Foster Care Review Case Plan Review
Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families
Policy: 700.0030
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The Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) establishes a permanency goal for each child in out of home placement and monitors permanency planning through ongoing strength based assessments of the family and regularly scheduled Foster Care Reviews in compliance with the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (PL 96-272), the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) (PL 105-98) and Rhode Island General Law (RIGL) 42-72-10. DCYF’s Foster Care Review system independently evaluates the safety, well being and progress toward permanency for each child in out of home placement no less frequently than in six-month intervals until permanency is achieved.

DCYF’s Administrative Review Unit (ARU) is responsible to oversee and facilitate each Foster Care Review in collaboration with Family Service Units (FSU), Juvenile Probation and in partnership with families, stakeholders and community providers. The Foster Care Review is a structured, time-limited discussion of family status facilitated by an Administrative Review Officer (ARO) held in the DCYF regional office convenient for the family.

In compliance with Federal law, State Law and Department Policy, the Foster Care Review process monitors that:

- A Service Plan is developed and projects the likely date by which the child may be returned to his or her home safely or placed in an alternative permanent placement.
- Reasonable efforts to prevent placement are made to keep families together through service assistance (refer to Policy: 700.0005 Preventive Services and Policy: 500.0075 Removal of Child from Home).
- Child safety and well-being are priorities when making decisions around services, placement and permanency planning.
- Permanency planning efforts are initiated at the time of placement, are appropriate per the needs of the child and family and steps to achieve the permanency goal are documented in the Service Plan.
- Placement is safe, effective, least restrictive and meets the child’s needs.
- Expanded services for families are provided to make it possible for a child to return home.
- Permanency is achieved for a child within 18 months of removal from the home.
- Reasonable efforts to reunify families are made except under specified circumstances as outlined in ASFA.
- The timely adoption, or other appropriate permanency option, of children who cannot return safely to their own homes occurs.

In addition to the above mandates, the ARO gathers information during each Foster Care Review to:

- Determine the continued need and appropriateness of placement for the child.
- Determine if the services and assistance in placement meet the needs of the child and family and if such services assist the family in achieving sustained progress toward the permanency goal.
- Determine the extent of compliance by parent/guardian with the current Service Plan.
- Identify barriers to permanency for children in placement.
- Track the reason for change in child placement over the last six months.
- Monitor quality of services and measure performance outcomes.
In compliance with Federal Law 96-272 and with State law, the Department for Children and Their Families has devised a Case Plan Review system which mandates regularly scheduled six-month reviews of the current Case Plan/Agreement (DCYF #032) for each child in placement. The intent of the Case Plan Review is to assess the progress of the child, the family and the Department towards meeting the goals, objectives, and tasks as defined in the most recent Case Plan/Agreement. This process helps to assure that appropriate and realistic goals and objectives have been set and that assigned tasks are reasonable, germane, and are being adequately carried out within the time frames indicated. Further, this process is designed to identify any specific barriers to the successful fulfillment of the Case Plan/Agreement and to facilitate planning towards overcoming these barriers. The case plan review shall be a cooperative effort between staff to provide the best possible services to the child and the family.

The Department further requires in compliance with federal law that a regularly scheduled six month Case Plan Review for children in foster/relative/institutional care who remain active with Probation, be held. For children in the custody of other states who are residing in Rhode Island under courtesy supervision, the responsibility for the formulation and review of Case Plans remains with the state retaining custody. Youths sentenced to the Rhode Island Training School who are committed to the Department on Dependency, Neglect and/or Abuse petitions shall have Case Plan/Agreements and Case Plan Reviews as outlined in the procedure below.

The Case Plan Review is a structured, time-limited discussion of case progress conducted by a staff member assigned to the Administrative Review Unit in conjunction with various prescribed individuals who are determined to have a significant role in the current Case Plan/Agreement. Each review shall be limited to approximately one hour. In families where there is more than one child active with the Department, additional time shall be allotted. Each participant shall be afforded the opportunity to voice his/her views and/or concerns as they relate to the purpose of the review. In situations where foster parents and/or surrogate parents are invited to participate in the Case Plan Review, their participation is to be limited to those subject areas of the review for which they have direct knowledge and/or involvement. Confidentiality for the child and family must be strictly maintained.

For those case situations where a petition has been filed in Family Court to terminate parental rights, the scope of the Case Plan Review changes. In accordance with R.I. Law 15-7-7 the Department no longer has an obligation to make reasonable efforts towards reunification once a petition has been filed to terminate parental rights. However, parental rights to see or visit the child(ren) remain intact while the termination petition is pending. In these situations parental participation in the Case Plan Review process shall be limited to visitation and any concerns the parent(s) may have about the care of the child(ren) in foster care. Reunification shall not be discussed while the termination petition is pending before the court.

Related Procedures
Foster Care Review
Case Plan Review

Related Policies
Service Plan
Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST)
Preventive Services
Removal of Child from Home
Termination of Parental Rights
Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
Complaints and Hearings
Confidentiality
Case Plan/Agreement Policy
Foster Care Review
Case Plan Review

Procedure From Policy 700.0030: Foster Care Review Case Plan Review

A. Each child in out of home placement has a Foster Care Review held no less frequently than every six (6) months until permanency is achieved.
   1. Each Foster Care Review is based on a system of determinations and factors that address ASFA mandates relating to safety, well-being and permanency.
   2. Youth sentenced to the Rhode Island Training School who are on Temporary Community Placement (TCP) have Foster Care Reviews.
   3. Once a termination of parental rights has been filed by the Department with the Family Court, reunification efforts are no longer discussed during Foster Care Reviews. Parental participation and discussion during the Foster Care Review is limited to visitation and any concerns that parents may have regarding the care of their children in placement (refer to Policy: 1100.0020, Termination of Parental Rights).
   4. States placing children through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) under courtesy supervision in Rhode Island are responsible for developing service plans with the families and monitoring permanency goals (refer to Policy: 700.0060, Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children).
   5. Information gathered during Foster Care Reviews is entered into RICHIST and analyzed to monitor the quality of services, performance outcomes and guide practice.

B. In partnership with the Department's efforts to monitor permanency planning, participants involved with the child and family are invited to the Foster Care Review to provide valuable input into the review process. Individuals invited include but are not limited to:
   1. Primary service worker/supervisor
   2. Secondary service worker/supervisor
   3. Parents/guardians
   4. Child (if age appropriate). This capacity will vary among children; however, most school-aged children can be expected to participate to some extent if they are verbal and understand most of the events occurring in their lives.
   5. Service providers
   6. Foster parents
   7. Placement provider
   8. Educational Advocate
   9. Other professionals and/or advocates seen as having a significant contribution to the well-being of the family

C. Scheduling a Foster Care Review
   1. Approximately six (6) weeks in advance of a required Foster Care Review, primary service worker and supervisor receive a RICHIST generated e-mail requesting contact be made with ARU to schedule a review for an identified child (refer to RICHIST Window Help: The Meeting Window).
   2. Primary service worker or supervisor contacts ARU as soon as possible to schedule a Foster Care Review to ensure invitations are sent out to the participants in a timely manner. Information discussed includes:
      a. Primary language of the family
      b. Individuals not appropriate to invite to the review
c. When children from the same family require separate Foster Care Reviews.

3. In the event contact does not occur between ARU and primary service worker, ARU schedules a Foster Care Review on primary service worker’s office day.

4. ARU sends DCYF # 128, Notification of Foster Care Review, to the following participants:
   a. Parent/guardian
   b. Foster parent
   c. Relative caretaker
   d. Children if age 16 and older

5. ARU sends DCYF # 128B, Foster parent Information for Service Plan Review, to all foster parents in addition to DCYF # 128. This form gives foster parents who cannot attend the Foster Care Review the opportunity to provide information to the ARO regarding the child’s well-being.

6. Primary service worker or supervisor sends the DCYF # 128 to all other appropriate participants.

D. Cancellation of a Foster Care Review

1. Primary service worker or supervisor contacts ARU as soon as possible when a cancellation of a review is initiated by primary service worker along with the reason for the cancellation.

2. ARU contacts primary service worker or supervisor as soon as possible when a cancellation of the review is initiated by ARU along with the reason for the cancellation.

3. A new date and time for the rescheduled Foster Care Review is established within thirty (30) days of all cancellations (refer to RICHIST Window Help: The Meeting Window).

4. Primary service worker or supervisor notifies all parties in all cases when a review is cancelled.

5. ARU sends DCYF # 128 with the new date to appropriate participants (refer to C, 4, a-d).

6. Primary service worker or supervisor sends DCYF # 128 to all other appropriate participants with the new date.

7. If a Foster Care Review is scheduled and the following changes occur prior to the review, primary case worker notifies ARU scheduler and the meeting is cancelled:
   a. Child returns to a parent’s home
   b. Child is sentenced to the RITS
   c. Child’s adoption is finalized in Court
   d. Family’s involvement with DCYF is terminated

E. Responsibilities of Primary Service Worker and/or Supervisor prior to the Foster Care Review

1. Complete or update the Service Plan with families and obtain appropriate signatures (refer to Policy: 700.0025, Service Plan).

2. Update family information in RICHIST (refer to Policy: 700.0100, Rhode Island Children’s Information System [RICHIST]).

3. Invite appropriate participants.

4. Provide copies of reports deemed pertinent to the Foster Care Review that are not contained in RICHIST to the assigned ARO.
5. When a family is transferred to another unit or division, the previous primary service worker and/or supervisor is responsible to attend the Foster Care Review for a period of up to 10 days after the transfer occurs.

F. Responsibilities of ARO prior to and during the Foster Care Review

1. Review family information contained in RICHIST, including reports/evaluations provided in hard copy form by primary service worker prior to the Foster Care Review.

2. Facilitate the Foster Care Review.
   a. Discuss the Service Plan and determine the appropriateness and effectiveness of the plan toward ensuring safety of the child, well being of the child and family and permanency planning.
   b. Ensure that a permanency plan is in effect for each child.
   c. Identify challenges to the successful fulfillment of the Service Plan and assist in the planning to overcome identified challenges.
   d. Assess progress towards meeting goals, objectives and tasks in the Service Plan.
   e. Ensure for children in state-supervised placements who are 16 years of age or older that a portion of their Service Plan describes services that will prepare the child for independent living.
   f. Discuss comments and recommendations with case participants.

G. Outcome of the Foster Care Review

1. Once there has been a thorough review of all material related to the Foster Care Review, ARO completes the RICHIST generated DCYF #128A (refer to RICHIST Window Help: ARU Review Window [New]). DCYF #128A includes the following information:
   b. Factors addressing safety and risk issues in the family.
   c. Summary and comments relating to case issues and progress.
   d. Recommendations when necessary to:
      i. Modify the current Service Plan.
      ii. Eliminate challenges towards successful fulfillment of the current Service Plan.
      iii. Modify the goal, objectives and/or tasks for a subsequent Service Plan.

2. ARO prints two copies of the signature page of DCYF #128A, signs and dates both copies and distributes to primary service worker and or supervisor for signature of agreement.
   a. If there is agreement, primary service worker and or supervisor sign both copies; place one in the family record and send one to ARU.
   b. If there is disagreement with any information or recommendations included on the form, the issue is addressed through the mutual chain of command of ARO and the primary service worker until a resolution is reached.
   c. Parent/guardian and children (when appropriate) enter signatures in the participation section of the signature page.
   d. If the parent disagrees with the recommended changes and/or modifications to the Service Plan, ARO or the primary service worker
informs the parent of the right to appeal (refer to Policy: 100.0055, Complaints and Hearings).

3. If requested, a signed copy of the recommendations/signature page is forwarded by the primary service worker and/or supervisor to the contract providers and other individual participants in compliance with DCYF Policy 100.000, Confidentiality.

4. ARO may determine that an issue is serious enough to warrant the creation of a Red Flag (refer to RICHIST Window Help: Red Flag Factors Window). If a red flag warning is needed, the ARO:
   a. Informs primary service worker and or supervisor at the time of the review or after consultation with ARU supervisor that ARO will create a red flag warning in RICHIST.
   b. Sends primary service worker a red flag e-mail with the issue(s) of concern requesting a red flag warning be created in RICHIST.

A. Individuals who should participate in the Case Plan Review include:
   1. Primary service worker
   2. Secondary Department service worker (if any)
   3. Supervisor of the primary service worker
   4. Child’s parent(e)/guardian(e)
   5. Child (if of the appropriate age and intellectual capacity)
   6. The Director of the child care facility or his/her designee
   7. Foster parent(s)
   8. Educational surrogate parent (for the educational portion of the case plan only)
   9. Parent’s attorney (if requested by the parent)
   10. Department child care facility liaison worker (when the presence of a liaison worker will aid in the identification or resolution of problems involving the practices of the child care facility or in worker/facility communication which may be adversely affecting the adjustment of the child
   11. Other professionals and/or advocates seen as having a significant contribution to the review (ex. Guardian ad litem, CASA volunteer, mental health professional)
   12. A staff member from the Division of Retardation must be invited to the review closest to the child’s nineteenth (19) birthday for any child past the age of eighteen (18) who is developmentally disabled and/or mentally retarded and who remains in the care of the Department. In addition, any mentally retarded child or family in which a parent is mentally retarded that is eligible to receive joint services from both Department of Children, Youth & Families and the Division of Retardation, (see Policy #631 Mentally Retarded Clients Section F) shall have a Division of Retardation staff person invited to the review.
   13. Any child with a disability eligible for, or receiving special education services under Public Law 94-142, shall have special education staff invited if the staff person(s) are seen as having a significant contribution to the review.

B. Responsibilities of the Administrator, Administrative Review Unit or his/her designee.
   1. Compile and distribute to each supervisor the monthly lists of children due for Case Plan review no less than six weeks prior to the due date for each review.
   2. Review the monthly lists returned by the supervisors including the preferred dates, times, and location for each review and any children added to the list.
   3. Designate the time, date, and location for each review. When possible, efforts shall be made to accommodate supervisors as to their preferred dates, times, and location for each review.
4. Assign an Administrative Review Officer to conduct each Case Plan Review.

5. Notify the supervisor and worker electronically of the date, time, location, and the Administrative Review Officers assigned for each review within one week of the receipt of the monthly lists.

C. Responsibilities of the supervisors in Family Services and Probation.

1. Review the monthly listing compiled by the Administrative Review Unit of the children due for Case Plan Review.
   a. In order to synchronize the case plan development/case plan review process, the supervisors shall add the names of any new child(ren) opened in an existing case scheduled for review.
   b. At the time of case assignment, the Administrators in Family Services shall send a memo or a transfer form to the Administrative Review Unit informing them of any child transferred to those units from any other unit or division. The supervisor shall ensure that each child transferred to his/her unit who is in need of Case Plan Review has been added to the appropriate list.

2. Propose a date, time and place for each Case Plan Review including at least one alternative date and time. This must be returned to the Administrative Review Unit within one week of receipt of the monthly list.
   a. Unless otherwise approved, all reviews are held at the Administrative Review Unit.
   b. When necessary, the meeting location shall be chosen to allow for individuals to attend that require a handicapped-accessible location.
   c. Once a date, time, and place for each review has been finalized by the Administrator, Administrative Review Unit or his/her designee, it cannot be changed without supervisory approval.

3. Oversee the process of inviting the appropriate individuals to each review. Upon receipt of the confirmation memo from Administrative Review Unit, the primary service worker shall provide written notice of the date, time, and location of each scheduled review to those individuals to be invited. (DCYF #128).
   a. This shall occur no less than three weeks prior to the scheduled review.
   b. A copy of each invitational letter shall be forwarded to the Administrative Review Unit.
   c. A copy of each invitational letter shall be filed in the case record.
   d. In the event it becomes necessary to invite an individual in any other manner (ex. telephone or in-person), this shall be documented in the RICHIST case record.

4. No less than five working days prior to the scheduled Case Plan Review, the supervisor must ensure that the assigned Administrative Review Officer has received a copy of the current Case Plan/Agreement (DCF #032), a copy of the Case Profile Narrative (DCF #148), and copies of any other data deemed pertinent to that particular review (ex. Court reports, mental health evaluations/reports, etc.).

5. Attend and participate in the Case Plan Review.
   a. A supervisor may be excused from the Case Plan Review only with the approval of his/her Unit Administrator.
   b. In these situations the scheduled Case Plan Review shall go forward in the absence of the supervisor provided the primary service worker is able to attend.
   c. The supervisor shall be expected to:
      i. Be familiar with the past history and current situation of the child and family.
      ii. Be familiar with the current Case Plan and any efforts made towards implementation.
      iii. Be able to identify and comment on any barriers delaying implementation and/or completion of specific objectives or tasks aimed at permanency for the child.
      iv. Be familiar with the child’s proposed Case Plan for the next six (6) months including any planned efforts or foreseen barriers towards implementation and/or successful completion.
      v. Be prepared to answer questions and join in the discussion with the reviewer and other participants in an informed, professional manner.
d. If the Case Plan Review cannot be attended by either the supervisor or the primary service worker, then the review shall be canceled and the reason given for lack of attendance recorded by Administrative Review Unit.
i. The review will be rescheduled by the Administrative Review Unit and shall take place within two weeks.
ii. At the end of each month, the Administrative Review Unit shall submit a list to the appropriate Administrator of the number of reviews canceled, the worker/supervisor involved and the reason given for the cancellation.
iii. A copy of these reports shall be sent to the Associate Director.

6. For youths sentenced to the Rhode Island Training School who have Case Plan/Agreements, Administrator of the Administrative Review Unit shall notify the Coordinator of Clinical Services of the need for a Case Plan Review no less than six weeks prior to the due date for each review.

D. Responsibilities of the Primary Service Worker
1. Identify and invite all appropriate individuals to the Case Plan Review at least three weeks in advance of the scheduled review.
2. Make available to the assigned Administrative Review Officer any material required for Case Plan Review. No less than five working days prior to the scheduled Case Plan Review, ensure that the assigned Officer has received a copy of the current Case Plan/Agreement (DCF #032), a copy of the Case Profile Narrative (DCF #148), and copies of any other data deemed pertinent to that particular review (ex. Court reports, mental health evaluations/reports, etc.).
3. Attend and participate in the Case Plan Review.
   a. A worker may be excused from the Case Plan Review only with the approval of his/her supervisor.
   b. In these situations the scheduled Case Plan Review shall go forward in the absence of the worker provided the case work supervisor is able to attend the review.
   c. The primary service worker shall be expected to:
      i. Be familiar with the past history and current situation of the child and family.
      ii. Describe the child’s current Case Plan including implementation efforts and any identified barriers delaying permanency for the child.
      iii. Describe the child’s proposed Case Plan for the next six months including any planned efforts or foreseen barriers towards implementation and/or successful completion.
      iv. Be prepared to answer questions and join in the discussion with the reviewer and other participants in an informed, professional manner.

E. Responsibilities of the Administrative Review Officer
1. Review thoroughly the Case Plan/Agreement (DCF #032), the Case Profile Narrative (DCF #148), and any other material submitted prior to the scheduled Case Plan Review.
2. If necessary, review the case record.
3. Chair the Case Plan Review.
   a. Assess the progress towards meeting the goal, objectives, and tasks of the Case Plan/Agreement.
   b. Identify barriers to the successful fulfillment of the Case Plan/Agreement.
   c. Facilitate planning towards overcoming any identified barriers.
   d. Ensure that there is appropriate permanency planning for each child.
4. Complete the Record of Case Review for each Case Plan Review.
   a. A completed copy is sent to the supervisor within seven days of the Case Plan Review to be signed and incorporated into the case record.
b. Barring any disagreement (see within, Section H, 4) a signed copy is forwarded by the supervisor to the Administrative Review Unit within seven days of receipt to be incorporated into their records.

c. A signed copy shall be forwarded by the primary service worker and/or supervisor to the contract providers and other individual participants upon request provided the rules of confidentiality are followed.

F. Focus of the Case Plan Review

1. Assess the goal, objectives, and tasks of the Case Plan/Agreement as to their appropriateness, clarity, realism, and affect on the permanent plan for the child and its target date.

2. Assess whether the assigned tasks are germane to the goal and objectives of the Case Plan/Agreement and whether they are being carried out within the prescribed time frames.

3. Assess whether all appropriate objectives to successfully achieve the identified permanent planning goal have been identified on the Case Plan/Agreement.

4. Assess the progress towards meeting the goals, objectives, and tasks as stated in the current Case Plan/Agreement. In addition, assess if the same goals, objectives and tasks were present at the last review. If progress is still not being made on repeated goals, the procedure in Section G, Below, shall be followed.

5. Identify any specific barriers to the successful fulfillment of the Case Plan/Agreement and facilitate planning towards overcoming these barriers.

6. Assess the continued necessity for placement (including progress towards alleviating or mitigating the causes necessitating the placement), the appropriateness of the placement resource, and what efforts are being made towards reunification (including visitation) if the child is in placement.

7. Assess the efforts being made to maintain the child in the home if the child is not in placement, including the need for continued intervention by the Department.

8. For those case situations where a petition has been filed to terminate parental rights, continued parental rights to visit the child(ren) unless precluded by court order must be ensured in accordance with RIGL 15-7-7. Reunification shall not be discussed at these Reviews while the termination petition is pending before the Court. Although other subject matter may be discussed at the Review, parental participation shall be limited to the visitation plan and to any concerns the parent(s) may have concerning the care the child is receiving in foster care.

9. In accordance with Public Law 96-272 all children in state-supervised placements who are 16 years of age or older must have a portion of their case plan describe services that shall prepare the child for independent living. The Case Plan Review shall assess progress towards meeting these objectives.

G. Outcome of the Case Plan Review

1. Once there has been a thorough review of all material related to the Case Plan Review, the Administrative Review Officer shall complete the Record of Case Review (DCF #048).

2. The Record of Case Review may include:

   a. Recommendation modifications to the current Case Plan/Agreement (DCF #032).

   b. Recommended methods to eliminate barriers towards successful fulfillment of the current Case Plan/Agreement.

   c. Recommended modifications in the goal, objectives, and/or tasks for a Subsequent Case Plan/Agreement.

   d. No recommended modifications or changes.

3. If the outcome of the Case Plan Review is a jointly agreed upon recommended change of goal, this must be brought to the attention of the Unit Administrator by the Administrator, Administrative Review Unit within ten days after the scheduled Review.
4. The Administrative Review Officer shall sign the completed Record of the Case Review (DCF #048) and shall send a signed copy to the supervisor of the assigned primary service worker.

5. The primary service worker and supervisor shall sign the Record of Case Review as acknowledgment of and agreement with the recommendations of the Administrative Review Unit.
   a. If there is agreement, signed copies shall be forwarded to the Administrative Review Unit within seven days of receipt and to the Unit Administrator with the signed original copy being filed in the case record.
   b. If there is disagreement with any of the information or recommendations included on this form, the process is as follows:
      i. The disagreement worker and supervisor and/or worker/supervisor and Administrative Review Officer shall attempt to resolve these differences.
      ii. If the disagreement cannot be resolved at this level, the Administrative Review Unit Administrator shall bring this to the attention of the Unit Administrator for discussion.
      iii. If the Administrative Review Unit Administrator and Unit Administrator cannot agree, then the Administrative Review Unit shall bring this to the attention of the Associate Director of Child Welfare Services for resolution.
      iv. When there is resolution, in accordance with 5.a., signed copies shall be forwarded to the Administrative Review Unit and to the Unit Administrator with the signed original copy filed in the case record.
   v. If there is disagreement by the parent(s) as to the recommended changes and/or modifications in the Case Plan/Agreement, the appeals procedure as outlined in the Case Plan/Agreement Policy (Section D inclusive) shall be followed.

6. The Unit Administrator shall be responsible to ensure staff take all appropriate action to comply with agreed-upon recommendations.

7. If there is not disagreement at a Case Plan Review but there is repetition of objectives over two review dates with little or no movement towards the goal or completing an objective, the following process shall take place.
   a. The Administrator of the Administrative Review Unit shall inform the Unit Administrator of the lack of movement in the case.
   b. The Unit Administrator shall take whatever action deemed necessary by that Unit Administrator to ensure that appropriate intervention is taking place.
   c. If the same situation exists at the next review by Administrative Review Unit, the Assistant Director and the Associate Director of Child Welfare shall be notified.