



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Rick Scott
Governor

Esther Jacobo
Interim Secretary

DATE: December 3, 2013

TO: Regional Managing Directors

THROUGH: H. Stephen Pennypacker, Esq., Assistant Secretary for Programs

FROM: Andrea M. Tulloch, Esq., Director, Office of Child Welfare

SUBJECT: Safety Methodology Implementation: Field Guidance 1

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide guidance to the field surrounding implementation of the Safety Methodology.

BACKGROUND: The Phase One Implementation sites have been underway for about three weeks. Regular communication is ongoing between the implementation sites and the Office of Child Welfare to ensure any questions or issues surrounding policy and practice are addressed. In the weeks leading up to roll-out, a series of memoranda and policy guidance was sent to the field to prepare for the release of the new FSFN functionality. The memos and policy guidance documents are posted on the Center for Child Welfare: <http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/HorizontalTab/DCFPolicyMemo.shtml>. Through our ongoing communications with the field, we have identified the following key practice issues that need further guidance/clarification:

- 1. FSFN FUNCTIONALITY AND CASE TRANSFERS:** Use of the new Safety Methodology FSFN tools is currently limited to Phase One Implementation sites. Further detailed policy guidance surrounding practice when transferring cases is under development. This guidance, informed by recommendations from the field, will be distributed by Monday, December 9, 2013.
- 2. PRESENT DANGER AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING ASSESSMENTS: *When is enough, enough?*** The field has requested additional support surrounding the Family Functioning Assessments (FFA), Present Danger Assessments (PDA) and Safety Planning. Throughout the next several months, staff from the Office of Child Welfare will be traveling to implementation sites to provide technical assistance and guidance on the completion of these tools. Additionally, the Office of Child Welfare is posting examples of high quality FFAs, PDAs, Safety Plans, etc., on the Center for Child Welfare website. FFA examples will be ready and posted by December 3rd; information and details will be forthcoming.

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3. **FSFN REPORTS:** The rollout of the new FSFN functionality brings the ability to run several types of reports. A full list of available reports is detailed via "How Do I Guides." These guides are located at the Center for Child Welfare website: <http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/FSFN/FSFNactivation.shtml>. On Monday, December 9th, the Office of Child Welfare will send out an overview of the new and updated reports.
4. **INITIAL SUPERVISOR CONSULTATION:** The initial supervisory consultation is required in all investigations within 5 days of receiving the intake. A telephone consultation, such as a discussion from the home or field with a supervisor about present danger and/or safety actions, will meet this requirement.
5. **FSFN AND FFAs:** A change request has been submitted to address the limitation of characters for the FFA. This change request has been given the highest priority and will likely require an "emergency" build. Until this issue has been fixed, users should use the FFA as intended and add any additional information in a Word document and scan it into the file cabinet in FSFN.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please disseminate this memorandum to all child welfare staff, Community-Based Care lead agencies, Children's Legal Services, and Sheriff's offices conducting child protective investigations.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you believe the new FSFN functionality is not working as it should, please contact the DCF helpdesk at (850) 487-9400 or dcf_helpdesk@dcf.state.fl.us. Policy questions and requests for assistance may be submitted via e-mail to Safety_Methodology@dcf.state.fl.us.

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