

## 6. Monitor the Family Support Services Case Plan through required contacts

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The caseworker is responsible for 30-day face-to-face contacts. The purposes of this contact are to monitor the changes in the family that address the family's specific circumstances, and to ensure the family is using services that appropriately address the child or family's identified needs.

However, when a child is placed in substitute care through a Voluntary Placement Agreement or Voluntary Custody Agreement or because a pre-adjudicated delinquent has been ordered into DHS custody (for reasons other than child abuse or neglect), the purposes for face-to-face contact with the child and the substitute caregiver also include monitoring the safety and well-being of the child in the substitute care placement.

### **The caseworker must have the following contacts:**

1. Face to face contact with the child every 30 days.
  - a. Face to face contact with each parent or legal guardian every 30 days.
  - b. Face to face contact with the substitute caregiver every 30 days when a child is in substitute care.
  - c. Contact with the substitute caregiver in the home or facility of the substitute caregiver every 60 days.
  - d. Contact with the service providers a minimum of every 90 days.

### **A. Parent or legal guardian contact and contact with a former foster child**

#### **Procedure**

- The caseworker must have contact with each parent or legal guardian and with the child or the former foster child every 30 days. The contact should occur in the parents' or legal guardians' or the former foster child's home. Activities during the contact may include, but are not limited to:
  1. Review how the services are helping family members make progress toward FSS Case Plan goals.
  2. Review the progress on any active Service Agreement.
  3. Verify individuals still remain eligible for services;
  4. Assess and determine that services are still appropriate in addressing the identified need and
  5. Check that services the department has agreed to provide are being provided.

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- When services are not addressing the child's, family's or former foster child's needs, re-evaluate the services, and/or develop additional strategies to address the identified needs.
- Ensure that the child's or former foster child's needs are being met.
- Ensure that a review of the FSS Case Plan is considered after receiving an expert evaluation.
- Review the FSS Case Plan a minimum of once every 90 days.

### **B. Contact with the child placed in substitute care**

Contacts with the child in substitute care involve not only monitoring services to the child, but confirming the safety and well-being of the child in the substitute care environment. This involves monitoring services provided to the child (education, physical and mental health, or other treatment needs), the child's adjustment to substitute care, and the ability of the substitute caregiver to provide a safe environment for the child.

#### **Procedure**

#### **Contact with the child placed in a foster home or with a relative caregiver**

**During each face-to-face contact the caseworker must monitor the safety of the child by:**

- Assessing the progress in, and adjustment to, the placement of the child.
- Receiving updates from the child and the substitute caregiver.
- If the child has a supervision plan, ensure that the plan continues to meet the child's needs as identified by the CANS and make adjustments with the substitute care provider as necessary.
- If the child is receiving personal care services, ensure that the personal care service plan is meeting the child's needs. If you are unsure as to whether the plan is being followed or is meeting the child's needs, this may include consulting with the Personal Care Nurse Manager in central office.
- Assessing the safety and well-being of the child by determining whether each of the following conditions exists in the home:
  1. The child is comfortable and the environment of the home is supportive and safe.
    - a. The caseworker should talk to the child alone and if the child is old enough to communicate, ask him or her questions about how the child feels in the placement, and whether he or she feels comfortable in the home.

2. Adults in the home take an active role in caring for and supervising the child.
  - a. The caseworker should talk to the child, if the child is old enough to communicate, about who takes care of him or her, what they do, and related topics.
3. Adult family members possess the physical, emotional and cognitive capacity to sufficiently care for the child.
  - a. The caseworker should assess whether the child is getting to medical and other appointments, getting to school on time, and what treatment providers for the child report about the child's needs being met or not met.
4. Family members and the child have contact with others in the community.
  - a. The caseworker should ask the substitute caregiver and the child what they do for recreation, and whether they attend school functions, church, neighborhood events and other activities.
5. The child is accepted as part of the household.
  - a. The caseworker should ask questions such as where the child eats, where they spend their time in the home (e.g., is much of the home restricted to the foster child), and whether the child participates in family activities with the substitute caregiver.
6. The substitute caregiver understands and is attentive to the child's vulnerability and need for protection.
  - a. Is the substitute caregiver attending to the child's special circumstances and protective of the child when the caregiver may be fearful or sensitive to the special issues that a victim of child abuse (for an adoptive or guardianship child) may need to address?
7. The substitute caregiver is amenable to department oversight and willing to partner with DHS.
  - a. Is the substitute caregiver following the FSS Case Plan, including the visitation plan? Does the substitute caregiver share negative information about the case with the child?
8. The child has a sufficiently positive relationship with the substitute caregiver's own children who live in the home.
  - a. The caseworker should talk to the child about their interactions with the foster parents' own children, (e.g., do they play together, do they fight or argue?).
9. The substitute caregiver is caring for children matching the preferences and experience of the family.
  - a. The caseworker should talk with the substitute caregivers about how they are managing the care of the children in their home (e.g., are they stressed, do they feel overwhelmed).

10. The interactions between the child and other children placed in the home are sufficient to ensure safety.
    - a. The caseworker should talk to the child about the interactions with other foster children in the home (e.g., do they play together, argue or fight, do they generally get along).
  11. The present demands do not exceed the ability of the substitute caregiver to provide safe and protective care.
    - a. The caseworker should talk to the substitute caregiver about their stress level, how they handle stress, whether they get breaks, whether they enjoy foster parenting, and how circumstances in their own lives may be impacting the children in the home.
- If any of the above conditions do not exist in the home, and the caseworker cannot confirm the safety and well-being of the child, the caseworker must:
    1. Assess child safety immediately to determine if there is a safety threat
      - a. If a safety threat is identified, the caseworker must immediately:
        - 1) Consult with the caseworker's supervisor to determine any immediate protective action required to ensure the child's safety or any action required to ensure the safety of the child and
        - 2) Contact a CPS screener and report the identified safety threat to the child.
    2. Document the behaviors, conditions or circumstances observed in the home and any immediate protective actions in FACIS.
  - When the child currently is safe in the home but a certification rule is being violated or, for other reasons, the caregiver is struggling with the responsibilities of caregiving, the caseworker must:
    1. Document date, time, location and current behaviors, conditions or circumstances observed in the home in FACIS case notes, and notify the certifier or certifier's supervisor within one day.
    2. Have face-to-face contact with the substitute caregiver within the next 30 days and the visit must occur in the home. The caseworker must observe the behaviors, conditions or circumstances of the substitute caregiver, the child and other children in the home, and conditions in the home.
  - When the caseworker can confirm the child is safe, current conditions in the home provide safety and well-being for the child, and the certification violation has been remediated or, for other reasons, the caregiver's struggles with caregiving have been resolved, the caseworker must:

1. Document the date, time, location and observations of the conditions of the environment in FACIS and
  2. Notify the certifier of the improved behaviors, conditions or circumstances in the home.
- When the caseworker can confirm the child is safe but cannot confirm that the certification standard has been remediated or if the caregiver continues to struggle with the responsibilities of caregiving, the caseworker must:
    1. Consult with the supervisor to determine whether to recommend implementation of a Placement Support Plan (Refer to Chapter VII for detailed procedures regarding the Placement Support Plan) to the certifier, or whether the child should no longer remain in the home because the conditions necessary to provide safety and well-being cannot be sustained in this home.
    2. Notify the certifier of the behaviors, conditions or circumstances in the home.
    3. Document the date, time, location and the behaviors, conditions or circumstances in the home in FACIS, in the notes tab for the certified family.

### **Contact with the child placed with a provider**

A **provider** is defined as a “person approved by a licensed private child-caring agency to provide care for children or an employee approved by a licensed private child-caring agency.” In other words, it is a placement in a residential treatment facility or a foster home licensed or approved by someone other than a child welfare certifier.

### **During every contact with a provider, the caseworker must:**

- Assess the progress in, and adjustment to, the placement of the child.
- Receive updates from the child and from the provider.
- Assess the safety of the child in the home or facility by determining whether each of the following conditions exists:
  1. The child is comfortable and the environment is supportive and safe.
    - a. The caseworker should talk to the child alone and if the child is old enough to communicate, ask him or her questions about how the child feels in the placement, and whether he or she feels comfortable.
  2. Adults take an active role in caring for and supervising the child.
    - a. The caseworker should talk to the child, if the child is old enough to communicate, about who takes care of him or her, what they do, and related topics.

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3. Adults possess the physical, emotional, and cognitive capacity to sufficiently care for the child.
  - a. The caseworker should assess whether the child is getting to medical and other appointments, getting to school on time, and what the treatment service providers for the child report about the child's needs being met or not met.
4. The child has formal and informal contact with others in the community.
  - a. The caseworker should ask the substitute caregiver and the child what they do for recreation, and whether they participate in school functions, church or other neighborhood events.
5. The child is accepted as part of the household or facility.
  - a. The caseworker should ask questions such as where the child eats, where they spend their time in the home or facility (e.g., are there restrictions placed on the child), and whether the child routinely participates in activities with the substitute caregiver.
6. The provider understands and is attentive to the vulnerability and need for protection of the child.
  - a. Is the substitute caregiver attending to the child's special circumstances and protective of the child when they may be fearful or sensitive to the special issues that a victim of child abuse may need to address?
7. The provider is amenable to department oversight and willing to partner with DHS.
  - a. Is the substitute caregiver following the FSS Case Plan, including the Visit and Contact Plan? Does the substitute caregiver share negative information about the case with the child? Is the substitute caregiver ensuring the child is receiving the treatment services he or she needs?
8. The child has a sufficiently positive relationship with other children in the home or facility of the provider.
  - a. Observe the child in the home or facility. Ask about his or her relationships with others, the friends he or she has developed, and what relationships are meaningful to the child.
9. The substitute caregiver is caring for children matching the preferences and experience of the substitute caregiver.
  - a. The caseworker should talk to the child about the interactions with other foster children in the home (e.g., do they play together, argue or fight, do they generally get along).
10. The interactions between the child and other children placed in the home or facility is sufficient to ensure safety.
  - a. Observe the care provided to all the children in the home or facility. Do people seem to get along? Is everyone valued as a member of the group?

- b. Do caregivers appear to possess the knowledge and skills needed to care for the child and other children in the home?
  11. The present demands of the home or facility do not exceed the ability of the substitute caregiver to provide safe and protective care.
- Document the date, time, location and observations of the conditions of the environment in FACIS.
  - If any of the above conditions do not exist in the home or facility, and the caseworker cannot confirm the safety and well-being of the child, the caseworker must:
    1. Assess child safety immediately to determine if there is a safety threat.
      - a. If a safety threat is identified, the caseworker must immediately:
        - 1) Consult with the caseworker's supervisor to determine any immediate protective action required to ensure the child's safety or any action required to ensure the safety of the child and
        - 2) Contact a CPS screener and report the identified safety threat.
    2. Document the behaviors, conditions or circumstances observed in the home or facility, and any immediate protective actions in FACIS.
  - When the child currently is safe in the home or facility, but the conditions described above are not fully met, the caseworker must:
    1. Contact the child caring agency's management to report the conditions of the home or facility, and request additional supportive resources for the provider.
    2. Document in FACIS case notes the contact with the child caring agency's management.
    3. Have face-to-face contact with the provider and the child within the next 30 days and the visit must occur in the home or facility. The caseworker must observe the behaviors, conditions or circumstances of the home or facility and the child and other children in the home or facility.
  - When the caseworker can confirm that current conditions in the home or facility provide safety and well-being for the child, the caseworker must:
    1. Document the date, time, location and observations of the conditions of the environment in FACIS and
    2. Contact the child caring agency's management and report the improved behaviors, conditions or circumstances in the home.
  - When the caseworker can confirm the child's safety but cannot confirm that current conditions in the home or facility meet the requirements in OAR 413-080-0059 (3)(a) (D), the caseworker must:

1. Consult with the supervisor to determine whether an immediate protective action is required to ensure the child's safety or any other action is required to ensure the child's safety or
2. Whether consultation with the child caring agency's management is necessary to provide additional support and ensure child safety.
3. Document the date, time, location and the behaviors, conditions or circumstances in the home or facility, and any actions in FACIS.
4. Document contact with the child caring agency's management.

### **C. Contact with the service providers**

#### **Procedure**

- Maintain regular contact with service providers a minimum of every 90 days to monitor the services provided through the FSS Case Plan.
  1. It is helpful to talk with service providers prior to beginning services and reach agreement about how the department and the service provider will maintain regular contact, and what specific information needs to be shared at the time of the contact.
  2. Arrange details such as:
    - a. Who will initiate the contact.
    - b. Whether contact will be by phone, in writing or other means of communication.
    - c. Notification of the parent, legal guardian or child's attendance and participation in the service.
    - d. Progress being made toward the case plan goal and how the service provider will measure progress (e.g., observable changes in behavior, condition or circumstance).
    - e. New information either the department or the service provider has become aware of that may impact the delivery of services.
  3. Consider developing a standardized format to maintain timely communication and provide adequate information to monitor progress.

### **D. Monitor the Family Support Services Case Plan**

#### **Procedure**

- The caseworker is responsible for the ongoing oversight all aspects of the FSS Case Plan. This includes:

1. The services provided to the family, child or former foster child.
  2. The progress made toward achieving the case plan goals.
  3. The services provided by DHS.
  4. The Visit and Contact Plan when the child is in substitute care.
  5. The completion of actions and activities for which DHS is responsible and
  6. The safety and wellbeing of the child and the child's environment (when the child is in substitute care).
- The caseworker monitors the FSS Case Plan by making required contacts. This includes completing the following activities:
    1. Ensure the department receives timely and accurate information from the service providers.
    2. Confirm current service(s) are meeting identified needs and are helping to resolve issues that resulted in family support services. Remember, family support services are intended to be short-term services to a family or former foster child. When services do not appear to have intended results, staff the case with the supervisor and consider using other service options to achieve the case goals.
    3. Confirm the safety of the child.
  - Respond in a timely manner to issues that may impact the safety of the child.
    1. If the caseworker becomes aware of a safety threat to the child, report that information immediately to an intake screener; and
    2. Consult with a supervisor to determine whether a protective action needs to be put into place to protect the child.
  - Consult regularly with your supervisor on the case.

## E. Documentation

### Procedure

- Document in FACIS case notes:
  1. The date, type and location of each contact with the child, parent or legal guardian, or former foster child.
  2. The date and type of each contact with each service provider
  3. Observations and conditions of the child during the 30-day contact.
  4. Observations and conditions of the parents or legal guardians during the 30-day contact.

5. Changes in the family.
6. Updates or reports from service providers.
7. Observations or reports from the substitute caregiver (when a child is in substitute care) and
8. Any immediate protective action, if required to ensure a child's safety.

### The supervisor's role

- Consult regularly with the caseworker regarding the progress achieved in meeting the FSS Case Plan goals in a timely manner.
- Keep the focus on the effectiveness of the services in meeting identified needs.
- Confirm the caseworker is monitoring the safety of the child when placed in substitute care.
  1. If informed by the caseworker about a safety threat to a child:
    - a. Discuss the situation with the caseworker to obtain information and provide direction;
    - b. Determine whether a protective action needs to be put into effect to protect the child; and
    - c. Ensure information is immediately reported to an intake screener.
- As appropriate, assign another staff person to make required contact when the assigned caseworker is unable to do so.
  1. Determine :
    - a. *Who may make contact:* A Child Welfare Program Manager; Child Welfare Supervisor or another caseworker may be authorized to make the contact in the caseworker's place.
    - b. *What the person needs to know:* Prior to contact, the person making contact must have information regarding the FSS Case Plan, the parent or guardians, and the child or former foster child, including any special needs of the child or former foster child.
    - c. *What the person does:* The person making contact is responsible for assessing the safety of the child or former foster child, if placed in substitute care, confirming appropriateness of services, and completing documentation requirements.

- When approving an exception to the required 30-day face-to-face contact with a child or former foster child, ensure:
  1. The safety and well-being of the child or former foster child can be confirmed by another responsible adult who has the face-to-face contact with the child or former foster child; and the responsible adult confirms the child or former foster child is safe.
  2. The exception to face-to-face contact documentation is in the case file, including approval for the exception, reason for the approval of the exception, and length of time the exception is in effect.
  3. The exception to required face-to-face contact is no longer than 90 days unless the caseworker obtains approval of the Child Welfare program manager or designee, and the Child Welfare program manager or designee confirms the facts demonstrating that child safety and well-being are confirmed without the required face-to-face contact.
  4. Reasons to grant an exception to face-to-face contact for a family support services case include, but are not limited to:
    - a. The child or former foster child has been placed in another planned permanent living arrangement (APPLA) that has been approved by the court. If appropriate, an exception may be granted when in APPLA for face-to-face contact every 90 days. In this situation the above documentation requirements apply.
    - b. The child or former foster child has been placed in substitute care with a provider (meaning with a person or employee approved by a licensed private child caring agency to provide care to children, such as in a residential treatment program). If appropriate, an exception may be granted for face-to-face contact every 60 days. In this situation the above documentation requirements apply.
    - c. A former foster child is receiving only Youth Transition (formerly ILP) services. If appropriate, an exception may be granted for face-to-face contact every 60 days. In this situation the above documentation requirements apply.
    - d. The child or former foster child is unavailable (for example, the child has gone on vacation with the foster parent).
    - e. The parent or legal guardian of the child or former foster child is unavailable.
    - f. A parent or legal guardian presents a safety risk to the caseworker or department staff, which has been documented in the case file.