

## **Family Services Review Commission Meeting**

**September 6, 2007**

**HSB-252**

**Members present:** Doreen Binder, Jessica Chanay, Peggy Kennerly (VCON), Rosemary Lazzari, Mavel Morales, and Michael Ware

**Members excused:** Maggie Bagon, Diane Cohen-Alpert, Kim Freeman, Shirley Kaping, Rob Potter, and Angela Sanchez

**Members absent:** Bonnie Davidson and Miranda Herrera

**DHS staff present:** Dave Lyda, Ted Swigart, Belit Stockfleth, Karen House, Mark Anderson, and Nancy Sathrum

**Administrative Handouts, sent via email prior to the meeting:** Meeting Agenda, Draft Minutes of the August 2, 2007 FSRC Meeting, FSRC Member Roster, DHS Summary of Complaints Report for July 2007, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Hearing on Restricting Access to DHS Premises and Employees (Peggy Kennerly), Draft Early Review and Development Rules and Policies, copies of four comment letters, Draft HB 2469 Implementation Plan, Policy Transmittal to staff regarding active JOBS disqualification status, copy of letter sent to these clients, brochure outlining new program elements (Dave Lyda), Proposed Legislation for Food Stamp Reauthorization (Belit Stockfleth), Child Care Improvements (Mark Anderson),

**Additional Administrative Handouts at meeting:** July 2007 Public Assistance Caseload, Self-Sufficiency at a glance for July 2007

### **Greeting and Roll Call**

Meeting called to order at 8:50 a.m. with 6 members in attendance; not enough for a quorum. Peggy Kennerly participated by video conference. Jessica Chanay chaired the meeting in Rob's absence.

Review handouts:

- The customer complaint reports have a new format that is easier to read. The DHS Customer Service workgroup is working on the form. Hopefully Angela can update us at the October FSRC meeting.
- A new TANF brochure was distributed at the 8/20 Rules and Policy meeting. There is a copy in your meeting packet.
- Restricting access: Peggy was asked about the bullet regarding persons being removed if they were interfering with business. The prior version was very broad. Peggy believes a second review at a higher level is appropriate when difficult situations arise and will suggest that District Managers review the record and work with clients to resolve issue prior to having them banned from the premises. **ACTION:** Please forward your written comments and concerns to Peggy by September 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Chair Report:**

- Action and follow-up items: None discussed.
- Approval of August 2<sup>nd</sup> Minutes: Requested changes made by Nancy on 9/12/07.
  - Page 1, change two co-chairs to “two co-chairs of the Policy Committee” (Jessica and Rosemary).
  - Page 2, reword the 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet regarding more business partners. Changed to “It may be advantageous to have more business partners at the table since working collaboratively with them often allows issues to move forward at a quicker pace.”
  - With noted changes, vote on minutes at October meeting.

**CAF Report, Dave Lyda, Ted Swigart, Belit Stockfleth, Karen House, Mark Anderson:**

**TANF General Update, Dave Lyda**

A meeting with advocates was held on August 20<sup>th</sup> to discuss early review and development of rules and policies. There was good discussion on the policy and possible changes to the draft concepts. The comments are being incorporated into the new rules. Both Jessica and Rosemary appreciated being invited to the meeting.

The temporary rules are in effect for 180 days from October 1<sup>st</sup>. The permanent rules will become effective in March 2008. The review brought up issues that had been missed. DHS wants to change the process slightly to gain community input before the rule goes out for public comment. Work will continue on formulating changes for discussion at the October meeting. The information brought to the table was very helpful from the DHS standpoint. The rules should be in alignment with the state plan. The 2008 state plan was mailed out and comments are requested by October 3, 2007.

The new TANF brochure outlines services that may be available to clients. Is it up to the worker to discuss available resources with the client? The workers are trained about the service dollars. When new workers aren't confident about a client's question, they often staff the question with their lead worker or manager prior to discussing with the client.

When rules were written there was a piece about the participation of teen parents that weren't the adult on the grant. Concerns were raised and DHS is proposing that it be changed back to current policy which requires teen parents to participate. Teen parents living with other adult family members, receiving grant or not receiving a grant, would be required to participate. Rule 461.130.0310. Provide opportunities for teen parent to make progress, preferably school. Research shows that the longer they are separated from school, the less likely they will return which affects their earning ability for their entire future.

Currently a parent, teen or not, without a disability is subject to sanction if they don't participate without good cause. DHS thinks it was an error to align with the federal

requirements instead of what is good for Oregon. HB 2469 includes language that a parent can be required to participate in activities; teen parent participation includes school. The Rule says full time as determined by the school, includes vocational training and alternative schools. Teen parents need access to a variety of services to obtain information and training. When a teen has a child, they have four months off then are required to participate in school, GED program, vocational school, etc.

Isn't the danger really to the primary adult on the grant? Will they be penalized for the teen parent's lack of participation? Financial penalty would be coded on the teen parent, not the primary client. DHS already has a history of the disqualifications, but it isn't active at this point. As of 10/1, the history will be removed and DHS will start over.

Questions were asked about the new rule. If the rule goes through, won't it be the parent's issue if the teen doesn't participate? How many households have been adversely affected? Is it a large problem? Do parents run into this problem? Yes, per Michael. Does the financial disqualification help them make the choice to continue to participate? Will this result in the parent kicking their child out of the house because it is affecting their grant? How do you write rules in a positive way instead of being punitive? How does DHS educate/train the worker to engage with the family? The impact to the family should be looked at and alternative options should be offered.

Doreen would like to see the rule changes tracked for outcomes. The tracking would help see how rule changes affect clients and cases. DHS often proposes rule changes without knowing the outcomes.

Dave's proposal is to make the change to go back to our current policy; track the number of cases affected and come back in six months to discuss the disqualifications. The FSRC can't vote on this now as a formal recommendation without a quorum present. This is our intent since the temporary rules need to move forward. The FSRC will have the ability to comment on the permanent rule process.

Dr. Ford training should help workers do a better job working with clients with a strength based emphasis. Youth transition training is available for teen parents. Work with parent and teen parent to engage them in services.

Seven of ten summits have been held around the state. There will be additional training in January depending on the implementation and periodic skill enhancement workshops around the state on an ongoing basis. DHS is currently providing updated cheat sheets to staff to educate them on new and changing issues.

Three draft time limit letters were distributed.

- September opportunity letters should be received by clients the end of August. Clients are being asked to contact their case manager to discuss their disqualifications. If DHS hasn't heard from clients by September 15, follow-up calls should be made.
- New 42 month letter sent to clients who have received TANF in Oregon or other states for at least three and a half years. This is a variation of the prior letter that gives clients a quick overview of the new disqualification process.
- General time limit letter to be sent to all clients receiving TANF benefits. A copy of the new benefits brochure will be sent to all clients.

It was suggested that the letter begin with a paragraph in **BOLD** about wanting to *help and work with the client*. **ACTION:** Commission input is needed by next Wednesday, September 12. Send further comments/questions to Dave.

There will be a few additional DCI rules to clarify the specific type of institutions and put more focus on community colleges. Is their general information on the Parents as Scholars program? Will this replace the DCI program? Will the participant number continue at 100? **ACTION:** More information was requested. Dave will provide further information to Nancy who will forward to FSRC. Additional discussion at a future meeting was also requested.

Feedback provided on the new TANF brochure. Mike is okay with brochure as it represents Family Support and Connections. Rosemary would like further clarification for clients on pre-assessment dollars. Formatting comment was to put post-TANF in bold on the last part of brochure. Add time limit request for a hearing, 45 days. Make brochure into poster to be displayed in offices. Ted said DHS is currently studying the number of posters that are required to be posted. This may help educate the general population on how TANF actually works.

**State plan for 2008, deadline is 10/3 for comments.**

#### **Update on 16 new positions, Ted Swigart**

Ted introduced himself as the Assistant Administrator of the Office of Self Sufficiency Programs. The 16 new positions are currently being referred to as "intensive case consultants". The intent is a specialized position with high level of case work experience working with clients with severe barriers. They will be experts available and involved in difficult cases and also provide support to case managers to reinforce skills taught in Dr. Ford training; modeling behavior to engage clients in a positive way and the use of group facilitation.

DHS Human Resources is working with DAS on the position classification, currently looking at Social Service Specialist 2. Recruitment can't begin until the classification is determined. The positions are typically posted for two weeks. Field Services is discussing

the distribution of these staff with District Managers. FSRC requested that these staff be trained in cultural competency.

The position description is being developed and will include assessment work with clients and case managers as needed. The position will be a liaison between case managers, clients, community partners, and other service providers such as mental health and alcohol and drug treatment. **ACTION:** Please send follow-up questions to Ted at [ted.swigart@state.or.us](mailto:ted.swigart@state.or.us).

### **Food Stamp Reauthorization, Belit Stockfleth**

Belit attended to report on Food Stamp Reauthorization but had to leave at 11:00 a.m. because of a grant proposal deadline. The draft of the proposed legislation is in your meeting packet. This is the passed house version that will be going to the Senate in mid-September. Jessica has some questions that she will send to Belit with cc: to FSRC members.

### **OHP Standard Waiting List, Karen House**

Karen House, Program Manager for CAF Medical Programs, gave an update on OHP Standard. The Standard program provides medical coverage for clients between 19 and 65 who aren't pregnant or disabled. (Pregnant and disabled clients are covered by other programs). No general funds are used for this program. The funding is from provider taxes (hospitals, etc.) and client premiums. The Standard program was closed to new enrollees in July 2004. At that time there were approximately 55,000 on the Standard program, down from approximately 100,000. The program currently has approximately 19,000 clients so may be able to re-open. Clients with a break in coverage would be considered a new enrollee. DHS recognizes the large need but will have limited enrollment to approximately 24,000 new clients. The proposed process is being developed and may include a reservation list. DHS divisions will meet to discuss next week. DHS is attempting to establish an equitable process for re-enrollment of approximately 24,000. Healthy kids program isn't included in the Standard program, but is a separate program with different funding.

FSRC member said that decreasing the number of clients doesn't seem reasonable if funding is available to serve them. It was a huge problem when the services were cut in July 2004. Karen mentioned that CAF assists in getting the benefits to clients, but DMAP actually coordinates the funding.

### **Child Care rate changes, Mark Anderson**

Child care enhancement document is in your packet. The legislature approved an additional \$40 million to increase the level of income for benefits effective on October 1, to reduce co-pays by approximately 20%, and to increase the maximum rates we pay providers. Our maximum rates have not matched what providers charge since 1994. The

rates will now be set at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of the child care provider market. Before this increase, the rates were set at the 26<sup>th</sup> percentile, which greatly reduced access to quality care. The highest cost will be \$875 per month instead of \$575. This represents about a 30% increase in provider rates, but depends on location, type of care, age of child, etc. This should provide our clients with same access to child care.

Will the child support pass through, when passed, affect child care. No, because pass through is only for TANF grants. Effective October 2008, pass through is \$50 per child up to \$200 per family for TANF. Mark agreed to return to a future meeting to discuss further.

**FSRC Subcommittees/DHS Partnerships:**

**Customer Service Subcommittee (Angela, Rob, Doreen, Jessica, Peggy): Status Report**  
Meeting was held and notes will be out soon. Subcommittee just getting started, no decisions at this time.

**Ad Hoc Commission Membership Subcommittee (Jessica, Mavel, Rosemary): Status Report**

Meeting was held and notes will be out soon. Process was discussed. Designation changes can be made to accommodate future assignments. **ACTION:** Email will be sent asking members if they want to change their designations if they meet the qualifications of other categories.

**Partnership Committees: Discuss Recent Activities**

Family Support Work Group (Maggie): Mike reported that there was very little funding to begin with, but additional funding has been added this year to help counties provide advocates to parents on the TANF caseload. Contact Dave Lyda at [dave.m.lyda@state.or.us](mailto:dave.m.lyda@state.or.us) or Stephanie Jernstedt at [stephanie.jernstedt@state.or.us](mailto:stephanie.jernstedt@state.or.us) for additional information.

**Legislative Subcommittee: Status/Revival**

A special legislative session will begin in February. The FSRC needs to plan now for what we want to pursue as a commission. Does anyone have an interest in providing a leadership role? Clarify in Strategic Plan process the difference between the Legislative Subcommittee and the Policy Subcommittee. Rosemary will continue on the subcommittee. **ACTION:** Jessica will ask Vic Todd if he has suggestions and follow-up by email with FSRC.

**Strategic Planning Agenda for October/November (Not discussed. Communication via email to plan for October meeting.)**

Brainstorming topics: Leadership, Sub-Committee membership, Content/Issues

FSRC Meeting Minutes  
September 6, 2007

Peggy sent an email with the Notice of Proposed rulemaking Hearing on the process for restricting an individuals' access to Department premises, employees, and visitors and urge FSRC members to read and respond to DHS with concerns and thoughts prior to the deadline of September 28, 2007, 5:00 p.m. She is unable to attend the hearing on September 25<sup>th</sup>. Peggy believes there are issues that need to be addressed and was waiting for a final decision from the FSRC. Members discussed how comments should be sent, individually or as a commission. What has more impact? Can comments be shared and voted on via email? Are email votes legitimate? After discussing with commission, Peggy could go back and report to the workgroup or develop a written document with the official comments of the commission. Need early decision on how FSRC wants to handle this type of issue. It was decided that members would respond individually to Peggy with concerns and comments.

The conversation was tabled and should be revisited during strategic planning process. Jessica and Rosemary will recommend Strategic Plan be broken into two documents to address communication and voting process for future needs.

DHS often asks for FSRC input or decision on specific items. As a commission, how do we handle this? It would be helpful for DHS to send information to the FSRC earlier so there is time for discussion. The FSRC needs to be flexible and give opinions on items that can't wait for future meetings. Do we vote in front of DHS or wait until they leave the meeting and inform them of the decision? Does that limit the discussion? Establish how communication and votes can take place within the time frames we deal with and include in strategic plan or operating procedures.

After further discussion of the temporary rule, the FSRC came up with the following statement. "We understand that it is DHS's intention to remove from the current temporary rule the teen parent exemption that requires participation. The commission members present at today's meeting would like data with regards to how many households have been affected or disqualified because of a teen parent not participating. **ACTION for Dave:** If possible, please provide this data at the December 2007 FSRC meeting."

**Deadlines:** Please provide feedback on letters by next Wednesday, 9/12<sup>th</sup>. Feedback on the 2008 State Plan is due by October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Send your individual comments to Dave Lyda. **ACTION:** Handouts will be sent electronically this afternoon to all members. **(Done 9/6/07)**

Next Meeting: The next FSRC meeting is scheduled for October 4, 2007, 8:30 a.m. to noon, in HSB-252. Please let Nancy know if you plan to attend by Video Conferencing or phone by Friday, September 21st.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.