Ventura County Human Services Agency Department of Children & Family Services Response to the Citizen's Review Panel's Annual Recommendations Report (2016-2017)

It is with appreciation that the Ventura County Department of Children & Family Services (CFS) reviews the 2016-2017 Ventura County Citizen's Review Panel (CRP) Annual Recommendations Report. We know and understand the time and focus community members have contributed to our shared goal of improving the child welfare system. Dedicated community partnerships strengthen the work of preventing and ameliorating child abuse and neglect.

In 2016-2017, the CRP activities focused on meeting the CRP federally mandated requirements (Goal 1), Carry out CRP functions in accordance with federal and California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) guidelines. (Goal 2), Monitor group home, residential care, and shelter usage outcomes for children in the foster care system in order to increase family maintenance cases. (Goal 3), Review, advise, and monitor recommended child welfare data variables and strategies used to monitor child welfare outcomes as part of Ventura County's CFS reporting process. Ensure a family-strengthening approach is incorporated as part of CFS reporting language and family engagement strategies.

Ventura County Department of Children& Family Services response to the six CRP recommendations (FFY 2016-2017) is as follows:

Recommendation #1 Child Welfare Outcomes

Response: Ventura County CFS accepts the recommendation to develop and enact an implementation plan to improve child welfare outcomes in the Oxnard and Port Hueneme areas. The information gathered as part of the 2016-2017 CRP meetings will be used to inform the new approaches and technical assistance from Casey Family Programs and the Public Child Welfare Training Academy will be leveraged to work with our local Partnership for Safe Families to design both internal and external strategies for improving outcomes in this target area.

Recommendation #2 Planning

Response: Ventura County CFS agrees to use the information gathered as part of the 2016-2017 CRP, county, municipal, and community partners to collaboratively develop a Prevention Plan to coordinate, align, and build prevention efforts throughout Ventura County with focus in

high-need communities, such as Oxnard and Port Hueneme. This effort will leverage the expertise of Diane Kellegrew who will provide direct assistance to both the Partnership for Safe Families and Ventura County CFS in designing this prevention plan.

Recommendation #3 Collaboration

Response: Ventura County CFS accepts the recommendation to convene County and community leadership to strengthen collaboration and alignment between community efforts and the child welfare agency for the purpose of improving child safety, permanence, and wellbeing. This group will take the place of the Citizen Review Panel going forward (CRP funding sunset). Specific efforts will focus on leveraging existing membership for continued work on the neighborhood model.

Recommendation #4 Outcome Monitoring

Response: Ventura County CFS will continue to collect relevant data and will expand efforts to facilitate the community's understanding of child welfare outcome monitoring. This will include continued public dissemination of the Children & Family Service Principles and Outcomes Dashboard.

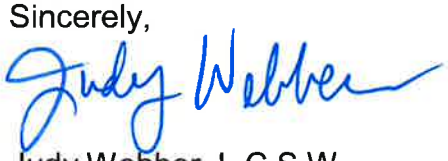
Recommendation #5 Outcome Monitoring

Response: Ventura County CFS will continue to support IPERC convening's for continued monitoring of outcomes and implementation of CCR implementation for children in care.

Recommendation #6 Dissemination

Response: Ventura County CFS will facilitate posting of the CRP 2016-2017 Annual Report on the website of the Ventura County Partnership for Safe Families and Communities (regional Child Abuse Prevention Council) and on the Ventura County Human Services Agency website.

Sincerely,



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