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# Aspiranet

## ~August 2021~

### Monthly Training

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#### Preparing for Joint Commission Reccreditation

*“With Joint Commission accreditation, we are making a significant investment in quality on a day-to-day basis. The Joint Commission accreditation provides us a framework to take our organization to the next level and helps create a culture of excellence. Achieving Joint Commission accreditation for our organization is a major step toward maintaining excellence and continually improving the care we provide.”*

Vernon Brown-CEO Aspiranet

Nearly a decade ago, Aspiranet chose to become accredited to improve and standardize our services, as well as formalize our safety and quality standards. Aspiranet became accredited through The Joint Commission (TJC), which is an independent, not-for-profit organization, and is the nation’s oldest and largest accrediting body in medical and mental health care, which includes Aspiranet. Our accreditation through The Joint Commission means that Aspiranet is nationally recognized as an agency for providing high quality services.

As part of maintaining accreditation status, every three years TJC visits Aspiranet for a “reccreditation survey”, which is an evaluation to confirm we are maintaining high quality standards. It’s now been three years since the last visit from TJC, so we anticipate they will be arriving as soon as August to review the Agency. During this process, there are TJC “Surveyors” who will visit Aspiranet locations across the state including foster care offices and resource family homes. During these visits, Surveyors will view files, assess the site for safety and compliance, and interview staff, resource parents, children and youth. Due to COVID-19, this process may be modified this year; possibly with some virtual visits and remote review of records. The Joint Commission provides a few days notice prior to arriving; when notified of our survey date we will learn more about the actual process this year and where they will be visiting.

In preparation for TJC arriving, Aspiranet has been reviewing files, staff and resource family training records, and conducting office reviews. As we communicated in the recent July letter, in anticipation of Community Care Licensing (CCL) and TJC visits to resource family homes, Aspiranet Social Workers will be conducting thorough inspections of all homes by August 31. Social Workers will wear masks, and again we request Resource Families to prepare for the home inspection by having the First Aid kit and locked medications accessible, as well as cabinets/pantries open in the kitchen and bathrooms for a hands-free and efficient review by your Social Worker. Safety and compliance with regulatory requirements are of utmost importance and a focus for Aspiranet, CCL and TJC.

The files for children and youth in your care will also be reviewed by your Aspiranet Social Worker. Outstanding documentation will be either provided by your Social Worker or requested from you to complete or obtain, including: Monthly Progress Reports, Physical Exam Reports, Dental Exam Reports, Clothing and Personal Property Inventories, etc. As a reminder, to protect children’s privacy, please maintain documentation in the childrens’ files and keep files in a locked location.

Your Aspiranet Social Worker may also be requesting any outstanding resource home file documentation from you which may include: current Driver’s License, auto and/or home owner’s insurance, current certificates for First Aid/CPR, Water Safety, Mandated Child Abuse Reporter training, etc.

We request timely response to requests for child and family file documentation in order that we can together maintain compliance with documentation standards.

It's been our experience that the Joint Commission Surveyors will typically visit the resource family homes of the family and child files they reviewed during the office visit. Resource families' work and household schedules are considered for possible TJC Surveyor visits, and your Aspiranet Social Worker will discuss a potential TJC Surveyor visit to prepare you. It's been our experience that the home visits are a positive experience for Resource Families. A Surveyor may walk through your home and may ask to check on specific safety measures, such as locked medication, toxics, fire arms, etc. The Surveyors will also be interested in talking with you as a resource parent and your children to learn about your experiences with Aspiranet. We encourage you to be yourself during the home visit, and want to reassure you the Surveyor is there to learn about you, your family and your services with Aspiranet.

The following are possible questions a Surveyor may ask:

**Resource Parents:**

- How has your experience been at Aspiranet?
- Overall, how satisfied are you with the services you/your child have received from Aspiranet during COVID-19?
- How were you prepared to become a resource parent? What is the process? What training have you received since?
- Are you involved in child's service planning process?
- Is your child given the resources he or she is needing?
- How is your home monitored?
- Tell me about the needs of your children?
- How are the children matched to your family?
- Do any of your children have special medical or emotional needs?
- Do any of your children receive medication?
- If yes, who prescribes, were you educated, how is the medication administered, what are the potential side effects?
- How do you support your child's service plan?
- How is the service plan updated?
- How do you support the child's biological family?
- Do you maintain a life book for your child?
- Does your child attend counseling?
- What is your role in supporting your child in counseling?
- Have you ever had to utilize on-call? If yes, tell me about this service.
- How is your family supported?

**Children/Youth:**

- How has your experience been at Aspiranet?
  - Have you had your needs met?
- Have there been any concerns?
  - If so, how have you communicated them? If you had a concern in regards to your care, who do you notify?
- Who is involved in helping you? Who do you talk to? Do they help you?
- Have your rights been explained to you?
  - What do you know about your rights as a child in foster care?
- Do you think Aspiranet respects your rights? If not, why not? If so, how is that demonstrated?
- What medical services do you receive, if any?
  - Are you taking medication?
  - What is your understanding of the reason you are taking medication?
  - How is your medication administered?
- What have you done if you have had questions?
  - How do you get responses to your questions?
  - Have you felt well informed throughout your care experience? If not, how could that be improved, in your opinion?
- How did staff members encourage you to ask questions about your treatment? What do you think of the answers they gave you?
- Do you know how to file a complaint?

As noted, you can expect your Aspiranet Social Worker will be discussing the upcoming TJC visit with you. Please ask any questions or voice concerns with your Aspiranet Social Worker and/or Program Director. The last TJC survey occurred in late July 2018, and Surveyor's provided positive feedback about our services and their interactions with staff, youth and resource parents. It was noted that our foster care program is "exceptional" and "something to be proud of". As our partners, resource parents are undoubtedly a big part in helping to make our program "exceptional"!

Please sign and return this page to your Aspiranet Social Worker for training credit.  
My signature below indicates that I have completed the August 2021 "Preparing for Joint Commission Reaccreditation" training.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature Foster Parent #1*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Print Name Foster Parent #1*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature Foster Parent #2*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Print Name Foster Parent #2*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Aspiranet Authorized Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

Training credit: \_\_\_\_ minutes