



**Child Welfare  
Services**

# **Supervisor/Mentor Guide for Child Welfare Specialists**

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# INTRODUCTION TO CHILD WELFARE SPECIALIST COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

The Child Welfare Services Training Unit will continue Child Welfare Specialist Competency Development, which includes CW Specialist CORE training, in FY 2018. **The Mission of the Child Welfare Services Training Unit is to support and enhance the OKDHS Child Welfare workforce through training, mentoring, and educational opportunities to improve the safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families involved in the Oklahoma Child Welfare system.** Child Welfare Specialist Competency Development's expected outcome is to have trained Child Welfare Specialists upon the successful completion of CORE. The plan includes:

- 4 weeks preferred (2 weeks minimum) of Pre-CORE activities;
- 5 weeks of classroom training;
- 2 weeks of On-the-Job training;
- 1 week of Interview Instruction and Evaluation;
- Structured mentoring;
- Intensive Supervision; and
- Provisional Certification of the Child Welfare Specialists' knowledge and skills.

This "**Supervisor/Mentor Guide**" will explain the Child Welfare Specialist Competency Development concept, outline what you can expect from the CW Specialist Training Unit, and detail what is expected from you and your CW Specialist. Please review this Guide **with your CW Specialist** to ensure that you, the CW Specialist, and any assigned mentor understand the requirements of the activities and training.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

- How do I get my new CW Specialist enrolled in CORE Training?  
CW Specialist supervisor will fill out the enrollment form located on-line at <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/training/core/> . Upon submission the request is sent to [ChildWelfareTraining@okdhs.org](mailto:ChildWelfareTraining@okdhs.org).
- When can I request updates on my new Child Welfare Specialists' progress in CORE Training?  
At any time after the CW Specialist begins CORE Training. The CW Specialist supervisor should contact a member of the CW Specialist Training Unit or OU

Contract staff listed on the Child Welfare website at <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/> in the Logistics Section / Personnel with any inquiries on their Child Welfare Specialists' progress, behavior, timeliness, etc. The Supervisor will receive a weekly progress report with quiz grades and any noted pertinent information regarding their CW Specialist while attending CORE.

- My CW Specialist is Permanency. Can I just have them do other tasks (such as transporting children) before coming to CORE rather than have the CW Specialist complete the CPS-oriented pre-CORE activities?

NO. All Child Welfare Specialists, regardless of assignment, must complete all the pre-CORE and as many of the OJT assignments as possible. Any other work should be assigned only after (or if) the CW Specialist has completed the required activities. This also applies to CPS Child Welfare Specialists during OJT, or Resource Child Welfare Specialists, etc.

One purpose of CORE, pre-CORE, and OJT activities is to provide the CW Specialists with a broad foundational knowledge of the child welfare process. CORE is not about specialized work; it is about child welfare work.

- What happened to HOT?

Hands on Testing has been incorporated into CORE during Module 4. Members of the Training Unit will evaluate the Child Welfare Specialists on the 4 critical areas during Module 4 and provide feedback to the CW Specialist. Full Certification will then take place in the field. Please see New CW Specialist Certification Handbook for full details.

## OVERVIEW OF CORE TRAINING

For information pertaining to training locations, lodging, mileage and per-diem please go to the logistics page at <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/>. Information for the dress code can be found in the FAQ's section at <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/training/faqs/>

All Child Welfare Specialists must have a minimum of two weeks Pre-Core experience in their county office prior to attending Core and complete all Pre-Core activities.

**Enrollment:** At the time the county receives a report date for a new CW Specialist, the CW Specialist Supervisor fills out the enrollment form located on-line at <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/training/core/>. Upon submission the enrollment will be sent via email to [ChildWelfareTraining@okdhs.org](mailto:ChildWelfareTraining@okdhs.org). Core enrollment occurs within the new LMS system and is no longer managed through KIDS. As per policy, the new CW Specialist must attend CORE no later than six weeks after their hire date.

## **Reinstatements:**

- 1) All Certification (Child Welfare Specialist Provisional Certification, Mentor Certification, etc.) is valid for 18 months after a CW Specialist leaves Child Welfare.
- 2) If the CW Specialist has been gone from Child Welfare for more than 18 months or if he/she has never completed a Certification, he/she will need to complete a modified version of CORE. Each reinstatement will be a case by case decision. Please email the Program Administrator or Program Supervisor for assistance.
- 3) See Reinstatement Handbook on the Child Welfare Website at for more details at <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/training/core/> .

## **Overall CW Specialist Evaluation:**

All CORE CW Specialists will receive an on-going summary of evaluation of their participation, as well as observation and testing of their acquired knowledge and skills. The evaluation materials will contain the following components and information:

- A summary of weekly performance on daily quizzes administered during CORE to test CW Specialists' retention of the previous day's content.
- Development Plan recommendation for Interviewing, KIDS, and Safety Assessment.

**CW Specialist Provisional Certification:** Upon successful completion of CORE, the CW Specialist is assigned a graduated caseload per the following schedule (Oklahoma Pinnacle Plan Point 3, Initiative 1):

- Phase 1/Provisional Certification: 50 percent upon successful completion of CORE;
  - Phase 2: 75 percent after six months of successful work; and
  - Phase 3: 100 percent after nine months of successful work.
- **Phase 1**—completed during CORE
    - **Meets Expectations**—The CW Specialist is where he/she needs to be as a CW Specialist. The CW Specialist has achieved provisional certification and can proceed to Phase 2, which includes eligibility to be assigned a caseload status of 50% and to move forward in completing Modules 5 & 6.
    - **Needs Improvement**— The CW Specialist needs more mentorship but the skill is there to be developed. The CW Specialist has achieved provisional certification and more structured mentoring is needed in areas identified by the trainers. The CW Specialist can proceed to Phase 2, which includes eligibility to be assigned a caseload status of 50% and to move forward in completing Modules 5 & 6.

- **Does Not Meet**— The CW Specialist should not be in the field without supervision and improvement is needed. The CW Specialist has not achieved provisional certification and a Support Plan must be completed with the assigned supervisor/mentor and FM/DD. The CW Specialist is ***not eligible to be assigned a caseload and cannot proceed to Modules 5 & 6 until a Support Plan is completed and received by the Training Unit. The Support Plan must be completed within 30 days and must include the Development Plan provided by the grader.***

## KIDS and AOCS Results

- **Meets Expectations**—the CW Specialist is where he/she needs to be as a new CW Specialist.
- **Needs Improvement**— the CW Specialist has the skill to be developed; more structured mentoring is needed in areas identified by the trainers.
- **Note**—*these are the only evaluation results for KIDS and AOCS. Feedback will be provided on the evaluation form, but these skills can be developed in the field. **Safety** can be better evaluated through their interviewing and critical thinking while consulting on cases.*
- The CW Specialist will be able to carry a partial caseload after he/she complete CORE. **CORE is complete after Modules 5 or 6 (based on the track).**
- A CW Specialist who receives “**Does Not Meet**” during Mod 4 will need to complete a Support Plan that is to be developed by their supervisor (with assistance from the Training Unit if needed) and or Field Manager or District Director.
  - *Please see sample Support Plans on the Child Welfare Website at <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/training/core/>*
- Once the CW Specialist successfully completes the Support Plan, the Plan will be scanned and sent to the Training Unit within 30 days so the CW Specialist may be enrolled in Modules 5 & 6 of CORE.
- Any CW Specialist who is not able to successfully complete the Support Plan will not be provisionally certified and will be unable to carry a caseload.

- **Once the CW Specialist completes Modules 5 & 6, he/she will be provisionally certified and be able to carry a partial caseload.**
  - The CW Specialist **then proceeds to Phase 2.**
  - **Note**—*some CW Specialist based on their tracks ( ie Hotline, Placement line etc.) may have their certification frozen in a provisional certification status, until he/she transfer to another position within Child Welfare. Upon transfer to another position that requires completion of certification, the CW Specialist will resume certification.*
  - *The supervisor will notify the training unit and we will facilitate resumption of the process.*
- **Phase 2**—completed in the field.
    - Once the CW Specialist has completed Mod 5&6, he/she receives coaching and mentoring by their supervisor/mentor. Prior to receiving a 75% caseload, the CW Specialist is “graded” on their interviewing skills using tools provided by the Training Unit. The CW Specialist must successfully complete 2 out of 3 adult and child interviews to move forward.
    - The supervisor/mentor attests the CW Specialist is certified by signing the CW Specialist Attestation Document. The Attestation Document is then provided to the Training Unit and the CW Specialist is “Certified.”
    - Please see the CW Specialist Certification Handbook for full details.

**Caseloads: *Under no circumstances will the CW Specialist be assigned a caseload until after the CW Specialist successfully completes CORE.***

## **PRE-CORE TRAINING ACTIVITIES**

Pre-Core training activities are part of the transfer of learning process, and the new Child Welfare Specialists must be allowed time and support in completing these activities. In order for classroom training to affect practice, CW Specialists must use their newly acquired skills in the work setting in the performance of Pre-CORE activities. Supervisors **MUST** ensure Child Welfare Specialists have an opportunity to do all the assigned activities.

These activities are not to be confused with the OJT Activities done *during* weeks three and five of CORE Training. These activities are different but share some of the same shadow forms. All Child Welfare Specialists will be trained comprehensively on the entire process of child welfare while in CORE.

**Prior to attending CORE, Child Welfare Specialists are required to be in the field a MINIMUM of 2 weeks AND have activities #1 through #13 completed.**

- 1) The following sections of the **Oklahoma Department of Human Services Child Welfare Practice Model Guide**:
  - Pages 5-8 on the Model flowchart, Intake and Screening;
  - Pages 17-22 on Assessment of Safety, 24-25 on Risk vs. Safety;
  - Pages 31-34 on Safety Planning;
  - Pages 45-49 on Family Visitation.
- 2) A selection of articles from ACTION for Child Protection related to aspects of Child Welfare Services:
  - Child Safety and Substantiation of Child Maltreatment;
  - Impending Danger and the Cultural Context;
  - When Living Conditions Seriously Endanger a Child's Physical Health
  - Video: Ethics in Child Welfare (30 min)  
<https://video.oucpm.org/2017/10/ethics-in-child-welfare-aspiring-to-practice-standards/>

The reading materials can be found at <http://dhslms.oucpm.org> . CW Specialists can begin work on their Pre-CORE Training activities as soon as possible.

- 3) Log into LMS and complete the following under **Online Courses** (<http://dhslms.oucpm.org/>):
  - a) **AFCARS**
  - b) **CW Specialist Pre-CORE Funding Curriculum**
  - c) **CW Specialist Pre-CORE Intro to Report Writing (Parts 1-3)**
  - d) **CW Specialist Pre-CORE HIV Policy**
  - e) **CW Specialist Pre-CORE Trauma**
- 4) The supervisor assigns or helps to assign each CW Specialist, regardless of the Child Welfare Specialists' unit assignment (CPS, PP, Comp, etc.), to a CPS mentor for Pre-CORE activities. The purpose of Pre-CORE activities is to familiarize the CW Specialist as much as possible with the CPS process and the beginning processes of a child welfare case.



**Please note: the purpose of the Pre-CORE activities is to have the CW Specialist observe the child welfare process “in order” as much as possible. Therefore, this should be their first shadowing experience and others should follow (for example, the CW Specialist should not attend a show cause hearing if he/she has not already shadowed on an investigation or assessment). We want to emphasize quality over quantity of shadowing experiences and adequately prepare the CW Specialist for CORE training.**

- a) Accompany or “shadow” the mentor on a CPS investigation or assessment, observing as many interviews on that single referral as possible (it is preferable the CW Specialist be able to observe all the interviews); including victim(s), sibling(s), PRFC(s), and collaterals. The new CW Specialist can also provide needed assistance to the assigned mentor; examples could include calling collaterals, picking up legal forms, etc. The mentor should closely assist the CW Specialist in completing the following:
    - 1) Entering collateral contact information into KIDS;
    - 2) Documenting at least one collateral interview.
  - b) The CW Specialist utilizes information from all of the observed interviews to complete a paper *Assessment of Child Safety (AOCS)* form based on their observations (completing the AOCS as if he/she are the assigned CW Specialist). The CW Specialist meets with their supervisor to discuss the investigations/assessments, including safety plans if applicable.
  - c) **Instructions to Supervisors/Mentors:** When the new CW Specialist returns, assist the CW Specialist in processing the information. The CW Specialist should complete an Assessment of Child Safety on each investigation or assessment observed.
- 5) Observe a minimum of one **Child Safety Meeting**. The new CW Specialist should discuss with their supervisor what their role is in a Child Safety Meeting, based on their assigned track (i.e. what role does a Permanency Planning Specialist have in a CSM)?
- 6) The Supervisor or Mentor introduces the new CW Specialist to:
- a) The juvenile judge(s) for their county;
  - b) The Assistant District Attorney(s) responsible for juvenile cases;
  - c) Law enforcement representatives who commonly work with child welfare;
  - d) Any other important stakeholders, such as a CASA director, ICW Specialist supervisor, etc.

- 7) Complete with their supervisor the *Learning Style Characteristics Inventory*.
- 8) **Assist the CW Specialist in locating a Permanency Planning mentor for the OJT week during training and ensuring the mentor has identified the case the new CW Specialist will complete OJT activities on. If the case is identified at this time, CW Specialist visits, visits to service providers, and if possible, a Family Functional Assessment can be scheduled in advance to avoid any problems when the CW Specialist returns from training for their OJT shadowing.**
- 9) Once all of the activities are completed, the supervisor and mentor:
  - a) Ensures the CW Specialist has checked the activities the CW Specialist was able to complete on the *Pre-CORE Training Checklist* to turn in on the first day of CORE;
  - b) Provide the CW Specialist written feedback, date, and sign the *Supervisor/Mentor Evaluation Form*.
- 10) The CW Specialist reviews the *CORE Expectations of Professional Behavior* form with the CW Specialist and discusses professional conduct while in training. The CW Specialist and supervisor sign and date the form. **The CW Specialist must submit the form with all other Pre-CORE documentation on the first day of training.**
- 11) **In order for the new CW Specialist to be successful in CORE Training the CW Specialist must be able to perform the following computer skills:**
  - Sign on to the computer;
  - Open and operate KIDS
  - Locate DHS Policy on the Infonet;
  - Locate and use forms on the Infonet
  - Utilize Basic Word functions:
    - Cut and Paste
    - Save As
    - Spell-check
    - Print
  - Accessing their DHS webmail

*If the new CW Specialist does not have the needed computer skills, a request must be made for the Workstation Support Specialist (WSS) to assist the new CW Specialist.*
- 12) Attend **Pre-CORE Referral Training**. This training is held the Thursday before a CW Specialist begins CORE. He/she will automatically be enrolled when he/she are enrolled in CORE. If for some reason, a CW Specialist is unable to attend the

Pre-CORE Referral Training, he/she may still attend CORE and make up this training, but this training is **required** before the CW Specialist can carry a caseload.

- 13) In an attempt to align the Agency's Quality Standards with Child Welfare's Practice Standards, please review both the Quality Standards and the Practice Standards with your Child Welfare Specialist. Information regarding the Quality Standards can be found on the Child Welfare Website. A list of Practice Standards can be found on the same website page. <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/training/core/>. After reviewing each of these, please have the Child Welfare Specialist complete the Quality Standards and Practice Standards – Pre-Core Activity by aligning the Quality Standards with the Practice Standards.

## **Core Friday Activities**

### **Module 1 – complete as many as possible, #1 is mandatory:**

- 1) Observe a forensic interview (or discuss the process with a forensic interviewer), find out county protocol for when to utilize a forensic interviewer.
- 2) Initial, sign, and date the Week 1 Friday Activities checklist. Each CW Specialist must present the checklist to the CORE Coordinator upon return to training.

### **Module 2 – complete as many as possible, #1 is mandatory:**

- 1) Staff the Taylor case with the supervisor, use the *Staffing Notes* form to discuss:
  - Initial referral information, how the CW Specialist should prepare to go out to the home
  - Noted safety threats and why safety planning was necessary
  - Review documentation describing home conditions completed by the CW Specialist
  - Heinous and shocking, law enforcement response
  - Discuss joint response with Tribal child welfare
- 2) Discuss services that could possibly help the family at this stage, what providers can offer, add information to the *Community Resource Directory*.
- 3) Initial, sign, and date the Week 2 Friday Activities checklist. Each CW Specialist must present the checklist to the CORE Coordinator upon return to training.

- 4) Complete on LMS:
- **Developmental Disability Services and Child Welfare** on-line training; broken into 3 modules- estimated time to complete **45-60** minutes

- 5) **Domestic Violence Overview** on-line training.

### **Module 3 – complete as many as possible, #1 is mandatory:**

- 1) Staff the Taylor case with the supervisor:
- Discuss with supervisor or resource CW Specialist what resource homes placements might be available for the Taylor children. What are the options if no placement is found?
  - Needed services for the children, find out what is available in the county, interview providers and add information to the *Community Resource Directory*;
  - Visitation planning in the case scenario – How would visitation be arranged? At what location? Frequency, supervision, etc;
  - Discuss Reasonable and Active Efforts.
- 2) Discuss the importance of **Placement Stability** and what efforts are made in your county to achieve this. The key points include:
- Placement stability is a key part of reducing trauma to children and parents, speeding up permanency for families, and reducing additional work for CW Specialist.
  - Each move for a child creates another loss in the child's life and forces the child into a new place with new people.
  - Changes to a child's placement are stressful for parents as well, taking their focus away from creating a safe home for their family.
  - Moves often result in educational disruptions, which create more loss for children as it relates to their connections, not to mention the burden of lost educational time/learning.
  - Fewer placement changes are directly related to fewer behavioral problems for children and quicker reunification for families.
  - Kinship homes are found to be much more stable for children vs traditional resource care.
  - Using time after child safety meetings to discuss possible placement options with parents and supports can facilitate children getting into the best placement at the first placement.
  - Providing all information we have about a child to the resource family and exploring possible supports or unmet needs before or during the placement increases stability for the child.
  - It is important to follow up with the resource home no later than 48 hours of placing a child to answer any questions and to ensure the family has the

- support he/she need.
  - Each time a CW Specialist conducts a visit with the child in the placement, the CW Specialist should talk to the child and the resource family about any concerns or barriers to stability. (This discussion needs to be documented in the contact screen on KIDS.)
  - Family Team Meetings can also be held to allow for the group to identify supports and ways to aid in the success of the placement.
- 3) Determine if CASA is involved in the county, discuss relationship between CW Specialist and CASA, and if possible, meet with the director or one of the volunteers to discuss their role.
  - 4) Initial, sign, and date the Week 5 Friday Activities checklist. Each CW Specialist must present the checklist to the CORE Coordinator upon return to training.
  - 5) Discuss with CW Specialist protocol when entering a potentially dangerous situation (including suspected meth lab). Discuss county protocol for joint response with law enforcement.

## **Pre-Module 4 ACTIVITIES during Training (2<sup>nd</sup> week-between Mod 3&4)**

Following completion of Module 3, the CW Specialist will have one week back in the office to complete OJT activities in preparation for Module 4. These activities are the responsibility of the Child Welfare Specialists' immediate supervisor and mentor, who will follow a structured process in this guide for the assignment and review of all activities.

Included in the CW Specialist Provisional Certification Handbook are grading tools for each interview (adult and child) by specialty (CPS, PP, Foster Care, and Adoptions). We encourage supervisors and mentors to utilize these tools in evaluation of their new Child Welfare Specialists' skills in preparation for Module 4.

- **Child Protective Services Assignment**

As part of their responsibilities, the new CW Specialist completes:

- At least two face to face child interviews;
- At least two face to face interviews with a parent or guardian;
- The supervisor and mentor meet with the CW Specialist to provide detailed and specific feedback on all work completed.

- **Permanency Planning/FCS or Comprehensive Assignment**

As part of their responsibilities, the new CW Specialist, along with a mentor, completes:

- At least two CW Specialist visits with children (utilizing the contact guide)
- At least two CW Specialist visits with a parent (utilizing the contact guide)
- The supervisor and mentor meet with the CW Specialist to provide detailed and specific feedback on all work completed.

- **Resource (Foster Care or Adoptions) Assignment**

As part of their responsibilities, the new CW Specialist, along with a mentor, completes:

- At least two face to face child interviews (the biological child of a Resource Parent in resource home or a child placed in TA);
- At least two face to face interviews with an adult applicant (an initial home visit, walkthrough and/or re-assessment, addressed any concerns or issues noted using the House Assessment or Initial Kinship agreement)
- The supervisor and mentor meet with the CW Specialist to provide detailed and specific feedback on all work completed.

- **ALL Child Welfare Specialists**

The supervisor pulls at least two (2) examples of completed Assessments of Child Safety. The examples should be well-done with safety threats noted, and the narrative fields for the six key questions should be documented in a way that makes identification of safety threats relatively clear. For each example, the supervisor provides the CW Specialist with the information documented in the narratives (but not the safety threats or decision) and asks the CW Specialist to:

- Identify any safety threats and the specific child or children to whom the threat(s) apply;
- Make an overall safety decision (safe or unsafe) for each child identified in the AOCs.

The supervisor then processes this activity with the CW Specialist assisting with any needed clarification. This activity will assist the CW Specialist in preparation for their evaluation in Module 4, and more importantly, for making safety decisions in the field. It should be repeated as needed with a CW Specialist who is struggling with identification of safety threats and appropriate decision making regarding safety.

## **ON THE JOB (OJT) ACTIVITIES during Training (1<sup>st</sup> week-between Mod 2&3)**

OJT activities during CORE Training are the responsibility of the new Child Welfare Specialist's immediate supervisor, who will follow a structured process in this guide for the assignment and review of all OJT activities. The supervisor will meet with the CW Specialist on the first day of OJT week, review all OJT activities and assist the CW Specialist in developing a plan to complete the activities. A complete set of instructions for the supervisor and CW Specialist follows. The supervisor will sign-off on the successful completion of all activities and provide feedback on the CW Specialist's work. The supervisor should collect all OJT assignments and maintain them in the Specialist's training file. **FEEDBACK IS ESSENTIAL ON EACH WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT**, otherwise, CW Specialists feel their time and efforts were wasted. **The Supervisor's role in the completion of the OJT activities is included in the End of CORE Observation Summary.**

### **OJT Activities**

**Instructions to Supervisors: During Pre-CORE activities, the supervisor should have assigned the new CW Specialist a mentor who has Permanency Planning responsibility. Have the mentor choose a case that is ongoing, court involved, and if possible, can schedule a CW Specialist visit with children in placement during OJT week. Help the new CW Specialist complete the following activities:**

- 1) Shadow the mentor on or review a completed Family Functional Assessment and Individualized Service Plan on a case suggested by your supervisor, discuss with your mentor and/or supervisor:
  - What were the identified safety threats?
  - Why was removal necessary?
  - What behaviors or conditions in the home need to change in order to make the child safe?
  - How will each of the services help the family?
  
- 2) Visit the service providers working with the family on the case reviewed in #1 above. Discuss with the service providers the following (and add the providers to the *Community Resource Directory*):
  - What services does the provider offer?
  - What are their specific treatment goals with the family whose case you reviewed?
  - How are the providers tracking the parents' progress?
  
- 3) Shadow a CW Specialist on a visit to a child in resource care from the reviewed case.

If this cannot be completed, shadow a CW Specialist on a CW Specialist visit to a child in resource care on another case.

- If this is not the case the new CW Specialist has already reviewed in activity #1, have the new CW Specialist review the Family Functional and ISP for this case.
  - Have the CW Specialist read the last few monthly contacts with the child(ren) being visited.
  - When the CW Specialist returns to the office, have them individually complete the Face to Face Contact Guide (04MP007E) and any required addendums based on your observations.
  - Observe a CW Specialist complete the **Child Behavioral Health Screener**.
  - Discuss the case with the mentor and/or Supervisor and ask any questions that came to mind regarding the home visit(s).
- 4) Shadow a CW Specialist on a visit to parents (preferably from the same case), following the directions from Activity #3 above.
- 5) Shadow a CW Specialist on an initial kinship placement walkthrough. If this is not possible, the mentor discusses the process with the CW Specialist, including usage of applicable forms (initial agreement, house assessment, background check, references, etc.).
- 6) The CW Specialist, with the assistance of their supervisor and/or mentor, identifies at least one resource parent to interview. The resource parent should have at least 12 months of experience as a resource parent. The CW Specialist interviews the resource parent utilizing the Foster Parent Interview Guide. The CW Specialist takes notes during their interview and types up a summary for their supervisor to review. The CW Specialist should be prepared to discuss their summary during Module 3 of CORE.
- 7) Shadow a Resource CW Specialist (adoptions and/or foster care) on a “field day,” when the resource CW Specialist will meet with multiple current or potential Bridge resource homes. The CW Specialist should be able to observe the resource CW Specialist conducting face to face contacts such as initial inquiries, resource family assessments, re-assessments, etc. **If activities 5, 6, & 7 can be completed on the same day, this is certainly allowable and advisable to effectively utilize the Specialist’s time.**
- 8) Attend a Court Review and/or Permanency Hearing. Mentor should assist the CW Specialist with entering the hearing results in the appropriate screen in KIDS.
- 9) Complete on LMS: <http://dhslms.oucpm.org>
- **Historical Trauma** on-line training;
  - **Trauma (Part 4)** on-line training; and
  - **Domestic Violence Overview** on-line training.



- 10) Complete Pre-Reading on LMS: <http://dhslms.oucpm.org>
  - **OK-TASCC Child Behavioral Health Screener**

### **Instructions to Supervisors/Mentors**

- 1) Ensure the CW Specialist meets with their assigned mentor for PP activities the first day of OJT;
- 2) Review case information with the CW Specialist for each activity and answer any questions the CW Specialist may have;
- 3) Ensure the CW Specialist understands the purpose for each reviewed form and shadowed activity;
- 4) Review the Child Welfare Specialists' Contact Guides. Provide feedback regarding observations and information collected during the visits to children and parents;
- 5) Ensure the CW Specialist has indicated the activities the CW Specialist was able to complete on the *OJT Week Activities Checklist* to submit upon return to training.

### **Module 5 & 6 – Specialized Training**

Child Welfare Specialists will be automatically enrolled in the following trainings based on their track after he/she successfully complete Module 4 or the Support Plan after Module 4.

The order of classes will depend on the schedule and some Norman COREs will have Modules 5&6 in Tulsa and some Tulsa COREs will have Modules 5&6 in Norman.

Module 5 & 6 Specialist Tracks can be located on the Child Welfare Training Website at <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/training/specialist-tracks/>.

## STRUCTURED MENTORING

**Why is it Important to Assign a Mentor?** The quality of learning a CW Specialist receives from Pre-CORE, OJT, and Post-CORE activities will depend greatly on the commitment of the mentor. The activities are not simply “busy work” but instead are designed to effectively prepare the CW Specialist for the content he/she will be exposed to in training. The mentor and supervisor effectively become trainers of the CW Specialist before CORE, during OJT, on Friday returns, and during Post-CORE shadowing.

**How do I Choose a Mentor?** A CPS mentor is assigned to each new CW Specialist at the beginning of employment and continues in that role until the beginning of CORE. A Permanency Planning mentor is assigned to the CW Specialist for OJT activities. After CORE, the CW Specialist is assigned a mentor based on that Child Welfare Specialist’s expected area of assignment (CPS, PP, or Resources). If needed to complete all activities, more than one mentor may be assigned; however, it is encouraged to have the CW Specialist shadow a single assigned mentor as much as possible. The Supervisor selects the most appropriate mentor available, based on the skills of the mentor and the specific job duties to be assigned to the CW Specialist upon graduation. Ideally, the mentor should be a CW Specialist from within the same group. If there is no qualified CW Specialist available, a mentor may be assigned from outside the Child Welfare Specialists’ group. A Supervisor may serve as a mentor only if the Supervisor is able to fulfill all of the mentoring responsibilities.

**What are the Qualifications Each Mentor Needs?** A mentor must be an experienced (one year or more) CW Specialist staff member with unquestionable ethics and outstanding social work skills who can expose the CW Specialist to the overall picture of the CW Specialist program. The mentor must have a good grasp of both the intent and the spirit of Child Welfare policy and be able to articulate the philosophy and mission of Child Welfare in the daily work routine. The mentor must be well respected by other CW Specialist staff and other children and family service professionals in the community.

**What are the Mentor’s Responsibilities?** The CW Specialist will accompany the mentor on various work assignments. The mentor will observe the CW Specialist gathering and documenting information, as well as the Child Welfare Specialists’ interactions with children, parents, court CW Specialists, etc. The mentor(s) will provide feedback of their observations of the CW Specialist during Pre-CORE Activities on the *Supervisor/Mentor Evaluation Form* located on the *Child Welfare Website* at <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/training/core/>

## **Intensive Supervision for New Child Welfare Specialists**

New Child Welfare Specialists need a supportive environment that allows adequate time to acquire knowledge and skills and to practice them in a closely supervised setting. In order for the CW Specialist Development Plan to be successful, supervisors must provide the intensive supervision of Child Welfare Specialists throughout CORE Training and for several months thereafter.

### **BEFORE CORE**

- **Do not** assign the new CW Specialist a caseload.
- Review the Pre-Core material, this Supervisor and Mentor Guide, as well as any e-mails received from the Training Unit or OU staff regarding training requirements or Pre-CORE activities with your CW Specialist.
- Complete as many activities as possible on the Pre-Core Training Checklist for Child Welfare Staff. The checklist is located on the Child Welfare website at: <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/training/core/>
- Assign a CPS mentor to the CW Specialist, recognizing that the mentor will have a great influence on the attitude and philosophy the CW Specialist will develop. Make sure the mentor is familiar with their responsibilities.
- Allow the CW Specialist to shadow the mentor or other experienced Child Welfare Specialists on a variety of job assignments listed in the Pre-CORE activities.
- Discuss with employee the Probationary Period (see page 22), role of CORE Training in the probationary period, and the Overall CW Specialist Evaluation (see page 5).
- Complete the *Supervisor/Mentor Evaluation Form*. Located on the Child Welfare Website at: <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/training/core/> .

### **DURING CORE**

- **Do not** assign the new CW Specialist a caseload.
- The CW Specialist receives Friday and OJT assignments during the classroom training weeks. Monitor the completion of all Friday and OJT activities.
- Discuss the Friday and OJT activities with the CW Specialist, complete the comments section, and sign required documentation forms.

- Ensure the CW Specialist turns in the completed Friday and OJT Activity assignment sheets with signatures to the CORE Coordinator the following week.
- Assist the CW Specialist in filing for mileage and per-diem, if appropriate, on the regular monthly mileage claim. **NOTE ON THE CLAIM THAT THE LODGING EXPENSES HAVE BEEN DIRECT BILLED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA.** Use the CORE Training workshop announcement to document travel.

### **AFTER CW SPECIALIST SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES CORE**

- Review the Post-CORE shadowing activities with the CW Specialist and ensure all activities are completed. Sign and date the Post-CORE activities checklist.
- Review the CW Specialists' performance on CORE quizzes and all Pre-CORE and OJT activities to determine areas needing improvement.
- Have regularly scheduled conferences every week.
- Help the CW Specialist feel a sense of belonging to the unit and provide frequent feedback for positive performance.
- Do not allow CW Specialist to perform new activities if he/she has not shadowed an experienced CW Specialist on a similar activity before; e.g., supervise visits or testify in court.
- Assist the CW Specialist with application of the Practice Standards; specifically ask the CW Specialist to discuss how their work with children and families reflects Oklahoma's standards for practice.
- Accept Specialists' feelings of confusion and inadequacy as normal. Be constructive – help CW Specialists identify mistakes. Point out good judgment.
- Review all written work closely and provide written and verbal feedback.
- Reinforce knowledge. Help the CW Specialist draw on knowledge he/she has gained and apply it to specific cases.
- Assign the new CW Specialist a graduated caseload per the following schedule (Oklahoma Pinnacle Plan Point 3, Initiative 1): as of January 1, 2018
  - 50 percent upon successful completion of CORE;
  - 75 percent after six months of successful work; and
  - 100 percent after nine months of successful work.
- Review with the CW Specialist their remaining mandatory training schedule for next

12 months and put it on the calendar. Ensure the CW Specialist is able to attend all mandatory Level I training. *If for any reason the CW Specialist cannot attend a scheduled mandatory class, the supervisor must e-mail **CHILD WELFARE TRAINING** (listed on Outlook) with permission for the CW Specialist to be withdrawn from the workshop and rescheduled.*

- Ensure the CW Specialist completes their Level I Training.
- Certify the CW Specialist during **Phase 2 of CW Specialist Certification** (See CW Specialist Certification Handbook for details).

## **ALWAYS**

- **CONTACT THE CW SPECIALIST TRAINING UNIT IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE.**
- Check the OU Child Welfare Training program website at <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/>. Supervisors and Child Welfare Specialists alike can often find answers to questions and other helpful information here. The personnel page is located in the Logistics section.

## **Mandatory Level Trainings**

After successful completion of the six week CORE Training and Certification, new Child Welfare Specialists will complete the Level I mandatory workshops within the next 18 months. Once the Specialist successfully completes CORE, the CW Specialist Training Unit will ensure the new CW Specialist is enrolled in the appropriate workshops. A schedule will be provided and e-mail reminders will be sent 3-weeks and 1-week prior to the scheduled training. *This training **MUST** be completed within 18 months of the CW Specialist's end of CORE.*

For a list of level training classes, please visit <https://cwtraining.oucpm.org/training/specialist-tracks/>

## **Probationary Period**

Effective July 1, 1998 there were some significant changes to the Merit System for Personnel Administration. These changes modified the length of the probationary and trial periods for new and promoted employees.

House Bill 2860 {1998} Section 7 amends Title 74, Section 840-4.13D states “every person, upon initial appointment under the classified service, shall be appointed for a probationary period of one year”. This section refers to all persons whose initial, classified appointment begins July 1, 1998 and thereafter. Although the amendment allows the appointing authority to waive in the writing the remainder of the probationary period at any time after a probationary employee has served six months, it will be Field Operations policy for all employees hired after July 1, 1998 to serve the full one year probation. The probationary period will not be reduced to less than one year.