

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Cover Memorandum accompanying the January 19, 2006 filing of a Notice of Proposed Rule Adoption by the Division of Family and Children's Services proposing to issue new Family Team Meeting policy for its policy manual.

1. Proposed Rule:

In keeping with the Department of Family and Children's Services' Family Centered Practice, Family Team Meetings shall be held within the first thirty days of custody.

Current Rule:

In keeping with the Department of Family and Children's Services' Family Centered Practice, Family Group Conferences shall be held within the first thirty days of custody.

Proposed Rule:

FAMILY CENTERED CONCURRENT PERMANENCY PLANNING INVOLVES:

- Family Team Meetings/Kinship Assessment

Current Rule:

FAMILY CENTERED CONCURRENT PERMANENCY PLANNING INVOLVES:

- Family Group Conferences/Kinship Assessment

Proposed Rule:

SERVICES TO HELP FACILITATE REUNIFICATION ARE:

- Family team meeting/concurrent planning

Current Rule:

SERVICES TO HELP FACILITATE REUNIFICATION ARE

- Family group conference/concurrent planning

2. Proposed Rule:

Prevention of Neglect/Abuse of Children

Activities include:

On all cases an Initial Family Team Meeting shall be completed within thirty calendar days from the opening of the case.

Current Rule:

None

3. Proposed Rule:

USE OF THE ISP/SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH PARENTS

On all cases an Initial Family Team Meeting and Individual Service Plan (ISP) shall be completed within thirty (30) calendar days from the opening of the case. Ongoing Family Team Meetings shall be convened, at a minimum, every time the ISP is updated.

Current Rule:

USE OF THE ISP/SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH PARENTS

There must be a completed ISP for parents in the case within 30 days of the time reunification becomes the permanent plan.

4. Proposed Rule:

On all cases an Initial Family Team Meeting and Individual Service Plan (ISP) shall be completed within thirty (30) calendar days from the opening of the case. The case is considered opened when the Area Social Work Supervisor (ASWS) makes the decision in MACWIS for continuing services. The ASWS should make a decision within five (5) calendar days of the worker's recommendation for continuing services.

Ongoing Family Team Meetings shall be convened, at a minimum, every time the ISP is updated. Refer to Volume IV, Sections B and D for time frames for the ISP completion. (See Practice Guide for examples of other times Family Team Meetings would be appropriate.)

A Child's Individual Service Plan (ISP) shall be completed within 30 calendar days of custody or court ordered supervision.

Definition of Family Team Meeting

Any face to face meeting with one or more family members for the purpose of assessment and case planning. A Family Team

Meeting involves working closely with the family to identify family members, extended family, and supportive persons the family wants to engage in the assessment and case planning process. The family members should be brought in as early as possible and actively engaged throughout the life of the case in the decision making process.

Current Rule:

In keeping with the Department of Family and Children's Services' Family Centered Practice, Family Group Conference meetings shall be held within the first thirty days of custody in order to make appropriate plans for the child. The parents shall be given the opportunity to decide who will be part of the Group.

FAMILY TEAM MEETING POLICY

Prevention of Neglect/Abuse of Children

Non-court ordered supervision to give aid and support to, or on behalf of, a parent or a caretaker in order to prevent the neglect or abuse of a child; or non-court ordered supervision to give aid and support to, or on behalf of, a child who has no caretaker to prevent the neglect or abuse of the child; or to give aid and support to parents/caretakers when child receives court ordered Protection Services, or Placement Services.

Activities include:

- Handling of information given by case members or community persons to ensure the safety of the children and prevention of abuse/neglect.
- Discussing with the parent, child or other knowledgeable persons, as appropriate, to determine the factors which may contribute to the neglect or abuse of the child.
 - On all cases and Initial Family Team Meeting shall be completed within thirty (30) calendar days from opening the case.
- By observing and studying of the caretaker's and/or child's social situation and living environment an accurate assessment is done to provide for better intervention planning.
- Sharing knowledge gained with the caretaker and/or child as appropriate, as a way of identifying the problems and gaining trust and cooperation in their solution.
- Case planning with the caretaker and/or child, or other significant persons, as appropriate, to give advice and guidance in such relevant areas as child rearing, age and sex appropriate developmental needs of a child, socialization and personal interaction skills, employment counseling, family or independent living, health maintenance, nutrition, preparation of foods, income management, and general household management.
Supporting the caretaker in efforts to make improvements in parenting patterns; supporting of a child, when appropriate, in efforts toward self-sufficiency, self-maintenance, and independent living, to include arranging for and follow-up on Maternity Home Care Service if needed.
- Arranging for purchasing services including all support services needed and available.
- Referring clients to other agencies and providers as needed and assisting with helping the client to access those services..
- Transportation of the client, as necessary, to receive other needed services.
- Also includes, as needed, activities identified in Case Management.

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The Individual Service Plan (ISP)

~~Families should be full partners in developing their service plan. The Service Plan will be developed, signed and approved within 30 calendar days from the date of assignment. In~~

~~cases where children are placed in the Department's custody, each child is required to have his/her own service plan.~~

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FOSTER CARE SERVICES

Family Centered Concurrent Permanency Planning involves:

~~Family Group Conferences/Kinship Assessment~~
Family Team Meetings

Services to Help Facilitate Reunification are:

~~Family group conference/concurrent planning~~
Family team meeting

Use of the ISP/Service Agreement with the Parents

~~There must be a completed ISP for parents in the case within 30 days of the time reunification becomes the permanent plan.~~

On all cases an Initial Family Team Meeting and Individual Service Plan (ISP) shall be completed within thirty (30) calendar days from the opening of the case.

Conditions for Placement

~~In keeping with the Department of Family and Children's Services' Family Centered Practice, Family Group Conference meetings shall be held within the first thirty days of custody in order to make appropriate plans for the child. The parents shall be given the opportunity to decide who will be part of the Group.~~

On all cases an Initial Family Team Meeting and Individual Service Plan (ISP) shall be completed within thirty (30) calendar days from the opening of the case. The case is considered opened when the Area Social Work Supervisor (ASWS) makes the decision in MACWIS for continuing services. The ASWS should make a decision within five (5) calendar days of the worker's recommendation for continuing services.

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A Child's Individual Service Plan (ISP) shall be completed within 30 calendar days of custody or court ordered supervision.

Definition of Family Team Meeting

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Legal Base

Federal: 42 USC Sections 622 and 675
45 CFR Parts 1355-1357

State: Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, Section 43-15-13