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STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE
AUDITOR GENERAL

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DEPUTY AUDITOR GENERAL

June 12, 2018

The Honorable Anthony Kern, Chair
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

The Honorable Bob Worsley, Vice Chair
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

Dear Representative Kern and Senator Worsley:

Our Office has recently completed an 18-month followup of the Arizona Department of Child Safety—Permanency Practices regarding the implementation status of the 16 audit recommendations (including sub-parts of the recommendations) presented in the special report released in September 2016 (Auditor General Report 16-110). As the attached grid indicates:

- 4 have been implemented;
- 1 is in the process of being implemented; and
- 11 have not been implemented.

Unless otherwise directed by the Joint Legislative Audit Committee, this concludes our follow-up work on the Arizona Department of Child Safety's efforts to implement the recommendations from the September 2016 special report.

Sincerely,

Dale Chapman, Director
Performance Audit Division

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Attachment

cc: Gregory McKay, Director
Arizona Department of Child Safety

Arizona Department of Child Safety—Permanency Practices Auditor General Report 16-110 18-Month Follow-Up Report

Recommendation	Status/Additional Explanation
Chapter 1: Department should improve its provision of information to the courts and FCRB	
<p>1.1 The Department should take steps to better understand and address court report submission timeliness by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Developing a mechanism for tracking court report submission dates, and b. Reviewing court report submission data to help identify causes for untimely court report submission, and developing action plans to address these causes. 	<p>Not implemented As indicated in its response to the performance audit report, the Department does not plan to implement this recommendation.</p> <p>Not implemented See explanation for recommendation 1.1a.</p>
<p>1.2 The Department should develop and implement guidance directing the supervisory review of court reports to help ensure that these reports contain the information and level of detail required by its court report templates.</p>	<p>Not implemented See explanation for recommendation 1.1a.</p>
<p>1.3 Once established, the Department should ensure that its supervisors are trained on the court report review guidance.</p>	<p>Not implemented See explanation for recommendation 1.1a.</p>
<p>1.4 The Department should work with the juvenile courts to determine how it can more clearly present new information and/or progress updates in court reports and update its court report templates, as needed.</p>	<p>Not implemented See explanation for recommendation 1.1a.</p>
<p>1.5 Once the Department has revised its court report templates to include guidance on incorporating new and/or updated information, it should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Revise its associated policies and procedures for preparing and providing court reports to the juvenile courts to reflect these changes, and b. Modify its existing training to include any changes made to its court report templates and train appropriate staff, including supervisors, accordingly. 	<p>Not implemented See explanation for recommendation 1.1a.</p> <p>Not implemented See explanation for recommendation 1.1a.</p>
<p>1.6 The Department should develop and implement policies and procedures to guide its review and use of information from the FCRB monthly attendance reports to improve caseworker attendance and the provision of information to the FCRB.</p>	<p>Not implemented See explanation for recommendation 1.1a.</p>

Recommendation**Status/Additional Explanation****Chapter 2: Department should improve its documentation and timeliness of kin searches**

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| 2.1 | The Department should establish a formalized monitoring process to help ensure that all staff involved in performing kin searches are documenting the required information in the "Locate Efforts" case note. | Not implemented
See explanation for recommendation 1.1a. |
| 2.2 | The Department should develop and implement policies and procedures that establish a formal time frame for the family locate unit to process kin-search requests submitted by caseworkers. | Not implemented
See explanation for recommendation 1.1a. |
| 2.3 | The Department should identify and implement methods to help ensure that caseworker kin-search requests are processed in a more timely manner, including exploring whether the number of requests made to the family locate unit can be reduced by transferring some of these requests to the family engagement specialists. | Not implemented
See explanation for recommendation 1.1a. |

Chapter 3: Department should implement its plans to improve permanency timeliness

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| 3.1 | To better achieve permanency in a timely manner, the Department should continue implementing its improvement plan to address the 2015 CFSR findings related to achieving permanency in a timely manner and improving its case-planning process. | Implemented at 18 months |
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Chapter 4: Department should implement its plans to improve timeliness of termination of parental rights

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| 4.1 | The Department should continue implementing its improvement plan to address the findings of the 2015 CFSR related to the timely filing of TPR petitions. | Implemented at 18 months |
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Chapter 5: Department should implement its plans to improve foster home recruitment

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| 5.1 | To better recruit and retain foster homes, the Department should: | |
| | a. Continue implementing its improvement plan to address the findings of the 2015 CFSR related to foster home recruitment and retention; and | Implemented at 18 months |

Recommendation**Status/Additional Explanation**

- b. Continue with its efforts to improve the recruitment and retention of foster homes by implementing the steps it has identified to address its 2016 strategic plan foster home recruitment and retention goal.

Implementation in process

The Department has taken some steps to address its 2016 strategic plan goals related to improving the recruitment and retention of foster homes. For example, the Department established the Fostering Inclusion Respect Support Trust Advisory (FIRST) Commission, which developed a website to improve foster families' interactions with the child welfare system. The Department is also implementing other strategies that, although not specifically identified from its 2016 strategic plan, are targeted at improving foster home recruitment and retention. For example, the Department started two projects in March 2018—a *Recruitment of Foster Parents* project and a *Kinship and Foster Parent Support* project—which aim to institute process improvements to better recruit, support, and retain foster parents.

Chapter 6: Department should implement its plans to improve foster children's connections to their family and community

- 6.1 The Department should continue implementing its improvement plan to address the findings for the 2015 CFSR related to preserving a child's connections to his/her family and community.

Implemented at 18 months