



## Policy: Staffing and Case Reviews

**ChildNet Number: CN 007.024**

**Original Approved Date: June 17, 2003**

**Policy Revised Date(s): May 17, 2006, June 22, 2010, September 16, 2010, November 19, 2010, August 22, 2014**

**Policy Sunset Date:**

**COA Standard(s): FKC 5.01, 5.02, 5.04, 5.06, 19.04 ASE 6.04**

### Statement of Policy:

Time is of the essence in achieving permanency for children in the dependency system. Therefore, permanency planning is critical to effectively reduce the length of stay for children in out of home care, while keeping in mind the child's best interest. Established during the early stages of a case, the plan for permanency is not fixed and/or unchangeable, and thus must be reviewed regularly to monitor the progress made (or not made) in regards to the legally approved case plan. All cases under ChildNet's supervision will be carefully monitored and reviewed to assess the level of commitment to the child's right to live as a member of a family and achieving permanency for all youth in care. Circumstances, case plan compliance by parents and/or relevant family members can change, legally warranting changes in the case plan goal when it appears to be in the best interest of the child to do so. Therefore, ChildNet will create both formal and informal opportunities for families where dialogue can take place regarding their legal case plan goal, and how to bring about permanency for their child (or children). For this purpose, ChildNet will remain in continual contact with the Children's Legal Services Office in order to help families and children achieve safety, permanency and wellbeing; and recommend needed case plan goal changes to the court when deemed necessary and/or appropriate.

**Board Chair's Signature:**

**Date:**

8/22/14



## **Procedure: Staffing and Case Reviews**

**ChildNet Number: CN 007.024**

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**Procedure Sunset Date:**

**COA Standard(s):**

**FKC 5.01, 5.02, 5.04, 5.06, 19.04 ASE 6.04**

**Definitions (If any):**

### **Statement of Procedure:**

This procedure establishes guidelines for case reviews and formal staffings of all cases under the supervision of ChildNet. Formal staffings and/or case reviews will be held periodically following intake, and as required by law, or more frequently as needed. In the event a staffing involves a perpetrator of domestic violence, physical abuse, or sexual abuse, additional steps are taken to ensure all interactions between the perpetrator and the victim are monitored and managed to ensure psychological and physical safety. Dependency Case Manager Dependency Case Management Supervisor Dependency Case Manager

### **A. Assignment and Initial Case Review:**

1. Upon receipt of a file from the Intake and Placement Unit, the Managers/Directors will complete a preliminary review of the file to determine, whether or not all pertinent documents are in the file and document any immediate follow-up needs to be completed. All completed efforts or pending tasks are documented in Comprehensive Welfare Information System (CCWIS) by the Manager/Director within one working day. Please see CN 003.005 regarding Case Chronological Documentation. The Manager/Director (or designee) will maintain a record of the case name, date received and removal date to ensure all subsequent staffings are scheduled timely. Manager/Director will assign the case in accordance with CN 003.001 Case Assignments. In
2. The Dependency Case Manager Dependency Case Management Supervisor will review the file and assign it to the appropriate Dependency Case Manager for immediate/continual case management tasks. At this initial case review the Dependency Case Manager will be assigned specific tasks to be completed as outlined, by specified due dates. The Dependency Case Manager Dependency Case Management Supervisor is responsible for entering a chronological note in CCWIS within one working day.
3. The Dependency Case Manager will schedule to meet the child, substitute caregivers and/or legal custodians within 2 days (48 hours). Further, the CDCM will meet with the



legal parents at the Family Team Meeting within 10 days in order to develop an initial permanency plan identifying:

- a. The permanency goal,
- b. A timeframe for achieving permanency
- c. The appropriateness of a concurrent goal
- d. Activities that support permanency

## **B. Quarterly Case Reviews**

The Dependency Case Manager/Dependency Case Management Supervisor is responsible for reviewing each case in their unit with the assigned Dependency Case Manager on a quarterly basis. See CN 003.069 regarding Supervisory Reviews.

## **C. Permanency Staffings**

Cases will be formally staffed for permanency as required by law, or more frequently as needed. The purpose of this staffing is to determine if the case plan goal is appropriate or if a change of goal should be recommended to the court as well as discuss relevant factors or barriers to achieving permanency. This is also the appropriate time for recommending concurrent case planning. If concurrent planning is being used, the permanency goal of reunification with the parent or legal custodian, in addition to any other appropriate permanency goal, will be addressed. All reasonable efforts that are being made to achieve both goals will be discussed and documented at these permanency staffings (See F.S. 39.6011 Case plan development (2) (c)).

1. The CBC shall ensure permanency staffings are held prior to preparing for a permanency hearing.
- 2.
3. The Unit Staff Assistant or designee is responsible for sending the permanency staffing schedule 14 working days in advance to the Dependency Case Manager/Dependency Case Manager (DCM), Dependency Case Manager/Dependency Case Management Supervisor/Dependency Case Manager Supervisor (DCMS), Children's Legal Services, Guardian Ad Litem Program and ChildNet designated staff.
4. In preparation for the staffing, the DCM will provide a current and completed Family Functioning Assessment-Ongoing (FFA-O) or Progress Update (PU) and submit to their supervisor at least four working days prior to the scheduled staffing date for review and approval. The Dependency Case Manager/Dependency Case Management Supervisor/Dependency Case Manager Supervisor (DCMS), is to submit the completed FFA-O or PU electronically to the Staffing Director or designee via e-mail at least 2 business days prior to the scheduled staffing date.



5. The Director or designee will assist by ensuring reasonable efforts on the part of the (CA/DCM) have been made to reach the case plan goal. This determination will take into account and include any efforts made regarding any concurrent goal as well. If reasonable efforts have not been made towards achieving the case plan goal(s) an immediate plan is put in place to ensure compliance. This plan will continue to be reviewed by the CA/DCM and his/her Supervisor during quarterly case reviews.
6. The staffing chair will discuss the conditions for return which would allow the child to be placed safely back into the home with an in-home safety plan and any safety management services necessary to ensure the child's safety. The facilitator will discuss and review the safety analysis for in-home cases. The child welfare professional shall assess for Conditions for Return at every staffing and hearing and on an on-going basis throughout the life of the case.
7. The staffing facilitator will consider whether or not a concurrent case plan goal is appropriate; whether or not diligent searches have been initiated and updated when necessary, and whether or not all required documents are in the file, such as the dependency petition and dispositional order. The committee must also verify that both parents are properly addressed in all orders. If referrals for services have not already been made, they must be documented and sent immediately after the staffing
8. Concurrent planning is undertaken when appropriate and includes: early assessment of the potential for reunification; full disclosure of options, expectations, and timeliness; early identification of potential family resources; early placement with permanent family resources; and counseling parents about relinquishment and permanency options when reunification seems unlikely.
- 9.
10. The appropriateness of the case plan goal will also be discussed. A change in the case plan goal can be recommended at this time based on the efforts made as documented in the case file. This recommendation will be included in the Judicial Review and Social Studies Report (JRSSR) which will be submitted to the court for approval at the Judicial Review hearing.
- 13.
14. The parents must be invited and ask to come accompanied by their attorney(s) if legal counsel has been assigned or retained. Following a review of the case plan tasks and progress, the parents will be given an opportunity to present any additional information that is pertinent, as well as service providers to assist in determining what goal will be most appropriate in moving forward. At this portion of the meeting, the staffing participants may break and excuse the parents, their attorneys and Guardian Ad Litem, if necessary, to conclude the staffing.



15.

#### **D. Ongoing Permanency Staffings**

1. In the event a child has been in out-of-home care beyond 12 months and meets the criteria for exemption, the case must be staffed for permanency every six (6) months until permanency has been achieved or until case closure. This staffing will be chaired by the Dependency Specialist or designee.
2. If it is recommended that a goal of Permanent Guardianship with a relative or non-relative is in the child's best interest, then the committee will consider recommending the case for closure if the family is stable and no longer in need of services from the Dependency Case Manager/Dependency Case Manager. The case must be staffed for eligibility for the Guardianship Assistance Program prior to closure. The child welfare professional shall have on going communication with the caregivers regarding services and benefits available to children and families with the goal of permanent guardianship.
- 3.
4. If it is determined that the goal of Adoption is no longer appropriate; or if it is determined that the case is unable to go forward with TPR at this time, the case will be staffed for a change of goal. The recommendations from this staffing will require review from the Children's Legal Services Office.
5. The case is reviewed by the court at a minimum every 6 months to assess the following:
  - a. conditions for return by assessing the safety analysis questions which would allow the child to be placed safely back into the home with an in-home safety plan and any safety management services necessary to ensure the child's safety
  - b. the safety and appropriateness of continued placement
  - c. parent, child and sibling visitation
  - d. efforts to reunify the family and progress toward permanency
  - e. possible placement resources and best options;
  - f. appropriateness of services (e.g. mental health or substance abuse treatment services)
6. If at any time the Dependency Case Manager/Dependency Case Manager (DCM) and/or the Dependency Case Manager/Dependency Case Management Supervisor/Dependency Case Manager Supervisor (DCMS) determine a need to go court due to safety and/or compliance issues, a meeting can be held with the Children's Legal Services Attorney assigned to the case to discuss the matter at hand, in conjunction with a written request for legal assistance. A determination will be made regarding whether or not a hearing or a report to the court informing the Judge of the status of the case, are necessary.



## E. Tracking

The Dependency Case Manager/Dependency Case Management Supervisor/Dependency Case Manager Supervisor (DCMS) and Director will have a dual responsibility to ensure all cases are staffed appropriately. Specifically, all newly received and reopened cases will be tracked for appropriate scheduling by the Director or designee. The DCMS will be responsible for ensuring all cases, as well as those cases where the goals were subsequently changed by the Court or deemed necessary as a result a supervisory case review are appropriately staffed at specified timeframes.

## F

President's Signature: Larry N. Rein Date: 6/3/2024