



St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners

Health and Human Services | Community Based Care Division

Case Consultations / Multidisciplinary Team Staffing

Effective Date: 6/3/24	Aligns With: 65c-30.023	Operating Guideline: QM-OG08
Supersedes: Policy titled "Case Review Staffing" dated 12/1/17	Applicable to: All FIP staff	Pages: 1 of 3

Purpose

It is the procedure of the Family Integrity Program, to effectively address child safety and serve the needs of child and family through a coordinated approach that engages all parties in the service planning and utilization of services, attempts to find permanency for the child, and attempts to maintain area children in the community near family and familiar surroundings to the greatest extent possible.

With regard to reunification, case closure, and other critical decision points in the life of a case, it is the intent of this policy to initiate a methodical approach to case review which allows for sharing decision-making and appropriate utilization of resources.

General Requirements

1. An ongoing mechanism for case review is fundamental to the quality assurance process and appropriate utilization of resources. An integrated multidisciplinary team (MDT) staffing must be held when a decision is required to determine the most suitable out-of-home placement, educational placement, or any other important decisions in the child's life which is so complex that the child welfare professional determines convening an MDT staffing is necessary to ensure the best interest of the child.
2. FIP recognizes that there are multiple levels of decision-making. One is a "consultation" typically held between the case manager, and their supervisor; the other is a formal "staffing", which can include multiple participants from various agencies. The purpose of the consultation or staffing is to facilitate decision-making and assure appropriate utilization of available resources. In either venue it is imperative that information-sharing among and decisions made by service delivery agencies and case management, is documented in entirety in the case in FSFN.
 - a. A consultation is an informal discussion of pertinent facts that will assist in decision-making process related to issues not requiring a formal setting. For example, children moving from relative placement to foster care placement is a natural occurrence and may not require a formal setting to make arrangements for the move.

b. An MDT Staffing is a more formal setting where individuals from services agencies, the Guardian Ad Litem, foster and birth parents, relatives and non-relatives, teachers and counselors, the client (if age appropriate), and all interested parties gather to discuss issues from multiple perspectives and to develop an agreed upon plan of action to be followed. The plan addresses the necessity of and cost-effectiveness of services, with special care given to circumstances that require a restriction of the child's freedom of choice. A MDT Staffing can have multiple functions, including Reunification Staffing, Permanency Staffing, Separated Sibling Staffing, etc.

Consultations

This exercise is an informal gathering of staff and information sharing, with outcome approval of the Agency Supervisor, in order to make a naturally occurring decision which may not require a formal group meeting:

- a. *Adoptions Transfer* - moving a case to adoptions for continuing services, after Termination of Parental Rights has been granted by the court.
- b. *Goal Change* – prior to a formal Permanency Staffing
- c. *Prior to approving the following:*
 - a. safety plans (within 5 business days of case transfer)
 - b. critical junctures
 - c. progress updates
 - d. case plans and modification of case plans
 - e. judicial reviews
 - f. case closure and case preparation activities

The Supervisor will use Case Notes page in the Child Welfare Information System utilizing the Supervisor Consultation note type. All entries into FSFN will be completed within two (2) business days.

Additionally, communication must occur with DCF, if the investigator has an investigation on an open case. Written confirmation of the CPI's opinion regarding a decision under consideration must be submitted in advance of decision-making to insure that the viewpoint of the investigator is given its full weight.

Multidisciplinary Team Staffing

Events requiring a staffing include, but are not limited to, those listed below. In an emergency situation, the formal staffing process can be abbreviated or set off schedule with approval of the lead agency management team. Case Review Staffings include:

- i. Reunification
- ii. Planned Placement Change
- iii. Emergency Placement Change

- iv. Separated Siblings
- v. Separated Siblings (Adoption)
- vi. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)- Educational/ Daycare Change
- vii. Missing Child/ Runaway
- viii. Human Trafficking
- ix. Change of Custody

The MDT Request form is prepared prior to the staffing, completed during the staffing with the appropriate signatures obtained during the staffing.

The agency's MDT Coordinator, under the Behavioral Health Coordinator, chairs the MDT Staffing.

The staffing team consists of FIP Management Staff, the Case Manager and Supervisor, Placement Specialist, the child's parents, caregivers, GAL, and other appropriate representatives or providers dependent upon the staffing's circumstances. The MDT Coordinator or the Behavioral Health Coordinator will ensure all appropriate parties are notified of the staffing date and time.

The Case Manager will complete their portion of the MDT Request form and submit it to the MDT Coordinator, along with any required supporting documentation.

The MDT Coordinator will document the staffing, including statements from all parties and the decision of each individual; documentation will be provided to all parties and in the case record in FSFN within two (2) business days.

Staffing Follow-up

The Case Manager/Supervisor, and/ or others (as indicated) are responsible for following through on staffing recommendations. The Case Manager/Supervisor will be responsible for following through and documenting all changes/modifications to service delivery, changes in level of risk, changes in visitation, reunification, closure, etc., as described on the completed staffing form.