

## **Attachment A**

### **Parent Behavioral Health Assessment (PBHA) Program Description and Process**

An important tenet in Florida's child welfare practice model is the partnership between child welfare professionals, families and other experts. When the family condition is impacted by mental health or substance misuse, behavioral health providers are key partners. Information gathered from behavioral health providers informs decisions around child safety, case planning, caregiver's protective capacities and behavior changes.

Parents, whose children are involved in the child welfare system, need timely access to assessments that will help provide a path to permanency for their children and improve/impact family well-being. These assessments should be trauma informed, comprehensive (to include assessing for co-occurring conditions), convenient and affordable.

Child welfare professionals need timely behavioral health focused assessments of parents whose children are involved in the child welfare system to ensure the parents are provided appropriate intervention services that focus on improved child safety, caregiver protective capacities and behavior changes.

Behavioral health providers need information regarding the family's history, the current family condition, current circumstances, identified safety concerns and information on the caregiver's enhanced and diminished protective capacities.

#### **Qualifications of PBHA Assessor**

Assessors must be licensed practitioners of the healing arts (licensed through Florida's 491 board) and be trained in Florida's Child Welfare Practice Model. Assessors must be comfortable diagnosing both mental health and substance use disorders and must be familiar with local resources. Assessors must have reliable transportation and be willing to conduct interviews in a location convenient for the parents, often times their home.

#### **Process during Child Protective Investigative Phase**

If during a Child Protective Investigator's investigation and assessment, present danger is identified or a child is determined to be unsafe the Child Protective Investigator (CPI) shall refer all parents involved in the case for a Parent Behavior Health Assessment. The CPI will complete the PBHA Referral Form and email it to [PBHA2@bigbendcbc.org](mailto:PBHA2@bigbendcbc.org). The following information shall be included with the referral: current allegations, prior abuse and neglect history including service history, prior criminal history, Present Danger Assessment, Safety Plan, Caregiver Protective Capacity document and other professional reports, assessments or evaluations that are available.

Within 48 business hours of receiving the PHBA Referral, the PBHA Assessor shall attempt to make contact with the parent in order to schedule a face to face interview. This interview should be scheduled as soon as possible but no later than 7 days from contact. The PBHA Assessor shall travel to the location of the parent, including local jails if a parent is incarcerated. In cases where the safety of the Assessor is a concern, the Assessor should contact BBCBC or its agent and arrange for a safe location to interview

the parent, often times an office or public setting. If contact is not made within 72 hours or the parent refuses to participate in the assessment process, the attempts shall be documented and provided to the referring CPI. The Assessor will hold referrals for non-responsive parents for 5 days, while the investigator attempts to engage the parent. If re-engagement is successful, the Assessor will again attempt to make contact within 48 hours. If these efforts are unsuccessful, the referral will be denied and the Assessor will inform the CPI.

Within 7 days of receipt of the PBHA referral and with information available, the PBHA Assessor shall provide email feedback to the Child Protective Investigator advising how behavioral health concerns and diminished caregiver protective capacities could impact child safety.

Within 14 days of the interview with the parent, the PBHA Assessor shall provide a written assessment as outlined in the attached PBHA Assessment template. This assessment shall be provided to the referring Child Protective Investigator and emailed to [PBHA2@bigbendcbc.org](mailto:PBHA2@bigbendcbc.org). All assessments should be received no later than 28 days following an accepted referral.

### **Process during Case Management Phase**

If contact with the PBHA Assessor is not made during the Child Protective Investigative phase of the case, the Case Manager will be responsible for sending a referral to the PBHA Assessor. The PBHA Referral Form and information previously submitted by the CPI along with updated information will be emailed to [PBHA2@bigbendcbc.org](mailto:PBHA2@bigbendcbc.org).

Within 48 business hours of receiving the PHBA Referral, the PBHA Assessor shall attempt to make contact with the parent in order to schedule a face to face interview. This interview should be scheduled as soon as possible but no later than 7 days from contact. The PBHA Assessor shall travel to the location of the parent, including local jails if a parent is incarcerated. In cases where the safety of the Assessor is a concern, the Assessor should contact BBCBC or its agent and arrange for a safe location to interview the parent, often times an office or public setting. If contact is not made within 72 hours or the parent refuses to participate in the assessment process, the attempts shall be documented and provided to the referring Case Manager. The Assessor will hold referrals for non-responsive parents for 5 days, while the Case Manager attempts to engage the parent. If re-engagement is successful, the Assessor will again attempt to make contact within 48 hours. If these efforts are unsuccessful, the referral will be denied and the Assessor will inform the Case Manager.

Within 14 days of the interview with the parent, the PBHA Assessor shall provide a written assessment as outlined in the attached PBHA Assessment template. This assessment shall be provided to the referring Case Manager and emailed to [PBHA2@bigbendcbc.org](mailto:PBHA2@bigbendcbc.org). All assessments should be received no later than 28 days following an accepted referral.

