



**Administrative Policies and Procedures: 16.23**

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| <b>Subject:</b>  | <b>Foster Home Case Files</b>  |
| <b>Authority:</b>  | TCA 37-4-201-207; Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children; TCA 37-5-105(3), 37-5-106; 37-5-107.  |
| <b>Standards:</b>  | <b>COA:</b> PA-RPM 5.01, PA-RPM 5.02, PA-RPM 6.01, PA-RPM 6.03.  |
| <b>Application:</b>  | DCS Foster Care Staff and Supervisory Staff, Contract Agency staff   |
| <b>Policy Statement:</b>   |  |
| <p>The Department of Children's Services (DCS) reviews and maintains case files in a systematic, confidential manner that ensures safeguards are in place to protect files from unauthorized and improper disclosure. The Department creates a Foster Home Case File upon receipt of an application. Contract provider case files should contain equivalent forms. Staff document contacts with foster parents in the Foster Home Case File.</p> <p>DCS maintains Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Foster Home Case Files using identical procedures and safeguards.</p> <p>DCS is in transition from maintaining hard copy case files to electronic case files. As of September 28, 2018, electronic case files are the preferred method of storing case files and staff should not create hard copy case files for new cases. Staff are not expected to maintain both hard copy and electronic case files as long as all required documentation is uploaded and maintained in TFACTS. Any new documents added to the case file on September 28, 2018 or later will be scanned into TFACTS. Any documents contained in the in hard copy case file prior to September 28, 2018 may continue to be maintained in the hard copy case file, but case managers are encouraged to scan those documents into TFACTS whenever feasible.</p> |  |
| <b>Purpose:</b>  |  |
| To ensure that Foster Home Case Files are protected and maintained in an organized, confidential manner and contain all pertinent information required to manage the foster home.  |  |
| <b>Procedures:</b>   |  |
| <b>A. Case file confidentiality and access to information</b>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All hard copy Foster Home Case Files must be marked "CONFIDENTIAL" on the spine of the binder and include the last name and first initial of the family. Foster Home Case Files are stored in a secure location out of public view.</li> <li>2. Documents related to the foster family are maintained in a three ring binder. A foster home case file is also started in TFACTS and includes all the information on the family including approval and re-assessment documentation. The Foster Home Case File binder, if one exists, along with the electronic foster home record in TFACTS acts as the official record for the foster family.</li> <li>3. Foster parents may have access to information in their hard copy case files, with the exception of third party documentation, documents deemed confidential</li> </ol> |

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|  | <p>by DCS or protected health information pursuant to HIPAA.</p> <p>6. DCS may release copies of a foster parent home study to another agency upon receipt of a signed release of information for each adult member noted in the home study. Portions of the foster parent home study may be considered public record and can be released upon request to the DCS Office of Communications. In such cases, consultation with the DCS Regional Legal Counsel is appropriate.</p>   |
| <p><b>B. Foster Home Hard Case File content organization</b></p> | <p>1. For the hard copy Foster Home Case File, information contained in each section listed on the Foster Home File Section Sheets is filed in reverse chronological order, with the most recent information located on top.</p> <p>2. If a Foster Home Case File is closed and the family decides to foster again and re-activate their home, the Foster Home Case File is pulled from closed records to be used for case history or needed information, however, the new Foster Home Case File will be maintained electronically in accordance with Section C of this policy. No new hard copy will be created for the re-activated foster home and no new materials will be added to the existing closed hard copy file.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Existing hard copy closed Foster Home Case Files are not required to be uploaded into TFACTS.</p> <p>3. All existing hard copy Foster Home Case Files are organized and maintained in the manner outlined below.</p> <p>a) <b><u>Home Study and Reassessments</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#"><u>CS-0692, Foster Home Mutual Reassessment or Reactivation</u></a></li> <li>◆ <a href="#"><u>CS-0773, Foster Home Addendum</u></a> (if applicable)</li> <li>◆ <a href="#"><u>CS-0961 Foster Home Study</u></a></li> <li>◆ <a href="#"><u>Profile of Parenting Study Tool</u></a>;</li> <li>◆ <a href="#"><u>CS-0682, Expedited Placement Assessment Summary</u></a> (if applicable)</li> <li>◆ Previous or other agency studies (if applicable)</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Items listed in this section are the narrative summaries. Other sections are the supporting documents to these narratives and are filed as outlined in items 2 through 11 below, in chronological order (with the most recent information located on top).</p> <p>b) <b><u>CS-0709, Foster Home Monthly Recording</u></b></p> <p>This section includes documentation of successful <u>and</u> attempted contacts and correspondence with foster parents.</p> <p>c) <b><u>Background Checks</u></b></p> <p>(For all adults in the home)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <a href="#"><u>CS-0687, Background Check History and IV-E Eligibility Checklist</u></a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#"><u>National Sex Offender Registry</u></a></li> <li>○ <a href="#"><u>Abuse Registry</u></a></li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

- ◆ [CS-0751, Background Clearance Check- Local Criminal History](#)
  - Local Law Enforcement checks
  - Any additional court documentation
- ◆ [CS-0691, Fingerprint Card Information](#)
  - Fingerprint results for each adult household member
- ◆ [CS-0921, Waiver of Criminal Convictions, Pre-Service and In-Service Training Requirements, Non-Safety Issues, CPS Substantiations and Education Requirements](#)

d) **Forms**

- ◆ [CS-0688, Foster Home Application for Parenting](#)
- ◆ [CS-0932, Foster Home Disclosure Acknowledgement](#)
- ◆ [CS-0559, Authorization for Release of Information and HIPAA Protected Health Information TO and FROM the Department of Children's Services and Notification of Release](#)
- ◆ [CS-0676, Home Safety Checklist](#)
- ◆ [CS-0871, Foster Home Disaster Plan](#)
- ◆ [CS-0678, Foster Parent/Other Adult Medical Report](#) (for adults in the home)
- ◆ [CS-0707, Medical Self Report for Other Adults and Children](#)
- ◆ [CS-0427, Child's Medical Record](#) (for birth/adopted and custodial children in the home)
- ◆ [CS-0670, Foster Parent Oath to Abide](#)
- ◆ [CS-0699, Notice of Privacy Practices \(HIPAA\)](#)
- ◆ [CS-0660, Disclosure Statement \(Options/Services Available to Relatives\)](#) (when applicable)
- ◆ [CS-0553, Discipline Policy](#)
- ◆ [CS-0782, Family ECO Map](#)
- ◆ [CS-0895, Foster Family Strengths/Needs](#)
- ◆ [CS-0950, AdoptUSKids Information](#)

e) **Verification**

- ◆ Birth Certificate (for household members)
- ◆ Valid Driver's License or RA approved plan for transportation
- ◆ Current Proof of Auto Insurance
- ◆ Current Auto Registration
- ◆ Driving Record Check
- ◆ Current Pet Vaccination

- ◆ Current Marriage Certificate (if applicable)
- ◆ Divorce Decree (for previous marriages)
- ◆ Death Certificate (for immediate family members)
- ◆ Final Decree of Adoption (for past adoptions)
- ◆ Medical Insurance (required for adoption)
- ◆ Contingency Plan (required for adoption)
- f) **Financial/Fiscal Information**
  - ◆ [CS-0431, Monthly Income & Expenditures](#)
  - ◆ Proof of reported sources of income
  - ◆ [W-9](#)
  - ◆ [CS-0674, Special or Extraordinary Rate Request](#) (if applicable)
  - ◆ [CS-0656, Supplemental Respite Billing Form](#) (if applicable)
  - ◆ [Claim for Travel Expenses, FA-0080](#) (with receipt copies)
- g) **Placement Contracts**
  - ◆ [CS-0626, Expedited Child Placement Contract](#) (if applicable)
  - ◆ [CS-0565, Daily Rate Child Placement Contract](#)
  - ◆ [CS-0727, Initial Intake, Placement and Well-Being Information and History](#), (completed for each placement contract).
- h) **Training**
  - ◆ TN KEY Completion Certificate Medication Administration
  - ◆ CPR and First Aid (Non-Certified) or CPR and First Aid Certification
  - ◆ CORE and In-Service Training including certificates, rosters and spreadsheets
  - ◆ [CS-1038 PATH Participant Assessment](#)
- i) **Incident Reports/ Performance Improvement Plans** (if applicable)
  - ◆ Incident Reports
  - ◆ Complaint Letters/Memos
  - ◆ [CS-0909, Foster Home Performance Improvement Plan](#)
  - ◆ [CS-0890, Incident Debriefing](#)
  - ◆ [CS-0826, Special Investigations-Notification of Case Initiation and Closure](#)
- j) **Correspondence**
  - ◆ [CS-0702, Foster Home Approval](#)
  - ◆ Denial Letter (if applicable)

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Other Letters, notices or written correspondence</li> <li>◆ Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) documents (if applicable)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">CS-0525, Interstate Compact Placement Request (100A)</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">CS-0523, Interstate Compact Report on Child’s Placement Status (100B)</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ Interstate Compact on Juveniles documents (if applicable)</li> </ul> <p>k) <b>Miscellaneous</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Family Photograph</li> <li>◆ Photo of Exterior of Home</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">CS-0962 Foster Assessment or Re-activation</a></li> <li>◆ TN KEY Homework</li> <li>◆ Family Home Floor Plan (indication fire escape route)</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">CS-0679, Authorizations for DCS Custodial Child to Travel out of State /Out of Country</a> (if applicable)</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">CS-0672, Shared Home Authorization</a>, (if applicable)</li> <li>◆ Miscellaneous Work Aid Documents (if applicable)</li> <li>◆ <a href="#">CS-0963 Foster Family Reference Letter and Questionnaire</a></li> </ul> <p><b><u>Note: Contract Provider Agencies may use equivalent forms, provided the content of the forms capture the content of the forms listed above.</u></b></p> |
| <p><b>C. Maintaining Electronic Case Files</b></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. After September 28, 2018, all new case files are to be maintained electronically.</li> <li>2. Electronic Case Files will be maintained as dictated by current TFACTS structure.</li> <li>3. All documents will be uploaded as outlined by the storyboards located on the <a href="#">Electronic Content Management</a> site. For information on the document storage functionality and category types, see form <a href="#">CS-1202 Electronic Case File Checklist</a> and the <a href="#">Document Storage Tip Sheet</a>.</li> <li>4. Once entered into TFACTS, documents and other information, including case recordings, assessments and service plans should not be printed for the purpose of sharing with other program areas, audits, case reviews or case records. This information should be accessed directly from the electronic case. Information relative to case evidence that cannot be uploaded into the TFACTS case record is maintained in a supplementary hard copy record (i.e.; DVDs, large medical records, birth certificates).</li> </ol>   |
| <p><b>D. Documentation</b></p>                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Foster home case recordings should contain all contact or activities related to the foster home highlighting the strengths demonstrated in the foster home and the challenges faced by the family. Any contacts that occur with the family are documented within thirty (30) calendar days and recorded in TFACTS.</li> <li>2. Home visits with foster parents must occur in accordance with the <a href="#">Visitation</a></li> </ol>   |

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|  | <p><u>Protocol.</u></p> <p>3. The foster home case recording is written:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) in clear, concise sentences avoiding usage of slang language or subjective/personal value judgments.</li> <li>b) in a manner that is sensitive to the emotional well being of the participants involved in the case by carefully considering terminology without sacrificing accuracy and completeness;</li> <li>c) reflect foster parent’s right to confidentiality and does not include information about persons unrelated to the case, unless those persons have a direct effect on the foster family;</li> <li>d) Documentation in the Foster Home Case File regarding custodial children is specific, only as it relates to the foster family; and,</li> <li>e) Abbreviations and acronyms used are commonly understood and acceptable</li> </ul> <p>4. The narrative of case recordings that document contacts (home visits, significant telephone calls, or written correspondence) with foster parents are written in the following “PC-COP” format and entered into <b>TFACTS</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>Purpose of Contact</b> – Why it was necessary to contact the family (e.g., to gather information, a response to a call or letter, to set up a visit etc.).</li> <li>b) <b>Content</b> - What was discussed and/or accomplished.</li> <li>c) <b>Observation/Assessment</b> -State in observable/measurable terms: individual behaviors and appearance, interactions among partners present, significant environmental factors, any progress made.</li> <li>d) <b>Plan</b> - State what is to be done next as a result of this contact, or as a natural progression of the case management process, including date/time and location of the next planned contact.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>E. Methods of records disposal</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The approved method for destroying confidential paper record information is shredding. Electronic records are irreversibly destroyed in accordance with State approved methods.</li> <li>2. Protected Health Information (PHI) records and databases are destroyed in accordance with federal and state laws, rules and regulations and applicable Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) policies and procedures.</li> </ul>  |

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| <b>Forms:</b>                | Located in Case File Contents  |
| <b>Collateral documents:</b> | Case Process Review<br><a href="#"><u><i>Conducting SSMS Checks in TFACTS</i></u></a><br><a href="#"><u><i>Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children Procedures Manual</i></u></a><br><a href="#"><u><i>Visitation Protocol</i></u></a><br><a href="#"><u><i>Protocol for Resource Eligibility Team (RET)</i></u></a><br><a href="#"><u><i>Electronic Content Management Site</i></u></a><br><a href="#"><u><i>Document Storage Tip Sheet</i></u></a><br><a href="#"><u><i>Document Category and Type Organization</i></u></a> |