**Tennessee Department of Children's Services**

# Protocol for Juvenile Justice Family Permanency Plan

**Supplemental to DCS Policies: 13.1, 13.26, 13.33, 31.1**

## *Introduction*

The Family Permanency Plan (FPP) is the method used by the Department of Children's Services (DCS) to document the strengths and needs of delinquent youth. The FPP documents the provision of treatment and/or services and progress the youth is making toward permanency. The FPP is used to define a starting point of supervision by identifying strengths, needs, concerns and a course of action to address them. A FPP is completed for all youth under supervision or in the custody of DCS.

When a youth is referred to the DCS for services, our goal is to provide services and support to assist the youth in becoming a productive member of society. We begin planning toward case closure immediately, identifying supports to reach the ultimate goal of permanency for youth and their families.

The youth and family's involvement in the entire treatment process is critical so that all can clearly understand what is expected. Service needs are identified during the ***Family Functional Assessment (FFA)*** process and through other available assessments such as the ***Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool***. Staff uses all available departmental and community resources when assessing a youth and family. Results of these assessments are indicators that are utilized to identify strengths and concerns to develop desired outcomes and action steps in the FPP.

### *The FPP has the following goals:*

- To ensure that the youth and family receive maximum benefits from services provided.
- To provide clear, measurable expectations for the child and family team members.
- To provide a clear treatment plan and document how assistance is implemented.

### *The Child and Family Team Meeting*

The FPP is developed during a Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM) with the input of the youth, family and the youth's team, unless extenuating circumstances exist. It is considered a working document. The team invites any supports and agencies providing services to the family.

***During the meeting, the FSW explains and documents in the FPP:***

- The range of services available to assist the family
- How DCS can support the achievement of desired outcomes
- How progress is monitored
- Any special conditions, including conditions ordered by the court
- Benefits to be gained if the plan is fulfilled
- Possible consequences of noncompliance
- Explain parental/caregiver role

***The FPP is based on assessments and includes:***

- Strengths and concerns indicated by all assessments including but not limited to the FFA, CANS, community risk assessment mental health assessments, school records, etc,.
- Services and supports to be provided to include specific steps for obtaining services, responsible parties and action steps.
- Agreed upon goals and timeframes for achieving them.
- Document any unmet service and support need and why.
- Include the level of supervision of the youth, including the number and type of contacts required, per policy ***13.1 Supervision of Delinquent Youth***.
- For youth on Aftercare, the FSW coordinates service needs with collaborative partners prior to the youth's return home and throughout the remainder of Aftercare as needed.
- The FSW develops a plan for any item scored Moderate or High on the community risk assessment tool.
- Needs identified to maintain and strengthen family relationships and community safety.
- Services and supports sensitive to the youth's age, developmental level, language, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and past experiences trauma.
- Review and approval by the FSW's supervisor.

**The FSW:**

- Identify and assist the youth and family in developing sources of pro-social support such as mentors, community members, peers, or other family members;
- Assist the youth in the development of appropriate leisure time activities.
- Connect the youth and family members to resources that help them meet unmet service needs; maintain and strengthen family relationships, prevent, manage and resolve family conflicts and identify strengths that can help them meet future challenges.

- Include family members in meeting scheduling decisions and allow participation via teleconferencing, if needed.
- Assist with transportation and childcare to the extent possible.

### *Aftercare Plans*

The FPP for youth on Aftercare:

- Include all recommendations made at the Release CFTM;
- Address on-going and support issues identified in reassessments, treatment summary, permanency plan issues that are targeted for aftercare and the youth's formal and informal supports;
- Address unmet needs while in custody;
- Identify services needed or desired and specify steps for obtaining these services and specify responsibilities of all parties, who completes what in obtaining services;
- Include the re-assessment community risk level (Low, Moderate, High) documented in the Safety section of the FPP.

### *Developmental Areas*

Action steps addressed in the FPP must cover relevant areas of concern. Barriers identified during the CFTM and those that are court ordered are documented in the plan. Each Mission: Safety, Permanency, and Well Being must be addressed along with applicable indicators, as outlined below. Desired outcomes and actions include the expected achievement date and responsible person for all assigned tasks.

**The following identifies where to document concerns in the plan.**

1. **Safety and Security**

   Concerns addressed under safety include; **safety of youth*:*** stealing, risk to the youth and victim, sanction seeking behavior, self-harm, etc.; **physical/sexual abuse**: victim or perpetrator; domestic violence; **safety of the community:** electronic monitoring, In-home services; curfew and curfew checks, after hour monitoring; **delinquent behavior**: including aggressive, destructive and violent acts; **supervision and reporting level:** including the number and type of contacts required and inform the family that contacts take place at the home, office, school, work, etc.; risk level (low, moderate, high) and justification for supervision level.

## 2. Parenting and Family Responsibilities (Indicator)

Behavior in the home that cause problems for the youth; parent participation in the youth's identified treatment needs; the relationship between the youth and the parent (communication, interaction, etc.); the parent's effort to parent due to work schedule, supervision of the youth, consistent discipline, etc; parents addressing their identified needs and residential stability.

Family issues can also be addressed such as how the FSW helps the family to: support and supervise the youth; help family with unmet service needs; help the family to maintain and strengthen family relationships; prevent, manage and resolve family conflicts; and identify strengths that can help them meet future challenges.

## 3. Socialization and Attitudes (Indicator)

Pro-social or delinquent attitudes and associates; pro-social recreational and leisure time activities; age appropriate activities, sports of hobbies; age appropriate social relationships; problem solving skills; demonstration of social skills in various social settings; positive relationships with peers and family; youth's adjustment in the home and anger management.

## 4. Restorative Justice (Indicator)

Involving youth in restorative activities should be addressed in this section such as the following: peer counseling, leadership development, service projects, family living skills, youth as drug educators, cross-age educational tutoring, work experience, service crews, employment, job preparation, career exploration, youth as recreation aids and planners, conservation projects, community development projects, recycling, community beautification projects, youth developed cultural education projects, conflict resolution training, and youth as school conflict mediators, work with adult mentors on community projects and intergenerational projects with the elderly.

## 5. Preparation for Adult Living (Indicator)

Education including if the youth is in school, working on a GED or other educational programs as well as program performance, progress, attendance and participation. Employment including attendance, participation, performance on the job, responsible use of money earned; job seeking skills, vocational training, housing, money management, consumer awareness, hygiene and nutrition.

Youth in DCS custody 14 years of age or older must have an Independent Living Plan developed and youth 17 years of age or older must have a Transition Plan developed. This is part of the Family Permanency Plan. See DCS Policy ***16.51, Independent Living and Transition Planning; the Independent Living and Transition Planning Guide***, the ***Guide for Developing an Independent Living Plan for Youth Ages 14 and Up***, and the ***Guide for Developing a Transition Plan for Youth Ages 17 and Up.***

## Time Elements:

### Probation Cases

The Probation FPP must be completed and approved by a supervisor within thirty (30) calendar days. See DCS Policy ***13.26, Probation Referrals*** for further details.

**Custody Cases:** See DCS Policy ***16.31, Permanency Planning for Children/Youth in the Department of Children's Services Custody*** for time frames.

### Aftercare Cases (Release to Home Placement)

The Aftercare FPP is developed at the Release CFTM. The plan must be reviewed and contain signatures of the youth and parent. A copy of the plan is given to the youth and parent.

### Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ):

1. **Cases Received from Out of State**

   When a youth on Probation or Aftercare (the term "parole" is used for these cases per the ICJ) from another state is supervised by the Department of Children's Services, a FPP is developed. A CFTM must be held within (30) calendar days of the home verification date.

2. **Cases Leaving Tennessee**

   If a youth is placed on probation in Tennessee and ***immediately leaves the area*** to return to their home state, no FPP is required. The youth follows the requirements of the receiving state per the Interstate Compact for Juveniles.

### Transfer Cases

If a youth is placed on probation but lives in a different county, the receiving county develops the FPP. The receiving FSW has (30) days from the home verification date to hold the CFTM and develop the plan.

If the family has been living in one county, then moves to another county or state during the supervision period (after the first 30 days) the FPP is already completed and sent with the required transfer documents.

### Quarterly Reviews

The FPP is reviewed quarterly via a CFTM to review the youth's progress toward desired outcomes. Quarterly reviews must be completed at the 90, 180 and 270 day point. After one year a new FPP must be developed. Quarterly reviews are documented in ***TFACTS*** in the CFTM

module, and a justification for continued supervision is indicated. See ***Work Aid: Juvenile Justice Family Permanency Plan Quarterly Review*** for more information.

The quarterly review must provide an update on each desired outcome and actions step to show how much progress the youth has made. Established time frames need to be addressed and adjusted if applicable. There is also an update on any services the youth and family are receiving, progress and other pertinent issues such as verification they are engaged and participating. Problems and successes experienced during service delivery are indicated. Any complaints that have been received regarding the service are discussed including resolution of the problem as well as the youth's current supervision level and the number of contacts that are made with the youth and family. Documentation reflects that these things have been addressed.

A copy of the quarterly review is given to the youth and parent.

**Interstate Compact for Juveniles**

Quarterly reviews for ICJ cases are completed by the guidelines indicated above; however, in addition, ***Form IX, ICJ Quarterly Progress Report or Violation Report*** must also be completed per the ICJ guidelines. After signatures are obtained, a copy is sent to the ICJ Deputy Compact Administrator in central office who sends the review to the applicable state.

**Court Ordered (Immediate) Release**

If the Juvenile Court releases a youth without prior notice via court order, the FPP is not required if the case is closed. If the youth is supervised on Aftercare, a CFTM is held within three (3) working days of the youth's return home to develop the FPP.

**The FPP and Case Closing (Discharge)**

The FPP addresses planning for the youth and family after the case is closed. A closing plan must be developed sufficiently in advance of case closing to ensure an orderly transition. The discharge plan identifies services needed or desired and specific steps for obtaining these services. The FSW takes the initiative to explore suitable resources and make contact with service providers prior to case closure.

**Training**

Training for the FPP is covered in the Juvenile Justice Specialty Week for new or transfer employees. Team Leaders or DCS Training staff may train staff by utilizing this protocol.