

**Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services  
(CCDCFS)  
Policy Statement**

**Policy Chapter:** Case Requirements  
**Policy Number:** 5.01.01  
**Policy Name:** In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)

**Original Effective Date:** 5/01/2015  
**Revision Date(s):**  
**Current Revision Date:**  
**Approved By:** Tamara Chapman-Wagner (Interim Administrator)

**PURPOSE:** To outline the procedures when a family is identified in need of ongoing supportive services

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to all screened in reports that meet the statutory and agency threshold for Child Protective Services (CPS) intervention and has been designated to either of the Differential Response pathway assignments of Traditional Response or Alternative Response.

**POLICY**

When families are identified as appropriate for IHSS, CCDCFS develops a respectful and meaningful collaboration with families to achieve shared goals. CCDCFS:

1. Emphasizes collaboration through language that demonstrates respect, inclusion, validation and encouragement for the family members' primary roles in planning and making decisions for themselves and their children.
2. Encourages the family members to identify and select the services and agencies they feel will best meet their individual needs, and provides the family members with other known services and agencies that they may want to consider.
3. Encourages and emphasizes the importance of families participating and engaging in family meetings during home visits and critical junctures in the life of the case, such as safety planning, family service/case planning, family service/case plan reviews and case closure.
4. Fully involves the family in writing the service or case plan; encourages the family to assume the leader role in developing all aspects of the plan. Plans are behaviorally specific and written in the family's words.

5. Demonstrates genuine interest in the family members' perceptions of their involvement. Regularly asks the family members if they feel involved, supported and empowered in making decisions that impact them.
6. Provides transparent information that is accurate, understandable and complete to the family members to help them make informed decisions and choices in ensuring the safety of their children. Shares results of family assessments and case reviews with the family, and discusses progress from the perspective of both the family and the agency.
7. Demonstrates and recognizes the family as expert. For example, tells the family members that they are the experts on their family, and they know their family best. Encourages family members to do most of the talking.
8. Encourages families to participate in all formal case reviews (90-day reviews and semiannual administrative reviews).

CCDCFS identifies and applies the most effective and culturally appropriate services, resources and processes to meet the goals established in the planning stage.

1. Facilitates service referrals and linkages on behalf of the family and with the family's knowledge, input and agreement.
2. Obtains a release of information and provides written and/or verbal communication to the provider. This information, with agreement from the family, would include the family's presenting issues, the agency's assessment results, the family's goals in addressing these issues with this service provider and desired outcomes of the family receiving this service.
3. At each contact, reviews the family service/case plan with the family to ensure that the plan is being implemented and is effective; discusses successes and barriers experienced in completing the plan and objectives. Works jointly and engages with the family to identify and craft solutions and make appropriate adjustments to the plan as needed to overcome identified barriers toward achieving case goals and closing the case.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **I. IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

- A. Upon receiving a case for ongoing services, the WOR contacts the family within one (1) business day to schedule an appointment. Initial contacts with the family are generally announced. The WOR makes efforts to provide the family with notification of a meeting time that is convenient for the family.

- B. If a “Case Plan” has not yet been developed, the WOR shall schedule a case plan development meeting in accordance with Policy 5.01.03 “Case Plan”.
  - 1. For AR cases an “AR Family Service Plan” is developed in lieu of the “Case Plan”. The “AR Family Service Plan” is completed immediately upon identification of needed services but never later than fifteen (15) days from the completion of the “AR-Family Assessment”.
- C. An “AR Family Service Plan” or “Case Plan” is developed in accordance with Policy 5.01.03 “Case Plan / Family Service Plan”. The WOR
  - 1. Obtains an understanding and agreement of needs to be addressed prior to discussing services.
  - 2. When a family is unable to complete, or is not in agreement with recommended services, suggests alternative services that may address the need and support change.
- D. Subsequent visits with the family are scheduled with the family at a time that is convenient for the family. In the event it is necessary to have an unannounced visit, the WOR is mindful of the intrusion and utilize rapport building techniques to help families retain a sense of control and / or comfort.
- E. Case plans are reviewed and discussed with participants no less than monthly at face to face meetings with the family. The WOR makes every effort to answer any concerns or questions the family members may have.
  - 1. For AR cases, the agency makes face to face contact with each parent, guardian, or custodian and child participating in or being provided services through the “AR Family Service Plan” at least every other week to monitor progress on the service plan activities.
- F. If the WOR is unsuccessful in making at least one successful face to face contact per month, the WOR attempts to make a minimum of two additional “good faith” attempts to complete the face to face contact within the calendar month.
- G. The objective of the family service plan and case plan is to build on strengths and change behaviors that contribute to the risk of maltreatment. If agreed upon services are not addressing the behaviors or are no longer suitable for the family, the WOR works with the family to find alternative methods to address the behavior.
- H. Case reviews are held with the family in accordance with Policy 5.02.02 “Case Review/Semiannual Administrative Review”.

- I. The WOR continues to gather case information by reviewing current and historical case records and making contact with family members, relatives, and any identified collateral contact. The WOR makes case decisions by utilizing available case information, completed Comprehensive Assessment Planning Model- Interim Solution (CAPMIS) tools, and consulting with their supervisor.
- J. Court intervention may be necessary when a safety threat or risk contributor is significant enough to consider a change in the child's placement. See Policy 5.02.01 "TDM / Staffings Policy".
- K. The agency closes the case when there are no active safety threats, there is an observed positive change in behavior, risk contributors have been addressed, and the agency and family agree services are no longer needed.
- L. At any time after an initial agreement for services, the family notifies CCDCFS that they are no longer interested in services; the case is closed unless a court motion has been or will soon be filed. The WOR includes a list of any recommendations and resources to the family in the case closing letter.
- M. When a family becomes non-compliant with a service that is aimed at reducing risk, the WOR evaluates whether or not absent this service, risk is increased and thus the child's safety is threatened. WOR will consult with their supervisor to determine if a TDM is necessary.
- N. When a family is non-compliant with recommended IHSS and / or has become non-responsive to the agency; and, the WOR has made diligent efforts to engage the family, the family case shall be closed (provided there is no reason to file a court motion). The following efforts to engage the family include:
  - Attempted monthly face-to-face contact with the family to discuss IHSS for the family at different times of the day and different days of the week with at least three attempts per month.
  - Attempted phone calls (if possible) to the family to discuss IHSS for the family.
  - WOR sends family "Engagement in Voluntary Services" letter via U.S. mail.

An IHSS case does not remain open for longer than a 90 day period if the family members remain non-compliant and / or non-responsive. When a case is closed due to a family no longer being compliant or responsive to voluntary services, the WOR includes a list of any recommendations and resources to the family in the case closing letter.

- O. When it is determined that protective services are needed, the whereabouts of the child or his or her parent, guardian, or custodian are unknown and there is reason to believe the child remains at risk of abuse or neglect, the WOR will issue a protective service alert.
  - 1. The WOR creates a protective service alert in statewide automated child welfare information system (SACWIS) and specifies whether the protective service alert is to be processed as an in-state or out of state alert.
  - 2. When a case is closed with an active protective service alert, the closing supervisor tracks the status of the alert and determines the need for extension.
  - 3. The protective service alert expires ninety days from the issue date. An extension is completed by the most recent case supervisor prior to the expiration if it is determined the child remains in immediate danger of serious harm. Each extension expires ninety days from the issue date.
  
- P. When contact or services were provided by the agency to the family after completion of the “Family Assessment”, and the case will be closed, the WOR completes a “Case Review” and “Case Closure”.
  - 1. For AR cases, the agency completes an “AR-Family Service Plan Review” and the “Case Closure”. The “AR-Family Service Plan Review” is held in conjunction with a case closing family team meeting.
  
- Q. The WOR notifies the family of case closure by completing and mailing a “Close Letter to Parent / Guardian”.

**SEE ALSO:**

- POLICY 2.03.00 “Standards for the Investigation of Intake Reports”**
- POLICY 5.01.03 “Case Plan Policy”**
- POLICY 5.01.04 “Family Team Meeting”**
- POLICY 5.02.01 “TDM / Staffings”**
- POLICY 5.02.02 “90 Day Case Reviews and Semi-Annual Reviews (SARs) for In-Home Supportive Services Cases**