

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Child and Family Services Agency



**Business Process: Concurrent Kin Planning**

**I. POLICY**

Concurrent kin planning begins with the Agency’s initial contact with the family during the hotline and investigation process and continues throughout the life of an ongoing case. Initially, the CPS worker gathers information on how a relative has already been or may become a support to the family. If a case is opened, the ongoing social worker also gathers information and engages relatives, especially to help the family meet their identified case plan goals. Social workers may also identify relatives who are willing and able to serve as permanency resources, also known as a “kinship provider”, in the event of a family emergency or a need to separate a child from the home due to imminent risk of danger. The social worker documents the concurrent kin plan as part of the case planning process.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

*Concurrent Kin Planning* – Process of working toward family stability with families while at the same time establishing an alternative or contingency back-up plan for children’s care in the event of a family emergency or separation due to ongoing child neglect or abuse. Concurrent kin planning is to occur with Hotline, Investigations, Out-of-Home, FTMU, In-home, KFLU, etc.

*Concurrent Kin Plan* – An alternative or contingency back-up plan established by the assigned social worker with the family for the care and/or placement of children in the event of a family emergency or separation due to ongoing child neglect and abuse.

*Full disclosure* - the act of being open and straightforward with birth parents about concurrent planning, with an emphasis on the child’s need for stability and permanence. All information is shared by the social worker with parents as well as with others involved in a case, including the child, relative caretakers, foster parents, community organizations, judicial court officers and attorneys.

*Kin* - biological family; friends, formal and informal supports identified by the biological family as supports to the children.

*Resource parents* - relative caregivers, licensed foster parents and adoptive parents who meet the needs of children who cannot safely remain at home. Resource families participate as members of the multidisciplinary team.

**PROCEDURES**

A social worker’s ability to engage with families is the most powerful predictor of successful outcomes. Social work staff shall explore family and kin supports as a routine part of engagement with every family. The social worker is also responsible for actively engaging non-custodial parents in order to secure their involvement with the child. (*For more details, see the Agency’s administrative issuance, [Facilitating Child Living Arrangements with Non-Custodial Parents](#).*)

**A. Kinship Identification and Engagement**

1. CFSA prioritizes efforts to identify kin in the early stages of a family’s involvement with the Agency. Critical information about known family members and support systems shall be asked at the initial call to the hotline. This information shall be captured in the referral snapshot.

2. If the referral is accepted for investigation, the investigative social worker will continue to gather information from the family around support systems and back-up caregivers if the parents are unable to care for their children for any reason.
3. Information on family supports and possible kinship providers shall be maintained throughout the life of the case and shall reflect ongoing assessment and engagement when involved in an ongoing case.
  - a. The Family Team Meeting Unit (FTMU), Kinship Unit (KFLU) or any other program area shall also collect information on family supports and possible kinship providers.
  - b. For guidance on how to engage kin without a parent's consent, see the Agency's administrative issuance, [Engagement of Kin without Parental Consent](#).
4. Family supports and possible kinship providers' information identified (through interviews, safety planning, or FTMs) shall be documented in the Agency's electronic case management system collateral screen within 24 hours of contact.

**Note:** *Identification of kin does not mean that the social worker is planning to separate the child from the family home, but kin may help prevent separation. More often, kin serve as key supports and invaluable stabilization resources for children and families.*

## **B. Concurrent Kin Plan Development**

A concurrent kin plan (CKP), developed by the social worker with the family, designates other capable adults to provide care to children if the parent is unable to do so, due to an unforeseen family emergency or a child welfare/protection issue leading to separation of the child from the home.

1. The investigative social worker shall develop the CKP within the first 30 days of the investigation.
2. The ongoing social worker shall review and update the CKP, with the family, within the first 30 days of an open case in conjunction with the completion of the initial case plan.
  - The CKP shall be reviewed and if needed, updated, every 90 days in conjunction with the service plans.
3. A CKP is developed for each family and shall specifically document if there are different caregivers for different children.
4. The assigned social worker shall document the CKP in a contact note in the Agency's electronic case management system, selecting the purpose as "Concurrent Kin Plan".

**Note:** *If the social worker is unable to develop a CKP with family, the social worker shall document the attempt in a contact note. If the family has no or limited supports, the social worker must document in the case plan and sustainability plan efforts to strengthen the family's support system.*

## **C. Pre-Placement Clearances and Authorization**

1. The assigned social worker shall ask the birth parents to sign an [Authorization to Access and Disclose Information\(General\)](#).
2. The social worker shall submit a referral to the Diligent Search Unit (DSU) to request that they conduct a CPR check for the kin. The language to be inserted in the DSU referral form is, "a CPR check is requested on behalf of kin, as part of the concurrent kin plan".

## **D. Licensing**

1. At the point that an emergency separation is occurring or being planned, the Kinship Family Licensing Unit (KFLU) will begin the licensing process.
  - a. KFLU shall begin vetting identified kin in the CKP as placement options

- b. If the separation occurs after normal business hours or on the weekend, the separation team shall look at the CKP in the Agency's electronic case management system and initiate the process of vetting kin.
2. If a separation is being planned, the assigned social worker shall hold an early alert meeting. The case management team shall communicate with KFLU about proceeding in vetting kin identified in the CKP. Examples of nonemergency separations include:
  - a. Shelter care recommendation for a community papered approval
  - b. Request for revocation of protective supervision (or Conditional Release)
  - c. Other situations where the parent is unable to safely care or provide for child, child is in a temporary safe place, but there is no long-term permanency plan for the child.
3. Prospective kin caregivers who consider assuming primary responsibility for a child shall be provided with the brochure, [Kinship Care: A Guide to Exploring Your Options](#).
4. When a prospective kin provider makes the informed decision to become a licensed kinship caregiver, the KFLU worker shall initiate the kinship licensure process.
5. If the prospective kin providers need resources (e.g., furniture, gift cards for food or clothing, or utility payment assistance), the assigned social worker or licensing worker shall contact the KFLU program manager to discuss referral options.