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LCPA Guidelines for Blended and Enhanced Caseloads

During a workgroup conducted on January 8, 2020 between Indiana Licensed Child Placing Agencies (LCPAs) and the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) Residential Licensing Unit, a definition to the Indiana Administrative Code (IAC) term, “enhanced supervision” caseload was identified.

As it stands, the IAC defines enhanced supervision as:

“Enhanced supervision” means additional daily supervision that a foster parent will be required to provide for a child with extraordinary needs, based on categories of supervision established by the department.

In regards to LCPA caseloads, 465 IAC 2-2-5 Sec 5(b). states:

“(1) The number of children under the supervision of one (1) caseworker shall not exceed eighteen (18). (2) For children requiring enhanced supervision, the caseworker to child ratio shall be determined and approved by the department, which ratio shall range between 1:8 and 1:12.”

The participants of this workgroup came to the decision that an enhanced supervision caseload was one that only included children with CANS scores of 3s and 4s. Caseloads that had any combination of CANS levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 would be defined as a “blended caseload.”

In order to assist LCPAs in determining an appropriate blended caseload size based on the CANS level of the child, the DCS Residential Licensing Unit developed the following guidelines:

- Caseloads with 90-100% enhanced supervision caseloads should not exceed 8 children.
- Caseloads with between 75% and 89% enhanced supervision should be between 8 and 12 children per caseworker.
- Caseloads with between 50% and 74% enhanced supervision should be between 12 and 15 children per caseworker.
- Per the IAC, no caseload should exceed 18 children.

The above percentages are guidelines and are not code or policy and thus the agency will not automatically be cited at an audit if their caseloads are not within these guidelines. Through the above mentioned workgroup, the Residential Licensing Unit was made aware that there are several items that

go into an agency determining the caseload size such as location, sibling groups, caseworker experience, or not knowing CANS levels at the time of placement.

In order for the Residential Licensing Unit to determine the appropriateness of caseloads not within these guidelines, the LCPAs will be asked to provide an explanation to support their caseloads not being within these guidelines and possibly the agency's plan for getting caseloads closer to being within the above guidelines. The Residential Licensing Unit will consider the following as justification for caseloads not being within the recommended guidelines above. (This is not an exhaustive list but a few of the items discussed at the workgroup.)

- Agency turnover
- Influx of new placements
- Sibling groups
- Location of the foster homes

The Residential Licensing Unit hopes these guidelines will support LCPA's by providing clarity with regard to the IAC requirements and definitions and ultimately assist the Residential Licensing Unit in increasing audit consistency.

The Department of Child Services Residential Licensing Unit would like to thank all of the Licensed Child Placing Agencies that participated in the January 8th workgroup and we look forward to collaborating more in the future to provide consistency, clarity and support to our LCPA partners. If any of our partners have ideas or suggestions for future workgroups, please reach out to your Residential Licensing Specialist.