



Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

DFPS News Release

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Takes Over Foster Care Redesign Contract

AUSTIN - The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) will take over the state's initial foster care redesign effort following the decision by Providence Service Corp. of Texas to voluntarily terminate their contract.

The five-year contract, which went into effect Feb. 1, 2013, was worth \$30 million dollars a year and included an opt-out clause for either party. Providence notified DFPS in writing on August 1, 2014 that it was exercising that right.

The contract was providing services for about 1,100 foster children who are in the care of the state from 60 counties in West Texas, including Midland/Odessa, Abilene, San Angelo, Wichita Falls and hundreds of smaller communities. This region was selected in 2012 as the state's first redesign area.

"The care and services for these foster children will not be affected in any way," said Judge John Specia, Commissioner of DFPS. "This will be a smooth transition."

DFPS notified providers in the redesign area of the change, and that DFPS will reassume contracting directly with providers as it did before the Providence contract went into effect 18 months ago.

"We have learned a great deal through this initial contract, and will build upon that in our ongoing redesign efforts," Specia said. "Providence made a good-faith effort, but progress was slow, and we believe this change will enable the state to step back and re-evaluate how we proceed on Foster Care Redesign in this area of the state."

Recently, DFPS notified Providence about several issues with the performance of their contract. Some of those issues included:

- Missing performance targets on key goals such as placing siblings together and keeping children close to home.
- Failing to develop staff and network of providers needed to place children as quickly as required.
- Unable to develop a full array of services to better serve children.

The state's second redesign contract, with ACH Child and Family Services from Fort Worth, remains in effect. ACH began serving children on July 1, 2014.

Redesign was developed by DFPS and authorized by the Texas Legislature in 2011 as a way to improve outcomes for the thousands of abused and neglected children who come into the state's care each year.

In a redesigned system, the state retains custody of foster children and manages individual cases that are overseen by a judge. Unlike the current foster care system, where the state contracts with hundreds of providers, under redesign a single contractor is responsible for the recruitment and training of foster parents and development of a network of services for foster children in a given area.

The goal of redesign is for foster children to remain closer to their home communities after they are removed by Child Protective Services (CPS). The intent is for these children to be provided more services closer to home and be placed with their brothers and sisters instead of separated from them.

"The state remains committed to the principles of redesign because it is clear the system has to improve," Judge Specia said.

Learn more about [Foster Care Redesign](#) on the DFPS website.