

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN  
LANCASTER COUNTY CHILDREN AND YOUTH  
AND  
LANCASTER COUNTY OFFICE OF JUVENILE PROBATION  
AND  
THE LANCASTER COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS**

## **I. General Provisions**

- A. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines the commitment between Lancaster County Children & Youth Agency (LCCYA), Juvenile Probation Office (JPO) and the court of common pleas to provide a structured format to enhance collaboration, coordination and service delivery to meet the needs of Lancaster County's dual status youth and their families by building an effective interagency/departmental partnership.
- B. This MOU grants authority given under the Pennsylvania Act 78 of 2016 (Amendment to Title 42 § 6342.2) for the Juvenile Probation, Children and Youth and the Court of Common Pleas to exchange case information in relation to dually involved youth. It's preferable that a consent to release confidential information by the person authorized is obtained in writing.

## **II. Description and Purpose**

The purpose of this MOU is to establish collaboration between Lancaster County Children & Youth Agency, Lancaster County Juvenile Probation and the Lancaster County Court of Common Pleas to enhance system coordination and service delivery, for the dually involved youth population of Lancaster County who are referred to and /or receiving services from Children and Youth and Juvenile Probation above agencies.

**The Lancaster County Children & Youth Agency** is a public child welfare agency regulated by the Office of Children, Youth and Families mandated to provide protection services to Lancaster County's children and their families. The Agency investigates all reports of child abuse and neglect and provides intervention services to address safety threats and risk factors and stabilize the family. The Agency's mission is to address the safety, permanency and well-being of children and youth at risk of abuse and neglect.

**Lancaster County Office of Juvenile Probation's** mission shall be in accordance with the Juvenile Act and the Rules of Juvenile Court Procedure, provide balanced attention to the protection of the community, the imposition of accountability to repair the harm to victims of juvenile offenders, and the development of competencies to enable children to become responsible and productive members of the community and to do so while treating all parties with dignity and respect, affording all that their constitutional and legal rights are recognized and enforced.

### **III. Scope of Work:**

Through the collaborative efforts and subject matter expertise and experience of the agencies and their community stakeholders, the partners to this agreement will conduct an analysis and dynamic examination of challenges and opportunities in the following focus areas:

- **Data**
  - Develop a data collection system that meets the needs of the dual system youth initiative.
  - Review national data and local sources of data regarding dually involved youth. Identify questions to be answered about dually involved youth; identify data sets and data points that must be collected, aggregated and shared across system and ensure that this data is regularly analyzed to inform practice.
  - Identify gaps in data that need to be filled so that systems are better able to serve youth and families.
- **Legal & Policy**
  - Evaluate the current processes for handling dually involved youth, including court processes, and consider alternative processes; develop proposals for new interventions.
  - Review and consider legal mandates for dually involved youth across systems. analyze & address legal, policy, and practice barriers to information sharing in an effort to improve information sharing while protecting the privacy of youth and families.
- **Practice & Resource**
  - Identify and compare organizational missions, mandates and policies.
  - Identify common and dissimilar components of case processing and management.
  - Inventory assessment tools used across systems in an effort to evaluate the most effective way to conduct joint assessment processes and joint case planning.
  - Inventory local resources and analyze whether there are gaps and or overlaps.
  - Consider opportunities to share resources or blend funding.
  - Identify best practices locally and nationally.
  - Develop thorough, ongoing staff training.
- Collectively, through the work of the subcommittees referenced above, and with the guidance of the Executive Steering Committee, the Initiative will explore the possibility of:
  - Developing and defining a clear case protocol for CYA and JPO workers
  - Instituting joint assessment and case planning processes at several key junctures.
  - Implementing widespread, ongoing training that incorporates trauma informed services training.

- Linking the work of the Dually-Involved Youth Initiative to other ongoing major initiatives including Youth Service Review, CASSP, Joining Forces for children, Local children's roundtable.
- Providing concurrent services to youth and families.

## **V. Outcomes:**

The partners in this agreement will collect, manage and routinely report the following agreed upon system performance and youth and family outcomes impacted by the agreed upon policies, procedures, and protocols resulting from the Lancaster County Dually Involved Youth Initiative:

- Reduction in recidivism, new referrals to CYA.
- Placement/family stability
- Mental health stability and functioning
- Substance abuse access/treatment
- Education stability and achievement
- More effectively and efficiently serve youth and families that touch both systems.
- Use evidence-based research and promising practices to inform changes in both systems so that we can better serve youth and families.

The Executive Committee for the initiative will endorse specific performance measures for each agreed upon outcome.

## **VI. General Terms:**

The undersigned agencies and organizations commit to ongoing collaboration, integration, and coordination with the goal of improving outcomes for dually-involved youth.

- **Term:** This agreement will be effective through [2 years from date signed] at which point it will be reevaluated and updated.
- **Termination:** Signatories may withdraw from this MOU at any time by making said request in writing with the effective date and reason for withdrawal.
- **Review:** This MOU may be reviewed by the parties' mutual agreement for additional terms at any time.
- **Participation:** Signatories commit to attend (or send a designated delegate with decision making authority) and actively participate in all relevant meetings, to the best of their abilities.

In order for this document to be the official Memo of Understanding it must be signed and dated by each Executive Director and the Judge.

## VI. Authorized Signatures

*Crystal A. Natan MSW, LSW*

07/23/20

Crystal A. Natan, Executive Director  
Lancaster County Children & Youth Social Service Agency

Date

*Cheri L. Modene*

7/23/20

Cheri L. Modene, Director  
Lancaster County Juvenile Probation

Date

*David R. Workman*

7/27/20

David R. Workman, Judge  
Lancaster County Court of Common Pleas

Date