

LEADERSHIP GUIDE: DIRECTORS

A GUIDE TO CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS



1 FOUNDATION

Be open, honest, clear and respectful in your communication.

- Use language and body language that demonstrate an accepting and affirming approach to all staff.
- Address individuals in person and in writing by the name, title and pronouns they request.
- Show deference to Tribal Leadership and their titles in written and verbal communications.
- Be transparent about your role and responsibilities and expectations of the agency.

Be accountable.

- Model accountability and trust by doing what you say you're going to do, being responsive, being on time and following federal and state laws.
- Be aware of and take responsibility for your own biases.

2 ENGAGEMENT

Create a learning environment.

- Demonstrate commitment to the professional development of staff by providing opportunities for staff to gain new knowledge and skills through multiple strategies (training, coaching, leadership opportunities).
- Ensure staff at all levels have the training, coaching, and system support needed to consistently use the CPM.
- Create a learning environment in which mistakes are seen as opportunities to learn and grow.
- Foster a culture of thinking about the work, trying new things and new approaches for everyone that will make the agency more efficient and effective.
- Pause and take time to use the practice model to guide response and interaction even in times of crisis.

Engage staff in implementation and system improvement.

- Participate with staff on implementation and identify what you are doing to support and sustain the CPM.
- Establish division CPM goals and communicate them at every opportunity.
- Establish and maintain regular and frequent communication between the leadership team and the implementation team.
- Establish agency CPM goals and communicate them at every opportunity.
- Include staff in creation of the vision for CPM and explain how staff roles play a key part in creation of the vision.
- Use positive motivation, encouragement & recognition of strengths to show support of staff implementation efforts.
- Engage staff and managers at all levels to identify ways to improve system efficiency and remove barriers for staff.

Show that you care.

- Demonstrate that you hear and care about the thoughts & experiences of staff and stakeholders (children, families, community members, and Tribes) as they implement and sustain the CPM by establishing feedback loops and regular mechanisms to report progress and outcomes.
- Communicate hope and understanding by listening to staff challenges and engaging in solution-focused strategies to work together to solve problems.
- Show compassion & provide support and encouragement by listening to staff at all levels in the organization to hear their successes, concerns/worries and ideas about implementing, supporting, and sustaining the model.

Recognize staff strengths and successes.

- Create regular opportunities to affirm agency organizational strengths and the efforts of staff and partners in their daily work.
- Foster leadership by staff at all levels, helping them recognize and gain confidence in their strengths.
- Foster leadership of staff, helping them recognize and gain confidence in their strengths, for example, by providing opportunities to share their experience and mentor new managers.

3 INQUIRY/EXPLORATION

Seek feedback.

- Meet regularly with staff & stakeholders (children, families, community, Tribes) to understand their perspectives, develop consensus and create a path forward that is sensitive to the varied needs and concerns of all parties.
- Regularly elicit feedback from staff and stakeholders (children, families, community members, and Tribes) by means of focus groups, surveys, and community meetings.
- Keep track of and acknowledge barriers and challenges impacting the organization and be transparent with staff and partners about what can be accomplished and what cannot.
- Seek out and invite in input from staff in the organization:
- Hold regular supervision meetings with managers to review the work of their division and to actively seek input and develop solutions for issues that impact the ability of their division to effectively deliver services to children, youth and families consistent with the CPM.

4 ADVOCACY

Promote advocacy.

- Provide frequent and regular opportunities for Tribes, agency partners, staff, youth, families, and caregivers to share their voice.

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ACCOUNTABILITY

Advocate for resources.

- Advocate for the resources needed to support and develop staff.
- Become a champion for the CPM by advocating for resources to support CPM practices & working to establish policies and practices that eliminate barriers for staff.
- In partnership with the implementation team, review planning goals and timeframes for training, coaching, policy, and practice change so that expectations for staff are clear and realistic.
- Advocate for the resources needed to provide effective, relevant, culturally responsive services for families:
- Ensure that all contracts are supportive of CPM practices and aligned with the CPM.
- Realign existing resources to support CPM.
- Review existing and new initiatives to ensure that key components are congruent with and integrated into the CPM implementation and planning.

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TEAMING

Build partnerships.

- Develop partnerships with effective community-based service providers with cultural connections to families receiving services from the CWS agency.
- Actively establish and facilitate community partnerships by initiating, attending, and participating in inter-agency collaborations to implement, support and sustain CPM.
- Meet with the Court to develop an understanding of CPM and identify actions the Court can take to support implementation and use of the CPM.
- Actively establish and facilitate partnerships with other Divisions in the Agency (such as Staff Development and Fiscal) to implement, support and sustain the CPM.
- Ensure partner agencies receive information about the CPM and support them in aligning their work with CPM.

Work with partners.

- Work collaboratively with families; youth; resource families; and cultural, community and Tribal representatives as active partners in the local implementation of the CPM and in ongoing policy development and operations.
- Engage with peers from other counties to share best practices and problem-solve.

Model teaming.

- Model inclusive decision-making.
- Model use of teaming structures and approaches to implement and support the CPM.
- Model and stress the importance of teaming by developing partnerships and MOUs and talking with staff about relationships and teaming efforts across divisions, across agencies, and with external partners.

Listen and provide feedback.

- Explore complaints, barriers, and problems through a transparent process of inquiry that includes listening to those involved, identifying others who need to be included, developing a shared expectation about follow-up, and reviewing other data and information in order to make balanced assessments and informed decisions.
- Be transparent to staff and stakeholders about barriers and why some requested changes cannot be made.
- Provide regular updates on any findings regarding complaints, barriers, and problems, and share action steps that have been taken to address concerns.
- Respond to inquiries from staff & stakeholders (families, caregivers, agency partners, community, Tribes) within 24 business hours to acknowledge the concern or question and establish shared expectation for follow-up.
- Meet with the workforce regularly and frequently to hear concerns and address them in a transparent manner, using a defined process and demonstrating actions taken to address concerns.
- Have a communication plan for ongoing dialogue with all Department staff and provide clear, frequent communication to the whole organization and be open to input.

Hold each other accountable.

- Engage in a CQI process to evaluate the process used to implement and model fidelity & effectiveness of the CPM.
- Identify and implement tools (dashboards, data points, charts) to monitor outcomes and measure effectiveness of the CPM.
- Engage stakeholders (families, youth, caregivers, Tribes, agency partners) in data collection and evaluation efforts.
- Support staff and hold each other accountable for sustaining the practice model by holding regular supervision meetings at all levels, and including practice behaviors in performance evaluation, professional development, coaching and mentoring activities, and progressive discipline.
- Provide regular updates to agency partners and the Board of Supervisors as appropriate.

Monitor organizational effectiveness.

- Identify and implement a transparent process to monitor for staffing gaps and plan organizational changes to ensure staff can meet demands of caseloads.
- Review the workload of the Department through regular supervision and through review of reports submitted outlining workload and staffing needs.

Monitor practice effectiveness.

- Identify and implement a transparent process to monitor for practice model fidelity and effectiveness.
- Accept responsibility for the implementation of CPM
- Monitor fidelity to and outcomes of CPM, and adjust implementation processes as needed.