

**Parking Lot Questions and Answers from the Teaming workshops held in February 2013, in the Norwich, Willimantic and Middletown offices of the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The workshops presented an overview of the different types of Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTM).**

1. Are signed releases of information needed for the Considered Removal (CR-CFTM) meetings? **Yes, releases of information should be in place for DCF to release information to family, kin, providers, who will be at the meeting. There is also a confidentiality statement on the sign in sheet.**
2. What about when cases are already court involved (Juvenile Court), will DCF automatically invite lawyers? **Yes, DCF should notify lawyers if we are involved in juvenile court. However, meetings will not be delayed or rescheduled due to a lawyer's schedule.**
3. DCF can authorize an Administrative Hold to remove a child from their home and assume custody of the children for up to 96 hours before presenting the case to court for a court order regarding custody. With the new Considered Removal policy, after an Administrative Hold has been authorized will DCF wait to file the Motion for Order of Temporary Custody (OTC) to allow time to hold the meeting?  
**Yes, whenever possible, based on when a hold is authorized (i.e. if a hold was authorized the day before a long weekend, there may not be extra time to hold a meeting).**
4. What will the timing of the meeting be like when DCF is seeking guardianship through a petition or motion to open and modify. **This would not be a CR-CFTM unless there is a safety factor present/imminence for removal. In these cases a Team Decision Making meeting (TDM) could be held or, if not available, the SW can conduct their own team meeting with family and providers to plan for placement. TDM meetings are facilitated by a neutral facilitator at the social worker level.**
5. How will bench OTCs be handled? **We will not be holding CR-CFTMs in these instances. We will hold some other type of team meeting with the family, using our TDM SW staff or the assigned Social Worker (SW)/Social Work Supervisor (SWS) will facilitate a team meeting if TDM staff is not available.**
6. Protective Supervision (PS), is a Juvenile Court disposition in which there is court oversight of a child who remains at home with parents, with accompanying court orders. When there is PS and the judge views this as a custody order, how should safety planning be handled in those circumstances? **Following the meeting, DCF should file something in court promptly informing the court of what occurred.**

7. If parents bring their lawyer, should DCF have a lawyer at the meeting? This is not encouraged as this will affect the integrity of the process. If there is a particularly litigious case, this could be considered.
8. After hours background checks, will there be a system in place for these requests to be made from meetings? The Careline can do background checks for DCF Area Office staff after hours.
9. During the CFTMs, there needs to be consideration of short term versus long term family arrangements. DCF in conjunction with the family and providers, should assess to make the best decision (i.e. relatives foster care versus family arrangement via a safety plan). This should be part of our assessment, how long do we likely expect a family arrangement to be needed, if we are talking about months relative foster care should be considered if the family is in need of the support. The outcome of the meeting is to address safety issues; that always needs to be front and center; the rest can be addressed through quality casework.
10. How do we handle situations with parents or family members who live out of state, with no information about criminal or Child Protection History?- We go with what we know at the time of the meeting, not "what if's". If it's an out of state parent, encourage them to seek an ex-parte custody order.
11. What will the data tracking look like, what information will be gathered/tracked to analyze how this is working? Logs are developed and will be reviewed at the area office and regional level; also sent weekly to DCF Central Office.
12. Will there be therapeutic support immediately following meetings for kids/youth? DCF should request that child's therapist attend the meeting, designated family member to support the child, Area Resource Group (ARG) can be invited to the meeting, and Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services (EMPS) can be called if needed.
13. How will concrete supports for the meetings be handled, like transportation for family members, child care, etc. This will be a joint responsibility of worker/leadership/family. More difficult issue is transportation and safety/emotional issues after the meeting. SWS should assess to degree possible and hold additional staff to assist with transport.
14. What will the documentation look like? At this time, the facilitator will be documenting the meeting in a link narrative under Family Engagement. SW/SWS/Manager should document activity/decision making as appropriate. SDM and safety plans are essential; this must be good across the office, not just with Intake staff.

15. What about Family With Service Needs (FWSN) placements, how will these be handled with Considered Removal Meetings and Ice Breakers? FWSN placements are usually congregate care placements and not a result of safety concerns. In these cases a TDM meeting could be held or, if not available, the SW can conduct their own team meeting with family and providers to plan for placement.
16. When kids enter placement through the Delinquency side of court, if this is expected, should we try to hold a meeting before just getting a bench OTC? Delinquency placements are usually congregate care by nature and thus do not fit meeting goals. In these cases a TDM meeting could be held or, if not available, the SW can conduct their own team meeting with family and providers to plan for placement. CR Only if involved with CPS, within 2 business days. (Will seek clarification)
17. What about Voluntary cases, when parents are asking DCF to place the children? CR-CFTM can occur if parent is seeking removal that day. Otherwise it could be a TDM case, or if not available, the SW can conduct their own team meeting with family and providers to plan for placement.
18. What about Probate cases? The Probate Court system has a process in place for holding family team meetings at the court. A CFTM would not be held without a tandem Child Protection Services (CPS) report.
19. What about when there is an ongoing police investigation and DCF cannot release information about the investigation? DCF always has to cite a reason for removal, either in an Administrative Hold or OTC for which the parent will be served. This is not any different than present practice.
20. Will there be a brochure? Can we customize this to include our dedicated conference line? There is a brochure; yes we can include the conference line.
21. Will DCF be removing right after the meeting if the decision is foster care? Potentially from the office if the children are being provided childcare? Yes, if safety factors cannot be remedied, we must remedy them and that means removal then and there.
22. Are flex funds available to pay providers who participate in a CRTM? Generally no, unless we are already contracting with them to provide service and these are negotiated as part of the service hours.
23. For Icebreakers, what about when DCF feels that it is not safe for the foster parent to meet the birth parent based on the parent's past behavior? Safety measures should be taken if there are significant concerns. This decision should be clearly documented in supervision and affirmed by a manager with a subsequent follow up plan.

24. For Icebreakers, Staff felt that both foster mother (FM) and foster father (FF) should be required to attend the icebreaker meeting and that the meeting should not occur without both foster parents (FPs). Also, if FF was unable to attend that another meeting should be held to engage that FF. This stemmed from a concern about exclusion of FF's like we tend to exclude fathers. [DCF will not hold two meetings, foster fathers will be invited, but meetings won't be delayed if they are not available.](#)

25. Re: IceBreakers. There is a feeling that when the Icebreaker meeting happens with a legal risk/adoptive/preadoptive placement that the meeting should look a little different and give time for more dialogue between the bio and preadoptive parent. Strong feelings were expressed that the Icebreaker would be much different than with FPs who is saying "I'm just caring for the child until you can." [This should be addressed on an individualized basis through collaborative conversation amongst SW staff and Foster and Adoptive Services Unit staff \(FASU\). Meeting should be focused on the care of the child.](#)

26. Re: Ice Breakers - Fast Facts Form, a DCF nurse had the following recommendations:

The current questions aimed at seeking medical info are:

*Do the children have health issues , if so what?*

She suggests changing the questions as noted below:

*Explain medications or allergies*

*Does your child have any allergies to medications or foods?*

*Does your child take any medication daily?*

*Has your child ever had surgery?*

[These questions will be added to the Fast facts form.](#)