

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES**

P.O. Box 419064, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9064

Reason for this Transmittal

- State Law or Regulation Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order or Settlement Change
- Clarification requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by DCSS

December 12, 2005

CSS LETTER: 05-36

ALL IV-D DIRECTORS  
 ALL COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS  
 ALL BOARDS OF SUPERVISORS

SUBJECT: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT (QAPI)  
 PLAN REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2006

The Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) has established Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2006 local child support agency (LCSA) performance goals. To facilitate the achievement of these goals, LCSAs are asked to prepare QAPI plan updates which identify specific actions to be taken to support improved program performance.

In FFY 2003, each LCSA submitted a QAPI plan which served as the basis for all future QAPI planning efforts. During FFY 2004 and 2005, the LCSAs submitted their QAPI plan updates as part of an ongoing effort to continually identify new activities, projects and approaches which, when implemented, would result in performance improvement. DCSS anticipates that during FFY 2006, LCSAs will continue activities that have been successful in improving performance and consider new activities as part of their performance improvement planning process.

Consistent with this approach, LCSAs are asked to submit updates to their original QAPI plans for FFY 2006. These updates will identify FFY 2006 performance goals and performance improvement activities which will be implemented effective October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2006. Updates should focus only on the actions to be taken to achieve FFY 2006 performance goals. LCSAs are not required to discuss the local QAPI structure and processes, unless changes have been made to either the local QAPI team or structure and/or processes employed, since the 2005 update.

To assist LCSAs with the preparation of the FFY 2006 QAPI plan updates, a template is enclosed for reference. The template, entitled the "2006 QAPI Plan Update Template" is to be used when preparing the update and is included as an enclosure in this letter. LCSAs should either copy the template and insert their plan update information onto the copied document or obtain an electronic version of the template by accessing the DCSS LCSA website, selecting the 2005 Child Support Services (CSS) link under letters and notices, and selecting the attachment link for this letter.

In FFY 2004, DCSS issued the LCSA Letter 04-15 that describes the QAPI Capacity Development Tools developed by DCSS. These tools provide suggestions and guidance to LCSAs on ways in which operations and performance can be improved. This letter may serve as additional guidance for each LCSA's use in the preparation of its FFY 2006 QAPI plan update. The update must address all of the points discussed below.

## **PERFORMANCE GOALS**

The update must identify the LCSA's FFY 2006 performance goals set for Collections on Current Support and Cases with Collections on Arrears performance measures. LCSAs should also include any additional county specific goals established by their program, although these are not required.

## **ACTION PLAN**

Separate action plans should be prepared for the performance measures Collections on Current Support and Cases with Collections on Arrears. We recognize that at the time the update is developed, action plans may already be in progress.

Action plans already in progress should be included in the update as well as activities yet to be implemented. The update should also address problems identified for which the LCSA is still in the process of determining possible solutions and developing actions to be taken.

In cases where the identified activity will impact both collections on current support and arrears, you will only need to describe the activity under one of the action plans, with a statement of expected impact for each measure.

Each action plan must include the following three components:

### **a) Problem Statement**

Provide a description of the program areas (i.e., actual functions or work activities) where improvement is needed in order to meet performance

goals. This should include a review of available data and discussion of the areas of the program which contribute to identified performance issues, including the root causes of the problem.

**b) Work Plan**

Provide a description of the specific actions the LCSA will take to ensure that goals are achieved during FFY 2006. These actions must be measurable and achievable, with a beginning and end date, if applicable, as well as milestones by which expected performance results will be achieved. This includes an implementation plan with timelines (indicating specific actions to be taken, staff to be involved and when the activities will be completed). In addition, the work plan should include a discussion of the manner in which identified barriers will be addressed.

**c) Expected Outcomes**

Provide a discussion of the expected outcome(s) of each action. The outcomes should be specific and quantitative (e.g., number of orders to be modified, number of cases to be closed, projected increase in current collections and arrears cases with collections, etc.), and provide an estimate as to the impact on the relevant federal measure.

Detailed work plans are not required for performance improvement activities which were described in previous plan updates, if those activities will be continued in FFY 2006. The action plan should simply note that these activities will be continued and include information on the expected outcome. Also, as noted above, the update should include a brief description of any changes that have been made to the LCSA's QAPI structure and/or processes.

This information should focus on any changes that have been made, and may be included as a separate document. No discussion of the structure or processes is required if they will remain the same.

As LCSAs continue with the implementation of the QAPI process, it is expected that they will monitor their progress in accomplishing tasks outlined in their updates. The submission of written progress reports by the LCSA is not required; however, DCSS Quality Assurance Section (QAS) analysts will monitor each LCSA's progress through ongoing contacts with local QAPI staff. In most cases, this monitoring process will consist of QAS analysts contacting each LCSA's QAPI staff by phone to discuss the status of their performance and QAPI plan implementation efforts, as well as to discuss any other issues or technical assistance needs.

In some cases, DCSS staff may conduct more intensive monitoring activities (such as site visits) in response to specific performance issues, or at the LCSA's request. Site visits may also be made for other program purposes.

LCSAs may wish to include additional information regarding county-specific issues which may affect performance, performance trends, the implementation of the QAPI program during the coming year, or program issues or activities not specifically related to QAPI. The inclusion of this information in the QAPI plan update is not required; however, LCSAs may choose to address any such issues as part of the update. Any information related to these topics should be included as an attachment to the update template when the update is submitted to DCSS.

LCSAs are asked to submit their FFY 2006 QAPI plan update by January 9, 2006. This date should provide sufficient time for preparation and submission. In addition, the FFY 2006 QAPI plan update can be submitted electronically. However, since this is the third year for submitting QAPI plan updates, DCSS requests each LCSA submit a cover letter signed by the IV-D Director, which reconfirms the LCSA's commitment to the QAPI planning process.

Your QAS analyst will contact your QAPI staff to provide any assistance that may be needed with the preparation of the QAPI plan update. In the meantime, if you have any questions or need assistance regarding any issue associated with QAPI, please contact your assigned QAS analyst or Mike White at (916) 464-5487 or by electronic mail at [Mike.White@dcss.ca.gov](mailto:Mike.White@dcss.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

s/SANDRA O. POOLE

SANDRA O. POOLE  
Deputy Director  
Child Support Services Division

Enclosure

**Federal Fiscal Year 2006 Quality Assurance and  
Performance Improvement Plan Update  
(Template)**

\_\_\_\_\_ County Department of Child Support Services

**LCSA FFY 2006 PERFORMANCE GOALS**

Federal Performance Measures:  
(performance goal percentage)

Collections on Current Support: \_\_\_\_\_ Performance Goal  
Cases with Arrears Collections: \_\_\_\_\_ Performance Goal

Additional LCSA-Specific Goals (If applicable):

**ACTION PLAN**

**COLLECTIONS ON CURRENT SUPPORT**

Problem Statement

Work Plan

Expected Outcomes

**CASES WITH ARREARS COLLECTIONS**

Problem Statement

Work Plan

Expected Outcomes