 Department of Children & Family Services <i>Building a Stronger Louisiana</i>	Division/Section	Child Welfare
	Chapter No./Name	6 – Foster Care (FC)
	Part No./Name	8 – Case Planning for the Foster Child
	Section No./Name	Case Planning for the Foster Child
	Document No./Name	6-825 Ongoing Family Team Meeting Administrative Reviews
	Effective Date	October 1, 2024

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is the policy of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to have ongoing Family Team Meetings (FTM) to review the family's progress toward achieving the goals and objectives of the case plan. Case workers must reconvene the FTM with all parties involved in the case prior to any changes being made to case plan.

FTMs provide an opportunity for revision of the case plan based on the changes in the behavior of the parents, improvement of unsafe conditions, reduction of risk factors in the home, the changing needs of the children and new information resulting from working with the family. After the reconvened FTM, revisions/updates to the case plan can be made and filed with the court of jurisdiction. Updated case plans are distributed to all parties.

Federal legislation requires Foster Care cases be reviewed (Case Review) at least every 6 months, either by court (Judicial Review) or through administrative review (Internal AR). Case reviews by an administrative review body are for the purpose of determining the continuing necessity and appropriateness, of the child's foster care setting, extent of compliance with the case plan, extent of progress which has been made toward alleviating or mitigating the causes necessitating foster care entry, and to project a likely date by which the child may be returned home.

II. PROCEDURES


A. ONGOING FAMILY TEAM MEETINGS

Ongoing FTMs may be held at any time needed to revise planning for the family, but shall be held at a minimum of every six (6) months. The FTMs shall be scheduled at a location, date, and time that is convenient for all who are to be invited. If emergencies arise which prohibit the case worker's or supervisor's attendance, efforts should be made to reschedule at a time or place convenient for all participants to be available, when possible. In the supervisor's absence, the Child Welfare Manager or his/her designee shall facilitate the meeting.

After the initial FTM, the reasons for entry into foster care do not need to be discussed at every subsequent FTM. If it is necessary to reiterate for the foster caregiver, parent, or child's benefit, it may be discussed in private.

1. Responsible Case Worker

If there are different case workers assigned for the child and the parents, the case worker assigned to the parents is responsible for scheduling the FTM. In cases of multiple case workers for parents, one of the parent's case worker (SP case worker) is designated the lead by the Child Welfare Manager. If the child's case worker or supervisor is unable to attend the Family Team Meeting, the child's case plan, including health and education information, shall be submitted to the designated lead Service to

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Parent (SP) case worker prior to the FTM to be included in the case planning for the family. The supervisor of the designated lead SP case worker and the supervisor of the additional case workers shall collaborate and ensure the timely scheduling of the FTM.

2. FTM Notification

The lead SP case worker is responsible for notifying participants of the FTM using Form 475 at least *** twenty (20)**** days prior to the scheduled meeting. Mandatory notifications shall be made to the child's parents, the child, the foster parents/caregivers, CASA, and the parent's and the child's legal counsel of record.

The case worker shall always discuss the benefit and role of the CASA worker's involvement in the teaming process with the child's parents, documenting the discussion in the child's case record. If the parent objects to CASA's participation in the FTM, and the case worker is unable to help the family overcome any concerns regarding CASA's participation, the case worker must document the objection in the child's record and advise the parent of CASA's right to participate in the child's portion of the FTM. When the child is deemed old enough and aware of the case planning process by the case worker, the case worker shall ensure the child is in attendance and participates in the FTM.


If a parent's whereabouts is unknown or if there is no known address for a parent, the notice shall be sent to the parent's legal counsel.

B. CHANGES TO THE CASE PLAN

After the ongoing FTM, if changes to the case plan are needed, the changes shall be finalized in the Family Assessment Tracking System (FATS), printed and filed with the court of jurisdiction. The revised case plan shall state the date of the original plan and the date of the revision. All parties shall be provided with a copy of the updated case plan.

If a parent, child, or other team member is actively involved with the development of the case plan and disagrees with the change, the disagreement shall be noted in the comment section of the case plan and dated. Every effort should be made by the case worker and supervisor to resolve any area of disagreement.

Case plans shall continue to be developed for each parent, unless the parent's rights are terminated, or the Department no longer has custody of the child. In some circumstances the SP case may remain open for ongoing supervision. The case worker continues to be responsible for reviewing and ensuring the parents maintain the safety of the children. The case worker shall notify the parents when their case is closed.

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If a youth is accepted into a QRTP, the case worker shall obtain the QRTP Case Plan from the QRTP Liaison Worker (QL) in order to incorporate it into the family's case plan. Refer to [6-560](#), Responsibility for DCFS Staff Working with QRTP Facilities.

C. JUDICIAL CASE REVIEW AND INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

Federal legislation requires Foster Care cases to be reviewed at least every 6 months, either by a court or through administrative review. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring a Judicial Review or an Internal AR occurs on each case as required at least every 6 months.


The Judicial Review shall be conducted within six months of the date the child entered Department custody, and every six months following this date for as long as the child remains in Department custody, [Ch.C. Article 692](#). The Case Review Hearing should serve as the mechanism for Case Review required by [P.L. 96-272](#). In cases where the Judicial Review is held timely, the case worker assigned to the case is required to enter the court hearing date within 2 working days after the hearing on the TIPS 110 screen for case event 3130.

When a Case Review Hearing does not occur timely or when it appears it will not occur before the deadline, the supervisor is responsible for scheduling an Internal AR (AR), within the six-month time frame, as the mechanism for achieving Case Review as required by P.L. 96-272.

The Internal AR process will involve a peer reviewer (someone not involved in the case or in the line of authority over the case) completing the Internal AR instrument through a case review. Peer Reviewers shall be a Child Welfare Worker III or higher. Peer Reviewers shall be designated by the supervisor when an AR is required. The peer reviewer is responsible for reviewing the case record and completing the [Administrative Review Form](#). The completed Administrative Review Form shall be shared with the assigned case worker, supervisor, and Child Welfare Manager of the reviewed case. The Administrative Review Form shall be filed in the child's record in Section 4. The assigned case worker is required to enter the Internal AR date within 2 working days of completion on the TIPS 110 screen for case event 3111.

If the child has an assigned CASA, the DCFS Peer Reviewer responsible for completing any necessary agency Internal AR must contact the child's CASA worker to invite them to participate in reviewing the case plan document and assess the appropriateness for planning for the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child. The Peer Reviewer must document the notification and efforts to include the CASA worker's participation in the AR process in the child's case record.

The Internal Administrative Review may not be used to substitute for a Permanency Hearing conducted by the court. [P.L. 105-89](#) does not allow the AR body to be part of or under the supervision or direction of the State Agency for the Permanency Hearing review. Where the court appoints or approves administrative bodies, in accordance with [LA R.S. 46:2417](#), the Department has a legal responsibility to cooperate with the administrative body, i.e., Citizen

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Review Boards. Refer to [6-835](#), Judicial Hearings for Case Review, Permanency, and Restoration of Parental Rights.

III. FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Foster Care Case Plan, online in FATS
[Child Welfare Foster Care Case Staffing Form](#)
Form 475 series
[Administrative Review Form](#)

IV. REFERENCES

Public Law [96-272](#)
Public Law [105-89](#)
Louisiana Revised Statute [46:2417](#)
[42 USC 675\(5\)](#)
[ACT 214 of the 2013](#) Regular Louisiana Legislative Session
Louisiana Children's Code Articles [692](#) and [702](#)