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March 7, 2017

ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) NO. 17-17

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- ☐ State Law Change
- ☐ Federal Law or Regulation Change
- ☐ Court Order
- ☐ Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- ☒ Initiated by CDSS

TO: ALL ADOPTION DISTRICT OFFICES
ALL COUNTY ADOPTION AGENCIES
ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL TITLE IV-E AGREEMENT TRIBES
ALL CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS
ALL COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF STATEWIDE COMMON CORE
3.0 CURRICULUM

REFERENCE: MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, DIVISION 14,
SECTION 14-600; ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE I-66-03;
ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE I-44-15

The purpose of this ACL is to provide information about the February 2017 implementation of the statewide standardized Common Core 3.0 (CC 3.0) for social workers. The CC 3.0 is the result of a large scale revision of California's Common Core Curricula (Core) for child welfare workers.

BACKGROUND

The 2003 federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) and the resulting Program Improvement Plan (PIP) mandated the development and implementation of a statewide standardized core curriculum for social workers and supervisors. The Statewide Training System, which is comprised of the Regional Training Academies (RTAs), the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC), Los Angeles Department of Child and Family Services (LADCFS) and the University Consortium for Children and Families (UCCF), developed the current Core in 2005.

This Core content was organized by stand-alone key topic areas identified as priority topics for new social workers. There were seven topics with standardized content and 14 topics with standardized learning objectives. For these topics, regions developed their own curricula which met the identified learning objectives. This resulted in a topic driven curriculum that although foundationally similar, varied greatly across the state. The decision to undertake a large scale revision of this curriculum arose after conversations with the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) revealed that they were seeking a much higher level of standardization throughout the state. Feedback from social workers and supervisors also exposed that although trainees gain knowledge, they struggle to transfer what is learned in the classroom to their everyday practice.

The CC 3.0 has standardized content to be delivered as written and takes into account the evolution of the field, particularly as California moves toward the implementation of the California Child Welfare Core Practice Model (CPM). The CC 3.0 is intended to shift the California training system from a training-based system to a system focused on workforce development by maximizing the use of available technology and multiple training modalities to promote transfer of learning from the classroom to the field.

COMMON CORE 3.0 INTRODUCES SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

Created Around the Core Practice Model

The CC 3.0 is organized around key practice areas defined in the CPM, initially developed by Pathways to Well-Being. This ensures the concepts in the content are grounded in best practices. The curriculum is organized by content in blocks that model the CPM and the process that social workers use to engage with families. Because the curriculum is designed to build upon itself, the sequence in which a trainee experiences CC 3.0 is very important and will mirror the sequence of the CPM.

1. **Foundation** - The Foundation Block content provides key information that is carried forward in the remaining blocks. This includes practical content that introduces trainees to the common core, legal content about the laws governing child welfare intervention, and practice related content. Concepts of fairness and equity/cultural humility, engagement, teaming, trauma-informed practice, Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and strength based practice are introduced and then interwoven throughout the blocks to reinforce best practices to support children and families.
2. **Engagement** - The Engagement Block content focuses on engagement and interviewing. This includes topics such as use of authority, strength-based interviewing, and learning how to talk to families about concurrent planning.
3. **Assessment** - The Assessment Block content focuses on critical thinking, standardized assessment, and child maltreatment identification. This includes identification of a critical thinking process; information about assessment policy and practice; and tips and practice for identifying neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse/exploitation.

4. **Case Planning and Service Delivery** - The Case Planning and Service Delivery Block content focuses on working with families to develop behaviorally based case plans that are culturally relevant and tailored to the specific needs of each family. This includes information about case planning policy and practice, writing case plan objectives, and the role of visitation in positive outcomes for families.
5. **Monitoring and Adapting** - The Monitoring and Adapting Block content focuses on measuring case plan progress and adjusting service planning to meet families' needs as they work their case plans. This includes information about measuring progress, placement policy and practice, reinforcing the importance of teaming, and placement stability.
6. **Transition** - The Transition Block content encompasses the typical transitions social workers facilitate with families, including reunification, placement changes, and After 18. This includes development of a trauma-focused transition practice.

Additional information about the classes in each block can be found in the attached document entitled "Common Core 3.0".

Standardized to Ensure Foundational Training Statewide

The CC 3.0 was created as a single standardized curriculum that is mandated statewide to ensure all new child welfare social workers are getting the foundational training necessary for competence in the field. The CC 3.0 has standardized content and will be delivered as written to ensure that the proper training reaches all of California's new social workers. The standard curriculum will be posted on the CalSWEC website and updated regularly in accordance with evolving child welfare practice. The blocks are designed to build on each other with common themes integrated throughout. Concepts of fairness and equity/cultural humility, engagement, teaming, trauma-informed practice, ICWA, and strength based practice have been interwoven throughout the blocks to reinforce best practices to support children and families.

Each block contains two levels of curriculum. Blocks begin with 100 level eLearning, classroom, and field activities, followed by 200 level classroom and eLearning content. The CC 3.0 integrates tools such as Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and Structured Decision Making (SDM) into the curricula and field activities. This integration ensures social workers are given the opportunity to practice tools in the classroom that will be used in the field. They will then have the opportunity to reinforce the skills learned in the classroom by working with their field advisor to practice the skills outside of the classroom.

New Modalities to Enhance Learning

The CC 3.0 provides a more comprehensive picture of child welfare practice for new social workers. It was created with a strategic blend of learning modalities. This includes using eLearning courses to deliver basic knowledge elements thus maximizing

classroom time for skill building and providing new social workers with opportunities to enhance skills learned in the classroom through application of concepts in the field.

The CC 3.0 consists of 24 eLearning courses, 22 ½ days of in-person classroom learning, and nine field activities.

100 Level eLearning

Within each block, there is eLearning that provides the foundational knowledge for skill building practice in the classroom and field activities. There are 22, 100 level eLearning courses that allow the trainee to work at their own pace to enhance knowledge acquisition. The eLearning modules provide handouts and study sheets to assist the new social worker throughout CC 3.0 and provide a reference for future practice. The counties should schedule protected time for their new social workers to complete the eLearning courses to allow the trainee to fully engage in the learning process.

Fourteen eLearning courses are **required** pre-requisites for classroom courses. These courses contain knowledge elements linked to specific 100 level classroom courses. Six eLearning courses are sequenced in order to improve the learning experience for classroom courses and three eLearning courses are provided as stand-alone modules. These three stand-alone eLearning courses are considered part of the Foundation Block and must be completed prior to taking the Foundation Block 200 level class.

100 Level Classroom

There are 15 ½ 100 level in-person classroom days in CC 3.0. Moving the knowledge acquisition piece of the curriculum to eLearning allows for classroom time to be focused on skill based learning. This is a big shift for both trainers and trainees. Trainers are no longer “lecturers” and are now facilitators of skill development. The activities in the classroom are designed to assist the trainee to engage in hands-on activities to develop their skills, through large and small group work, vignettes and case studies. The CC 3.0 integrates tools used in the field (such as SDM and CWS/CMS) as well as best practices (such as teaming, trauma informed practice, and concepts of Safety Organized Practice) to better prepare new social workers to support California families.

100 Level Field Activities

The third component of CC 3.0 is the Field Activities. These nine skills-based field activities are designed to revisit specific foundational knowledge and skills, learned in the eLearning and classroom, and practice them in the field. It is important to note that these activities are to be conducted in the field with actual cases and not in a Simulation Lab. Counties will be responsible to provide field support. Supervisors are well-situated to fill this role, but depending on local needs, counties may identify others as field advisors for new staff. Field advisors will be responsible for arranging, discussing, observing, and completing documentation on specific field experiences for trainees.

The field activities are designed to reinforce typical child welfare activities and likely would be included in usual supervision of new employees. The CC 3.0 package provides tools to support field advisors including a field guide with descriptions of the field activities and step-by-step instructions for completion. A standardized field advisor curriculum must be completed by all field advisors to provide an overview of the concepts in CC 3.0 and skill-building opportunities in coaching and mentoring.

Optimally, field activities should be completed soon after the 100 level classroom training, so that transfer of learning for new social workers can be effective. If there is a long lapse of time between 100 level classroom training and completing field activities, the opportunity to reinforce learning will be lost and the skills learned may not transfer as well to their practice. Field activities must be completed prior to new social workers taking the 200 level courses.

200 Level eLearning and Classroom

The final component of CC 3.0 is the 200 level content. There are seven 200 level in-person classroom days and two eLearning courses. This curriculum is designed to reinforce particular practice areas and deepen the trainee's skill and knowledge in each block. After the trainees have completed all of the 100 level content in each block and had some time in the field to gain some experience, they are required to complete the 200 level courses. The 200 level courses will be delivered in sequence, as the activities introduced in the Assessment Block are further explored in subsequent blocks. Taking the courses out of order will greatly diminish the new social workers' ability to participate in the classroom activities. New social workers are not considered to be finished with CC 3.0 until all 200 level classes have been completed. Refer to Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Chapter 14-600 Training Programs for training timelines. This can be found at: <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/ord/entres/getinfo/pdf/sdman.pdf>

SEQUENCING

Because CC 3.0 is designed for the blocks to build upon each other to strengthen social work practice, the order in which the new social worker experiences the program is crucial. The curriculum will be delivered in sequence by blocks as outlined above. It is best for all new social workers to begin with the Foundation Block and work their way through the curriculum. Beginning a new social worker in the middle of a CC 3.0 cycle may be confusing and hinder their ability to apply concepts in the field. Within the blocks, eLearning courses provide the necessary knowledge for participation in the 100 level classes. Fourteen of these courses are required pre-requisites and must be done prior to the corresponding class. If a new social worker is unable to complete the pre-requisite eLearning prior to their scheduled class, they will need to reschedule their class. It is incumbent on the counties to ensure new social workers have protected time to complete their eLearning prior to the class to keep them on track. Knowledge and skill acquired through eLearning and classroom are applied to a skill building activity in

the field. Once the new social workers have had some time to practice their new skills in the field they return for a 200 level class to strengthen their practice.

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of CC 3.0 began in January 2016 with the addition of the Assessment Block into Common Core 2.0, essentially creating Common Core 2.5 (CC 2.5). By implementing this block early, the counties and RTAs were able to practice with the new modalities of training and build capacity to roll out the remaining five blocks. This time enabled the counties to establish field advisors and rearrange schedules to allow protected time for eLearning to take place.

FULL IMPLEMENTATION

Statewide, all new cohorts of social workers will be enrolled in CC 3.0 beginning February 1, 2017. The 100 level eLearning, classroom and field activities will be implemented February 1, 2017. The 200 level classes will be implemented July 1, 2017. Cohorts that began their training prior to February 1, 2017, will have until December 29, 2017 to complete all CC 2.5 classes. As of January 1, 2018, training entities will no longer be providing CC 2.5 classes. If a social worker misses a CC 2.5 class and is unable to make it up prior to the deadline, the county can work with their training entity and California Department of Social Services to find the appropriate CC 3.0 class(es) to meet the requirements. There is a make-up matrix available on the CalSWEC website below to assist in these instances.

Additional information about the CC 3.0 revision, including detailed information regarding content, implementation timelines, and FAQs, can be found on the CalSWEC website at: <http://calswec.berkeley.edu/common-core-30-information-and-overview>

If you have any questions about the implementation of CC 3.0, you may email cwstrainingquestions@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

GREGORY E. ROSE,
Deputy Director
Children and Family Services Division

Attachments

COMMON CORE 3.0

Foundation Block

Block 1 – Foundation		
100 Level eLearning **	Federal and State Laws	60 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose of laws and regulations specific to children and youth placed in out-of-home care Primary goals of child welfare practice in California: Safety, Permanency and Well-being 	
	*Legal Procedures	60 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal overview of dependency cases Purpose, standard of proof, time frames for each hearing, and providing information to the families about the legal proceedings 	
	Time and Stress Management	60 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies for managing time Exploration of secondary traumatic stress and stress reduction techniques 	
	Social Worker Safety	60 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing social worker safety in the field Avoiding and mitigating danger 	
	*ICWA Introduction	60 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tribal sovereignty Basic provisions of the law 	
	Documentation Practice and Report Writing	120 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tips and practice writing case notes, case plans, and court reports. 	
100 Level eLearning **	*Key Issues in Child Welfare: Behavioral Health	60 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Factors influencing the mental health functioning of family members Recognize there is a range of functioning/living with mental illness Commonly occurring mental disorders that impact families in a child welfare setting 	
	*Key Issues in Child Welfare: Substance Use Disorders	60 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levels of treatment and case planning Indicators of substance use and relapse Dynamics of substance use and impact on families in a child welfare setting 	
	*Key Issues in Child Welfare: Intimate Partner Violence	60 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definitions of Intimate Partner Violence Intervention Strategies Impact of Intimate Partner Violence on children in a child welfare setting 	
	Introduction to Child Development	60 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ages and stages milestones Red flags Connection to CWS and need to engage with the family 	
	*Introduction to Trauma Informed Practice	60 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key terms related to childhood traumatic stress Traumatic responses at developments stages and chronological ages Healing support and recovery of youth experienced trauma 	

COMMON CORE 3.0

Block 1 – Foundation		
100 Level Classroom	Orientation to Child Welfare Practice and Common Core 3.0 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to SW practice in California • NASW Code of Ethics • Social Workers role and responsibility in advocacy • Overview of the core practice blocks, modalities, and sequence 	½ day
	Values and Ethics in Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice related vignettes with ethical dilemmas • Awareness of personal values and their possible influence on casework 	½ day
	Teaming, Collaboration, and Transparency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration basics (who to collaborate with, their role, your role and why this collaboration is important) • Interdisciplinary collaboration (behavioral health), sharing roles (adoption social worker, etc.) 	1 day
	*Trauma-informed Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to trauma-informed practice (including secondary traumatic stress/stress management) 	1 day
	Fairness and Equity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intro to cultural humility, disproportionality and disparity 	½ day
	*ICWA and Working with Native American Families and Tribes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History and culture • Overview of the ICWA law and requirements (Spirit of the Law) 	1 day
	Intro to CWS/CMS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic CWS/CMS training including terms, commands, navigation, notebooks, reports 	½ day
	*Key Issues in Child Welfare: Social Worker as Practitioner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stages of change and strategies for engaging and motivating family members experiencing intimate partner violence, substance use and/or mental illness • The role of the child welfare practitioner • Practice case plan interventions used by child welfare workers to engage children, youth and families. 	2 days
	*Legal Procedures and Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal procedures, responsibilities, and preparing for appearances and testifying in court 	1 day
Field**	ICWA and Working with Native American Tribes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify local tribes and best practices for connecting with Tribal representatives 	1 hour
	Cultural Responsiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection on bias and cultural humility 	1 hour
200 Level	Classroom - Trauma Informed Practice and Key Issues Knowledge and Skill Reinforcement Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma Informed Practice • Key Issues in Child Welfare Practice: Intimate Partner Violence, Behavioral Health, Substance Use Disorder 	1 day
	eLearning - ICWA Review and Expert Witness	60 Minutes
	eLearning – Child Welfare Services Outcomes	60 minutes

COMMON CORE 3.0

Engagement Block

Block 2 – Engagement		
100 Level eLearning **	Respect, Courtesy and Skillful use of Authority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate use of authority and respect • Voluntary and involuntary clients • “Customer” service 	60 minutes
	*Interviewing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phases of the interview • Types of questions • Strength-based interviewing strategies 	90 minutes
	Concurrent Planning Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic definition • Family Finding (CWS/CMS Integration Point) includes family finding and connectedness) 	90 minutes
100 Level Classroom	*Engagement and interviewing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and framing your message • Strategies to employ “in the moment critical thinking” about what facts are needed, what doesn’t add up, how to get at the key information 	1 day
Field**	Interviewing	2 hours
	Exploring Family, Extended Family, Community & Tribal Connections & Relationships	2 hours
200 Level	Classroom - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Humility in Child Welfare Interviews: Ethnographic Interviewing • Interviewing Children 	2 days

COMMON CORE 3.0

Assessment Block

Block 3 – Assessment		
100 Level eLearning **	*Overview of Assessment Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The difference between safety and risk Protective capacity (including operationalizing protective capacity in teams) SDM policies and procedures 	120 minutes
	*Child Maltreatment Identification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types of maltreatment Recognizing neglect 	90 minutes
100 Level Classroom	Critical Thinking and Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information analysis and synthesis Fact checking Supervisor consultation 	½ day
	*SDM Skills Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SDM tools throughout the life of the case Practice completing assessment tools 	1.5 day
	Assessing for Key Child Welfare Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special issues in assessment (red flags for Intimate Partner Violence, Mental Health, Substance Abuse) Assessing for well-being factors (health, education supports, mental health) Understanding the purpose of using mental health screening tools 	½ day
	*Child Maltreatment Identification Skills Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills practice identifying neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect using a framework 	1 day
Field**	Collaborative Assessment, Planning and Support: Safety and Risk in Teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe safety and risk case presentation in a team setting Practice completing a safety plan with a team 	2 hours
	Completing SDM Assessment Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice completing safety and risk assessment tools 	2 hours
200 Level	Classroom - Structured Decision Making Knowledge and Skill Reinforcement Lab	1 day

COMMON CORE 3.0

Case Planning and Service Delivery Block

Block 4 – Case Planning and Service Delivery		
100 Level eLearning **	*Case planning basics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on case planning as a path to permanency DIV 31 Requirements Identifying safety linked behaviors to use in case plan development Intro to SMART objectives 	90 minutes
	Purposeful visitation and family time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of documenting visit activities and link to case plan objectives Using visits to support case plan monitoring 	90 minutes
100 Level Classroom	Behavioral Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing behavior based objectives (CWS/CMS Integration point) Behavioral case planning based on assessment of identified family strengths and needs 	½ day
	*Case Planning in a Team Setting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case planning and concurrent planning in a team setting including culturally specific, coordinated, family-driven teaming processes Use of community services including Linkages, formal and informal supports Relationship building between birth and foster families 	½ day
Field**	Collaborative Assessment, Planning and Support: Initial case plan [part I]:	3 hours
200 Level	Classroom - Case Planning and Concurrent Planning skills lab	1 day

Monitoring and Adapting Block

Block 5 – Monitoring and Adapting		
100 Level eLearning **	*Monitoring and Adapting: Supporting Safety, Permanency and Well-being <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the focus of MSLC by addressing identified safety and risk concerns Consideration of relevant laws, practices and policies Utilization of appropriate SDM tools 	60 minutes
	*Placement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify supports to help resource families maintain safety, permanency and well-being in placement Research based factors associated with increase stability in out-of-home placements Guidelines, placement assessment process, and placement options of RFA process and CCR 	60 minutes
100 Level Classroom	*Managing the Plan: Supporting Safety, Permanency and Well-being <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bias (personal standards vs. community standards, MSLC) Collaboratively (re)evaluating the effectiveness of the plan Achieving Safety Goals Collaboration and teaming to enhance well-being and placement stability Support healing in children and families who experience trauma following child welfare placement 	1 day
Field**	Collaborative Assessment, Planning and Support: Case plan update [part II]	3 hours
200 Level	Classroom - Managing Change	1 day

COMMON CORE 3.0

Transition Block

Block 6 – Transition		
100 Level eLearning**	*Case Closure and After Care Plans for all Transitioning Cases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing risk and safety as cases are closing, and developing aftercare plans for all types of case closures Continuing to create, develop, and support Circles of support for families, children, youth and Non Minor Dependents at case closure 	60 minutes
	After 18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding eligibility and Extended Foster Care basics Engaging and working with young adults (rights, role changes, self-determination) 	60 minutes
100 Level Classroom	*Transition practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning transition with families Minimizing trauma in placement changes and transitioning to permanency Case management during transitions Managing transition within teams 	1 day
Field**	Collaborative Assessment, Planning and Support: Transition Case Plan [part III]	3 hours
200 Level	Classroom - Managing Transitions Knowledge and Skill Reinforcement Lab	1 day

*Denotes eLearning as a required pre-requisite

**Denotes an estimated time for self-paced modules

100 Level eLearning
100 Level Classroom
Field
200 Level