinship Placements.
12. The interstate Compact of the Placement of Children (ICPC) is a statutory compact agreement between all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the US Virgin Islands. This agreement is reciprocal in nature and thus there is not specific funding that is exchanged between states for this responsibility. Any reimbursement for foster care services as a result of an ICPC placement are provided directly from the sending state to the Caregiver or licensing Child Placing Agency if therapeutic services are needed. As a result, the SSCC will not receive any direct Blended Foster Care Rate for the placement services provided to Children placed in Texas through ICPC. Additionally, Caregivers needing verification for standard foster care services or adoptions services begin the process by having an initial home assessment completed. In Stage I DFPS may reimburse the SSCC for the Home Assessment only for Standard Foster Care and Adoption Verification via IMPACT invoicing based on actual Caregivers served. In Stage II this reimbursement will continue if the SSCC chooses to use a sub-contractor for this service and reimbursement is requested by the SSCC through the purchased client services invoicing process. The reimbursement request must not exceed the annual purchased client services allocation for SSCC. If the Family is approved to move forward with verification (if required by the sending state), the verification will be completed by the SSCC network. This service is completed by DFPS foster home development staff in non-Community-Based Care areas and these staff are part of the resource transfer for Stage I services. The DFPS Texas Interstate Compact Office (TICO) is the point of contact for ICPC. The DFPS TICO is the point of contact for ICPC. The TICO will provide the same services to the SSCC as they provide to CPS staff in non-CBC areas. At a minimum; the SSCC must:
 - a. Review all ICPC referrals from his or her Designated Community Area for accuracy and completeness;
 - b. Ensure all ICPC referrals are processed expeditiously to meet federal guidelines related to the Safe and Timely Act ([Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006, P.L. 109-239](#));
 - c. Provide technical assistance to SSCC Caseworkers regarding general ICPC inquiries;
 - d. Follow all CPS ICPC policies and procedures as outlined in [CPS Handbook Policy 9000](#), including but not limited to:
 - i. Reviewing and submitting ICPC packets to the TICO;
 - ii. Completing ICPC requests for placement packets;
 - iii. Completing home screening within sixty (60) calendar days per federal law [42 USC §671\(a\)\(26\)](#);
 - iv. Completing kinship assessments, and/or homes studies; and
 - v. Monitoring and documenting home visits.

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13. Any other function or service that DFPS determines is necessary to allow the SSCC to assume responsibility for Case Management.

Section 2.17 Foster Care Placement Capacity

During Stage I, DFPS will only refer Children in or who require paid Foster Care from the Region 7A and/or 7B, Designated Community Area and Young Adults in SIL programs within the Designated Community Area to the SSCC. During Stage II, DFPS will refer all Children in DFPS conservatorship and Extended Foster Care from the Region 7A and/or 7B Designated Community Areas, regardless of placement type, to the SSCC. The SSCC must have the ability to build and manage available Foster Care capacity in the Designated Community Area in order to increase the likelihood that Children are placed in their home communities. Therefore, as part of Readiness activities for Stage I, DFPS and the SSCC will agree to:

- (A) Provide placement capacity data to the SSCC on a quarterly basis;
- (B) Develop a process by which a Child, legally from an area outside of the Designated Community Area, may be placed into a placement facility within the SSCC Designated Community Area;
- (C) DFPS will not use new placement capacity that results solely from the SSCCs effort to develop its network of providers unless agreed to as outlined in the Joint Operations Manual; and
- (D) Notwithstanding the above, DFPS reserves the right to assess placement capacity utilization amongst the SSCC Designated Community Areas and the Legacy System statewide. DFPS will consider the SSCC's capability to reasonably share requested capacity with other SSCCs and DFPS and may intervene when deemed necessary. Such intervention by DFPS may include, but is not limited to, reversing any denial by an SSCC of a Form 1508-Request for the appropriate placement of a Child into a Designated Community Area.

Section 2.18 Major Deliverable #3 – Compliance with General Requirements of the SSCC

- (A) **Accountability.** The SSCC is ultimately responsible for all Contract requirements, including outcomes, regardless of whether the Contract requirement is performed directly by the SSCC or indirectly by the SSCC through an agent, employee, volunteer, or subcontractor.
 1. The SSCC is responsible for implementing and maintaining a quality assurance process to ensure the product satisfies the requirements of the Contract;
 2. The SSCC is responsible for responding to feedback from DFPS relative to services provided under Contract and incorporating that feedback to ensure continuous improvement as indicated in performance measures;
 3. The SSCC is responsible for monitoring and evaluating services, policies, and processes and applying actions necessary for improvement if the results require change;
 4. The SSCC must manage referrals to ensure timeframes and quality expectations are met;
 5. The SSCC must cooperate with DFPS in monitoring, verifying, and evaluating services provided under this Contract. Contractor must make Client records and service delivery documentation available upon request by DFPS;
 6. The SSCC must establish a system to monitor the performance of its direct service network providers to ensure the highest quality services and

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- compliance with this Contract;
7. The SSCC must establish a system to verify performance data of its direct service network providers to ensure accurate data is reported and verified in compliance with this contract; and
 8. The SSCC and SSCC's subcontractor(s), as a term of its agreement with the SSCC, must respond to feedback requested from DFPS regarding any findings made by the State Auditor Office (SAO) and must reconcile all cited findings in order of priority as designated by the SAO.

(B) Legal/Regulatory. The SSCC must:

1. Comply with all court orders and jurisdictional requirements;
2. Comply with all court orders regarding the provision of Substitute Care, Case Management services, Purchased Client Services and/or reunification services for Children, Youth, and families services through the SSCC, relevant to the stage being implemented; and
3. Follow all State (including, but not limited to, Texas Family Code and Title 40, Part 19 of the Texas Administrative Code) and federal laws listed below, including compliance with the terms and regulations of all Performance Improvement Plans as a result of a Federal or State Audit as well as Child Care Minimum Standards for twenty-four (24)-Hour Residential Care Operations and Child-Placing Agencies, and DFPS Records Management Policy:
 - a. [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#)
 - b. [Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act \(CAPTA\)](#)
 - c. [Child and Family Service Review \(CFSR\). The SSCC must work with DFPS to improve outcomes for Children based on the Federal CFSR requirements.](#)
 - d. [Child Welfare Services, Title IV-B, Subpart 1 of the Social Security Act](#)
 - e. [HHSC Child Care Minimum Standards](#)
 - f. [DFPS Records Management Policy](#)
 - g. [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)
 - h. [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act](#)
 - i. [Indian Child Welfare Act \(ICWA\)](#)
 - j. [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#)
 - k. [McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#)
 - l. [The Multiethnic Placement Act, as amended by the Interethnic Adoption Provisions](#)
 - m. [National Youth in Transition Database \(NYTD\)](#) The SSCC must assist Children and support the necessary activities including ongoing computer access required for entry of data into NYTD system and will assume this responsibility in Stage II.
 - n. [Promoting Safe and Stable Families, Title IV-B, Subpart 2 of the Social Security Act](#)
 - o. [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF\)](#)
 - p. [Texas Family Code](#)
 - q. [Title IV-E of the Social Security Act](#)
 - r. [Title 40 Part 19 of the Texas Administrative Code](#)
 - s. [Family First Prevention Services Act](#)

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- t. [eCFR :: 2 CFR §200.331 -- Subrecipient and contractor determinations](#).
- (C) In providing Substitute Care services and services for Kinship Caregivers in a Designated Community Area (Stages II-III), the SSCC must, either directly or through subcontractors, perform the statutory duties as DFPS's agent in connection with the delivery of Substitute Care services and services for Kinship Caregivers in that Designated Community Area. The Case Management function must not be performed by subcontractors;
 - (D) The legal representation provided to the Department during DFPS conservatorship case proceedings will be provided to the SSCC (Stages II-III);
 - (E) Pursuant to [Texas Family Code §264.167](#), an employee, agent, or representative of an SSCC is a client's representative of DFPS for purposes of the privilege under [Texas Rule of Evidence 503: Lawyer-Client Privileges as found in the Texas Rules of Evidence](#) as that privilege applies to communications with a prosecuting attorney or other attorney representing DFPS, or the attorney's representatives, in a proceeding under [Subtitle E \(Protection of the Child\) of Title 5 \(The Parent-Child Relationship and the Suit Affecting the Parent-Child Relationship\) of the Texas Family Code](#); and
 - (F) The SSCC must report known Serious Incidents, licensing investigations, licensure board reports and investigations, suspected fraud or fraud investigations, and violations that occur within the SSCC's service model to DFPS in accordance with HHSC Licensing Minimum Standards and contract requirements. For these circumstances in particular, and at all times in general, the SSCC must have operational procedures and mechanisms in place to ensure they are knowledgeable of and respond immediately to conditions or situations that may pose a threat to Child safety. DFPS will regard any failure to disclose and report as a breach of the SSCC's contract. HHSC Residential Child Care Licensing's role with all licensed providers, including the SSCC subcontractors will remain unchanged. The SSCC must incorporate these same reporting requirements as terms in any agreement with an SSCC subcontractor.
 - (G) In accordance with Reporting Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation, the SSCC must, within the time frame specified in Minimum Standards but no later than 24 hours after discovery, report to the Contract Administration Manager (CAM), Caseworker, and the Caseworker's Chain of Command any allegation or finding of a Serious Incident or death of a child in care. The SSCC provider/subcontractor must also report Serious Incidents to the DFPS Statewide Intake hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or report online at <https://www.txabusehotline.org>. Out-of-State SSCC providers/subcontractors must also report Serious Incidents to the DFPS Interstate Compact for Placement of Children (ICPC) by email at ICPCHS@dfps.texas.gov. For a list of Serious Incidents and reporting timeframes, see Minimum Standards. Minimum Standards for CPAs, 26 TAC, Chapter 749, Subchapter D, Division 1 Minimum Standards for Child- Placing Agencies (texas.gov) Minimum Standards for GROs, 26 TAC, Chapter 748, Subchapter D, Division 1 Minimum Standards for General Residential Operations(texas.gov).

Section 2.19 Service Delivery

- (A) The SSCC may provide services to people of various cultures, races, ethnic backgrounds, and religions.
- (B) The SSCC will:

1. Coordinate and deliver services in a manner that is relevant to the background of Children and Families served in the distinct communities and population hubs within the Designated Community Area; and
2. Make reasonable efforts (as determined by the department) to ensure services provided to Children and Families are offered in the individual's primary language.

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Section 2.20 Major Deliverable #4 - Placement Services and Services to Children/Youth/Young Adults

The SSCC must coordinate and manage services to the Child, Youth, or Young Adult in a manner that, at a minimum, conforms to and complies with the service and Contract requirements stated, defined, and described in this Contract.

(A) Notification Request for Services

1. DFPS will:

- a. Refer Children, Youth, and Young Adults to the SSCC for services;
- b. Refer non-verified relatives/Fictive Kin or other Caregivers, located within or outside the Designated Community Area and who are interested in becoming a verified kinship foster or adoptive home, to the SSCC for verification and licensing services;
- c. As a part of Stage I, provide final approval or reason(s) for denial of all placement decisions within twenty-four (24) hours of request for approval. Approval may be assumed if notice of placement denial is not received by the SSCC within twenty-four (24) hours of request. For emergency placements only, DFPS will evaluate the SSCC's recommended placement option within one (1) hour of receipt of notification from the SSCC by telephone or electronic notification. For emergency placements, the SSCC may assume approval from DFPS if the Department does not provide notice of placement denial within one (1) hour of the request;
- d. As part of Stage I, notify the SSCC of all court orders regarding placement;
- e. As part of Stage I, provide written notification to the court of all placement and medical consent activities, consistent with current statutory requirements;
- f. Determine eligibility and make appropriate referrals for SSCC services; and
- g. Provide notice to the SSCC within two (2) business days, when DFPS becomes aware that a child is no longer eligible for the SSCC services.

2. SSCC must:

- a. Maintain the capacity to accept referrals from DFPS for Child/Youth placement every single day of the year, including nights and holidays;
- b. Accept all referrals (No Reject) made by DFPS and continue to meet the individual needs of Children and Youth referred (No Eject);
- c. Limit Placements for New Facility. If single source continuum contractor contracts with a General Residential Operation providing Treatment Services and wished to place Children with an operation before the operation has received a full permit (in provisional licensed status), the SSCC must use a gradual referral plan that limits both the number of Children placed at the operation each month and the number of Children with a service level of specialized, intense, or intense plus. The SSCC should use this gradual referral plan until such time as the operation exhibits and the SSCC verifies, sustained compliance with

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licensing standards. The SSCC must work in conjunction with new facilities to understand the facility's case mix and census as well as maintain awareness of other entities who refer Children to the operation (such as other SSCCs, DFPS, other governmental entities, etc.);

- d. Create a single process for the training and use of Alternative Caregivers for all Child-Placing Agencies within their placement network in the Designated Community Area to facilitate reciprocity of licenses for Alternative Caregivers between agencies, including respite and overnight care providers;
- e. Adapt to and abide by requirements of local courts (if different from process listed in Contract) regarding placement processes and/or notification requirements;
- f. Offer Supervised Independent Living (SIL) services. The SSCC must develop Contracts for supervised independent living services that will meet the needs of the Young Adult to be served;
- g. In instances where DFPS has established an SIL program with a public university, the SSCC must use the same terms, conditions, policies, processes described in the DFPS interagency agreement with the public university. This section does not apply in instances where both the public university and the SSCC have agreed in writing to develop a an SSCC specific subcontract with its own terms, conditions, policies, and processes;
- h. Utilize the same parameters as DFPS when making recommendations to the Department on who a Child's medical consentor should be. These parameters are outlined in Chart 1. See DFPS [CPS Medical Services Resource Guide](#) for more information;
- i. Ensure that all Foster Parents, Caregivers, and employees who serve as Medical Consentors for a Child who is prescribed psychotropic medications participate in an office visit or telehealth visit with the prescribing physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice nurse in the STAR Health Network at least once every ninety (90) days to allow the practitioner to:
 - Appropriately monitor the side effects of the drug; and
 - Determine whether the drug is helping the Child achieve the treatment goals and whether continued use of the drug is appropriate.
- j. Advise Youth/Young Adults at least sixteen (16) years old of their right to request to become their own Medical Consentor; and
- k. For all Children receiving psychotropic medication, the SSCC must assess the extent to which the Child:
 - Has been provided with appropriate psychosocial therapies, behavior strategies, and other non-pharmacological interventions; and
 - Has been seen by the prescribing physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice nurse in the STAR Health Network. DFPS CPS Handbook, [11000 Health Care; 11100 Medical Consent \(texas.gov\)](#).

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Chart 1: Medical Consenter

Child's Placement	Recommended Designee First and Second Primary	Recommended Back Up First and Second Back Up
1. CPA Foster Family Home 2. CPA Pre-consummated adoptive home	1. Foster parents, or 2. Pre-consummated adoptive parents	Professional employee(s) of the CPA, such as a case manager
GRO offering Childcare services only (Children's home with cottage model)	1. Cottage parents	1. Alternate cottage parents; 2. CPS Caseworker
Home and Community-Based (HCS) Family home	1. HCS-based support Family Caregivers	1. CPS Caseworker; 2. Caseworker's Supervisor
1. GRO Residential Treatment 2. Center; 3. GRO Therapeutic Camp; 4. GRO Child Care Facility; or 5. Group Setting with Shift Staff	1. 1st Primary: the CPS Caseworker or Local Permanency Caseworker; or 2. 2nd Primary: second CPS Caseworker or Local Permanency Caseworker	Any combination of the following individuals may be selected as the 1st and 2nd backup: 1. CPS Caseworker; 2. Local Permanency Caseworker; 3. CPS Supervisor; or 4. Local Permanency Supervisor. * In rare situations and with approval from the Local Permanency Supervisor or designee, a Human Services Technician (HST) specially trained to consent to psychotropic medication.
HCS-based group home (with shift staff) Nursing home Intermediate care facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF-IID)	1. CPS Caseworker 2. 2nd CPS Caseworker or CPS Supervisor	1. 3rd CPS Caseworker or CPS Supervisor 2. CPS Supervisor
GRO offering Treatment Services for individuals with intellectual disabilities State Supported Living Centers (SSLC)	1. Developmental disability (DD) specialist assigned as primary worker 2. Secondary CPS Caseworker or Caseworker's Supervisor	1. 2nd Developmental disability (DD) specialist 3rd Developmental disability (DD) specialist or Primary CPS Caseworker
Placement with Relative or Kinship Caregiver	Primary live-in Caregiver(s) for the Child	Another person, relative or kinship individual that knows the Child and has knowledge of his/her medical condition and needs

***During Stage II, the SSCC will replace the DFPS Caseworker/supervisor role as relevant medical consenter designee.**

(B) Applicable Requirements.

1. The SSCC must consider all applicable state and federal requirements and best practices when making recommendations of potential placements to DFPS. All decisions should be made based on the individual Child's best interest. Areas for

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consideration include but are not limited to, the following:

- a. The Child's safety;
 - b. Preference for Family;
 - c. Least Restrictive, most family-like setting;
 - d. Placement with Siblings;
 - e. Child's individual circumstances;
 - f. Children are placed in their home communities and in close proximity (no more than fifty (50) miles to their home of removal;
 - g. Maintaining the Child in the School of Origin and minimizing educational disruption;
 - h. Biological Family's individual circumstances;
 - i. Substitute Caregiver's individual circumstances;
 - j. Services respect and support the Child's culture; and
 - k. Continual review of the appropriateness of the Child's placement and efforts to preserve the current placement.
2. All applicable state and federal requirements when documenting the Child's placement and document in IMPACT the following (see Chart 2 for time frames):
 - a. Date of placement;
 - b. Date of discussion with Child regarding initial and all subsequent changes in placement;
 - c. Child's response to discussion regarding placement;
 - d. Whether placement was emergency or planned;
 - e. Whether Pre-Placement Visit(s) occurred and if so, date(s) of Pre-Placement Visit(s); and
 - f. Name, address, and telephone number for current placement, including agency or facility name if service is delivered through a subcontract with the SSCC.
3. Explanation as to why identified placement is most appropriate, including:
 - a. If the placement is not with a Kinship Caregiver, Foster Family Home or cottage-style General Residential Operation (GRO) document why a more restrictive setting is needed;
 - b. If Placement Change resulted in a change of schools, explanation as to the need for school change;
 - c. If placement is more than fifty (50) miles from Child's home of origin, explanation for why the Child is not in close proximity; and
 - d. If the Child is not placed with all Siblings, reasons for separation.
4. Immediately notify DFPS when the SSCC becomes aware that a Child or Youth may no longer be eligible for SSCC services.
5. **Luggage Requirements for Foster Children:** When moving a Child's personal belongings, whether that be the initial removal, removal from one foster home,

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GRO, CWOP, etc. to another placement, the SSCC must ensure that Luggage is provided to the Child. If a Child requires more than one Luggage to transport the Child's personal belongings, then the SSCC must provide additional Luggage to the Child. SSCC must track each time a trash bag is used to transport a Child's personal belongings and the reason the SSCC failed to provide the Child with appropriate Luggage to move the Child's personal belongings. See **Exhibit G, SSCC Required Reports** for more detail.

(C) Placement Referral Types for Paid Foster Care Services. (Stage I) include:

1. DFPS Emergency Placement - Process utilized when DFPS makes a referral to the SSCC for Children/Youth who are in immediate need of paid Foster Care services and are not currently served by the SSCC;
2. DFPS Non-Emergency Placement (New Referral to the SSCC) - Process utilized when DFPS makes a referral to the SSCC for Children/Youth who are transitioning from a placement in the Legacy System to the SSCC's continuum of care;
3. DFPS Non-Emergency Placement (Change of Placement Request) - Process utilized when DFPS has identified a need for a change in placement for Children/Youth already served by the SSCC;
4. SSCC Emergency/Non-Emergency Placement- Process utilized when the SSCC has identified a need for a change in placement for Children/Youth already served by the SSCC; and
5. Placement Referral Types for Paid Foster Care Services and Required Notifications, Roles, Responsibilities and Documentation Requirements (see Chart 2).

(D) Child/Youth Sexual Victimization and Aggression

As part of the placement process, the SSCC must ensure that a Child's initial and subsequent Caregivers receive information regarding any history of a placed Child/Youth's sexual victimization, or sexual aggression. This information should include any information related to sexual abuse by an adult or another Youth.

(E) Required Notifications Related to the Child

1. DFPS will provide the SSCC with a completed Placement Summary (Form K-908-2279 or DFPS accepted equivalent) and its Attachment A - Child Sexual History Report, which provides any history of sexual victimization or sexual aggression for each Child upon placement. When a history of sexual aggression, or victimization is identified after placement, DFPS will provide an updated Attachment A to the SSCC, which must ensure that the placement addresses the Child's safety, any therapeutic needs, and other Children's safety. The SSCC must ensure that all of its Residential Childcare providers have policy that reflects the requirements of this section.
2. **Required Initial Signatures**
 - a. **General Operations.** DFPS and the SSCC will develop (via joint protocols) a policy to ensure that the Child's placement administrator receiving intake staff

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(as applicable), and the Child's case manager sign the K-908-2279 (or DFPS accepted equivalent) and its Attachment A. If any of these required signatories are not present at the time of placement, the Child's placement administrator, or their designee in their absence, will ensure all required signatories sign and return these documents to the Child's DFPS Caseworker within 72 hours. This policy must also specify obtaining the signatures each time Attachment A is updated and designate responsibility for uploading the signed documents into OneCase.

- b. **Child Placing Agencies.** DFPS and the SSCC will develop (via joint protocols-established in the Joint Operation Manual posted on the DFPS CBC page) a policy to ensure that foster parents provide a signature acknowledging the receipt and content of Form K-908-2279 (or its DFPS accepted equivalent) and its Attachment A at the time of placement. If the placing party cannot obtain the foster parent's signatures at the time of placement, both parties must work together to obtain the signatures no later than 72 hours after placement. This policy must also specify obtaining the signatures of the foster parents each time Attachment A is updated and designate responsibility for uploading the signed documents into OneCase.

(F) Subsequent Certification by Caregivers

1. **General Residential Operations.** At the time of placement, and when the Attachment A is updated, the SSCC must ensure that each Child's placement administrator must inform all Caregivers, prior to providing care or supervision, if a Child has a history of sexual aggression, or victimization as provided for in Attachment A. As proof of this notification, the placement administrator must obtain each Caregiver's signature on the certification form attached to Form K-908-2279 (or its DFPS accepted equivalent), Attachment A. The SSCC must ensure that each GRO has a written process to provide notice to a temporary placement (psychiatric or medical hospital, juvenile detention facility, respite care, etc.) of any associated Child sexual aggression, or victimization noted in Attachment A. The Administrator and Case Manager for the Child must ensure that any temporary placement is provided with the information and that proof in the form of a signed DFPS certification form is obtained from the temporary Caregiver(s). The placement administrator will maintain copies of the certification form for each Child and provide such to DFPS upon request.
2. **Child Placing Agencies.** The SSCC must ensure that each CPA provider has a written process in place to provide notice to a temporary placement (psychiatric or medical hospital, juvenile detention facility, respite care, etc.) of any associated Child sexual aggression, or victimization noted in Attachment A. The case manager for the foster home must ensure that any temporary placement is provided with the information and that proof in the form of signed DFPS certification form is obtained from the temporary Caregiver(s). The case manager must retain this documentation in the foster home record and will submit to DFPS upon request.

(G) No-Pay Placement Providers (Stage I and II)

If the SSCC selects a Child Placing Agency provider for placement that does not accept payment for the care of the Child/Youth, then the SSCC must provide DFPS with a plan as to how the

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SSCC will set aside the minimum pass-through amount for the Child/Youth while in the care of the SSCC and use any remaining portion of the blended rate for the benefit the Community-Based Care Program.

(H) Intensive Psychiatric Stabilization Program

In a limited number of circumstances, the SSCC may decide that an Intensive Psychiatric Stabilization Program (IPSP) services are in the best interest of the Child/Youth. The SSCC must obtain authorization from DFPS prior to referring any DFPS Child or Youth to an IPSP. DFPS must then verify appropriateness and either approve or deny the referral. The SSCC must seek DFPS approval for both the SSCC's IPSP Treatment Services plan and the IPSP's treatment program utilized by the SSCC that meet the conditions of this subsection.

- a. In a limited number of circumstances, the SSCC may decide that Intensive Psychiatric Stabilization Program (IPSP) services are in the best interest of the Child/Youth. The SSCC must identify which of the existing IPSP program(s) the Child may qualify for. The SSCC must identify the program and obtain pre-authorization from DFPS prior to referring any DFPS Child or Youth for IPSP services. Based on established parameters, DFPS will verify appropriateness and provide or deny the pre-authorization. If the pre-authorization is denied, the Child shall not be referred for IPSP services.
- b. The SSCC must identify the criteria and methodology it will use to refer the Child/Youth to DFPS for IPSP services, including but not limited to, client characteristics, level of internal managerial review, and consistency with Health and Safety Code Section 572.001. DFPS is responsible for approval of the admission of the Youth to an IPSP program.
- c. The SSCC must continue to provide Case Management services to the Child/Youth, including but not limited to, responsibility for transporting, admitting, once admittance is approved by DFPS, participating in treatment, discharge planning for the Child into the IPSP program. The SSCC must identify how it will oversee, support, ensure safety, and monitor the well-being and progress of the Child/Youth while in the IPTSP treatment program. This section of the Contract is not meant to imply a level of availability of IPSP services. DFPS does not guarantee admission or any level of capacity for IPSP programs.

- (I) The SSCC will** follow steps outlined in policy Section 4211.6 (Placements into Operations on Heightened Monitoring (HM) as set forth in the Child Protective Services Handbook found here; [DFPS Conservatorship Policy](#).

During Stage II, DFPS will continue to make referrals for emergency placements and the SSCC will assume all Substitute Care placement (kinship, non-DFPS paid and paid Foster Care), Reunification and service planning, coordination, and delivery duties as a part of Case Management responsibilities.

Effective January 2025, DFPS and SSCCs will begin transitioning Children, providers and Caregivers to a new foster care service model called the Texas Child-Centered Care System (T3C).

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The T3C model includes a universal assessment and placement process which will change requirements listed in Chart 2. The SSCC must adopt these changes.

Chart 2: Placement Referrals Stage I (and Stage II, as applicable)

Notification Type	DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
DFPS Emergency Placement*	1. Notify the SSCC of the emergency need for placement by telephone or through electronic notification via IMPACT. (All telephonic notification will be followed by notification referral in IMPACT.); 2. Provide access to placement and other available Case Information within 2 hours of referral, if referral information is provided telephonically access to written documentation will follow; 3. Evaluate the SSCC's recommended placement option and medical consentor within one (1) hour of receipt of notification from the SSCC by telephone or electronic notification. (If approval is granted by telephone, written approval will follow within twenty-four [24] hours.) Approval is to be assumed if denial of placement is not provided to the SSCC within the designated timeframe; 4. Provide SSCC access to appropriate placement and other available information at the time of placement and as it becomes available	1. Accessible twenty-four (24) hours a day and 365 days a year; 2. Takes physical possession of Children from DFPS within four (4) hours of receipt of DFPS notification of emergency placement need; 3. Identifies and notifies DFPS by telephone or electronically of appropriate placement option including potential medical consentor no later than seven (7) hours of receipt of DFPS notification of emergency placement need; 4. Evaluate the placement options and review all licensing variances, including variances pertaining to Caregiver ratio, supervision, and training, when determining if the placement can meet the Child's individual needs; 5. Ensures the Child is involved, and the Child/Youth's input is considered in decision as appropriate to the Child's age and level of understanding; 6. Places Child as soon as possible following receipt of DFPS referral;	1. Must document (via IMPACT) required information regarding referrals and placement and provide to DFPS within designated time frame; 2. Must maintain an electronic record (Home Assessment Tracking tool) of the status of a home study of a potential relative or designated caregiver as required under Section 262.114(a-3) of the Texas Family Code; and 3. Track each time a trash bag is used to transport a Child's personal belongings and the reason the SSCC failed to provide the Child with appropriate Luggage to move the Child's personal belongings. See <u>Exhibit G. SSCC Required Reports for more detail.</u>

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Notification Type	DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	over the course of the case, including but not limited to, information and documentation required by DFPS Residential Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards for Emergency Placements; and 5. Evaluate the SSCC recommended placement and review all licensing variances, including variances pertaining to Caregiver ratio, supervision, and training, when determining if the placement can meet the Child's individual needs.	7. Ensure that a Child's Caregivers receive information regarding any history of a placed Child/Youth's sexual behavior problems, sexual aggression. This information should include any information related to sexual abuse by an adult or another Youth; 8. Provides required placement documentation via IMPACT to designated DFPS staff within twelve (12) hours of receiving referral; and 9. Ensures an initial standardized medical screening for Children at removal within three (3) business days as described in DFPS 3- Day Medical Exam policy. *The initial screening is not meant as a substitute for needed emergent care.	
DFPS Non-Emergency Placement (New Referral to the SSCC)	1. Notify the SSCC of the need for placement through electronic notification and schedule placement staffing with the SSCC; 2. Provide SSCC access to placement and other relevant Case Information with referral and as it	1. Identify potential placement option(s) for Child and schedule Pre- Placement Visit(s) for Child with potential Caregivers; 2. Evaluate the placement options and review all licensing variances, including variances pertaining to Caregiver ratio,	1. Must document (via IMPACT) required information regarding placement and provide to DFPS within designated time frame.

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Notification Type	DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	becomes available over the course of the case, including, but not limited to, information and documentation required by DFPS Residential Childcare Licensing Minimum Standards for Non-Emergency Placements; - Evaluate the SSCC recommended placement option and medical consentor within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt of notification from the SSCC electronically. Approval is to be assumed if denial of placement is not provided to the SSCC within designated timeframe; - Notify CASA and attorney ad-litem that change in placement has occurred; - Evaluate the SSCC recommended placement option, review the referral history of the home, assess if any concerns for the Child's safety or well-being and document in the Child's electronic case record; and - Evaluate the SSCC recommended placement and review all licensing variances, including variances pertaining to Caregiver ratio, supervision, and training, when determining if the placement can meet the Child's individual needs.	supervision, and training, when determining if the placement can meet the Child's individual needs; - Ensure the Child is involved, and the Child/Youth's input is considered in decision as appropriate to the Child's age and level of understanding; - Must contact provider from which the Child will be moved to gather relevant information; - Identifies and notifies DFPS electronically of appropriate placement option, including potential medical consentor as soon as possible and no later than three (3) days prior to placement needing to occur; - Ensure that a Child's Caregivers receive information regarding any history of a placed Child/Youth's sexual behavior problems, sexual abuse by an adult or another Youth; - Provide required placement documentation via IMPACT to designated DFPS staff within twelve (12) hours of placement occurring; and - Place a Child within required timeframes.	- Must maintain an electronic record (Home Assessment Tracking tool) of the status of a home study of a potential relative or designated Caregiver as required under Section 262.114(a-3) of the Texas Family Code. - Track each time a trash bag is used to transport a Child's personal belongings and the reason the SSCC failed to provide the Child with appropriate Luggage to move the Child's personal belongings. See <u>Exhibit G. SSCC Required Reports</u> for more detail.

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Notification Type	DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
DFPS Non-Emergency Placement (Placement Change Request)	1. Notify the SSCC of request to change placement. 2. Documentation should state reason for desired change in placement as well as time frame for change of placement. 3. Participate in joint staffing if requested by the SSCC. 4. Evaluate the SSCC recommended placement option and medical consenters electronically within twenty-four (24) hours; approval is to be assumed if denial of placement is not provided to the SSCC within the designated timeframe. 5. Provide SSCC access to appropriate placement documentation and available information at the time of the placement and as it becomes available over the course of the case. 6. Evaluate the SSCC recommended placement option, review the referral history of the home, assess if any concerns for the Child's safety or well-being and document in the Child's electronic case record. 7. Evaluate the placement options and review all licensing variances, including variances pertaining to Caregiver ratio, supervision, and training, when determining if the placement can meet the Child's individual needs.	1. Request joint staffing with DFPS if needed; 2. Evaluate the placement options and review all licensing variances, including variances pertaining to Caregiver ratio, supervision, and training, when determining if the placement can meet the Child's individual needs; 3. Identify potential placement option(s) for Child and schedule Pre-Placement Visit(s) for Child with potential Caregivers; 4. Ensure the Child is involved, and the Child/Youth's input is considered in decision as appropriate to the Child's age and level of understanding; 5. Identifies and notifies DFPS electronically of appropriate placement option, including potential medical consenters as soon as possible and no later than three (3) days prior to placement needing to occur; 6. Ensure that a Child's Caregivers receive information regarding any history of a placed Child/Youth's sexual behavior problems, sexual victimization, and sexual aggression. This information should include any information related to sexual abuse by an adult or another Youth;	1. Must document potential placement information provided to DFPS and time Child was taken to actual placement location; 2. Must document (via IMPACT) required information regarding placement and provide to DFPS within designated time frame; 3. Maintain documentation of DFPS' placement approval; 4. Must maintain an electronic record (Home Assessment Tracking tool) of the status of a home study of a potential relative or designated Caregiver as required under Section 262.114(a-3) of the Texas Family Code; and 5. Track each time a trash bag is used to transport a Child's

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Notification Type	DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
		7. Provide required placement documentation via IMPACT to designated DFPS staff within twelve (12) hours of placement occurring; and 8. Ensure continuity of care for a Child whose placement has changed by: (1) notifying each specialist treating the Child of the Placement Change and (2) coordinating the transition of care from the Child's previous treating primary care physician and treating specialists to the Child's new treating primary care physician and treating specialists, if any.	personal belongings and the reason the SSCC failed to provide the Child with appropriate Luggage to move the Child's personal belongings. See Exhibit G, SSCC Required Reports for more detail.
SSCC Emergency Placement	1. Evaluate the SSCC recommended subsequent placement option and medical consentor within one (1) hour of receipt of notification from the SSCC by telephone or electronic notification (If approval is granted by telephone, written approval will follow within twenty-four [24] hours.) Approval is to be assumed if denial of placement is not provided to the SSCC within the designated timeframe; 2. Provide the SSCC access to the appropriate placement documentation of approval or denial and access to available information at the time of the placement as it becomes available over the course of the case; 3. Evaluate the SSCC	1. Immediately notify DFPS of need to evaluate current placement for appropriateness by telephone or electronically; 2. Identifies and notifies DFPS electronically of appropriate placement option, including potential medical consentor; 3. Evaluate the placement options and review all licensing variances, including variances pertaining to Caregiver ratio, supervision, and training, when determining if the placement can meet the Child's individual needs; 4. Complete a Pre-Placement Visit(s) for	1. Must document required information regarding Placement Change via IMPACT and provide to DFPS within designated time frame; 2. Documentation must clearly support why the desired change in placement is necessary and in the best interest of the Child; and 3. Must maintain an electronic record (Home Assessment Tracking tool) of the status of a home study of a potential relative or

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Notification Type	DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	recommended placement option, review the referral history of the home, assess if any concerns for the Child's safety or well-being and document in the Child's electronic case record; and 4. Evaluate the placement options and review all licensing variances, including variances pertaining to Caregiver ratio, supervision, and training, when determining if the placement can meet the Child's individual needs.	Child with potential Caregivers, whenever possible; 5. Ensure the Child is involved, and the Child/Youth's input is considered in decision as appropriate to the Child's age and level of understanding; 6. Ensure that a Child's Caregivers receive information regarding any history of a placed Child/Youth's sexual behavior problems, sexual victimization, and sexual aggression. This information should include any information related to sexual abuse by an adult or another Youth; 7. Provide required placement documentation via IMPACT to designated DFPS staff within twelve (12) hours of placement occurring; and 8. Ensure continuity of care for a Child whose placement has changed by: (1) notifying each specialist treating the Child of the Placement Change; and (2) coordinating the transition of care from the Child's previous treating primary care physician and treating specialists to the Child's new treating primary care physician and treating specialists, if any.	designated Caregiver as required under Section 262.114(a-3) of the Texas Family Code. Track each time a trash bag is used to transport a Child's personal belongings and the reason the SSCC failed to provide the Child with appropriate Luggage to move the Child's personal belongings. See Exhibit G, SSCC Required Reports for more detail.

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Notification Type	DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
SSCC Non-Emergency Placement	1. Evaluate the SSCC recommended subsequent placement option and medical consentor within twenty-four (24) hours; approval is to be assumed if denial of placement is not provided to the SSCC within the designated timeframe; 2. Provide the SSCC access to appropriate placement documentation of approval or denial and as it becomes available over the course of the case, including, but not limited to, information and documentation required by DFPS Residential Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards for Non-Emergency Placement; 3. Evaluate the SSCC recommended placement option, review the referral history of the home, assess if any concerns for the Child's safety or well-being and document in the Child's electronic case record; and Evaluate the placement options and review all licensing variances, including variances pertaining to Caregiver ratio, supervision, and training, when determining if the placement can meet the Child's individual needs.	1. Notify DFPS of need to evaluate current placement for appropriateness within thirty (30) days of desired change in placement electronically. Documentation must clearly state reason for desired change in placement; 2. Evaluate the placement options and review all licensing variances, including variances pertaining to Caregiver ratio, supervision, and training, when determining if the placement can meet the Child's individual needs; 3. Identifies and notifies DFPS electronically of appropriate placement option, including potential medical consentor as soon as possible and no later than three (3) days prior to placement needing to occur; 4. Complete a Pre-Placement Visit(s) for Child with potential Caregivers that ensures that a Child's Caregivers receive information regarding any history of a placed Child/Youth's sexual behavior problems, sexual victimization, and sexual aggression. This information should include any information related to sexual abuse by an adult or another Youth;	1. Must document required information regarding Placement Change via IMPACT and provide to DFPS within designated time frame; and 2. Documentation must clearly support why the desired change in placement is necessary and in the best interest of the Child. 3. Must maintain an electronic record (Home Assessment Tracking tool) of the status of a home study of a potential relative or designated Caregiver as required under Section 262.114(a-3) of the Texas Family Code. Track each time a trash bag issued to transport a Child's personal belongings and the reason the SSCC failed to provide the Child with appropriate Luggage to move the Child's personal belongings. See Exhibit G, SSCC Required Reports for more detail.

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Notification Type	DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
		5. Coordinate communication between and among current and future Caregivers; 6. Ensure the Child is involved, and the Child/Youth's input is considered in decision as appropriate to the Child's age and level of understanding; 7. Provide required placement documentation to designated DFPS staff within twelve (12) hours of placement occurring; and 8. Ensure continuity of care for a Child whose placement has changed by: (1) notifying each specialist treating the Child of the Placement Change; and (2) coordinating the transition of care from the Child's previous treating primary care physician and treating specialists to the Child's new treating primary care physician and treating specialists, if any.	
ICPC/TICO	1. Texas Interstate Compact Office (TICO) coordinates interstate placement requests for placements of Children from Texas into other states and for requests of Children from other states to be placed within Texas with other compact offices in other states; and 2. TICO office reviews and approves request packets for	During Stage I if Texas is the receiving state: 1. Determining if the Caregiver is verified for foster care or adoption services by a private agency in the SSCC network; 2. Updating the Caregiver verification if needed;	1. Provide documentation of these services; 2. Must maintain electronic record (Home Assessment Tracking tool) of the status of a home- study as required under subsection (a) of a

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Notification Type	DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	completeness and compliance with applicable compact laws. During Stage I if Texas is the receiving state: 1. DFPS Regional ICPC Coordinator reviews all ICPC referrals for accuracy and completeness, ensures that all ICPC referrals are processed expeditiously and provides technical assistance to DFPS/SSCC regarding general ICPC inquiries; 2. DFPS Regional ICPC Coordinator completes the initial screening by completing background checks on the Family and reviewing for obvious bars to verification; 3. If verification for standard Foster Care services is required by the sending state, once verification is completed the ICPC Regional Coordinator will create a service authorization to reimburse the SSCC for the cost of the home study only in IMPACT; and 4. DFPS will provide supervision of the Child in placement.	3. Providing verification documentation to TICO; 4. Determines if the Child requires standard or treatment (therapeutic) foster care services; 5. Complete initial home assessment. (home study) within required time frame and send to DFPS Regional ICPC Coordinator; and 6. If the sending state requests verification for Children who require standard foster care services or adoption services, the SSCC or their network provider will complete the verification process and notify and provide supporting documentation to the DFPS Regional ICPC Coordinator when complete.	potential relative or designated Caregiver; and 3. Track each time a trash bag is used to transport a Child's personal belongings and the reason the SSCC failed to provide the Child with appropriate Luggage to move the Child's personal belongings. See <u>Exhibit G. SSCC Required Reports</u> for more detail.

During Stage II, DFPS will continue to provide oversight and monitoring functions and the SSCC will assume responsibility for all duties related to ICPC services, except for those services provided by the TICO office directly.

- (A) **Continuous Twenty-Four (24) Hour Awake Supervision.** DFPS cannot place any Children or Youth in its conservatorship in Residential Child Care placements with more than six (6) Children (inclusive of foster, biological, and adoptive Children) that lack continuous twenty-four (24) hour awake supervision. The SSCC must ensure that any placement provided by itself or its subcontractors that serves seven (7) or more Children in a facility must provide continuous twenty-four (24) hour awake supervision. The SSCC must require their Network Providers to

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report to DFPS when this condition is not met in the format provided by DFPS. The report must be made within twenty-four (24) hours of the occurrence and must include the Provider's actions to correct the issue. All reports should be documented and submitted to DFPS in the format and site prescribed by DFPS.

Section 2.21 Child/Youth Assessment/Service Planning (Stages I-III)

(A) DFPS will:

1. Provide access to all available, relevant information on the Child, Youth, and Family for use in the assessment process at time of referral and as it becomes available over the course of the case, including, but not limited to, information and documentation required by HHSC Residential Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards for Emergency and Non-Emergency Placements;
2. Within seven (7) days of referral, schedule the Initial Coordination Meeting (ICM) with the SSCC to review Child case history and discuss the SSCC's recommendations for services to be provided to the Child and Family;
3. Provide final approval for services agreed upon and documented in the Child Plans of Service and subsequent revisions (Stage I);
4. Establish the permanency and concurrent goals for Children and Youth and their Families in collaboration with the SSCC and in accordance with judicial requirements (Stage I); and
5. Notify the SSCC of all court ordered services for all Children and Families served through the SSCC.

(B) SSCC must:

1. Ensure that all assessments: (1) are conducted from a trauma-informed, Child and Family centered, strength-based perspective; (2) consider the unique culture, experiences, and beliefs of the Child and their Family; (3) incorporate all evaluation and assessments completed through STAR Health or other providers; and (4) conform to Minimum Standards;
2. Implement the CANS assessment tool for Children and Youth ages three (3) years and older;
3. Ensure timely delivery and continuity in the provision of services to meet the assessed needs for Children and Youth in Substitute Care and their Families;
4. Develop and implement a process by which Children, Youth, and Families may elevate concerns about the provision and/or quality of services provided;
5. Ensure that all services identified in the Child (Stages I-III) and Family (Stages II-III) plans of services are provided and documented in a timely manner and support the Child's Permanency Goal; and
6. During Stage II, coordinate conferences and case planning staffing's, including but not limited to, Initial Coordination Meetings (ICM), Family Group Conferences, Permanency Conferences, Circles of Support Conferences, staffing's with STAR Health and meetings required by the court.

(C) Service Planning Model Assumptions.

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1. During Stage I, DFPS and the SSCC will work collaboratively to develop plans of service for Children.
2. Services will be identified and designed to support the Child's Permanency Goal including concurrent permanency goals and will sufficiently address the reasons for DFPS intervention.
3. During Stage II the SSCC must ensure Children, Youth, Families, and Caregivers have an opportunity to participate in the identification of needed services and in the development of Service Plans.
4. The SSCC must utilize and maximize services offered through other state agencies and community, for which DFPS Children, Youth, and/or Families are a priority population.
5. Services to the Child (with the exception of placement) that are ordered by the court and fall outside the Purchased Client Services funding streams will be reviewed by DFPS and the SSCC on a case-by-case basis to determine financial responsibility.

Section 2.22 Child/Youth Service Planning (Stages I-III): Roles, Responsibilities and Documentation Requirements (See Chart 3)

Chart 3: Child and Youth Service Planning

I. At Referral

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Provide the SSCC access to relevant Case Information in IMPACT prior to the ICM.		

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II. ICM Meeting

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Within seven (7) days of referral, schedule the Initial Coordination Meeting (ICM) with the SSCC to review Child needs and outline services to address the assessed needs; and 2. Provide the SSCC two (2) business days' notice of meeting.	1. Stage I: Share the SSCC preliminary service recommendations for Child with DFPS during Initial Coordination Meeting (ICM). Actively participate in ICM meeting (Stage I); 2. Stage II: Share the SSCC preliminary service recommendations for Child and Family with DFPS during Initial Coordination Meeting (ICM); and 3. Actively participate in ICM meeting.	1. Use the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment; and 2. Stage I: Share all assessments, evaluations and medical reports related to the Child with DFPS.

III. Service Planning

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Work jointly with the SSCC and its residential provider and schedule Initial and Subsequent Service Planning Meetings to develop Service Plans. The SSCC Care Coordinator will be invited to participate; 2. Schedule Initial and all Subsequent Service Planning Meetings to develop Child plans of service within timeframes required by Texas Family Code and applicable licensing standards. The SSCC provides fourteen (14) days' notice to DFPS of Service Plan Meetings; 3. Establish permanency and concurrent goal with input from the SSCC (Stage I); and 4. Develop the written Service Plan via IMPACT and in accordance with the Texas	1. Ensure that the Child or Youth, age three (3) years or older, receives a comprehensive assessment (CANS): a. Within 30 days of removal; b. Annually; and c. Every ninety (90) days if the Child is receiving therapeutic Foster Care services. 2. Make all reasonable efforts to ensure Children, Youth, Families, and Caregivers participate in Service Planning.	1. Share all assessments, evaluations and medical reports related to the Child with DFPS.

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
Family Code and HHSC Minimum Standards; 5. Make all reasonable efforts to ensure Children, Youth, Families, and Caregivers participate in Service Planning; and 6. Provide necessary oversight measures and review processes to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements (Stage II).		

Exhibit I: Statement of Work

IV. Visitation Planning

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Work with the SSCC to identify visitation plan with Family members and Siblings if placed separately; 2. Provide the SSCC access to Documentation of Approved Visitation Plan; 3. Conduct visits with Children and their Caregivers; 4. Actively participates in all Service Plan meetings; and 5. Provide necessary oversight measures and review processes to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements.	1. Work with DFPS to identify visitation plan with Family members and Siblings if placed separately; and 2. Assist in arranging and provide transportation for visitation (Stages I- III).	1. Document visitation plan with Family and Siblings if placed separately in IMPACT.

V. Audit/Monitoring

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Provide necessary oversight measures and review processes to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements; and 2. Ensure case plans meet state and federal requirements	1. Evaluate and report on the effectiveness of service being provided to Children, Youth, and Families; and 2. Adjust the service type, frequency and duration of services based on input received through staffings.	1. SSCC must document all audit and monitoring activities as outlined in this Contract.

VI. Discharge Planning

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Work jointly with the SSCC to determine when a Child or Youth and their Family are ready for discharge from services and achievement of their Permanency Goal; 2. Ensure that discharge planning including services to prepare a Child	1. Work jointly with DFPS to determine when a Child or Youth and their Family are ready for discharge from services and achievement of their Permanency Goal; and 2. Participate in a Family meeting when the Child or	1. Complete discharge of SSCC referral in IMPACT when needed (Stage II); and 2. Document any changes in Child or Family (Stage II)

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
and Youth for permanency is incorporated with the Child and Youth's Service Plan; 3. Schedule a Family meeting when it is time to discharge the Child or Youth from the SSCC for the achievement of the Permanency Goal; 4. Provide necessary oversight measures and review processes to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements; and 5. DFPS must require a General Residential Operation to develop a transition plan for each Child who has been placed at the operation for longer than six (6) months.	Youth is ready for discharge to permanency.	Service Plans in IMPACT.

***During Stage II, DFPS will continue to provide oversight and monitoring functions and the SSCC will assume all service and discharge planning, coordination, and delivery as a part of Case Management responsibilities.**

Section 2.23 Child's Physical and Behavioral Health Needs (Stage I): Roles, Responsibilities and Documentation Requirements (see Chart 4)

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Chart 4: Health Needs

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Ensure proper consent is obtained for Children in paid Foster Care placement for all physical, psychotropic medication and behavioral health and substance abuse treatment; 2. Inform the SSCC of any known physical or behavioral health issues, medications prescribed and/or substance abuse issues that need to be addressed upon referral or as soon as DFPS becomes aware of health issues requiring special attention; 3. Monitor all physical and behavioral health services to ensure the Child's individual needs are being met; and 4. Provide necessary oversight measures and review processes to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements.	1. Ensure that the Child or Youth, age three (3) years and older, receives a comprehensive assessment (CANS): a. Within thirty (30) days of removal; b. Annually; and 2. Coordinate all physical and behavioral health and/or prescribed medication(s) and/or substance abuse related services identified in the Service Plan; 3. Ensure Children in paid Foster Care placement receive an initial standardized medical screening within three (3) business days from removal, should they qualify per Texas Family Code §264.1076; Note: The initial screening is not meant as a substitute for needed emergency care. 4. Ensure Children in paid Foster Care receive a TX Health Steps medical checkup within thirty (30) days from removal; 5. Ensure Children in paid Foster Care receive all follow-up medical exams, Early and Periodic Screening and Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) exams, including Early Childhood 6. Ensure the Caregiver provides written consent for the Child's ECI information to be entered into the Child's Health Passport; 7. All services identified will be accessed through the STAR Health Network, with the exception of substance abuse services that are accessed through the Department of State Health	1. Maintain documentation in accordance with what is required in DFPS Minimum Standards.

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	Services (DSHS); 8. Provide or ensure the provision of all mental and behavioral health related services identified in the Child's Plan of Service; 9. Ensure proper oversight of any prescribed psychotropic medication; 10. Schedule and transport Children to and from appointments; and 11. Notify DFPS of any medical and dental appointments, medical emergencies, known significant physical or behavioral health concerns or changes, including when a Child's psychotropic medications fall outside the Psychotropic Medication Parameters.	

***During Stage II, DFPS will continue to provide oversight and monitoring functions and the SSCC will assume responsibility for all duties related to meeting the Children's (Kinship, Reunification, and paid Foster Care) physical and behavioral health needs as a part of Case Management responsibilities.**

Section 2.24 Transitional Living Services (Stages I, II, III): Roles, Responsibilities and Documentation Requirements (see Chart 5):

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Chart 5: Transitional Living Services

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Work jointly with the SSCC and schedule the initial planning meeting for transitional plan for Youth; 2. Approves the Youth's transitional plan; 3. Tracks all transitional living services for the Youth; 4. Identify Youth to be surveyed and enter required data and maintain National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD); 5. Confirm eligibility for all transitional living services and financial supports to the SSCC; 6. Schedule and facilitate Circle of Support (COS) Meetings to develop the Youth's Transition Plan; 7. Determine the Youth's (ages eighteen (18) – twenty-three (23)) eligibility for Extended Care and/or Return to Care; 8. Ensure that the Youth signs the Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement (Form 2540) in a timely manner; 9. Ensure Life Skills training completed by Youth is documented in IMPACT; and 10. Provide necessary oversight measures and review processes to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements.	1. Jointly work with DFPS to initiate initial planning meeting for the development of a transitional plan for Youth resulting in one (1) plan followed by the SSCC and DFPS; 2. Develop and complete the DFPS Transitional Plan (Form 2500) or Single Service Plan (when available) with the Youth; 3. Work with each Youth and Family to develop and implement a Transition Plan as well as attend and participate in all planning meetings; 4. Arrange for annual independent living skills assessment (currently the Casey Life Skills Assessment) for Youth in DFPS managing conservatorship who are age fourteen (14). If a Youth was not eligible to receive the assessment at age fourteen (14) or fifteen (15), an assessment must be provided to all Youth in DFPS conservatorship at age sixteen (16) or older. Youth will only be assessed one (1) time; 5. Ensure an interpretation of the completed scored assessment is shared and discussed with the Youth and the Caregiver; 6. Through the Youth's Service Plan, ensure an annual update of the independent living skills the Youth learned the preceding year is conducted to ensure the Youth is being prepared for their successful transition to adulthood. The annual review should include a review of the original assessment responses and documentation of the Youth's progress and continued need in the Youth's plan of services; 7. Assist DFPS in obtaining NYTD	1. Document services to help the Youth meet identified needs to achieve Independent or Transitional Living; 2. Provide completed 2540 Forms; 3. Document Life Skills Training as well as experiential Life Skills Learning; 4. Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement (Form 2540) must be completed within thirty (30) days of the Youth's 18th birthday or thirty (30) days after the Youth's 18th birthday; and 5. Document and report by the 15th of the month following the month of service all Preparation for Adult Living Life Skills training completed by each Youth to DFPS. More frequent reporting will be required during some months to be in compliance with NYTD.

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	surveys from identified Youth at ages seventeen (17), nineteen (19), and twenty-one (21); 8. Provide identified services to help the Youth achieve independence; 9. Assist the Youth in applying for and securing services to help with their successful transition to adult living; 10. Work with Youth and other significant individuals to identify and foster lifelong connections to caring adults that help with their successful transition to adult living; 11. Assist DFPS in obtaining the Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement (Form 2540), Seven (7) days before Child's 18th birthday; 12. Participate in Youth's Circle of Support Meetings; 13. Arrange and ensure participation of all referred Youth in Preparation for Adult Living Life Skills Training; 14. Develop and deliver PAL Life Skills Training utilizing the curriculum topics found in Appendix 10212: Preparation for Adult Living Skills Training Curriculum Outline at: CPS Handbook Policy 10200; 15. Include experiential and community-based learning as a part of PAL Services; 16. Assist the Child/Youth in maintaining necessary documentation for Voluntary; and 17. During Stage I, the SSCC must notify the DFPS CPS Caseworker and the Caseworker's chain of command within twenty- four (24) hours of	

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	the consent for placement by a minor in the SSCC's Transitional Living Program in accordance with the Texas Family Code §32.203.	

***During Stage II, DFPS will continue to provide oversight and monitoring functions and the SSCC will assume responsibility for all duties related to transitional living services, including, but not limited to, coordination of the Education Training Voucher and PAL Aftercare services to eligible Youth and Young Adults as a part of Case Management responsibilities.**

Section 2.25 Adoption (Stages I, II & III). - Roles, Responsibilities and Documentation Requirements (See Chart 6)

Chart 6: Adoption

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Responsible for all legal/court activities related to termination of parental rights, legal risk placement, adoption, and eligibility for post-adoption subsidies and services; 2. Approve or deny the SSCC's selected adoptive home study; if selection is denied, provide in writing the rationale for the decision, including specific reasons that would indicate why the Family was not an appropriate match and/or how the decision is not in conformity to the agreed	1. Recruit and approve adoptive homes, including homes to meet the unique needs and specific Child characteristics when needed; 2. Place Children in DFPS approved legal risk and/or adoptive home. 3. Provide services to prepare and support Adoptive Placements; 4. Obtain assessments and services needed to ensure placement stability in a legal risk and/or adoptive home prior to consummation; 5. Inform the prospective adoptive parent of the prospective adoptive Parent's right to examine the records and other information	1. Provide documentation of these services.

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
upon placement guidelines; and 3. Evaluate the SSCC recommended adoptive Family selection and approve within designated timeframe. Approval is to be assumed if denial of selection of adoptive Family is not provided to SSCC within designated timeframe.	relating to the Child's health history. 6. Edit the adoptive records and information to protect the identity of the biological Parents and any other person whose identity is confidential; and 7. Provide the prospective adoptive Parents with access to research regarding underlying health issues and other conditions of trauma that could impact Child development and permanency.	

***During Stage II, DFPS will continue to provide oversight and monitoring functions and the SSCC will assume responsibility for all duties related to adoption services, including, but not limited to the coordination of post-adoption services as a part of Case Management responsibilities.**

Section 2.26 Court Responsibilities (Stages I-III)

State and federal requirements mandate that Children in DFPS' legal conservatorship have periodic court reviews. The court reviews include, but are not limited to, adversary/show cause hearings, status hearings, permanency hearings, special hearings, trial settings, post- trial permanency hearings, and special settings. At those court review hearings, the court will review the Child's Permanency Goal, the Child's placement, Child and Family services, the Child's medical care, and progress towards permanency. The role of the SSCC and DFPS is outlined by stage of Community- Based Care (CBC) implementation. Regardless of the stage of CBC implementation:

(A) DFPS will:

1. Provide access to all available, relevant information on the Child, Youth, and Family for use in the assessment process at time of referral and as it becomes available over the course of the case, including, but not limited to, information and documentation required by HHSC Residential Child Care Licensing.

(B) SSCC must:

1. Maintain and provide all available court orders, reports, and information to DFPS upon request by DFPS, its authorized agents, or as otherwise expressly provided for in this agreement;
2. Ensure that Children and Youth attend all court hearings unless excused by the presiding judge prior to the court hearing. Attendance may occur through video conference and/or teleconference when appropriate and if approved by the court;

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3. Notify DFPS immediately of any service of legal process including but not limited to summons, subpoena, or discovery notices related to performance under contract;
4. Ensure attendance of staff with personal knowledgeable of case at all court hearings unless excused by the presiding judge;
5. Comply with all court orders and jurisdictional requirements; and
6. If the SSCC fails to comply with any court order or other governmental requirement and a court imposes a monetary penalty upon DFPS, then the DFPS will recoup such damages against the SSCC in the amount attributable to the SSCC's noncompliance. This includes noncompliance attributed to the SSCC in regard to any orders that DFPS must comply with as part of the M.D. v. Abbott matter that relate to the functions assumed by the SSCC. DFPS will provide a copy of the orders that relate to the SSCC.

(C) **Stage I.** Court services (including Drug and other specialty courts) are required of both DFPS and the SSCC whenever DFPS has legal conservatorship of a Child or Youth who has been referred to the SSCC. (See Chart 7)

1. Work with the applicable DFPS or local government assigned Attorney in preparing for all court related activities;
2. Ensure that the SSCC's agents, employees, case managers, direct delivery service providers, volunteers, subcontractors, or any other necessary party appear and testify in judicial proceedings, depositions, and administrative hearings relating to the Child or Child's Family, as directed by counsel;
3. Provide notice of all court hearings, prepare court reports as required and present evidence in Child protection cases in compliance with [Texas Family Code §263.0021](#). The following persons are entitled to at least ten (10) days' notice:
 - a. Foster parent,
 - b. Pre-adoptive parent,
 - c. Relative Caregiver,
 - d. Director of General Residential Operation,
 - e. Biological parents,
 - f. Attorney ad Litem,
 - g. Guardian ad Litem, and
 - h. The Child if the Child is ten (10) or older.
4. **Notice is required for:** a Child's Placement Change, the failure to locate a placement for at least one night, a significant change in medical condition, an initial prescription of a psychotropic medication or a change in dosage, a major change in school performance or serious disciplinary event at school or any event determined to be significant under DFPS rule; and
5. **Court Ordered Mediation.** In instances involving court ordered mediation, the SSCC must attend and comply with applicable policy, see [DFPS CPS policy 5571.1](#) regarding what can and cannot be agreed to during mediation.

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Section 2.27 DFPS Court - Responsibilities: Roles, Responsibilities and Documentation Requirements (see Stage I Chart 7) (see Stage II, Chart 8)

Chart 7: Stage I Court Requirements

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Prepare court report, attend court, and testify. 2. Notify the SSCC of all scheduled court hearings. 3. Provide the SSCC a copy of court orders, settings, notices, court reports, including CASA or guardian ad litem reports and other relevant court information. 4. An employee, agent, or representative of the SSCC is considered to be a Client's representative of the department for purposes of privilege. 5. The State of Texas maintains responsibility for providing all legal representation through a DFPS or local government Attorney.	1. Attend court hearings and/or preparation meetings as requested by DFPS, legal representation, CASA, Child's attorney, parent's attorney, guardian ad litem or volunteer advocate, Child and/or parents or other Family members. 2. Notify DFPS of who will be attending court electronically prior to court hearing twenty (20) days prior to scheduled hearing. 3. Provide information necessary for preparation of court reports twenty (20) days prior to scheduled hearing. 4. Provide supplemental information for inclusion in court report when significant events occur prior to scheduled hearing. 5. Provide notice to Caregiver of all court hearings.	1. Maintain documentation of all court orders. 2. Document and provide all information requested by DFPS in order to complete court reports. 3. Records of the SSCC related to Community-Based Care are subject to Chapter 552, Government Code, in the same manner as the records of the department.

Chart 8: Stage II Court Requirements

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Upon referral to the SSCC, DFPS will provide the SSCC a copy of court orders, settings, notices, court reports, etc. 2. DFPS will provide technical assistance and perform Case Management oversight. 3. The State of Texas maintains responsibility for providing all legal representation through	1. Upon case transfer, take over all responsibilities related to obtaining copies of court orders, settings, notices, court reports, etc. 2. Prepare court report using court report template approved by DFPS or ordered by court and provide copies to all people who require notice. 3. Complete other documents as required by the court, including necessary service or documents	1. Record court actions and recommendations. 2. Maintain documentation of all court orders, legal actions, and status. (in IMPACT and hard copy). 3. Comply with DFPS records management guidelines, policies, and procedures in responding to requests

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
a DFPS or local government Attorney.	requested by the attorney representing the Department. 4. Attend court, including statutory hearings and trial, and testify during hearings and trial. 5. Secure and coordinate translation services for Family members, as needed, for court proceedings. 6. Attend court preparation meetings as requested by DFPS legal representation, CASA, Child's attorney, parent's attorney, guardian ad litem or volunteer advocate, Child and/or parents or other Family members. 7. Provide supplemental information for inclusion in court report when significant events occur prior to scheduled hearings. 8. Provide notice and file with court: Medical Consenter, Educational Decision Maker, and Child Placement Resource forms. 9. Assist attorney as needed in locating missing and absent parents, requesting diligent searches, and preparing supporting documentation for service of citation. 10. Confer with DFPS or local government attorney regarding preparation and upcoming hearings. 11. Assist in timely completion of discovery requests. 12. Work with attorney to ensure citation, notice, and diligent searches are completed in a timely manner. 13. Work with attorney to ensure that all pre-trial and trial activities are performed as needed. 14. Review:	for production of documents. 4. Must maintain an electronic record (Home Assessment Tracking tool) of the status of a home study of a potential relative or designated Caregiver as required under Section 262.114(a-3) of the Texas Family Code.

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	a. Notes and recommendations of service providers and others working with the Child/ren and Family in order to accurately complete court reports; b. Service Plans; c. Home Studies filed w/Court; d. SSCC's recommendations for consistency with DFPS and/or SSCC policy; and procedures; e. SSCC's preparation for Final Hearings. 15. Address any pending issues of concern and determine whether revision, amendment, or other action is appropriate for prepared Court Reports and, when necessary, arrange for a new court report to be submitted to the court in a timely manner. 16. Support attorney during trial by obtaining documents or information from DFPS, SSCC, sub-contractors, medical personnel, etc. as needed. 17. Must be knowledgeable about the legal requirements for hearings. 18. Testify at the Court's request as an agent of the Department, representing the state's case and interests in the proceeding. 19. Coordinate with juvenile probation for crossover Youth appearance in court and attendance at hearings.	

Also see: Texas Child Welfare Law [Bench Book](#) for additional guidance.

Section 2.28 Major Deliverable #5 – Case Management (Stages I-III)

In Stage II, the SSCC continues responsibilities for all Stage I activities, as well as assumes Case Management services, including any that are legally required by the court. The SSCC must provide input regarding services, as required by the court, to a Child, or to the Child's Family, a Young Adult in Extended Foster Care, a relative or

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Kinship Caregiver, those placed in the Designated Community Area through Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), and through inter-regional agreements. Responsibility for providing Case Management services as outlined in this section must be provided by SSCC staff directly and cannot be subcontracted out to a different provider, government agency, or entity.

(A) The SSCC must provide Case Management services and develop a Case Management Manual that provides details on how the SSCC will accomplish at a minimum the following:

1. Primary Caseworker face to face visits with the Child;
2. Family and Caregiver visits;
3. Parent-Child visitation as court ordered or in the best interest of Child(ren) in the case;
4. Convening and conducting Permanency Planning meetings;
5. The development and revision of Child and Family plans of service, including a permanency plan and goals for a Child or Young Adult in care;
6. The coordination and monitoring of services required by the Child and the Child's Family or Caregivers including:
 - a. pre-adoption and post-adoption assistance.
 - b. services for children in the conservatorship of the department who must transition to independent living; and
 - c. services related to family reunification, including services to support a monitored return;
7. The assumption of court-related duties regarding the Child as described in Section 2.26 and Section 2.27, Chart 7 and Chart 8;
8. Ensuring the Child is progressing toward the goal of permanency within state and federally mandated guidelines;
9. The Reunification of Children with the biological parents of the Children;
10. The promotion of safe placement of Children with relative or Kinship Caregivers and the services to relative and Kinship Caregivers;
11. The Reunification of Children with the biological parents of the Children when possible and support services after a Child is returned for the period of time ordered by the court; and
12. Any other function or service that the department determines necessary to allow a single source continuum Contractor to assume responsibility for Case Management.

(B) Referral and Case Management Services to Children and Families (Stages I-III):

1. DFPS will:

- a. Provide referral to the SSCC for coordinated Purchased Client Services and Case Management services.

2. SSCC must:

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- a. Maintain the capacity to accept referrals from DFPS for services to Families of Children referred to the SSCC twenty-four (24) hours per day, three hundred and sixty-five (365) days per year;
- b. Accept all referrals (No Reject) made by DFPS and continue to meet the individual needs of the Family and other individuals referred (No Eject). This includes families and other individuals who reside outside of the Designated Community Area;
- c. Ensure that the Family receives appropriate testing and assessment(s) as indicated by their case history, which can include, but is not limited to, a mental health or domestic violence assessment, psychological testing and evaluation and a substance abuse screening and assessment;
- d. Provide evidence-based, promising practice, or evidence-informed support for Children and Families; and
- e. The SSCC must maximize Purchased Client Services funding by utilizing Community-Based services for which DFPS Families are eligible.

(C) DFPS will pay the SSCC for eligible Purchased Client Services provided to Family members within the appropriate allocation using an automated process in IMPACT (see Chart 15). This allocation excludes services for Children, Youth, and Young Adults as part of the Stage II implementation.

1. SSCC must:

- a. Ensure timely delivery and continuity in the provision of services to meet the assessed needs for Substitute Care in accordance with the requirements established by DFPS;
- b. Develop and implement a process by which Children, Youth, and Families may elevate concerns about the provision and/or quality of services provided;
- c. Ensure that all services identified in the Child (Stages I-III) and Family (Stages II-III) plans of services are provided and documented in a timely manner and support the Child's Permanency Goal;
- d. Comply with any court order issued by a court in the case of a Child for whom the SSCC has assumed Case Management responsibilities or an order imposing a requirement by the department that relates to functions assumed by the SSCC regarding services for Children, Youth, and Families;
- e. Provide Case Management services for Children, Families, and kinship Caregivers receiving services in the Designated Community Area; and
- f. Provide Reunification support services to parents after a Child receiving services from the SSCC is returned to the Child's Family.

Section 2.29 Referral for Case Management Services to the Family (Stages II-III): Roles, Responsibilities and Documentation Requirements (see Chart 9)

(A) Families Residing Inside and Outside the Designated Community Area(s) (Stages II-III)

1. The SSCC must serve Families referred by DFPS, including Families who may reside outside of the Designated Community Area, when the Child is referred to the SSCC by DFPS; and

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2. The SSCC must have documented policies and processes that ensure timely delivery of services for Families residing outside of the contracted Designated Community Area(s).

Chart 9: Referral for Case Management Services

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
DFPS will refer Families who require services that support the achievement of safety, permanency, and well-being for the individual Child in conservatorship to the SSCC electronically.	Review referral of Family and identify, coordinate, and deliver services needed.	Must document service recommendations via IMPACT.

Section 2.30 Kinship Services (Stages II-III): Roles, Responsibilities and Documentation Requirements (see Chart 10)

(A) DFPS will:

1. Provide necessary oversight measures and review processes to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements.

(B) SSCC must:

1. Promote the safe placement of Children with appropriate relative or Kinship Caregivers.
2. Provide Case Management of Children, Kinship Caregivers and Families.

Chart 10: Kinship Services

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Upon removal, notify the SSCC of the need for kinship Caregiver services. 2. Provide necessary oversight measures and review processes to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements.	1. Promote and support the safe placement of Children with appropriate relative or Kinship Caregivers. 2. Promote ongoing contact with relatives and other significant individuals pertinent to the Child's well-being and permanency. 3. Provide Case Management of Children, relative and Kinship Caregivers, and Families. 4. Evaluate potential Kinship Caregivers being considered	1. Placement documentation for Kinship Placements. 2. Written assessments regarding the evaluation of potential Kinship Caregivers. 3. Risk or safety evaluations regarding potential Kinship Caregivers if needed. 4. Document contacts with Kinship Caregivers in IMPACT. 5. Complete documents required for Kinship

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	for placement including written assessments of potential Kinship Caregivers. 5. Develop and implement a risk or safety evaluation and approval process to be used in determining appropriateness of Kinship Placements. 6. Find local resources to meet the Child's and Caregiver's needs. 7. Maintain Face to Face Contact with the Kinship Caregiver with the majority of the monthly visits occurring in the home. 8. Provide the DFPS Kinship Caregiver Manual to Kinship Caregivers. 9. When a Child is placed with a Kinship Caregiver, the Caseworker must explain the financial resources that may be available to the Kinship Caregiver. 10. Determine eligibility of all available financial resources for Kinship Caregivers. 11. Ensure day care services for Children in CPS conservatorship who live with eligible kinship Families. 12. Promote and assist kinship Caregivers seeking verification as a foster parent or approval to adopt. 13. Assist Kinship Caregivers in meeting the conditions to verify eligibility for Permanency Care Assistance or any other financial payments associated with care of Child. 14. The SSCC case worker	Caregiver financial assistance programs. 6. Kinship Payments paid directly to eligible Kinship Caregivers in IMPACT.

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	assigned to work with kinship families must assist the family in requesting and obtaining both kinship adoption assistance and kinship verification reimbursement when appropriate.	

Section 2.31 Conducting visits with the Child and the Family (See Chart 11)

(A) DFPS will:

1. Monitor and assess of visits are in compliance with federal and state requirements.

(B) SSCC must:

1. Conduct visits Conduct visits with the Child, Siblings, Caregivers, and Family at a minimum of once a month.
2. Document visits with the Child, Caregivers, Siblings, and Family.

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Chart 11: Visits with Children in Substitute Care and Families

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
Provide necessary oversight measures and review processes to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements.	1. Maintain Face to Face Contact with each of the Child's parents monthly, to address case planning and service needs. More frequent contact may be needed, and exceptions may apply, depending on the issues in the case. 2. If a parent is incarcerated, the SSCC must maintain monthly contact with the parent and continue working with the parent towards identified goals in the Family plan of services. 3. Maintain monthly Face to Face Contact with the Children who remain at home after a Sibling has been placed in Substitute Care and the case is in temporary legal status. 4. Provide courtesy supervision for parents and Children residing in Designated Community Area when legal case is in another area. 5. Arrange frequent visitation (at least weekly) Sibling visitation when Siblings are separated. If face-to-face visitation cannot be arranged promote other forms of contact, such as phone calls and texts, video conferences, or FaceTime. 6. Arrange Parent-Child visitation (at least twice per month). 7. During the monthly or more frequent visits, the SSCC must discuss with the Child and parents the progress in addressing the Family Service Plan since the last visit. 8. The SSCC must visit the Child, at a minimum, on a monthly basis. The visits must focus on issues relevant to case planning and service delivery to ensure safety, permanency, and well-being of the Children. 9. The majority of the visits must occur in the Child's residence. Specifically, there is at least one (1) visit each	SSCC must document each contact in IMPACT with details about his or her observations and discussions with the Child, Caregiver, and Family.

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	month at the residence in a majority of the months over the year.	

Section 2.32 Child and Family Service Planning (Stages II-III): Roles, Responsibilities and Documentation Requirements (see Chart 12)

(A) DFPS will:

1. Notify the SSCC of the need for services.
2. Monitor and assess services to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements.
3. May review, approve, or disapprove the SSCC recommendation with respect to the Child's Permanency Goal.

(B) SSCC must:

1. Convene and conduct Service Planning and Permanency Planning meetings;
2. Develop and revise Child and Family plans of service, including a permanency plan and goals for a Child or Young Adult in care.
3. Coordinate and monitor services required by the Child and the Child's Family.
4. Assume all court-related duties regarding the Child as described in Section 2.25, Section 2.26 and Chart 8.

Chart 12: Family Service Planning

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Notify the SSCC of the need for Family services. 2. Provide necessary oversight measures and review processes to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements. 3. May review, approve, or disapprove the SSCC recommendation with respect to the Child's Permanency Goal.	1. Schedule and notify all required participants of Initial and all Subsequent Service Planning Meetings to develop Child and Family Plans of Service in accordance with time frames established by the Texas Family Code. 2. Make all reasonable efforts to ensure Children, Youth, Families, and Caregivers participate in Service Planning. 3. Collaborate to develop visitation plan with parents, Family, and Siblings if placed separately. 4. Arrange, monitor, and provide	1. Complete timely documentation of all Service Plans in IMPACT and changes in service array or delivery. 2. Document all meetings and visits with Family members in IMPACT. 3. Create and maintain individual Client records which includes the following: a. Form 2054. b. DFPS Child and

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	transportation for visitation with relatives and/or Fictive Kin. 5. Arrange, monitor, and provide visitation with parent and/or Family member who is the subject of the Family Plan of Service twice per month. 6. Identify available services to meet the Family's needs through the assessment of the Family's history and individual needs. 7. Identify permanency and concurrent goal. Develop the Family Plan of Service. 8. Ensure all Family members who are subject of the Family plan of service participate in Service Planning. 9. Ensure that the needs of Children not in Substitute Care but residing with the Family or a kinship Caregiver are assessed and addressed in the Family plan of service. 10. Evaluate and report the Family's level of compliance with services offered to DFPS and the court. 11. Evaluate and report on the effectiveness of services being provided to Family. 12. Adjust the service type, frequency and duration of services based on the individualized needs of Family members. 13. Work jointly with the Family and the court to determine when a Child or Youth and their Family are ready for discharge from services and achievement of their Permanency Goal. 14. Ensure that discharge planning	Family Plans of Service. c. Individual treatment or Service Plan with periodic updates documenting progress or lack of progress. d. All reports required by Contract. e. Court reports and orders received. f. Adequate documentation to support services received such as who received the services, who provided the services, when and where they were provided, the duration and the outcome: i. Date and manner of submission of assessments, plans, or reports required by Contract. ii. Case notes, including documentation of complaint investigations, court-related services.

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	including services to prepare a Family for their Child or Youth's permanency is incorporated in the Family's Service Plan. 15. Coordinate and facilitate a family meeting (for Youth aging out refer to Transitional Living Services section of this Contract) when their Child or Youth is ready for discharge to permanency.	

Section 2.33 Sample Array for Family Services

Chart 13 provides examples of services previously delivered to Families served by DFPS. The SSCC will not be limited to providing only the services listed below and inclusion of this table is not meant to imply the availability of funds for each of these services.

Chart 13: Sample Service Array

Service	Description
Psychological/Psychiatric Evaluation/Assessment	Psychosocial or Developmental assessments Psychological or Psychiatric evaluations.
Assessment, Counseling and Therapy (Non-Substance Abuse)	Individual, Group or Family assessment, counseling, and therapy (not including substance abuse counseling).
Substance Abuse Testing & Confirmation	Testing to identify or confirm the existence of a drug in a person's system.
Substance Abuse Assessment, Counseling, and Therapy	Substance Abuse related Individual, Group or Family assessment, counseling, and therapy.
Concrete Services	The purchase of goods or services to increase the safety of the home or better meet the needs of the Child.
Translator and interpreter services	Communication services utilized when a Client's ability to communicate is diminished due to Limited English Proficiency or some other communication disability.

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Service	Description
Parent/Caregiver Training	Individual or group training for parents or Caregivers to improve their parenting skills.
Permanency Planning Meetings	Multi-disciplinary meetings that engage the parent, Child, Family, and other legal parties in case planning. Participants also review progress made toward the goal of providing safety, permanency, and well-being for the Child.
Camping	Youth camps that have the general characteristics of a day camp, resident camp, or travel camp. They are used primarily for recreational, athletic, religious, or educational activities. The property or facility must accommodate five (5) or more Children under eighteen (18) who spend all or part of at least four (4) days there.
Court-Related Services	Court-related services that are deemed legally necessary and appropriate for the well-being, safety, or permanency of the Child.
Court Ordered Supervised Visitation	Visitation services between a Child and his or her parents or other Caregivers that are required, court ordered or the opinion and possible testimony of a trained third party regarding the Parent-Child relationship is needed.

Section 2.34 Family Reunification Services (Stages I-III): Roles, Responsibilities and Documentation Requirements (see Chart 14)

(A) DFPS will:

1. Will provide necessary oversight measures and review processes to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements.

(B) SSCC must:

1. Reunify the Children with the parent(s) of the Children when safe and appropriate.
2. Provide Family reunification support services after a Child receiving services is returned to the Child's Family for a period ordered by the court and/or prior to the dismissal date.

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Chart 14: Family Reunification Services

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Provide necessary oversight measures and review processes to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements.	1. Reunification of Children with parent(s) of the Children when safe and appropriate. 2. Initiate the Reunification process. 3. Develop and conduct an assessment regarding the safety in the home. 4. Provide supervision after the Child is returned to ensure safety and provide services as needed. 5. Conduct Face-to-Face Contact with the Child and Family at a minimum of once a month after Reunification to ensure stability, safety, well-being, and permanency. 6. Update the Family plan of service and ensure that the Family's Service Plan includes plans and a deadline for terminating CPS conservatorship and evaluate the plan every ninety (90) days. 7. Ensure day care services, as needed, to support the success of the Reunification plan for the Child(ren) and Family.	1. Documentation of safety assessment. 2. Documentation of staffing where the decision of Reunification is made. 3. Documentation of the Family plan of service and its updates. 4. Documentation of the contacts with the Child and Family. 5. Documentation of contacts with collaterals and serviced providers.

Section 2.35 SSCC Fiscal Requirements (Stage I-III)

(A) The SSCC must:

1. Develop and maintain comprehensive, accurate written financial operating procedures, subject to review and approval by DFPS;
2. The SSCC must have independent financial audits conducted annually and provide the results to DFPS within thirty (30) days from the receipt of findings provided by the independent auditor. Audits must be conducted by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) licensed by the state regulatory body of the state in which the audit was performed. An audit conducted pursuant to Single Audit Requirements meets the conditions of this subsection; Exhibit I: Statement of Work;
3. Provide all financial information requested by DFPS in an appropriate format within three (3) business days of the request;
4. Maintain sufficient cash management policies and procedures to produce cash flow reports that meet the requirements of DFPS;
5. Coordinate and pay for services, required in individual Service Plans for Children and Families referred to the SSCC by DFPS;

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6. Ensure that financial and utilization management systems are in place to guarantee accountability for dollars spent and the capacity to manage financial risk;
7. Assume responsibility for any monitoring/audit exception or other payment irregularity regarding services provided under the Contract;
8. Demonstrate the ability to manage funding to provide services within available resources; and
9. The SSCC must use an accrual accounting system that reflects the application of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) approved by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA).

(B) Submit a detailed Accounting Policy Manual to DFPS during readiness that includes the following:

1. A detailed description of an accounting system capable of supporting the operation and management of a provider network, payroll, and subcontractor payments;
2. Fiscal policies and procedures that address payment, invoices, delinquencies, reconciliation, audits, and other standard accounting procedures;
3. A detailed description of an information system that supports the management and oversight of services and an information system that collects, integrates, and reports financial and outcome data; and
4. The SSCC must update the Accounting Policy Manual at least sixty (60) days before transition to Stages II and III. After Stage III, the SSCC will update the SSCC Accounting Policy Manual at least thirty (30) days before each new state fiscal year unless such a date falls within 120 days of Stage III implementation, in which case the SSCC will update the SSCC Accounting Policy Manual thirty (30) days before the next state fiscal year. DFPS must approve of each update to the SSCC Accounting Policy Manual.

Section 2.36 Required Reports

The SSCC must ensure compliance with report requirements outlined in the SSCC Contract and HHSC Residential Child-Care Minimum Standards. The SSCC must accurately complete cost reports, time studies, Contract Monitoring surveys, Performance Measurement reports, court reports and any other reports required and requested by DFPS within time frames specified by DFPS. The SSCC must submit annual cost reports as required by [Title 1 TAC Rule § 355.102](#). Additionally, the SSCC must submit in the format and reporting schedule specified by DFPS as noted in contract **Exhibit G. SSCC Required Reports.**

Section 2.37 Performance Measures and Associated Remedies

DFPS will monitor the performance of the Contract via quarterly performance review. The SSCC must provide all services and deliverables under the Contract at an acceptable quality level and in a manner consistent with acceptable industry standard, custom, and practice. Contractor performance evaluation is based on assessment of the performance measures outlined in this section, compliance with the terms and conditions of the Contract, and compliance with HHSC Minimum Standards, as indicated by DFPS records and Contract Monitoring performed by DFPS staff. Stage II performance measures will include measures that address other areas such as Case Management and Kinship Care and reflected in the federal [Child and Family Services Review \(CFSR\)](#).

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Additional performance measures may be included and used to make decisions to renew or terminate the Contract. See the **Exhibit H, Performance Measure** for more information.

- (A) **Goal of the Contract:** The goal of this Contract is to ensure the provision of the full continuum of services for all referred Children and their Families and/or any other individual or entity directly involved in supporting the achievement of safety, permanency, and well-being of the Child by developing a Community-Based service delivery model that fully engages communities within the Designated Community Area and ensures effective and efficient service delivery, continuity of care, and improved outcomes for Children and their Families.
- (B) **Basis of Performance Measures:** Performance measures reflect the Quality Indicators adopted by the Public Private Partnership, the outcomes identified in the Community-Based Care logic model, and the Administration for Children and Families Child and Family Service Review outcomes. Measures for renewals are subject to change on an annual basis. If, at any time during the term of the Contract, changes to a measure are necessary due to changes in federal or state laws, rules, regulations, or code, the performance of the SSCC will be measured under the new requirements. DFPS may compute new baselines, and revise the indicators, targets, data sources, or methodologies for the measures during the Contract period.
- (C) **Data Sources:** DFPS will use data collected through the Information Management Protecting Adults and Children in Texas (IMPACT) data system to develop the indicators and calculate the methodologies. DFPS may also work with externally contracted entities to design and produce performance measures using data available through the IMPACT data system.
- (D) **Performance Period:** Contractor performance for all outcomes is assessed annually and tracked quarterly to support the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process, using the following quarters, wholly or partially, depending on the Contract start and end dates: September 1 through November 30, December 1 through February, March 1 through May 31, and June 1 through August 31 unless otherwise noted. Performance is reported for each fiscal year or partial fiscal year, depending on the Contract start and end dates.
- (E) **Performance Tracking:** Performance measure data may be used by DFPS to make decisions about Contract status, to adjust the nature and intensity of DFPS' Contract monitoring and quality assurance activities, and to keep stakeholders informed about the success of the performance based contracting effort. DFPS will track performance throughout the Contract period. Any and all analyses can be used by DFPS to determine subsequent performance targets to be mutually agreed upon by DFPS and the SSCC, CBC model changes or the need for Contract changes. The performance measures are outlined in **Exhibit H, Performance Measures**. It is understood that the individual needs of a Child are paramount; not all indicators are appropriate for every Child.
- (F) **Baselines:** The performance of the Contractor will be compared to the historical performance of the Legacy System in the Designated Community Area to determine if their strategies are effective in meeting or exceeding historical baselines. Initial baseline performance will reflect an established performance period of the Legacy System in the Designated Community Area prior to implementation of the relevant stage. The safety measure is the exception with a standard target of 100%. For measures without historical data, initial baseline performance will be gathered during the initial stages. In addition to the performance measures outlined in this section, in Stages I-II, DFPS will monitor the number of days in paid foster care for Children and Youth served by the SSCC against an established baseline. The baseline will be a weighted average of care days (stratified by age at admissions) calculated from an

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established performance period prior to Stage I. DFPS will assess the need to recalculate baselines annually. In regard to Stage III, baselines refer to the expected care day utilization during the five-year performance window. Baselines are constructed using the weighted average care day utilization in the three years before the initial five-year performance window. There are separate baselines for each of the covered population's strata.

(G) **Thresholds:** Thresholds are data points intended to inform DFPS and the SSCC that performance of the SSCC is trending downward for a particular performance measure. DFPS will apply threshold criteria to each performance measure and display the results on the quarterly performance measure dashboard. Threshold criteria include:

1. performance results within the bottom 20th percentile of the state;
2. performance results below historical performance for the region; and/or
3. performance results below any recent statewide change from baseline (i.e., the statewide average).

DFPS may rely on the following to monitor the SSCC's performance measures: (1) one threshold criterion breached means an early indicator of a potential negative SSCC performance measure trend; (2) two threshold criteria breached means that the SSCC must aggressively evaluate the identified negative performance measure and put steps into place to address the negative trend(s); and (3) three threshold criteria breached means that DFPS will intervene as set forth in **Exhibit B, DFPS SSCC UNIFORM TERMS AND CONDITIONS**; Section 10 - Intervention, Contingencies, Termination and Transition.

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ARTICLE III: UTILIZATION AND COMPENSATION

Funding is contingent upon legislative appropriation and availability. If adequate funds are not allocated to this Contract, either party may immediately terminate this Contract or the SSCC's activities and performance under this Contract will be correspondingly reduced as mutually agreed upon by DFPS and the SSCC. Utilization and payment methodologies are outlined in Exhibits C-1 through C-3, Funding Matrices for each Stage (including Start-Up) and type of service. See Exhibits C-1 through C-3, Funding Matrices for more information.

Section 3.01 One Time Startup Funds (Stages I and II)

All Start-Up funding is based on legislative appropriations. DFPS will provide the SSCC with a one-time Start-Up time payment for Stage I and Stage II to cover costs associated with Readiness activities, workforce development, building a provider network, and other necessary organizational and financial infrastructure to meet the obligations of this Contract. Based on the stage of implementation, DFPS will provide Readiness requirements to the SSCC that the SSCC must accomplish. The parties must mutually agree upon a target Operational Start Date for the applicable stage, based on readiness progression and workforce needs, prior to the SSCC accepting its first referral applicable to such stage. If the SSCC fails to comply with readiness requirements or does not meet the anticipated operational start date, DFPS reserves the right to recoup Start-Up Funds.

Section 3.02 Foster Care Rates

DFPS develops the reimbursement methodology for determining payment rates for DFPS contracted 24-hour Residential Child Care. Foster care rates include funding for both provider administrative and direct service costs associated with the provision of foster care.

- (A) **Community-Based Care Foster Care:** Community-Based Care foster care reimbursement has three components for each Designated Community Area:
1. A Blended Foster Care Rate;
 2. An Exceptional Foster Care Rate; and
 3. Beginning in Stage III, financial incentives and remedies will apply based on length of stay in Substitute Care.
- (B) **Blended Foster Care Rates for the Designated Community Area:** The methodology to set the Blended Foster Care Rate utilizes statewide legacy projections by Service Level /Placement/Strata as well as SSCC Designated Community Area's placement projections by Strata. An adjustment is made during the rate setting process to address the exclusion of legacy DFPS Homes for the SSCC. Estimates for legacy DFPS placements are calculated using CPA rates when determining the Blended Foster Care Rate for the SSCC.
1. **Strata:** There are four (4) Strata categories. Each Strata is based on age at time of initial entry into State Conservatorship and the length of time from the initial entry date into conservatorship and the month of service being reported. Each Strata is based on the following:
 - a. Strata A: Age at time of entry < one (1);

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- b. Strata B: Age at time of entry one (1) – thirteen (13); time in care < two (2) years;
- c. Strata C: Age at time of entry one (1) – thirteen (13); time in care >= two (2) years; and
- d. Strata D: Age at time of entry fourteen (14) – seventeen (17).

For more information on the proposed Blended Foster Care Rate for this Designated Community Area, please visit the following: [Proposed Payment Rates for the 24-Hour Residential Child Care Program](#).

All final adopted Blended Foster Care Rates for this Designated Community Area will be posted on the Internet which can be accessed at [24 Hour Residential Child Care & Supervised Independent Living Program \(24 RCC/SIL\)](#).

- 2. **Minimum Pass-Through Requirement:** The SSCC must remit a minimum dollar amount of the daily Foster Care rate to foster parents to pay for Child maintenance costs of Children and Youth placed pursuant to this contract. The SSCC must document the payment schedule for services provided through the SSCC demonstrating the provision of required pass through for foster families. The required minimum pass-through dollar amount to a foster parent in all of the Designated Community Areas is \$27.07 per day. If the appropriated Foster Care rates change as a result of the Texas Legislative Session, the amount of the required minimum pass through required may be adjusted by DFPS.
- 3. **Social Security Payments:** Blended Foster Care Rate payments will be reduced by DFPS by the amount of Social Security payments and other income received from the state and federal government that are transferred to the SSCC by DFPS for specific Children and Youth.
- 4. **Financial Risk:** DFPS will pay the established Blended Foster Care Rate Child for each calendar day of placement in paid foster care provided under the SSCC's Contract, mitigating risk associated with increased entries into paid Foster Care. Through the use of a single Blended Foster Care Rate, the SSCC will have flexibility to offer individualized services to Children and Youth and will continue to be reimbursed at the same rate as Children and Youth move down or up the continuum of care and require less intense or more intense services and/or a reduction or increase in the frequency of services.
- 5. During Stage I, the SSCC must notify the DFPS CPS Caseworker and the Caseworker's chain of command within twenty-four (24) hours of the consent for placement by a minor in the SSCC's Transitional Living Program in accordance with the Texas Family Code §32.203.

- (C) **Exceptional Foster Care Rate:** There may be a certain number of Children and Youth in the Designated Community Area with exceptional needs that cannot be met appropriately through the use of the Blended Foster Care Rate. DFPS will establish a rate for each fiscal year. The SSCC cannot charge DFPS for both the blended rate and the exceptional care rate for the same Child on the same day or use the exceptional care rate for SIL Youth under any circumstances. Each SSCC will be allocated a percentage of the projected number of days of paid foster care. These days do not roll-over between fiscal years and will be adjusted

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annually. The approved exceptional care rate will be provided by DFPS at the start of each fiscal year.

1. DFPS will authorize use of exceptional care days upon the submission and approval of the SSCC's Exceptional Care Utilization Management (ECUM) process. The ECUM process must include at a minimum the following information:
 - a. The process used for assessing and determining a Child has exceptional care needs;
 - b. The responsible staff within the SSCC that reviews and authorizes the Child as having exceptional care needs;
 - c. The method and process the SSCC uses to determine the payment rate to their subcontractors, including but not limited to who within their organization authorizes that rate;
 - d. The process for determining the need for extension and re-authorization of exceptional care days; and
 - e. The process used for tracking the use of exceptional care days.
2. When DFPS approves the SSCC's ECUM process, the annual number of exceptional care days allotted to the SSCC will be added to **Exhibits C-1 through C-3, Funding Matrices** of the Contract through a unilateral amendment.
3. The DFPS Director of Placement (or designee) must approve the utilization of exceptional care days in excess of the SSCC's annual allotment of exceptional care days. In order to use exceptional days of care in excess of its annual allotment of days, the SSCC must submit sufficient documentation for each Child that specifies the circumstances surrounding the request and the justification for the use of exceptional care days for that Child to the DFPS Director of Placement (or designee) for approval. Any exceptional care days that go beyond the SSCC's allotted number of days and for which there was no prior DFPS approval, will be at the expense of the SSCC.
4. Prior DFPS approval for the use of exceptional care days is required in the following circumstances:
 - a. The daily amount for exceptional care days is double or more than DFPS's exceptional care rate at the time; and
 - b. Prior DFPS approval of the use of exceptional care days may also be required should the SSCC's use of exceptional care days indicate system non-compliance with the approved SSCC ECUM process as determined by DFPS.
5. DFPS will conduct quality assurance of exceptional care cases by reviewing a sample of cases against the SSCCs approved ECUM policy and related procedures to ensure compliance with the approved policy.
6. Equal Share of Loss for Exceptional Foster Care: On a quarterly basis with all data organized by month and fiscal year, the SSCC must provide DFPS with the number of Children, days of care, and amounts the provider paid for Children placed using the Exceptional Foster Care Rate. On an annual basis, six (6) months following the end of the fiscal year, DFPS will use exceptional care paid days from IMPACT to

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calculate the difference between the amounts the SSCC paid for Children placed using the Exceptional Foster Care Rate and either pay fifty (50) percent of the loss or collect fifty (50) percent of the over payment from the SSCC. There is continued work on the cost share model, which is subject to change.

(D) **Blended Foster Care Rate Reconciliation:** Reconciliation of the Blended Foster Care Rate is intended to assure that the SSCC is being reimbursed based on its actual case mix of Children. After the SSCC has been providing services under Stage I for at least twelve months, reconciliation will be mandatory beginning the first full state fiscal year quarter. The SSCC must provide a monthly report to DFPS of all days of care – See **Exhibit G, SSCC Required Reports**, for detailed information. The reconciliation process will occur on an annual basis, six (6) months following the end of the state fiscal year, DFPS will take the SSCC's aggregate service level days of care and translate it into the costs which DFPS would have incurred in the legacy system and compare that amount to the total amount paid through the Blended Foster Care Rate as reflected in IMPACT. To mediate any cash flow issues that may arise and due to address the difference in the forecasted and actual case mix; DFPS will provide an advance payment of 75 percent of the SSCC's forecasted annual shortfall in case mix. Within 30 days of the close of the first quarter of the state fiscal year the SSCC must submit the utilization template in a format established by DFPS that will show actual utilization by DFPS Service Levels for the first quarter of each state fiscal year 2024 and forecast utilization of each subsequent quarter. DFPS will issue a payment to the SSCC representing 75 percent of any SSCC forecasted shortfall in accordance with the Texas Prompt Payment Act.

1. The annual reconciliation described above will take into account any advance payment made by DFPS due to forecasted shortfall. Based on that comparison, DFPS will compensate the SSCC for the difference or collect overpayment from the SSCC; and
2. During Readiness, the SSCC must include in the utilization management plan. submitted to and approved by DFPS, a crosswalk of SSCC service levels to the corresponding DFPS legacy service levels. If the SSCC modifies its service levels, the SSCC must submit in writing any modification to the corresponding DFPS service levels to DFPS for written approval.

(E) **Foster Care Case Rate:** In Stage III, DFPS will begin to evaluate the time it takes for a Child or Youth in paid Foster Care settings to return home, exit to a relative/Kinship Caregiver or exit to an Adoptive Placements. Financial incentives and remedies will be assessed based on the SSCC's ability to safely exit Children and Youth from paid Foster Care settings in a timely manner.

1. For each SSCC, DFPS will calculate a baseline weighted average number of paid foster care days by taking the sum of the strata-specific number of care days anticipated divided by the total number of Children across all strata in the Designated Community Area. The anticipated (baseline) care days are calculated by applying historic averages for each age strata to the current number of entries in each age strata. The strata are based on the age of the Child upon entry. The baseline will

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- be derived from the average days in paid Foster Care for Children in the Designated Community Area prior to Stage II implementation;
2. If Children and Youth served by the SSCC exit Foster Care to a permanent or anticipated to be permanent setting (return home, relative/kinship or adoption placement) in less time and at a higher rate, on average, than predicted by the SSCC baseline, then the SSCC will receive an incentive payment equal to the general revenue amount that DFPS would have spent had Children and Youth served by the SSCC remained in paid Foster Care for the length of time predicted by the baseline;
 3. The SSCC will be required to expend all funds obtained through the incentive process in a manner that improves the quality of care delivered on behalf of DFPS Children, Youth, and Families in the Designated Community Area; and
 4. If the actual number of days in paid Foster Care for Children and Youth served by the SSCC is higher than the established baseline for the Designated Community Area, the SSCC will be assessed a financial remedy and pay DFPS an amount equal to the general revenue amount that DFPS spent for the Foster Care days in excess for failure to achieve the established outcome target. Compliance with expectations for paid care days and calculation of financial incentives and remedies will be determined on an annual basis after the performance period.
 5. A Per Diem Rate (PDR) will be used to assign a dollar value to paid foster care days in the calculation of incentives and financial remedies. The PDR is an aggregate rate that incorporates forecasted Blended Foster Care Rate and Exceptional Foster Care Rate utilization.
 6. The payment of incentives and the assessment of financial remedies is subject to a risk-sharing methodology. For actual paid foster care days below the Designated Community Area baseline that is attributable to a change in the length of time Children stay in paid foster care, DFPS will make an incentive payment to the SSCC in an amount equal to the general revenue portion of the unused paid foster care days multiplied by the PDR. The entire incentive amount will be retained by the SSCC. This calculation is referred to as the Stage III incentive payment. More detail is provided in the Stage III Operational Manual.
 7. For actual paid foster care days above the Designated Community Area baseline no financial remedies will be assessed until paid foster care days exceed 110% of the Designated Community Area baseline. The calculation to assess financial remedies consists of two steps.
 8. First, the general revenue portion of the excess paid foster care days (defined as over 110% of the Designated Community Area baseline) is multiplied by the PDR. Second, the amount from step one is reduced by 50%. This calculation shall be referred to as the Stage III financial remedy payment.
 9. The payment of incentives or the assessment of financial remedies will be determined after validation of the SSCC actual and baseline paid foster care days. The validation will occur six (6) months after the close of the state fiscal year.
 10. DFPS reserves the right to re-evaluate and re-calculate the Stage III incentive payment, the Stage III financial remedy payment, and/or the risk sharing methodology.

(F) Texas Child Centered Care (T3C) Transition Funding: T3C will change the methodology that goes into calculating the cost of foster care and collectively will establish a new foster care system in Texas. Defining, purchasing, and reimbursing providers based on individual

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service packages (as opposed to using a child leveling system), T3C is a complete change in child welfare funding for Texas and will require time and attention to effectively prepare the residential provider community. So long as funding is available, DFPS will provide one-time transition grant funding as appropriated by the 88th Legislature to the SSCCs for organizational readiness to develop, contract with, and manage a network of residential providers in a T3C environment and to be prepared to monitor and compensate providers under the T3C system. These transition grant funds are set forth in the **Exhibits C-1 through C-3 Funding Matrices**.

1. As part of T3C readiness, the SSCC must develop:
 - a. Readiness instruments to be used to bring new residential providers into the network, and/or transition existing residential providers to the new system.
 - b. Policies and procedures consistent with selected primary models and targeted service package(s) the residential provider will be delivering.
 - c. New targeted and upfront training for intake, case managers, directors, foster parents (if applicable), direct delivery staff (if applicable), on new primary models/service packages and CANS 3.0 assessment tool and process.
 - d. Information Technology systems to support operating under the new T3C service array, including establishing a billing and payment method.
 - e. Data collection system to track and report changes.
 - f. System to complete cost collection to populate a more robust cost report.

(G) T3C Transition Funding Acknowledgement: Each SSCC acknowledges that ACH Child and Family Services (ACH) is the SSCC charged with managing and distributing state fiscal year 2024 T3C provider grant funds as appropriated by the 88th Legislature.

Section 3.03 Community-Based Care Network Support (Stages I-III)

DFPS will pay the SSCC monthly for costs incurred for capacity/network development and oversight, community engagement and IT systems requirements efficiencies using an annual per Child FTE rate. The rate can be found in **Exhibits C-1 through C-3, Funding Matrices**. The SSCC will be paid twelve (12) monthly installments by the 30th day of end of the month for the previous month. On an annual basis, six (6) months following the end of the fiscal year, DFPS will perform a true-up based on actual Child FTEs as reflected in IMPACT for the Designated Community Area. If the actual Child FTEs are above the forecasted number for the year, DFPS will pay for the additional Child FTEs. If the actual Child FTEs are below the forecasted number for the year the SSCC will remit the overage per Child FTEs to DFPS.

Section 3.04 Resource Transfer

As DFPS and the SSCC move through the Stages of Implementation, some of the functions traditionally performed by DFPS will shift to the SSCC. Transfer of resources will be commensurate with the transfer of functions from DFPS to the SSCC according to the stage of implementation and Children served under the SSCC continuum of care. All resource transfers based upon a proportional reduction of employees and the associated resources as reflected in the General Appropriations Act and subject to Legislative appropriations. In the future this process may be informed by the SSCC cost report.

The resource transfers for each stage will be paid to the SSCC at the end of each month for the previous month via invoicing prepared by DFPS staff. DFPS retains the resources associated with the functions

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necessary to operate the Designated Community Area Legacy System. The following methodologies are applied to the DFPS appropriation to determine the amount of each resource transfer:

(A) Resource Transfer (Stage I):

1. Placement staff resources will be determined using the number of state staff performing the functions multiplied by the percent of Children in care for SSCC Designated Community Area;
2. Conservatorship resources will be determined using the percent of time conservatorship staff spend performing placement and some Case Management functions in Stage I multiplied by the percent of Children in care for SSCC Designated Community Area multiplied by the Designated Community Area's percent of Children in paid Foster Care; and
3. Contract Management resources will be determined by the number of state staff performing the functions for residential contract management multiplied by the percent of Children in care for SSCC Designated Community Area multiplied by the Designated Community Area's percent of Children in paid Foster Care. For regional contract management resources, the percent of time CVS staff spend on performing placement functions is applied to the above methodology.

(B) Resource Transfer (Stage II-III):

1. Case Management resources will be determined using the DFPS appropriated Caseworkers multiplied by the percent of Children in care for the SSCC Designated Community Area plus the associated direct delivery support staff resources;
2. Contract Management resources will be determined using the number of state staff performing regional contract management functions multiplied by the percent of Children in care for SSCC Designated Community Area; and
3. Resource transfers for placement and conservatorship become part of Case Management resource transfer in Stage II.
 - a. The SSCC will return any unspent funds related to the Case Management resource transfer to DFPS.
 - b. DFPS and the SSCC will work together to develop an appropriate cost reporting process for Stage II. The SSCC will be required to return any unspent funds related to the Case Management resource transfer, if provided to DFPS.

Section 3.05 Quality and Utilization Management Contract Funds

As DFPS and the SSCC move through the stages of Implementation, some of the quality and utilization management functions performed by DFPS (via a third-party contract) will transfer to the SSCC. As a result, DFPS will provide funding commensurate with the transfer of functions from DFPS to the SSCC. The Quality and Utilization Management funding will be paid to the SSCC at the end of each month for the previous month via invoicing prepared by DFPS staff. The Quality and Utilization Management will be determined using the percent of Children in care for SSCC Designated Community Area multiplied by the statewide quality and utilization contract amount.

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Note: This funding does not include the utilization management functions performed by DFPS' third-party provider for Adoption Assistance and Permanency Care Assistance eligibility.

Section 3.06 Supervised Independent Living (SIL) Rates (Stage I-III)

The SSCC must offer Supervised Independent Living placements as a part of the continuum of paid Foster Care services. This includes Young Adults who request a SIL placement within the Designated Community Area but are not from the Designated Community Area.

- (A) DFPS will reimburse the SSCC a separate SIL rate for Young Adults residing in a SIL placement.
- (B) Young Adults residing in a SIL placement are not included in the Blended Foster Care Rate or in the methodology used to determine incentives around length of stay in paid Foster Care in Stage III.
- (C) In instances where DFPS has established an Interagency Agreement (IAC) with a State of Texas Public University, the SSCC must use the same agreement, policies, and processes for its SIL program with the Public University. This Section does not prohibit an SSCC and Public University from modifying any agreement between both parties with the prior approval of DFPS.
- (D) During Stage I, the SSCC must notify the DFPS CPS Caseworker and the Caseworker's chain of command within twenty-four (24) hours of the consent for placement by a minor in the SSCC's Transitional Living Program in accordance with the Texas Family Code §32.203.
- (E) Enhanced Case Management (ECM) services may be provided by some SIL providers. These are additional services available to ECM-eligible Young Adults who require more assistance in their SIL placement to successfully adjust to and maintain their SIL placement.
- (F) Young Adults requiring Enhanced Case Management (ECM) services may have characteristics that include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Ability to live independent of twenty-four (24) hour supervision while in the Supervised Independent Living program;
 - 2. Basic skills in self-care and the ability to follow a daily routine.
 - 3. Frequent, but non-violent, antisocial acts;
 - 4. Frequent or unpredictable physical aggression;
 - 5. Depressive behaviors including being markedly withdrawn and self-isolating;
 - 6. Major self-injurious actions, including attempting suicide in the last twelve (12) months;
 - 7. Current abuse of alcohol, drugs, or other conscious-altering substances, that results in severe impairment due to the substance abuse and there is a primary diagnosis of substance abuse or dependency;
 - 8. Intellectual or developmental disability.
- (G) Young Adults admitted under ECM will have additional daily funding for coverage of the enhanced Case Management. These funds will be combined with and paid through the same IMPACT invoicing process as other SIL placements. The Supervised Independent Living (SIL) Payment Rates may be accessed at: [Supervised Independent Living \(SIL\) Payment Rates](#).

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Once a Young Adult has been placed into the SSCC SIL program with ECM services, DFPS State Office will be notified of the placement through the DFPS Supervised Independent Living SIL@dfps.texas.gov.

Section 3.07 Extended Foster Care (excluding SIL placements) (Stages I-III)

DFPS will reimburse the SSCC the Blended Foster Care Rate for Young Adults who remain in paid Foster Care through the Voluntary Extended Foster Care Agreement (VEFCA) excluding SIL placements.

Section 3.08 Day Care (Stages I-III)

The SSCC will coordinate day care services (Foster Care and Kinship Care) for Children and Families who meet the appropriate DFPS eligibility criteria and subject to agency appropriation. The SSCC may only use the eligible Texas Workforce Commission day care providers for day care services. The SSCC will coordinate with DFPS so that DFPS may initiate day care process and payment for eligible day care services to the Texas Workforce Commission on behalf of the SSCC. Day Care will be paid directly to TWC by DFPS on behalf of the SSCC. Rates are established by TWC.

Section 3.09 Chafee Funds

An annual federal award of Chafee funding is provided to DFPS. The SSCC will be provided the appropriate allocated share according to the stage of implementation. As the statewide DFPS budget is adjusted, the SSCC allocation will be adjusted (increase or decrease). These funds are provided through the use of federal John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) federal funds, referred to as Chafee funds. To learn more about these funds, please visit: [Chafee Foster Care Independence Program \(CFCIP\)](#).

(A) Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) – Life Skills Training (Stages I-III)

PAL life skills training is used for the purpose of preparing Youth in Substitute Care to live independently when he or she becomes an adult.

1. DFPS will allocate an estimated amount to the SSCC each fiscal year to be used in the delivery of PAL Life Skills services.
2. DFPS will reimburse PAL Life Skills assessment and training services via IMPACT invoicing based on actual Youth served not to exceed annual allocation.

(B) Education and Training Voucher (Stage II-III)

Education and Training Voucher (ETV). ETV funds are sent directly to the Youth or organization for which the funds are designated. Designated SSCC staff must inform and assist the student in applying to the ETV program. The SSCC must assist the Youth in the completion of the required forms and Youth verification process for the ETV program with DFPS.

For more information on PAL after care and ETV use the following links:

1. [Preparation for Adult Living \(PAL\) Program - Texas Foster Youth Justice Project](#)
2. DFPS CPS Handbook, [10300 Post-Secondary Education Programs](#)

Section 3.10 Adoption (Stages I-III)

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Purchased Adoption Services (Stages I-III). DFPS will reimburse the SSCC for eligible services using the same rates DFPS pays per purchased adoption service via a monthly invoice in IMPACT.

Section 3.11 CANS

The SSCC must ensure Children who require therapeutic services receive a CANS every ninety (90) days. Subject to appropriation, the SSCC will receive a funding allocation to cover the costs of the ninety (90) day CANS for eligible Children. The CANS funding will be paid to the SSCC each month for the previous month via invoicing prepared by DFPS staff.

Section 3.12 Kinship Caregivers Grant/CPS Plan (Stage II)

Kinship care is a viable alternative to Foster Care for many Children in Texas. Kinship Caregivers can experience significant hardships when they take on the responsibility of caring for their kin. Texas has long recognized the many benefits of Kinship Care and it is the preferred placement option for Children in DFPS conservatorship, however, the proper supports and services must be in place for the Families.

As described in section 427(a)(1) of the Social Security Act, the KIN NAV Grant allows Title-IV E agencies to assist kinship Caregivers in accessing services to meet the needs of the Children they are raising, as well as their own needs. In addition, the use of these funds to provide concrete supports and other necessary support services can improve the overall well-being of Children who are in the care of kinship Caregivers. A portion of the KIN NAV Grant will be allocated to the SSCCs used that are in Stage 2 and will be noted on **Exhibit C-1** through **C-3, Funding Matrices** to provide the following:

- (A) **Licensing/Adoption Expenditures Support:** Financial assistance for licensing standard items to complete Kinship Caregivers Licensures/Adoption Verification. Examples of items include but are not limited to; FBI fingerprints, fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, fire inspections, home inspections, safety items for the home to meet licensing/adoption standards. This support would not be limited to a one time use and can be accessed more than once, if the support is not used for the same items (ex. Purchased smoke alarms, then later used again to purchase FBI fingerprints).
- (B) **Expansion on Concrete Services:** Increase the amount of annual assistance for concrete services. These two (2) supports will allow for permanency to be achieved sooner and support more families going through the PMC with PCA process, with the assistance of licensing expenditures. Having this resource available to them, to access more than annually, supports kinship Families that are going through the licensing/adoption process to achieve permanency for the Children in their homes.

Section 3.13 Verification Reimbursement and Kinship Placement Assistance SSCC Stage II

- (A) **Kinship Placement Assistance.** The SSCC will provide a one-time benefit, allowable up to \$1,000, paid to the Kinship Placement, regardless of the number of Children placed in the home; every kinship Caregiver may be eligible for the funding; the SSCC case worker must assist the family in requesting and obtaining this financial resource; there is no income level base requirement for this assistance; and not all Kinship Placements will require this benefit and not all expenditures will be \$1,000.

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- (B) **Kinship Verification Reimbursement.** The SSCC may reimburse up to \$750 paid to a kinship Caregiver after completion of foster home verification; intended to offset costs associated with the verification process and is not intended to offset any costs incurred by the CPA working to verify the family; the SSCC case worker assigned to work with kinship families must assist the family in requesting and obtaining this financial resource; this is a reimbursement for costs already paid – not paid ahead; there is no income level base requirement for this reimbursement; and not all Kinship Placements will require this benefit and not all expenditures will be \$750.

Section 3.14 Early Payments Stage II

The SSCC will receive a portion of the resource transfer starting three months prior to “Go Live” for Stage II. See the timeline below:

Three months until Go Live	25% of a monthly payment
Two months until live Go Live	25% of a monthly payment
One month until live Go live	50% of a monthly payment

Section 3.15 Coordination and Delivery and Family Services (Stages II-III)

The SSCC must identify its own unmet service needs and either deliver the services directly, identify available community resources, or purchase the needed services. Processes and parameters established in this subsection are only applicable to those services offered by the SSCC through the use of the DFPS Purchased Client Services (PCS) allocation of funds and do not apply to any services offered by the SSCC through the use of community resources or additional funding methods. DFPS will determine the projected amount of Purchased Client Services funds available to the SSCC on an annual basis starting with Stage II.

It is expected that the SSCC will manage within the funding allocation, yet maximize all available resources, including community resources and other funding methods so that Families referred to the SSCC can receive appropriate and effective services.

(A) **DFPS will, within available appropriation:**

1. Provide an allocation to the SSCC for Purchased Client Services in the Designated Community Area based upon appropriations.
2. Establish IMPACT service codes to be used for billing purposes.
3. Reimburse the SSCC via IMPACT invoicing monthly.

(B) **The SSCC must:**

1. Identify the types of Purchased Client Services needed to meet the specific needs of Clients in the Designated Community Area.
2. Provide sufficient information on the modality or service description, eligible population, and payment methodology prior to implementing a service.
3. Access the Purchased Client Services funding by submitting an electronic invoice after the service is provided.
4. Ensure the service coordination and delivery of services in accordance with the agreed upon Service Plan and within negotiated allocation of Purchased Client

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Services funding to the Families of Children, Youth and Young Adults who enter Substitute Care and referred by DFPS to the SSCC.

5. Adhere to legislative mandates and SSCC Required Reports associated with the funding streams.

(C) **Fee Schedule for Purchased Client Services Funding (Stages II-III):**

DFPS service payment and billing processes are dependent on the link between an established fee and identified service. DFPS must provide notices to the SSCC within two (2) business days of any change in an individual or Family's eligibility. DFPS will pay the SSCC for Purchased Client Services provided up until the time DFPS notifies the SSCC of any changes, even if an individual or Family's eligibility ended prior to notification. The SSCC will provide DFPS payment methodologies and applicable fee schedules for services offered through the use of the Purchased Client Services funding allocations. Fees charged to DFPS will be reasonable and comparable to those for similar services within the Designated Community Area. Invoices will be processed by DFPS in amounts not to exceed the rates on the fee schedule.

To ensure federal financial participation, the SSCC must ensure that services offered as a part of the Purchased Client Services allocation meet the criteria outlined in the following:

1. [Child Welfare Services, Title IV-B, Subpart 1 of the Social Security Act](#)
2. [Promoting Safe and Stable Families, Title IV-B, Subpart 2 of the Social Security Act](#)
3. [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF\)](#)
4. [Title IV-E](#)

Section 3.16 Invoice Payment Processes (Stages I-III)

(A) **Foster Care Rates:**

1. **DFPS will:**

- a. Approve placement information in the IMPACT electronic system (Stage I only).
- b. Generate invoices at the beginning of each month for prior month of service and will process payment to the SSCC for Foster Care services through the IMPACT system. Invoices will be reconciled with the SSCC to assure accuracy.
- c. Implement an end of month placement discrepancy and reconciliation process with the SSCC to ensure accurate payment data is in IMPACT.
- d. Submit monthly Itemized Provider Statement to the SSCC, after reconciling with the SSCC to assure accuracy.

2. **The SSCC must:**

- a. Participate in the end of month provider statement reconciliation process with DFPS to ensure accurate payment data is in IMPACT.
- b. Contact appropriate DFPS staff to inquire about errors in payment and/or the Itemized Provider Statement.

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- c. In Stage II, the SSCC will enter, review, and approve all Child placements with the SSCC into IMPACT. The payment process will remain the same.

(B) Purchased Client Services

The SSCC will select and bill for services delivered in accordance with Child/Youth (Stage I) and Family (Stage II) Service Plans. Chart 15 outlines the anticipated invoice process and documentation requirements for payment of services for Children and Youth rendered through the use of Purchased Client Services funding. Chart 16 outlines the anticipated invoice process and documentation requirements for payment of services for families rendered through the use of Purchased Client Services funding. Procedures may be modified or further specified in the designated community specific operations manual.

Chart 15: Invoice Process for Purchased Client Services for Children and Youth

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Generate Form 2054 when required, to initiate the invoice process. 2. Enter Form 2054 into IMPACT to generate pre-bill based on services, service delivery time range, units of services 3. Enter purchase of service invoice information. submitted by the SSCC into IMPACT if Form. 2054 is not used (Stage I). 4. Prepare Form 4116X, State of Texas Purchase Voucher (only submitted when situations warrant the need for a manual payment process).	1. Generate and forward an invoice with sufficient information to initiate the payment process to include but not limited to the client name/client number, service type, number of units delivered and effective dates for CPS personnel to enter into IMPACT (Stage I). 2. Obtain explanation of benefits from client when claiming for deductibles or services denied by the insurance carrier. 3. Maintain documentation of fees charged and paid by the client when utilizing a sliding scale. 4. Ensure claims submitted by subcontractors are accurate and complete. 5. Submit required invoice documentation to DFPS designated Contract office by the 15th of the month following the month of services.	1. Submit invoice billing statement which includes: a. Documentation to support any claim as a result of services or co-payment and deductibles not covered by the client's insurance. b. Documentation to indicate clients who have been imposed a sliding scale fee and the associated service and fee charged to the Contract and the client's share. c. Medicaid denials d. Other Supporting documentation which may be request by DFPS.

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements

***During Stage II, the SSCC will replace the DFPS role in the invoicing process for Purchased Client Services for Children and Youth.**

Chart 16: Invoice Process for Purchased Client Services for Families

DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
1. Creates a Family Service Referral in IMPACT, which includes all Family members identified as needing to receive services. 2. Submits Family Service Referral to the SSCC. 3. IMPACT System will: a. Automatically create a Service Authorization (2054) for each Family member identified on the Family Service Referral, with each 2054 including every SSCC service code for a period of one year from the date of creation. b. Transmits the information to SSCC via batch processes.	1. Updates the Family Service Referral when additional Family members will be provided services; and removes Family members when services are no longer needed. 2. Obtains explanation of benefits from Clients when claiming for deductibles or services denied by the insurance carrier. 3. Maintains documentation of fees charged and paid by the Client when utilizing a sliding scale. 4. Ensures claims submitted by subcontractors are accurate and complete. 5. Transmits required invoice to IMPACT (in a format provided by DFPS) for services provided 6. IMPACT system will: a. Run a pre-validation batch to verify delivered service details and to create invoice; b. Rejected lines are sent	1. Maintains records on each Family member receiving services (by IMPACT PID), including: a. Documentation to support any claim as a result of services or co- payment and deductibles not covered by the client's insurance. b. Documentation to indicate clients who have been imposed a sliding scale fee and the associated service and fee charged to the Contract and the Client's share. c. Medicaid denials. d. Signed Form 4116X, State of Texas Purchase Voucher (only submitted when situations warrant the need for a manual payment process). e. Other supporting documentation which may be requested by DFPS.

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DFPS Role	SSCC Role	SSCC Documentation Requirements
	back to SSCC; c. Other lines are included in the invoice; and d. Invoice is sent to CAPPS Financial System for payment.	

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ARTICLE IV. START-UP REQUIREMENTS

Section 4.01 Introduction

This section presents the scope of work for the Start-Up Period of the Contract, which includes those activities that must take place during readiness between the Contract and the operational start date at each stage progression.

The Start-up Period will include a Readiness review by DFPS of the SSCC, which must be completed successfully prior to the SSCC's operational start date for Stage II. DFPS may, at its discretion, terminate the Contract, postpone the operational start date for Stage II, or assess other Contractual remedies if the SSCC fails to timely correct all Start-Up Period deficiencies within a reasonable cure period, as determined by DFPS.

If for any reason, an SSCC does not fully meet the Readiness review prior to the Stage II start date, and DFPS has not approved a delay in the operational start date or approved a delay in the SSCC's compliance with the applicable Readiness review requirement, then DFPS will impose remedies for any actual damages and recoup Start-Up funds as appropriate.

Section 4.02 Start-Up Period Scope for SSCC

SSCC must meet the Readiness review requirements set forth in Article V. of the Contract no later than sixty (60) days prior to the SSCC accepting its first referral from DFPS in Stage II. SSCC agrees to provide all materials required to complete the Readiness review by the dates established by DFPS.

Section 4.03 Start-Up Period Schedule and Tasks

In Stage II, the Start-up Period begins. Stage II Start-up Period must be completed no later than the date indicated for Stage II implementation in Section 2.03 of this Statement of Work.

The SSCC has overall responsibility for the timely and successful completion of each of the Start-Up Period tasks. The SSCC is responsible for clearly specifying and requesting information needed from DFPS in a manner that does not delay the schedule or work to be performed.

Section 4.04 Contract Start-Up and Planning

- (A)** DFPS and the SSCC will work together during the Contract Start-Up Period to:
 - 1. Define project management and reporting standards;
 - 2. Establish communication protocols between DFPS and the SSCC;
 - 3. Establish a schedule for key activities and milestones; and
 - 4. Clarify expectations for the content and format of Contract Deliverables as specified in this Statement of Work.
- (B)** The SSCC must develop a written work plan, referred to as the Stage II SSCC Management Plan, which will be used to monitor Readiness progress throughout the Start-Up Period. The SSCC's Plan must include a detailed description of the schedule, processes, procedure and timeline for the implementation of Community-Based Care in the Designated Community Area, including but not limited to, a timeline for implementing, Case Management services for

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Children, Families, and relative and kinship Caregivers receiving services in the Designated Community Area, and Family Reunification support services to be provided after a Child receiving services from the Contractor is returned to the Child's Family.

- (C) The SSCC's Plan must identify a designated SSCC staff member responsible for the facilitation and oversight of this process.
- (D) The SSCC will need to submit to an initial IT Security review performed by DFPS Office of Information Security (OIS). The SSCC must resolve any critical and high-risk items identified by OIS prior to Readiness certification.
- (E) Submit for approval the Utilization Management Process used to identify the level of care provided to Children and Youth referred under the Contract and a cross walk of SSCC service levels to the corresponding DFPS legacy service levels.

Section 4.05 Administration and Key SSCC Personnel

No later than the Effective Date of the Contract, the SSCC must designate and identify Key SSCC Personnel that meet the requirements of this Contract and specify office location for each. The SSCC will supply DFPS with résumés of each Key SSCC Personnel as well as organizational information that has changed relative to the SSCC's Proposal, such as updated job descriptions, office locations and updated organizational charts, if applicable. If the SSCC is using a Material Subcontractor, the SSCC must also provide the organizational chart for the Material Subcontractor.

Consistent with Texas Family Code §264.154, the SSCC must provide DFPS with a description of its full corporate structure, including divisions and subsidiaries on an annual basis to be posted on DFPS's Internet website.

Section 4.06 Post Start-Up

The SSCC will work with DFPS, community stakeholders, and Network Members and other Providers, to promptly identify and resolve problems identified after the operational start date and to communicate to DFPS, Providers, and Members, as applicable, the steps the SSCC is taking to resolve the problems.

If an SSCC makes assurances to DFPS of its Readiness to meet Contract requirements, including Management Information System (MIS) and operational requirements, but fails to satisfy requirements set forth in this Section, or as otherwise required pursuant to the Contract, DFPS may, at its discretion do any of the following in accordance with the severity of the non-compliance and the potential impact on Members and Providers:

- (A) Suspend referrals to the SSCC;
- (B) Impose contractual remedies, including liquidated damages; or
- (C) Pursue other equitable, injunctive, or regulatory relief.

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ARTICLE V. OPERATIONS READINESS

Section 5.01 Introduction

The SSCC must clearly define and document the policies and procedures that will be followed to support day-to-day business activities, including coordination with subcontractors and/or other network providers. The SSCC will be responsible for developing and documenting its approach to quality assurance. DFPS or its designee will conduct a Readiness review prior to the operational start date for Stage II.

(A) During Readiness review Stage II, the SSCC must, at a minimum:

1. Develop operations procedures and associated documentation to support the SSCC's proposed approach to conducting operations activities in compliance with the contracted Statement of Work and the SSCC's accepted proposal.
2. Sixty (60) calendar days prior to the operational start date (Stage II), develop and submit to DFPS, the schedule, processes, procedure and timeline for the implementation of Stage II Community-Based Care in the Designated Community Area, including but not limited to, a timeline for implementing, Case Management services for Children, Families, and relative and Kinship Caregivers receiving services in the Designated Community Area; and Family Reunification support services to be provided after a Child receiving services from the contractor is returned to the Child's Family.
3. Sixty (60) calendar days prior to the operational start date (Stage II), develop and submit to DFPS, a Case Management Manual that provides details on the SSCC Case Management services, delivery approach and how all other Case Management services are to be accomplished.
4. All SSCC Case Management staff in Stage II must complete DFPS CPS Professional Development (CPD) Training prior to providing Case Management function. The SSCCs must follow the DFPS CPD Training Model framework and duration, with flexibility on their adopted practice model and content. The SSCC may add additional training components that are specific to the SSCC's particular model. The SSCC must provide documentation demonstrating compliance with training requirements (e.g., enrollment or attendance rosters dated and signed by each attendee or other written evidence of training).
5. Sixty (60) calendar days prior to the operational start date (Stage II), submit a comprehensive proposal setting forth its fee schedule and comprehensive plan to provide Purchased Client Services.
6. Develop and submit to DFPS the SSCC's proposed complaint and appeals processes.
7. Demonstrate the ability to satisfactorily administer the requirements of delivering Substitute Care services, services for relative and Kinship Caregivers, Case Management and Family Reunification services including the Contractor's ability to provide:
 - a. Evidence-based, promising practice, or evidence-informed supports for Children and families; and
 - b. Sufficient available capacity for inpatient and outpatient services and supports for Children at all service levels who have previously been placed in the Designated Community Area.

(B) As part of the Readiness review process, the SSCC must prepare a plan detailing the methods

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by which the Contractor will avoid or eliminate both Case Management and contracting conflicts of interest. The department may not transfer services to the Contractor until the department has determined the plan is adequate.

- (C) If after conducting the review process, the department determines that an SSCC is able to adequately deliver Substitute Care services, services for relative and Kinship Caregivers, Case Management and Family Reunification services in advance of the projected dates stated in the timeline included in the Contract with the Contractor, the department may adjust the timeline to allow for an earlier transition of service delivery to the Contractor. If the department determines that an SSCC is not able to adequately deliver said services, the department may adjust the timeline to allow for a later transition of service delivery to the Contractor.
- (D) During the Readiness review, DFPS may request from the SSCC certain operating procedures and updates to documentation to support the provision of services. DFPS will assess the SSCC's understanding of its responsibilities and the SSCC's capability to assume the functions required under the Contract, based in part on the SSCC's assurances of operational Readiness, information contained in its Proposal, Joint Operational Manual, Case Management Manual (Stage II) and subsequent Provider's Manual, and in documentation submitted by the SSCC.
- (E) The SSCC is required to promptly provide a Corrective Action Plan or Risk Mitigation Plan as requested by DFPS in response to Operational Readiness review deficiencies identified by the SSCC or by DFPS or its agent. The SSCC must promptly alert DFPS of deficiencies and must correct a deficiency or provide a Corrective Action Plan or Risk Mitigation Plan no later than ten (10) calendar days after DFPS's notification of deficiencies. If the Contractor documents to DFPS's satisfaction that the deficiency has been corrected within ten (10) calendar days of such deficiency notification by DFPS, no Corrective Action Plan is required.

Section 5.02 Capacity Sharing Plan

DFPS has a statewide sharing philosophy, and the Capacity Sharing Plan must support this philosophy. As part of readiness and implementation, the SSCC must maintain a revised, DFPS approved, plan titled as Capacity Sharing Plan that includes but not limited to the following information:

- (A) Provide your organization's assessment of the current paid foster care capacity in the Designated Community Area. Provide the method used for any assessment and/or engagement activities. Include the assessment methods used, or that may be used, to evaluate the quantity and quality of capacity currently available statewide;
- (B) Provide your organizations assessment of any gaps in paid foster care capacity in the Designated Community Area and statewide, that includes all methods used for the assessment and/or engagement activities;
- (C) Provide the method used for maintaining the ability to share capacity statewide amongst the SSCCs and to accept referrals from DFPS, for paid foster care every single day of the year, including nights and holidays;
- (D) Describe the plan to accept all referrals for paid foster care (No Reject) made by DFPS and continue to meet the individual needs of Children referred (No Eject) until DFPS determines the individual is no longer eligible for the SSCC services (Stage I); and
- (E) The plan must be made readily available to DFPS upon request for review, modifications and/or approval.

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Section 5.03 Assurance of System and Operational Readiness

In addition to successfully providing the Deliverables described in Section 4.03 (“Start-up Period Schedule and Tasks”), the SSCC must assure DFPS that all processes, MIS systems, and staffed functions are ready and able to successfully assume responsibilities for operations prior to the operational start date. In particular, the SSCC must assure that Key SSCC Personnel, and network Provider staff are hired and trained, MIS systems and interfaces are in place and functioning properly, communications procedures are in place, Provider Manuals have been distributed, and that Provider training sessions have occurred according to the schedule approved by DFPS.

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ARTICLE VI. TURNOVER REQUIREMENTS

Section 6.01 Introduction

This entire section presents the Turnover requirements. "Turnover" is defined as the activities that the SSCC is required to perform prior to or upon termination or expiration of the Contract, in situations where the SSCC will transition data and documentation to DFPS or a subsequent Contractor.

Section 6.02 Turnover Plan

The Turnover Plan is a comprehensive document detailing the proposed schedule, activities, and resource requirements associated with the Turnover tasks. The SSCC shall submit an initial Turnover plan twelve (12) months after Contract execution and submit an updated transfer plan each year and six (6) months before the end of the Contract period, including any extension. An updated Turnover Plan will be submitted by the SSCC and approved by DFPS. DFPS may require additional information from the SSCC or require the SSCC to modify the Turnover plan as necessary.

Section 6.03 Transfer of Data and Information and Staff

The SSCC must transfer to DFPS or a subsequent Contractor all data, documentation, staff as applicable, and information necessary to transition operations. "Documentation" means all operations, technical and user manuals used in conjunction with Services, and Deliverables that DFPS determines are necessary. The SSCC must involve DFPS on all Transfer of Data and Information processes. This may require several meetings to support successful strategic planning that includes a transition of but not limited to standard operations, personnel, cases, IT functions, provider network, purchased client services, fiscal functions, performance, and oversight. The SSCC must provide the documentation in the formats in which the documentation exists at the expiration or termination of the Contract. In addition, the SSCC must provide DFPS and the subsequent contractor (if applicable) the following for transfer purposes:

- (A) Data, information, and services necessary and sufficient to enable DFPS to map all SSCC Program data from the SSCC's system(s) to the replacement system(s) of DFPS or a successor Contractor, including a comprehensive data dictionary as defined by DFPS.
- (B) All necessary data, information, and services will be provided in the format defined by DFPS or the successor Contractor (if applicable).
- (C) A listing of all employees and employment information to include but not limited to; tenure, salaries, benefits, and any additional information the Department may request by the timeframe requested by the Department. Information on all subcontracted services to include the rate and fee schedule.
- (D) The SSCC must provide, information, and services mentioned in this section using its best efforts to ensure the efficient administration of the Contract. The data and information must be supplied in media and format specified by DFPS or the successor Contractor (if applicable), and according to the schedule approved by DFPS in the Turnover Plan. The data, information, and services provided as detailed in this section must be provided at no additional cost to DFPS.
- (E) All relevant data and information must be received and verified by DFPS or the subsequent Contractor (if applicable). If DFPS determines that data or information are not accurate and complete, then DFPS reserves the right to hire an independent Contractor to assist DFPS in obtaining and transferring all the required data and information and to ensure that all data and

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information comply with applicable state and federal law. The reasonable cost of providing these services will be the responsibility of the SSCC.

Section 6.04 Turnover Services and Staff

If the SSCC or DFPS terminates the Contract prior to the expiration of the Contract Period, then DFPS may require the SSCC to update the Turnover Plan sooner. In these cases, DFPS's notice of termination will include the date the Turnover Plan is due. The Turnover Plan must be a comprehensive document detailing the proposed schedule, activities, and resource requirements associated with the Turnover tasks. The Turnover Plan describes the SSCC's policies and procedures that guarantees:

- (A) The least disruption in the delivery of Services to Children, Youth and Families who are being served by the SSCC during the transition to a subsequent vendor.
- (B) Cooperation with DFPS and the subsequent Contractor in notifying employees, stakeholders, including the community, members of judiciary, providers, and others of the transition, as requested and in the form required or approved by DFPS.
- (C) Cooperation with DFPS and the subsequent Contractor in transferring staff to the subsequent Contractor, or DFPS as requested and as approved by DFPS.
- (D) A listing of all employees and employment information to include but not limited to tenure, salaries, benefits, and any additional information the Department may request by the timeframe requested by the Department.
- (E) Cooperation with DFPS and the subsequent Contractor in transferring information to the subsequent Contractor, as requested and in the form required or approved by DFPS.
- (F) DFPS must approve the final Turnover Plan, which must include at a minimum:
 - 1. The SSCC's approach and schedule for the transfer of data and information, as described in this Section.
 - 2. The quality assurance process that the SSCC will use to monitor Turnover activities.
 - 3. The SSCC's approach to training DFPS or a subsequent Contractor's staff in the operation of its business processes.
 - 4. DFPS is not limited or restricted in the ability to require additional information from the SSCC or modify the Turnover Plan as necessary, including requiring the SSCC to submit an updated Turnover Plan at any point during the term of the Contract based on performance or financial issues identified as a result of Contract monitoring.
 - 5. The SSCC and DFPS will continue to perform in accordance with all terms and conditions of this Contract until DFPS determines that all Turn over activities have been completed successfully.

Section 6.05 Post-Turnover Services

Thirty (30) days following Turnover of operations, the SSCC must provide DFPS with a Turnover Results Report documenting the completion and results of each step of the Turnover Plan. Turnover is completed at the sole discretion of DFPS. DFPS will not consider Turnover completed until DFPS approves the Turnover Plan. If the SSCC does not provide the required data or information necessary for DFPS or the subsequent Contractor to assume the operational activities successfully, the SSCC agrees to reimburse DFPS for all reasonable costs and expenses, including transportation, lodging, and subsistence to carry out inspection, audit, review, analysis, reproduction, and transfer functions at the location(s) of such records, and attorneys' fees and costs. This section does not limit DFPS's ability to impose remedies or damages as set forth in the Contract.