



IN Department of Child Services Mentor & Peer Coach Bonus Program Guidelines

Director's Note 1/21/2016

PURPOSE

The Department of Child Services (DCS) Mentor and Peer Coach Bonus Program is designed to reward successful Family Case Manager Field Mentor and Peer Coaches. The program goal is to recognize their efforts to support new Family Case Managers in their professional development and new worker learning processes.

SCOPE

These guidelines apply to all Family Case Manager Field Mentor and Peer Coaches that meet the program requirements. Family Case Manager Supervisors, Local Office Directors and Regional Managers serving as a Peer Coach or Field Mentor are not eligible for this bonus award program.

Goals of DCS Field Mentor and Peer Coach Programs:

- Reduced turnover due to workers' better understanding of the Family Case Manager role and what to expect
- Teach new workers best practice in the field to support theory in the classroom
- Increase new worker confidence by performing case management activities in the local office where they will be working and in coping with difficult situations
- Increased productivity due to workers' ability to focus and prioritize
- Better outcomes for children and families

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be met for all Field Mentors and/or Peer Coaches to be considered for a bonus award to ensure a successful and consistent reward and recognition program for DCS.

- Employees must be successful in meeting all performance expectations and competencies
- Employee must not be on a work improvement plan or have had disciplinary action or a letter of counseling issued in the six (6) months prior to nomination
- Employee must make at least a six (6) month commitment to serve as a Field Mentor or Peer Coach
- Employee must reach six (6) consecutive months of actively coaching and/or mentoring during the eligibility period

Employees serving as both a Field Mentor and Peer Coach may receive one bonus award per eligibility period.

ELIGIBILITY PERIOD

The Field Mentor and Peer Coach bonus award will be compensated twice a year in January and July based on respective eligibility periods. The eligibility period of January 1 through June 30 will be paid out in July and the eligibility period of July 1 through December 31 will be paid out in January.

EXPECTATIONS

Field Mentors meeting the program requirements are eligible to receive a \$150 bonus upon completion of the three (3) month formal mentoring period and subsequent three (3) months of informal mentoring and consultation. Field Mentors are expected to work with mentees throughout the new worker training process in accordance with the mentoring guidelines and criteria established by Staff Development which includes transfer of learning activities. Field Mentors may only receive one (1) bonus payout per eligibility period.

Peer Coaches meeting the program requirements are eligible to receive a \$150 bonus upon completion of six (6) months of actively coaching a new Family Case Manager. Peer Coaches are expected to work with all newly hired FCMs in accordance with the Peer Coach guidelines, criteria and processes established by Staff Development. Peer Coaches may only receive one (1) bonus payout per eligibility period.

Characteristics of DCS Field Mentors and Peer Coaches:

- Person has a strong commitment to best practice, agency policies and procedures
- Person has basic abilities to coach and mentor and has a proven ability to relate well with diverse populations
- Minimum of two years of experience as a successful Family Case Manager (Recommended)

Expectations of DCS Field Mentors:

- Model superior practice in the various skills identified on the rating sheets
- Assess mentees on the skills identified on the rating sheets through observation and provide mentee with feedback on strengths/needs relating to these skills with the mentee as appropriate
- Complete one comprehensive Skill Assessment Scale at the time of the mentee's graduation

Expectations of DCS Peer Coaches:

- Attend all scheduled Peer Coach meetings for the region
- Apprise regional leaders of any needs and/or strengths of the peer coaching process so they can support and problem solve as needed
- Participate in regular and on-going opportunities for guidance and coaching to aid in ongoing skill development

APPROVALS

It is the responsibility of the Regional Manager (RM) to determine whether a Field Mentor or Peer Coach has met the program and eligibility period requirements. Field Mentor and Peer Coach lists are due on the first Friday in January (for July – December eligible employees) and July (for January – June) eligible employees. Information shall include employee name, local office, and eligibility period. Information will be emailed to DCSRecognitionProgram@dcs.in.gov for processing. DCS Payroll will process awards no later than the following pay period in which the approved form was received.

Employee must be actively employed by DCS at the time of award approval and payout.

REPORTING/BUDGET

At the beginning of each fiscal year, an overall agency bonus budget will be determined.