



2024 Illinois Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR)

Addendum E - Training Plan

**Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
Submitted June 30, 2023**

Training Plan

States must provide updated information on training plan requirements including:

- *As needed, update the Training Plan. Any training activities to be paid for with the title IV-E funds that were not included in the Training Plan must be included in an Updated Training Plan. The Training Plan can be updated by submitting a separate document that will serve as an appendix to the 2020-2024 Training Plan.*
- *For any new training not previously described, the state must address the following in its updated training plan;*
 - *A brief, one-paragraph syllabus of the training activity*
 - *Indication of the specifically allowable title IV-E administrative functions the training activity addresses.*
 - *Description of the setting/venue for the training activity.*
 - *Indication of the duration of the training activity.*
 - *Description of the proposed provider of the training activity*
 - *Specification of approximate number of days/hours of the training activity.*
 - *Description of the audience to receive the training.*
 - *Description of estimated total cost.*
 - *Cost allocation methodology applied to training costs*

Office of Learning and Professional Development (OLPD) Program Development 2020-2025 Updated: Year 4 FY24

The learning and professional development priorities stated in this plan will improve the knowledge, skill, and ability of employees, allied helping professionals, foster caregivers, and adoptive parents to perform their job and care for children; competently, ethically, and professionally.

For 2020-2025, learning and professional development programs will support the implementation of the following:

- Five-year and Annual Updates to the Federal Children and Family Services Plan (CFSP);
- Federal Child and Family Services Program Improvement Plan (PIP) as enacted;
- Director and executive staff program initiatives and priorities,
- Department compliance with national child welfare accreditation training standards of the Council on Accreditation (COA),
- Furthering the use of experiential learning to improve capacity through skill development,
- State Law and Court Training Mandates, and
- Federal Law, Federal Court Consent Decrees, and Orders.

For Year 4 of this plan, the strategic direction for learning and professional development will focus on aligning of the learning in support of the Departments strategic goals. The Learning and Development areas of focus (6):

- 1) *Enhanced Safety and Decision Making through Family First/Motivational Interviewing.* The Department has established mandatory ongoing professional development for all direct service staff and supervisors. In year one, the first of these mandatory trainings the Safety Reboot. Topics for other trainings will be based on feedback from surveys, focus groups, and DCFS administrative direction based on available data and feedback from key stakeholders.
 - A cornerstone in this effort is in-service training in support of the Department's renewed focus on safety. Procedural revisions and learning strategies will support improving the skill and ability of staff to demonstrate improved decision-making to reduce the reoccurrence of maltreatment for children in that come into to contact with the Department

through investigations, intact family services, or out-of-home care. The “Safety Reboot” was rolled out statewide in year 1 of this plan.

- During this reporting period installment 4 – “Motivational Interviewing Skills” was combined with the rollout of Family First and will continue as a focus of this plan through December of 2023. **Family First/Motivational Interviewing training (FF/MI) began October 2021.** The Intact cohort started in the fall of 2021. The initial Intact cohort ran from October 2021 to January 2022 with 86% of Intact staff and supervisors completing the course. The remaining Intact staff, Permanency, and Adoptions were folded into the Spring of 2022 cohort completion. The course was added to Foundations for Intact and Permanency, Adoptions stills receives the training as an in-service. In April of 2023 DCP will began an abbreviated course that focuses on a Family First overview and MI without the pieces related to casework SACWIS updates that only apply to follow-up staff.

- 2) Continued use and expansion of simulations. Simulation training has been offered consistently to investigators since the launch of the Department Child Protection Training Academy (CPTA) in 2016. The Department launched the DCFS CPTA simulation lab in Dekalb with Northern Illinois University in May 2023 which had been on hold during FY22 and for the first three quarters of FY23 due to contractual issues with the university and a lack of staffing at the NIU center. During the development phase staff that were hired began training with the DCFS CPTA Chicago lab. In FY23 the Chicago simulation lab provided all of the simulations for Q1 through Q3 after the Springfield location decided not to renew their contract for FY23. All simulations that were needed for child protection have been accomplished. The DCFS CPTA in Carbondale with Southern Illinois University (SIUC) has also been delayed due to contractual issues with the university which are being resolved. The contract is pending SIUC final legal review. In the meantime, the DCFS Chief Learning Officer has been able to negotiate with the SIUC Chief of Staff to move forward with creating and posting positions concurrently to minimize delays. The anticipated start, pending staffing will be in Q2 of FY24. The goal is to have a simulation center in each region by the end of FY23. Illinois State University (ISU) is in contract negotiations with the Department to launch the final simulation center in Bloomington in January 2024. This will support expansion to new and veteran permanency DCFS and private sector staff and supervisors.

The Department has contracted with Deloitte to develop the new technology needed for the CCWIS implementation, now known as Illinois Connect. The DCFS Chief Learning Officer met with the Chief of Staff and Chief Information Officer to request that the Department invest in immersive learning modules that provide virtual simulations to further expand OLPD’s experiential learning opportunities. Child Protection leadership has also been exploring immersive learning and in 2023 Deloitte collaborated with OLPD and Child Protection to develop four customized immersive learning virtual environments and multiple “choose your own journey” interactive skills application modules that will launch in July 2023 along with OLPD’s new learning management system (LMS) that will replace the current Virtual Training Center (VTC). The new Learning Development Center (LDC) launches in July 2023. Child Protection will be the first to pilot the new immersive learning technology and scenarios for child welfare Permanency and Intact staff will be launched as part of the phase two release of the LDC in March 2024. This innovation has zero budgetary impact on the Department.

- 3) Continued (in-service) training in support of the Illinois Core Practice Model. The Illinois Core Practice Model has been adopted as a cornerstone strategy for the Program Improvement Plan and will continue to be implemented across the state with evaluation of the impact on the CFSR outcomes over the PIP reporting period. The Illinois Core Practice Model includes three training components related to Family-centered, Trauma-informed, and Strength-based practice, sustained use of this practice model to strengthen supervisory practice, and enhanced use of Child and Family Team Meetings. The Department has fully embedded the

core practice model with continue to build in systems to implement and sustain the components of the Illinois Core Practice Model through in-service training courses and workshops that reinforce and support casework and supervisory practice. The evaluation of its impact will be measured through Chapin Hall and the Department's Division of Quality Enhancement.

The OLPD Field Implementation Support Program (FISP) operated through the Department's Workforce Development contract with UIUC has continued training for a CFTM pilots and the Meta Model Pilot. The training consists of a 3-hour facilitator-led training refresher for the targeted intact and permanency staff and supervisors followed by a 1.5-day facilitator-led deep dive into application of CFTM with a family-centered, trauma-informed and strength-based lens. After completing the two training sessions, additional systems and practice coaching, supervisory forums for support and implementation support will be provided by various staff under the Division of Strategy and Performance.

4) Continued (Pre and In-service) Foundation training courses for new hires or reassigned employees in the areas of:

- Child protective services, including training on revisions to Rule 300; and to improve the skill and ability of staff to achieve the Department's PIP goal of improvement in engaging parents and assessing family and children's needs (Goals #1 and #2); - A Foundations redesign for Child Protection began in April 2023 and will launch in January 2024. The redesign will streamline the curricula and fold in the DCP MI in-service.
- Family preservation (Intact Family) services (Goal #1 and #2); - A Foundations redesign for Intact began in July 2022 and launched in phase 1 in October 2022. The redesign streamlined the curricula and folded in the FF/MI in-service and Workplace and Field Safety as a facilitator led course. Phase 2 will enhance the current curricula with more learn-centered application.
- Training to improve the skill and ability of staff to achieve the Department's PIP Goal of increasing the capacity of foster parents to improve the overall well-being of children served by the Department and to build parental capacity (Goal #3 and #4);
- Foster care (permanency-placement) services. This includes improvement in staff skill and ability to achieve the Department's PIP Goal of improved timeliness of Family Reunification (Goal #3),
- Adoption and post-adoption services, including training to improve the skill and ability of staff to achieve timeliness of adoption (such as termination of parental rights, adoption placement, subsidized guardianship, and adoption services) (Goal #3),
- Licensing of agencies, institutions, day care and foster care homes,
- *Training in support of casework and supervisory staff use and application of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS).* and
- Child welfare supervision and management, including the implementation of the Department Model of Supervisory Practice (Goal #2 and #3).

OLPD has increased the number of Foundations offerings to support the Department's and Child Welfare Contributing Partner (CWCA) agency hiring. Turn-over in direct service positions has been high since the pandemic and is expected to continue. This has led to hiring of staff that may not have a human service degree background or any child welfare work experience. In response, a Foundations redesign for Permanency and Intact began in July 2022 and launched in phase 1 in October 2022. The redesign streamlined the curricula and folded in the FF/MI in-service and Workplace and Field Safety as a facilitator led course. Phase 2 will enhance the current curricula with more learn-centered application. The courses are now both a 3-week hybrid model with 2/3 in-person and 1/3 virtual facilitator led. OLPD Foundations for Intact and Permanency course now allows for more instruction time in-class

and application to solidify the foundational learning. In October 2023, videos will be added that highlight youth in care voice to enhance the curricula for all Foundations courses.

5) Continued In-Service training workshops and courses in support of safety, well-being, permanency, and prevention.

Services to Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Questioning, and Intersexed (LGBTQI) youth in Department care:

- The new “Working with LGBTQI Youth in Care” launch in August 2021. The initial training threshold for staff was met at 85% in November of 2021 and has now been made a required course through Foundations.
- The Department has continued to work with the HRC to launch a facilitator-led staff and caregiver LGBTQI training as per the agreement with BH. OLPD is awaiting content from DEI to update the Department’s Appendix K that gives direction to staff, supervisors, and caregivers on Department expectations per rule and procedure, which is anticipated for fall of 2023. The project was delayed due to procurement issues which are being resolved so the contract can be executed through UIUC. Once received the content will be incorporated into the facilitator-led training

Training in support of the Office of Racial Equity:

The Implicit Bias Training began in 2021 and continues to be mandatory for all new Department and purchase of service agency staff. OLPD completed update to the current public and internal Mandated Reporter trainings to include a module on Understanding Bias used and modified with permission from the University of Maine. The Governor’s Office implemented the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for all state employee that is being developed by the Illinois Department of Human Rights with required completion for state agency employees by December 2022. The training was offered through the state agency OneNet training system.

OLPD will continue to offer all required pre-service and in-service training and required and needed over the next year of this plan

6) Continued Long-Term Title IV-E training through colleges and university social work and human sciences schools in support of the Department to recruit/retain a qualified workforce.

- The Department has added a goal *to enhance partnerships with universities, create opportunities for professional development, and reduce barriers for upward mobility for DCFS and Community Based Provider staff to its Strategic Plan.* In support of this, OLPD continues efforts to recruit college students for casework and supervisory careers with the Department and CWCA agencies, including Latino students with language skills in both Spanish and English. The Department will expand the Title IV-E Long Term Education Program in partnership with colleges and universities to graduate students directly to casework and supervisory jobs. This will not only provide a well-trained workforce, but also meet the recruitment needs for the next five years and beyond. In Year 3 through 5 of this plan, additional public and private universities will be added to the current list of Colleges and University Partners. (See attached Exhibit A for the list of active and in development Partnership Universities).
- Education Fellowship Pilot Program: The pilot continues as the Department is initiating contracts with public university schools of social work to implement the Pat McGuire **Child Welfare Education Fellowship Pilot Program** to provide educational stipends to eligible undergraduate students in their junior or senior year enrolled in a Bachelor of Social Work Program (“BSW”) or eligible graduate students enrolled in a Master’s of Social Work Program (“MSW”) at a participating public university in Illinois.
 - The amount of a stipend is up to a maximum of \$10,000 each academic year for a maximum of two academic years, up to a maximum total of \$20,000 for the two

academic years combined for each eligible student. The stipends must be used to pay the costs of tuition, university fees, and books.

- As a condition of receiving a stipend, eligible students must enter into agreements with the Department in which they agree to, inter alia,: (i) complete the BSW or MSW course of study in which the eligible student is enrolled at the participating university, (ii) become a licensed Child Welfare Employee in Illinois prior to graduation, (iii) accept full-time employment in a direct services position at a Department purchase of service agency located anywhere in the State within six months of graduation and, (iv) maintain full-time employment in a direct services position at a Department purchase of service agency for at least 9-months for each academic semester the student received a stipend from the Department. Stipend recipients who fail to complete the Program education and employment requirements must repay the stipends received from the Department. The Pilot Program will last six academic years.
- The Department currently has expanded participation to all state universities with no restriction on the number of students from each participating university. This aligns with but is not restricted to state universities that teach the Department’s Foundations for Permanency.

Foundations for Permanency at colleges and universities: At the submission of the last training plan in 2021, a total of 13 universities are active and an additional 15 are in the progress of adopting the university partnership program or in development to begin their partnership in the program. Please see the Exhibit A for the status of the engagement to teach Foundations for Permanency at colleges and universities.

FY23 University Partnership Progress

Educational Institution	Status
Aurora University	Active Partner
Chicago State University	Active Partner
Dominican University	Active Partner
Governors State University	Active Partner
Illinois State University	Active Partner
Lewis University	Active Partner
Northeastern State University	Active Partner
Northern Illinois University	Active Partner
University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign	Active Partner
University of Saint Francis	Active Partner
Saint Augustine College	Active Partner
Southern Illinois University, Carbondale	Active Partner
Western Illinois University	Active Partner
15 New Partnerships in Development for FY24-FY25	

OLPD will also continue to support these Department Workforce Development goals:

- Develop relationships with University Social Work and other related programs in Illinois to allow graduate students to conduct an internship with DCFS while earning their degree and develop a path to hire new graduates committed to working in the field of child welfare.
- Provide pathways for easy access for individualized training for their current program or to a refresher class through the reinstatement of the DCFS 705A program for Department staff to offset costs for DCFS staff to attend ongoing professional development workshops, conferences, and additional college level courses.

- Support the existing workforce through the full implementation of the DCFS Model of Supervisory Practice.
- Improve implementation support of our Core Practice Model across the system, with the intention of shifting system culture toward recognizing families as the experts on their strengths and needs.
- Develop multi-disciplinary training (judges and attorneys as trainers) for caseworkers on testifying and court procedures to improve their knowledge of court process, expectations and building relationships with court stakeholders to improve communication and caseworker retention.