

## Re-Engagement Review

### Review of Cases with Sanctions – September 2008

The current re-engagement process was implemented in October 2007 to help ensure consistent, appropriate, and strength based services are provided across the state.

The “re-engagement” process is performed to ensure the following:

- Individual case plans were created in partnership with clients
- Activities on the case plan were appropriate
- Clients are aware of their rights and responsibilities
- Screenings and possible evaluations for barriers have been offered/completed and documented
- A team review of the family’s situation before potential sanction - which includes a discussion of child safety issues – was conducted.

The goal of these efforts is to identify early potential barriers to client success in the program and ensure necessary steps are taken to address those barriers.

The following is a summary of the second review using the re-engagement policy. A statewide review of all cases with an active sanction was conducted for the month of September 2008. Field offices were provided lists of cases with an active sanction on August 29, 2008. Overall, the number of cases with an active sanction has increased from 92 in March 2008 to 168 clients in September 2008.

Districts were given guidance regarding the review process including who would conduct the reviews. Case managers were not part of the review teams but were included during the local debriefing.

District review teams included:

- Line Managers
- Lead Workers
- Community Resource Coordinators
- Program Analysts
- Community Partners such as mental health providers

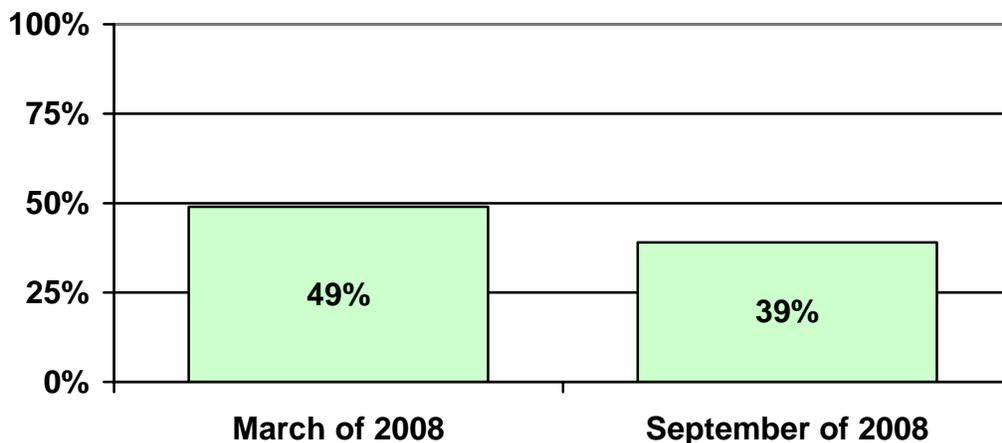
### **Results & Analysis**

During the review, when one or more elements of the re-engagement process were missing the reviewer recommended one or more sanctions be removed. Staff were informed these recommendations would be final unless documentation was provided to overturn the recommendations.

In some instances the removal of one or more sanctions resulted in an under payment or under issuance of benefits to the family. In these instances, supplements were issued. The total amount of supplements issued was \$20,748.

The graph below displays the percentage of cases where the process was correct, including documenting the process. There were approximately 39% or 66 (out of 168) of the cases during the September 2008 review where the process was correct.

**Percent of cases with Correct Process**



There were a number of reasons why sanctions were removed. The table below displays the reasons for removal. It is important to note while the reasons stated caused the sanction to be removed, in many cases, the issue was more related to documentation of the issue.

<b>❖ Reason for Removal</b>	<b>September 2008 Percent Removed</b>
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❖ Reason for Removal	September 2008 Percent Removed
<b>Accommodations</b> (Insufficient documentation or a needed accommodation was not offered)	5%
<b>Assessment/Evaluation</b> (Insufficient documentation or required assessment/evaluation was not offered or the results were not considered)	36%
<b>Child Safety review</b> (Insufficient documentation or child safety review with Child Welfare was not completed)	30%
<b>Client re-engaged</b> (client re-engaged and was cooperating with plan)	3%
<b>Disabilities</b> (Insufficient documentation or disability issues were not considered)	17%
<b>Domestic Violence</b> (Insufficient documentation or domestic violence was not considered)	7%
<b>DQ4<sup>1</sup> Requirements</b> (Insufficient documentation or DQ4 requirement not met)	3%
<b>Local Team Staffing</b> (Insufficient documentation or re-engagement review team staffing not conducted)	21%
<b>Required notices</b> (Insufficient documentation or required notices not sent)	2%
<b>Rights and Responsibilities form</b> (DHS 7819 not located)	5%
<b>Screening</b> (Insufficient documentation or required screenings not offered or re-offered)	28%
<b>TANF closed</b> (TANF case closed prior to sanction being applied)	3%

<sup>1</sup> DQ4 constitutes full-family sanction. The additional requirements before full-family sanction are that the department attempt a home visit and discuss with the client alternative resources should the TANF grant end.

- ❖ *The percentages, in the table above, represent the percent of the cases with a sanction removed in which the particular reason for removal was discovered. A single case may have had multiple reasons for removal and any single reason would have resulted in the sanction being removed.*

The September review indicates a need for further training, coaching, and follow-up, including:

- Better documentation of the department's efforts to engage families in the TANF program when an individual in the family is moving to a sanction or from one level of sanction to the next.
- Completing the required screenings, which include screening for potential issues involving alcohol and drug, mental health, learning disabilities, physical health, and domestic violence.
- Providing needed assessments or evaluations when results of screenings indicate such a need.
- Better connection with DHS Child Welfare staff in order to review the impacts to the children should a sanction be imposed.

### ***Lessons Learned***

- **Documentation:** There remains a need to continue the learning process regarding the importance of documenting the case. This was a significant factor that resulted in errors.
- **Accessing the Information:** One of the identified issues for staff is that specific areas for storing critical information are located in different parts of the system. Such information may include the need for an assessment or an evaluation, the need for an accommodation, or the disability of a family member. This information should be accessed and utilized when working with clients and when conducting case planning and re-engagement.
- **Consultation:** Consultation with qualified and appropriate professionals is a vital aspect of the re-engagement process. Case managers rely on specialists to help answer difficult questions and provide expert advice with issues such as mental health and learning disabilities. The program needs to continue to build strong relationships to ensure the best opportunities are available for individuals who rely on these services to succeed.

### ***Next Steps – Future Reviews***

The current re-engagement process was implemented in October 2007. Since implementation the department has continued to work on refining the process. One of the challenges identified by field staff is related to the tracking system used to record the re-engagement process. Staff have found the system to be complicated and in many instances contributed to a lack of documentation of their re-engagement efforts. A workgroup was established to help provide guidance, recommendations, and work through issues that may be complicating the process. This fall, Central office sent clarification to field offices based on workgroup recommendations. Clarification included re-engagement tips, information that must be documented, and instances in which the re-engagement page in the narration system should be used. The workgroup also recommended a Rapid Process Improvement (RPI) event be conducted with respect to the re-engagement and disqualification process. The results of the RPI will help to determine, along with statewide reviews, the specific areas in the process that need further clarification.

The workgroup recommendations and this re-engagement review also identified several additional topics for training that will be in development. These topics include: training for facilitators of the re-engagement staffing; training regarding narration and documentation; training on disabilities and accommodations; and statewide training related to the results of the RPI.

Central office will conduct statewide reviews of sanctioned cases and provide consultation to ensure improvement in the process occurs. The reviews of sanctioned cases will be incorporated into regular reviews to ensure errors are corrected timely. While field staff will continue to participate in the review process, primary responsibility will shift to central review staff to perform initial analysis; this will enable a more frequent review timeframe. Reports will continue to be provided to the Family Services Review Commission every six months. The next report will be submitted in May 2009.