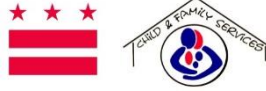


GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency



Business Process: Placement Stabilization Staffing

I. POLICY

Separating children and youth from their parents and placing them into out-of-home care is often necessary to keep children safe.¹ Once children are placed in a new setting, stability is key to decreasing their trauma, reducing their time in out-of-home care, and achieving permanency and increased well-being. As a result, CFSA and its contracted agencies shall conduct Placement Stabilization Staffings (“PSS”) for children in care.

A PSS is a comprehensive review that determines the services and supports needed to stabilize children in their placement and prevent a replacement from occurring. This review shall be conducted by a facilitator (the assigned resource parent support worker [RPSW], resource development specialist [RDS], or other Agency lead) in the following instances when: (1) a child enters care or (2) when certain types of replacements occur (see Procedure A(2)(b)(i-iii) for more information). The staffing shall result in the completion of a Stabilization Action Plan (SAP), which includes the identification of specific action steps to help stabilize the child in their placement by the facilitator. The facilitator shall also distribute the SAP to the participants within 2 business days following the conclusion of the staffing.

II. PROCEDURES

Procedure A: General Requirements for a Placement Stability Staffing

1. Purpose and Staffing Guidelines: A PSS is a meeting to gather and review information that will help stabilize the child in their placement and/or prevent current or future placement disruption. This staffing consists of a review of the child’s current medical, social, behavioral, educational, and dental needs to determine the additional evaluations, services, and supports that are required to prevent future placement disruptions, along with a follow-up action plan to ensure placement stabilization.

A PSS can be accomplished through an in-person meeting, virtually, or telephonically, taking into consideration the comfort level and desires of the resource providers. The PSS facilitator will be designated by their respective agency. The facilitator will be responsible for coordinating, including inviting participants, and convening the staffing.

Required participants are the facilitator, resource parent or congregate care staff, and social worker. Such participants shall receive an invitation from the staffing facilitator and are expected to participate in the staffing.

Optional participants invited to attend the staffing may include, but are not limited to: the child, their parents, kin, current and former resource providers, and the Guardian Ad Litem (GAL). Such participants may receive an invite from the staffing facilitator if a clinically appropriate determination is made by the social worker in partnership with the staffing facilitator.

2. Eligibility Criteria and Timeframes for Placement Stabilization Staffings: Placement Stability Staffings are required under the following circumstances and timeframes:
 - a. Within 10 business days of a child entering care.
 - b. Within 5 business days of the following types of replacements:
 - i. When a child experiences a 2nd move in the first 12 months of entering care; or

¹ Within this business process, the term “child” refers to anyone under age 21.

- ii. When children who have significant behavioral and/or mental health challenges are referred to a higher level of care to ensure their stability, while they remain in the care of their resource provider.
- iii. When a child is discharged from a psychiatric or medical hospitalization, Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF), or correctional setting to a resource home or congregate care facility.

Note: *If a child experiences multiple (2 or more) disruptions within a month and the disruption reasons are similar, a staffing must be held once the child is placed in a new setting and “relatively” stable.²*

3. Alternatives to Placement Stabilization Staffing: The following meetings can be used in place of a PSS provided that the discussions include an action plan:
- a. Family Team Meeting (FTM)
 - b. Specialized Opportunities for Youth (SOY) Placement
 - c. Youth Transition Plan (YTP)
 - d. Quarterly Treatment Planning Meeting (*Please note this is a NCCF specific meeting*)

When the above alternative meetings take place, a PSS does not need to be held and a SAP is not needed. The plan from the alternative meetings shall be sufficient.

Note: *For children and youth who are not eligible for a PSS or the alternatives listed above, CFSA and its private agency partners have additional resources available to assist with placement stabilization including, but not limited to: clinical team meetings, on-call crisis support, mobile crisis stabilization services, and the Child and Adolescent Mobile and Psychiatric Services (CHAMPS). Staff in need of this information shall contact their direct supervisor or CFSA’s Office of Well-Being (OWB).*

4. Requesting a Placement Stabilization Staffing: A PSS shall occur automatically upon a child’s entry into foster care and during specific types of replacements, as identified in the Eligibility Criteria and Timeframes section above.
- a. For CFSA, the placement RDS. Kinship RDS or RPSW shall receive notification from CFSA’s Placement Leadership Team that a staffing is needed. The PSS facilitator shall coordinate and convene the staffing.
 - b. For private agency partners, the staffing facilitator shall receive notice from CFSA or their Agency Lead. The facilitator shall work with the social worker and in some instances, placement staff, to coordinate and convene the staffing.

Note: *Although private agency partners may have their own process for initiating a PSS, all private agency partners shall identify an Agency Lead to work with CFSA to determine the need for the staffing, have a system set in place to alert the staffing facilitator of the need to schedule the staffing, and identify staffing logistics.*

5. Placement Stabilization Staffing Participants and Venue: The following considerations shall be made by the PSS facilitator when coordinating and convening the staffing.
- a. Required participants shall include the facilitator, resource parent or congregate care staff, and social worker. Such participants shall receive an invitation from the staffing facilitator and are expected to participate in staffing.
 - b. Optional participants invited to attend the staffing may include, but are not limited to: the child, their parents, kin, current and former resource providers, and the Guardian Ad Litem (GAL). Such participants may receive an invite from the staffing facilitator if a clinically appropriate determination is made by the social worker in partnership with the staffing facilitator.

² “Relatively stable” is defined as a child remaining in placement for more than 7 days.

- c. A PSS can be conducted through an in-person meeting, virtually, or telephonically, taking into consideration the comfort level and desires of the resource provider.

Procedure B: Placement Stabilization Staffing Goals

The PSS shall be centered on the following tasks:

1. Ensure all participants are aware of the purpose and goals of the staffing.
2. Conduct a review of the child's needs, past and current placement status, and resources needed to stabilize the child/youth in the home and prevent future disruptions.
3. Identify, review, and document the following information in the SAP (see *attachment*):
 - a. Placement history;
 - b. Child/Youth input on situation, if age appropriate;
 - c. Resource Provider's input;
 - d. The resource provider's triggers that may lead to a replacement;
 - e. The needs and behaviors of the child that may contribute to placement challenges;
 - f. The resources required to help to stabilize the child/youth;
 - g. The steps taken to engage and partner with the resource parent;
 - h. The actions the resource parent has taken to elevate concerns;
 - i. The plans developed and put in place to promote and ensure placement stability; and
 - j. Next steps and/or modifications to current services and supports that need to be addressed.
4. Review next steps.
 - a. Summarize specific timeframes and action steps that each team member shall complete;
 - b. Describe how issues identified shall be elevated;
 - c. Determine the need for a follow-up staffing, and if necessary, select the date of the staffing; and
 - d. Ensure that all team members have each other's contact information, particularly important for the resource parent or congregate provider to have everyone's phone and email.

Procedure C: Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

The following staff shall be responsible for completing the following tasks upon notice and in preparation of a PSS:

1. Social Work Staff:
 - a. Assist with the logistics of the PSS (e.g., reach out to clients, additional stakeholders, etc.);
 - b. Make clinical determinations regarding which participants shall be invited to the PSS;
 - c. Attend the staffing;
 - d. Provide historical case information;
 - e. Help ensure the appropriate services and supports are in place;
 - f. Work with facilitator in, at a minimum, completing action steps; and
 - g. Review the disruption report provided by the Program Outcomes Unit on a weekly basis to determine if: (1) children are appropriately placed on the report and (2) all relevant, accurate information is included within the report.

2. Program Outcomes Unit:
 - a. Provide a disruption report (an internal report managed by program outcomes) on a weekly basis to CFSA and contracted private agency staff;
 - b. Monitor children who meet the stabilization and exception categories;
 - c. Review and reconcile the responses provided by staff;
 - d. Provide the final tracking document to Performance Accountability and Quality Improvement Administration (PAQIA);
 - e. Provide data analysis, as applicable.
3. Placement Stabilization Staffing Facilitator:
 - a. CFSA:
 - i. RPSWs shall facilitate the staffing for initial entry into traditional foster care placements located in the District of Columbia.
 - ii. Kinship RDS shall facilitate the staffing for initial entry and replacements into kinship homes.
 - iii. Placement RDSs shall facilitate the PSS for: (1) replacements and (2) on behalf of congregate care providers.
 - b. Private Agency:
 - i. Private agency staff (i.e., NCCF and Children's Choice [CC]) shall conduct staffings for both initial entries and replacements into Maryland kinship and traditional homes independent of CFSA, unless technical assistance is requested. The agency's leadership shall assign an agency lead to conduct staffings.
 - ii. Private agency partners shall also work with CFSA to determine the best method to conduct staffings.
 - c. Invite participants to the staffing as follows:
 - i. Required attendees shall receive an invitation from the staffing facilitator to participate in the staffing.
 - ii. Optional participants may receive an invite from the staffing facilitator if a clinically appropriate determination is made by the social worker in partnership with the staffing facilitator.
 - d. Complete and distribute the SAP to the participants within 2 business days following the conclusion of the staffing and submit the plan to cfsa.stabilization@dc.gov.
 - e. Document the staffing's occurrence as a FACES.net contact note within 24 hours or the next business day.
 - f. The content of the plan shall be included in a contact note in the child's case and in the provider's screen.
 - g. Follow-up with staffing participants to ensure completion of SAP action items.

Procedure D: Documentation

1. The occurrence of a PSS shall be documented in a FACES.net contact note and the content of the plan shall be included in a contact note in the child's case and in the provider's screen by the assigned facilitator. The SAP shall be completed by the facilitator.
2. The completed plan shall be sent by the facilitator to the Program Outcomes Unit by email to cfsa.stabilization@dc.gov. The plan is due by the 18th of every month. If the 18th falls on a holiday or weekend, the plan shall be sent by the next business day.
3. This report will be shared with the leadership team from CFSA and partner agencies.