



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Shevaun L. Harris
Secretary

DATE: July 21, 2023

TO: Community Based Care Lead Agency CEOs
Child Protection Directors

Through: Casey Penn, Deputy Secretary ^{CP}

FROM: Sharron Washington, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Quality and Innovation ^{SW}
Jess Tharpe, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Child and Family Well Being ^J

SUBJECT: Enhancing the Workforce for Child Placing Agencies providing Child Welfare Services

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide guidance on educational requirements for employees of a child placing agency licensed under 65C-15, Florida Administrative Code (FAC).

Background: The Office of Licensing amended 65C-15, F.A.C., on March 1, 2023, to reduce hiring restrictions and align staffing qualifications with s. 402.402, F.S., to enhance the workforce in child placing agencies. Below is guidance for child placing agencies providing child welfare services in accordance with s. 402.40(2)(b), F.S., to ensure individuals meet the approved candidate profiles.

Approved candidate profiles for individuals performing child welfare services in accordance with Section 402.40(2)(b), F.S.:

- **Option 1:** An associate degree from an accredited college or 60+ college credits from an accredited college or university **AND** one of the following:
 - Two years of professional work experience (see examples below); or,
 - Two years of full-time social work or human services experience.

Examples of professional work experience could be, although not limited to:

- Guardian Ad Litem or similar child advocate role
- Family support worker
- Teacher's assistant/aide
- Child Care provider/worker
- Therapeutic assistant
- Behavior health technician
- Family intervention specialist
- Home health aide
- Nurse (LPN or RN) or similar profession
- Nursing facility assistant
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Other professional jobs that require an assessment of factors that can contribute to trauma or protective capacities with children and families.

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- **Option 2:** A high school diploma or GED equivalent (official transcripts required) **AND** one of the following:
 - Four+ years of full-time social work or human services experience.
- **Option 3:** A Bachelor's Degree for those without relevant professional experience, social work, or human services experience.

Implementation for all applicant changes was effective March 1, 2023.

Please share this memorandum with licensing teams, Lead Agencies, and Lead Agency subcontracted providers.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have any questions regarding these procedures, please contact Courtney Smith (courtney.smith@myflfamilies.com), Deputy Director, Office of Licensing.

Cc: Florida Certification Board
Director of Children's Legal Services