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AUDITOR GENERAL

STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE
AUDITOR GENERAL

WILLIAM THOMSON
DEPUTY AUDITOR GENERAL

February 4, 2010

The Honorable Judy Burges, Chair
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

The Honorable Thayer Verschoor, Vice Chair
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

Dear Representative Burges and Senator Verschoor:

Our Office has recently completed a 6-month followup of the Department of Economic Security—Division of Children, Youth and Families—Child Protective Services—Congregate Care regarding the implementation status of the 7 audit recommendations (including sub-parts of the recommendations) presented in the performance audit report released in June 2009 (Auditor General Report No. CPS-0901). As the attached grid indicates:

- 3 have been implemented and
- 4 are in the process of being implemented.

Our Office will conduct an 18-month followup with the Department on the status of those recommendations that have not yet been fully implemented.

Sincerely,

Melanie M. Chesney, Director
Performance Audit Division

MMC:sjs
Attachment

cc: Neal Young, Director
Department of Economic Security

**Department of
Economic Security—Division of Children, Youth and
Families—Child Protective Services—Congregate Care
Auditor General Report No. CPS-0901
6-Month Follow-Up Report**

Recommendation	Status/Additional Explanation
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Finding 1: Improvements needed in congregate care investigations

1.1 To help facilitate the timeliness of congregate care investigations, the Division should:

a. Implement the Division’s action plan for the specialized investigative unit requiring the unit supervisor to revise the unit’s procedures to more effectively use manual and online systems to track investigation activity, to update investigators weekly on upcoming investigation completion dates, and to increase contact with investigators to discuss ongoing investigations; and

Implemented at 6 Months

b. Ensure the specialized investigative unit remains adequately staffed and do not routinely use the unit’s investigative staff to assist with other investigative units’ workloads. If this is not possible due to staffing cuts, the Division should review and prioritize the specialized investigation unit’s responsibilities to ensure tasks critical for ensuring child safety are performed; for example, completing investigations within 21 days;

Implemented at 6 Months

1.2 To help ensure that information is available for management use in monitoring investigations’ thoroughness, workload, and productivity, the supervisor of the specialized investigative unit should enforce division policy requiring staff to document case activity within 10 days of its occurrence.

Implementation in Process

The Division has developed and started implementing specific steps to enforce timely investigative documentation. By the next followup, enough time will have passed to assess whether the steps are effective.

1.3 To help ensure child safety by making certain complete information is available for conducting child abuse background checks on congregate care employees, the Division should seek a statutory amendment clarifying that CPS has authority to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect in RTCs.

Implemented at 6 Months

Finding 2: Division should improve congregate care outcome monitoring

2.1 The Division should review and revise the outcomes within its congregate care contracts to ensure that they meet established criteria: they are clear, include measurable indicators of performance, and contain specific performance targets.	Implementation in Process The Division revised the outcome measures for the residential treatment center, therapeutic group home, and behavioral health group home contracts that were awarded in October 2009. It is currently revising the outcome measures for the new group home and shelter contracts that will be solicited in June 2010.
2.2 The Division should enforce the requirement that congregate care providers submit required outcome data to the Division. Additionally, the Division should ensure that it compiles the necessary outcome data for those congregate care outcomes it is responsible for tracking.	Implementation in Process The Division developed a process to enforce timely submission of required outcome data from its congregate care providers and will begin implementing the process with the quarterly reports due on January 30, 2010.
2.3 As part of its ongoing efforts to reprioritize its responsibilities in response to budget cuts, the Division should determine the importance of using outcome data to monitor congregate care provider performance, including using the data as additional criteria for yearly contract renewal and as the basis for helping providers identify problems and correct deficiencies, and assign staff accordingly.	Implementation in Process The Division intends to use the outcome data collected in conjunction with recommendations 2.1 and 2.2 as additional criteria for yearly contract renewals.
