

ONGOING SERVICES

In-Home Cases

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Policy The Department of Children and Families shall serve children and their families with open protective services cases in the child's home of origin whenever safely possible.

Receiving the Case When a child protective services case is transferred from an Intake unit to an Ongoing Services unit, the Program Supervisor shall ensure that the case is assigned to an Ongoing Services Supervisor within one working day.

The Program Supervisor shall also ensure that the Supervisor assigns the case to an Ongoing Services Social Worker within two working days of assignment. A supervisory conference shall be held.

Case Transfer Conference A case transfer conference shall be held within five working days for all high risk cases, and may be held in any other case when requested by the Investigations Social Work Supervisor and Social Worker.

The case transfer conference shall be attended by the:

- Investigations Social Worker;
 - Investigations Social Work Supervisor;
 - Ongoing Services Social Work Supervisor; and
 - Ongoing Services Social Worker, if assigned.
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Joint Home Visit The Investigations and Ongoing Services Social Workers shall have a joint home visit to discuss the transition to Ongoing Services. Whenever necessary, a member of the Regional Resource Group shall attend for high risk cases and in cases in which the RRG is already involved.

Family participants shall include but not be limited to the parents and children (as age- and developmentally-appropriate) and service providers. (**Note:** The ISW shall be responsible for inviting the participants.)

Topic to be discussed shall include:

- family strengths and needs;
- family composition;
- family supports;
- cultural and language considerations;
- goals and objectives to initiate the case plan; and
- the timing and purpose of first Large Team and future planned meetings.

Cross-reference: DCF Policy 21-2, "Child and Family Permanency Teaming."

Case Planning Initial and ongoing family case plans may be developed for all families with an open case in ongoing services including unsubstantiated transfers and Family Assessment Response cases.

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Other Teamings

Each Region may choose to develop one or more additional teams to ensure consistent and meaningful case practice.

Contact Standards

The Ongoing Services Social Worker shall meet with the parents and children in accordance with the contact standards set forth in DCF Policy 20-1-1, "Purposeful Visitation and Contact Standards."

Cross reference: "Purposeful Visitation Practice Guide."

Structured Decision Making

Structured Decision Making ("SDM") tools shall be utilized throughout the period the case remains open.

Tools include:

- The Family Strengths and Needs Assessment (FSNA) should be used on all ongoing service cases (including Voluntary Service Program cases, permanency, etc.);
- A Safety Assessment shall be completed on any ongoing services case when new information becomes available that indicates a threat to the safety of a child. Additionally, a Safety Assessment is completed:
 - prior to the removal of any child from the home;
 - prior to returning a child to the home during the investigation whether protectively placed by DCF or prior to the end of an arrangement the caregiver made for care outside of the home as a protective intervention; and
 - throughout the existing case whenever new information becomes available that indicates a threat to the safety of a child.

The risk level for cases opened for ongoing services should be considered by Social Workers and Social Work Supervisors throughout the life of the case when prioritizing case work activities.

Non-Compliance with Case Plan

When a parent is not in compliance with Case Plan requirements, the Ongoing Social Work Supervisor shall consult with Ongoing Program Supervisor, the Area Office Attorney or Assistant Attorney General and RRG members as appropriate, to determine if a neglect petition should be filed in Superior Court for Juvenile Matters.

Services to Prevent Placement

Reasonable efforts shall be made to provide services to prevent out-of-home placement. Services to prevent placement shall be offered based on the unique needs of the family. Consideration shall be given to, among other things:

- the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment;
 - services identified in the Case Plan; and
 - needs identified by family members.
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Documentation of Services Offered All services offered to the family to prevent placement shall be documented in the case narrative.

If DCF is not able to provide or contract for a service, the reasons shall be documented in the case narrative.

Considerations when Deciding if Placement is Necessary DCF shall consider all relevant factors when making the decision to place a child in out-of-home care including:

- the willingness of a parent to accept a service that is intended to prevent placement;
- SDM Risk Assessment;
- results of the SDM Safety Assessment and Re-Assessment(s);
- the results of any consultations with the AAG, Area Office Attorney or a member of the Regional Resource Group; and
- the input of service providers.

Considered Removal A Considered Removal Child and Family Team Meeting (CR-CFTM) shall be required for all cases in which a child is being considered for immediate removal from his or her home based on the identification of a safety factor as indicated by the SDM Safety Assessment.

Cross reference: DCF Policy 21-2-1, "Considered Removal: Child and Family Permanency Teaming".

Involuntary Placement If Ongoing Services staff determine that a child must be removed from his or her home due to imminent physical danger, and there is no other alternative than involuntary out-of-home placement, either:

- the Program Supervisor shall order a 96-hour hold; or
 - the Social Worker shall prepare a request for a Motion for Order of Temporary Custody from the Juvenile Court.
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