



**State of Florida**  
**Department of Children and Families**


**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**Mike Carroll**  
Secretary

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**DATE:** January 30, 2017

**TO:** Mike Carroll  
Secretary

**FROM:** Keith R. Parks   
Inspector General

**SUBJECT:** Six-Month Status Report for Office of Program Policy Analysis and  
Government Accountability Report No. 16-04

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In accordance with Section 20.055(6)(h), Florida Statutes, enclosed is our six-month status report on Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability Report No. 16-04, *Placement Challenges Persist for Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation; Questions Regarding Effective Interventions and Outcomes Remain.*

If I may be of further assistance, please let me know.

Enclosure

cc: Melinda Miguel, Chief Inspector General, Executive Office of the Governor  
Kathy DuBose, Staff Director, Joint Legislative Auditing Committee

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Mike Carroll  
Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
INTERNAL AUDIT

*Enhancing Public Trust in Government*



Keith R. Parks  
Inspector General

Project # E-1516DCF-033

January 30, 2017

## Six-Month Status Report

### Placement Challenges Persist for Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation; Questions Regarding Effective Interventions and Outcomes Remain

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide a written response on the status of corrective actions taken six months after the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) published Report No. 16-04, *Placement Challenges Persist for Child Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation; Questions Regarding Effective Interventions and Outcomes Remain*.

#### REPORT CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, STATUS & COMMENTS

The Office of Child Welfare (OCW) provided updated status and corrective action comments to OPPAGA's conclusions and recommendations. Presented below are the full text of OPPAGA's conclusion statement followed by its recommendations and OCW's up-to-date status and corrective action comments, as reported by management and staff.

**CONCLUSION:** *With improvements to the Florida Abuse Hotline operations, the implementation of a screening tool, and the development of certification criteria that could standardize safe house services, the state has heightened its efforts to identify and address the needs of child victims of commercial sexual exploitation.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** *We recommend that DCF gather systematic feedback from users about the screening instrument. Given the recent statewide release of the screening tool to lead agencies, DCF may also wish to consider gathering feedback from lead agencies or CPIs regarding the screening tool's implementation.*

**Status (per Office of Child Welfare staff): Partially Completed**

We have solicited feedback from the regions, particularly about developing a shorter tool. After communication with the University of South Florida (USF) professors, there is not enough data yet to accurately, through evidence-based practice, develop a shorter tool.

Human Trafficking Regional Coordinators are encouraging regions to seek opportunities to secure feedback through the following mechanisms:

- CPI Multidisciplinary Staffings;
- Human Trafficking CBC Alert Staffings; and
- Creation and usage of surveys.

The Human Trafficking Annual Strategic Planning session is scheduled for February 24, 2017. All Regional Human Trafficking Coordinators will be present and all Regional Criminal Justice Coordinators have been invited to attend. We will again discuss this topic at that meeting.

***RECOMMENDATION:*** *We further recommend that DJJ and DCF validate the screening tool when sufficient data and support are available to do so. We recommend DCF consider automation of the tool and prioritizing the validation of the screening tool as resources allow.*

***Status (per Office of Child Welfare staff): Partially Completed***

A Change Request was submitted in January 2016 and October 2016 requesting that the Human Trafficking Screening tool be built into FSFN for automation reporting purposes. At this time, this Change Request has been accepted but there is not an identified designated date for completion. In addition, OCW explored the potential for a separate database for tracking screening tool data, but it was determined to be an excessive workload increase for the regions and will not be pursued at this time.

***RECOMMENDATION:*** *As DCF works to identify relevant treatment outcomes for CSE children, we recommend that it consider data representing the diverse needs and placements of the CSE population. We recommend that DCF consider the data from additional Florida interventions and providers.*

***Status (per Office of Child Welfare staff): Partially Completed***

DCF currently receives treatment outcome reports from USF regarding Citrus Mental Health's CHANCE program. DCF has requested data and outcomes from other providers but all of the information provided from other specialized programs comes from their own internal collection and analyses and lacks an independent academic analysis.

DCF has indicated the need for funding to support the independent academic evaluation and analysis of specialized programming. In addition, a similar recommendation came out of the Statewide Council on Human Trafficking's Services and Resources Committee and reflected in the Council's 2016 Annual Report to the Legislature. In the 2016-17 Legislative session, U.S. Institute Against Human Trafficking, previously known as the Dream House, was provided a general revenue appropriation. They have partnered with USF to obtain an independent academic evaluation of their programming as well. They are anticipating opening their home in March or April 2017.

This follow-up audit was conducted as required by Florida Statutes 20.055(6)(h) and section 2500.A1 of the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing as published by the Institute of Internal Auditors. Elton Jones compiled this follow-up audit from representations provided by program management. Please address inquiries regarding this report to Jerry Chesnutt, Director of Auditing, at (850) 488-8722.