

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

**Policy Chapter:** Case Review  
**Policy Number:** 5.02.02  
**Policy Name:** Case Reviews / Semi-Annual Administrative Reviews

**Original Effective Date:** 09/01/2008  
**Revision Date(s):** 07/01/2015  
**Current Revision Date:** 07/01/2015  
**Approved By:** Thomas D. Pristow

**PURPOSE:** To establish a process for completing required case reviews and Semi-Annual Administrative Reviews (SAR) which will promote timely and appropriate service delivery to families through frequent and increased parental involvement.

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to all CCDCFS Direct Services staff. All cases with an active case plan or family service plan are subject to a case review.

**POLICY**

**I. Case Review**

- A. The purpose of a Case Review is to ensure continued efforts are made to:
1. Assess child safety.
  2. Evaluate whether risk to the child is lowered or increased.
  3. Evaluate the effectiveness of supportive services offered and provided to the child, his or her parent, guardian, custodian, or pre-finalized adoptive parent, or substitute caregiver.
  4. Identify barriers to the provision of services.
  5. Prevent placement, if possible, of the child in substitute care, assist in reunifying the child with the child's parent, guardian, or custodian, or establish a permanent placement for the child.
  6. Determine next steps based on the progress of the family (continue with services, file for court intervention, close the case).
- B. A case review is required no later than every ninety days from whichever comes first:
1. Original court complaint date;
  2. Date agency received custody of a child;
  3. Date of court ordered protective supervision (COPS);
  4. Date of parent, guardian, or custodian signature on the case plan for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)/voluntary cases only;
  5. Date of completion of the Alternative Response (AR) Family Assessment for AR only.

- C. Case Reviews are completed in conjunction with required SARs.
- D. Case Reviews are completed for all non-emergency staffings that take place after a case plan is completed.
- E. Case Reviews are completed at the time of case closure unless:
  - 1. The case is closed within thirty days after completion of a Case Review and the intent to close was indicated on the Case Review.
  - 2. The case is closed prior to the completion of the case plan and the timeframe for completion of the case plan has not lapsed.

## **II. Semi-Annual Administrative Review**

- A. A SAR is required no later than every one hundred eighty (180) days from whichever of the following activities occurs first:
  - 1. Original court complaint date;
  - 2. Date of placement;
  - 3. Date of COPS;
  - 4. Date of parent, guardian, or custodian signature on the case plan for IHSS;
  - 5. Date of completion of the AR-Family Assessment for AR only.
- B. The SAR is completed no more than thirty (30) days prior to the due date.
- C. A Case Review is completed in conjunction with the SAR.
- D. For AR and IHSS cases, a review panel of at least two people conducts the SAR. The review panel consists of the WOR and supervisor or designee.
- E. For court ordered protective supervision (COPS) and substitute care cases, a review panel of at least three people conducts the SAR. The review panel consists of the WOR or worker familiar with the case plan or family service plan; a case review facilitator; and supervisor or designee.
- F. The following individuals are invited to the SAR:
  - 1. The child's parent, guardian, or custodian, unless the child is in permanent custody.
  - 2. The pre-adoptive parent of the child in an adoptive placement.
  - 3. The child, if age and developmentally appropriate.
  - 4. The guardian ad litem (GAL) and / or court appointed special advocate (CASA), if one has been appointed.
  - 5. The child's substitute caregiver, including the relative providing care for the child, if applicable.
  - 6. The child's attorney, if applicable.
  - 7. The Indian custodian, if any, and the child's Indian tribe and extended relatives.

8. Any service provider and/or community partners (collaborative) working with the family.
- G. The agency provides written invitation including the date, time, and place for the SAR, to the child's parent, guardian, custodian and child, if age and developmentally appropriate, no less than seven (7) days prior to the SAR.
- H. CCDCFS provides a written summary for each SAR required for a child receiving services using the SAR tool in SACWIS. The summary contains the following information:
1. The extent of progress made toward alleviating the safety threats, risk, and / or circumstances requiring the agency to provide services, assume protective supervision, or assume temporary custody of the child.
  2. A conclusion regarding the appropriateness of the supportive services provided to the child and the child's parent, guardian, or custodian, or pre-finalized adoptive parent, or substitute caregiver.
  3. An assessment of the appropriateness of the case plan for the child and the extent of compliance by all case plan participants.
  4. If applicable, a summary of why IHSS, AR, or COPS must be continued or terminated and an estimated date of when IHSS, AR, or COPS may be terminated.
  5. Description of how the child's current living arrangement is appropriate and provides for the child's specific safety needs and meets the child's basic and special needs.
  6. The agency's recommendation regarding the child's custody arrangement for the next six-month period.
  7. The names of all parties participating in the SAR.

**For Children in Substitute Care the Summary Also Includes:**

8. Evaluation of whether services provided to the child and the child's parent, guardian, or custodian will help the child return to a safe environment, if applicable.
9. A summary of the ongoing efforts to identify an appropriate potential relative or kin placement.
10. An estimated date the child may be returned and safety maintained at home, placed with a relative or other suitable non-relative, placed in a planned permanent living arrangement, placed for adoption or finalized in an adoptive home, or prepared for independent living.
11. A determination of whether a child with a legal status of planned permanent living arrangement should continue in that status or whether the agency shall file a motion with the court requesting permanent custody of the child.
12. The extent of progress made towards meeting the needs of the child in a planned permanent living arrangement or in the permanent custody of the agency.
13. A determination of whether a concurrent plan needs to be developed to address locating a permanent family placement for the child which

may be made concurrently with reasonable efforts to safely return the child to the child's own home.

14. If a concurrent plan is developed, indicate the agency's progress toward implementation and whether any amendments need to be made.
  15. A review of the life skill services to assist a child attaining the age of sixteen to prepare for the transition from substitute care to independent living.
  16. The agency's recommendation regarding the child's custody arrangement for the next six-month period.
  17. The agency's recommendation regarding the termination of parental rights for the child who is in the temporary custody of the agency for twelve (12) or more of the previous twenty-two (22) consecutive months.
  18. An update of the JFS 1443 "Child's Education and Health Information" attached to the case plan.
  19. An update of Kids Insight.
- I. A copy of the SAR summary is provided to all parties in the SAR no later than seven (7) days after completion of the SAR.
- J. For each child in custody who has attained the age of sixteen (16), the agency requests a credit report from each of the three major credit reporting agencies (CRA) each year until the child is discharged from substitute care. This may be completed simultaneously or separately throughout the year. A request is submitted to at least one CRA by the first SAR held after the child attains the age of sixteen. The agency provides the child with a copy of the report and assists the child interpreting the credit report and resolving inconsistencies. This information is included in the SAR summary.
- K. For court involved cases, the agency files with the court a copy of the SAR summary no later than seven (7) days after completion of the SAR and includes a copy of the amended case plan, if an amendment was completed.
- L. For court involved cases, the agency provides a copy of the SAR summary to all parties on the case plan before the end of the next day after filing the summary with the court. The agency indicates, in writing, the parties have seven days from notice of filing the required SAR summary with the court to object to proposed changes made in the case plan as a result of the SAR and request a hearing on the proposed change. The substitute caregiver or relative providing care for the child is not considered parties to the SAR unless otherwise determined by the court.

## PROCEDURES

The procedures outlined in this section are for those reviews required by Ohio Administrative Code. Additionally, a Case Review tool is completed in SACWIS for TDM staffings, case closures, or any time during the life of a case following a case plan or case service plan. For the procedures on those additional Case Reviews refer to TDM/Staffing policy, IHSS policy, and / or seek guidance from your supervisor.

### **I. Non Court Involved Cases (AR, IHSS)**

- A. The worker of record (WOR) reviews ticklers in SACWIS as a reminder of upcoming due dates for case reviews and SAR's. When a Case Review or SAR is due, the WOR works with their supervisor to ensure the review is scheduled.
- B. The supervisor tracks the due dates of all Case Reviews and SARs for cases under their supervision. The supervisor schedules Case Reviews and SARs with the WOR on a date prior to the due date. The supervisor provides no less than four-teen (14) days notice of the review to the WOR.
- C. The WOR invites all required parties to an SAR by producing an SAR notification letter in SACWIS and mailing it to all required participants at least seven (7) days in advance. The WOR is not required to invite parties to a Case Review. The information covered in a Case Review is discussed with the family during monthly face to face contacts.
- D. The WOR completes the Case Review or SAR tool in SACWIS no less than five (5) business days prior to the scheduled review. The supervisor reviews the information in advance of the scheduled review.
- E. The Case Review or SAR is held at the designated time with no less than the worker familiar with the case plan or case service plan and a supervisor or designee (at a supervisor level).
- F. The supervisor facilitates the meeting and encourages participation and input from all parties present. No party outside of required agency personnel participates in the review or SAR without the consent of the parent.
- G. The supervisor approves the completed Case Review and completes the written summary for the SAR.
- H. At the conclusion of the review, the supervisor provides SAR copies to all meeting participants. A copy of the Case Review is only required to be provided when held in conjunction with an SAR.

- I. If the parents are not in attendance, the supervisor mails the completed paperwork to them with a cover letter (see Case Review / SAR Summary Cover Letter) within one business day. The WOR will review the information in the Case Review and SAR with the family during their next monthly face to face contact.
- J. A copy of the SAR documents is maintained in the case record. The WOR will submit the SAR documents to be filed/scanned no later than 14 days after completion of the SAR.

## **II. Court Involved Cases**

- A. All cases with court involvement as indicated in SACWIS are scheduled for case reviews and SARs by the case review department in the Semi-Annual Review Application (SARA) schedule system. It is the responsibility of the WOR and supervisor to ensure that all cases are reviewed timely. If a case is not scheduled timely, the WOR notifies the case review department so the case is manually scheduled.
- B. The WOR navigates SARA to view the day, time, and location for upcoming case reviews or SARs. SARA should be navigated 1-2 times per week as the schedule is subject to change.
- C. The WOR ensures that the contact information for all required parties is accurate and up to date in SACWIS and a part of the invitee list in SARA. The WOR reviews the invitee list at least 30 days prior to each scheduled case review or SAR. This will assure that the proper participants are notified at the correct address two weeks prior to the scheduled review. Persons and addresses must be entered in SACWIS to become part of the invitee list. The case review department will provide notification of the review for all parties listed on the invitee list. If the invitee list is not updated within two weeks of the review, the WOR invites the party by producing an SAR notification letter in SACWIS and mailing it to all required participants at least seven (7) days in advance.
- D. Circumstances may exist that require the scheduling of two meetings (e.g. domestic violence, protection orders, and other court orders) to maintain a separation of parties. When those circumstances exist, the WOR notifies the Case Review scheduling department as soon as possible so arrangements can be made.
- E. The WOR completes the Case Review or SAR tool in SACWIS and all additional paperwork is submitted to the supervisor no less than five (5) business days prior to the scheduled review. The supervisor will review the tool and paperwork prior to the scheduled review.
- F. All reviews require the following paperwork to be completed by the WOR:

1. Case review tool in SACWIS. Tool is completed as part of the SAR tool for all scheduled SARs.
  2. Updated and stamped case plan which includes the concurrent plan (COPS cases do not require a concurrent plan).
  3. ODJFS 1443 (Medical / Educational Forms) completed and saved in SACWIS. WOR ensures all medical and education information on the child's person profiled is updated and accurate. The person profile provides the information for the ODJFS 1443. Children not of school age do not require an Educational form. Children in COPS status do not require an ODJFS 1443.
  4. Completed SAR cover sheet listing all required parties.
  5. Documentation from service providers as applicable.
  6. Written comments from parties unable to attend.
  7. Signed release of information for providers / community partners to attend.
  8. Family tree form completed with as much known information. This form is discussed during the review as updated as appropriate.
  9. For every child in custody, WOR brings an updated photo (within 1 year) of that child.
  10. Reunification assessment. Not required for COPS cases.
  11. IL assessment and plan (if applicable).
  12. For all youth ages 16 and up, a Transition Plan including documentation of all state requirements must be in development or completed.
  13. Child Study Inventory updated within the last 30 days (PC children).
  14. Adoption Matching Conference paperwork (PC children).
  15. Kids Insight paperwork.
  16. Custody SAR & Case Review Preparation Tool.
- G. When the review is an SAR, the WOR initiates the SAR tool in SACWIS prior to the scheduled meeting. The WOR completes the identifying information, safety review, service review, strength and needs update, risk reassessment, case analysis, and reunification assessment sections at least five (5) business days prior to the scheduled meeting. The facilitator completes the remaining sections and approves the document following the meeting.
- H. The Case Review or SAR is held at the scheduled meeting time with a minimum review panel that consists of the WOR or worker familiar with the case plan or family service plan; a Case Review facilitator; and supervisor or designee.
1. The WOR contacts all required parties (including parents, substitute caregivers, GAL, and network providers) at least five (5) business days prior to any scheduled SAR to remind them of the meeting and encourage their attendance.
  2. Assigned resource managers, independent living workers, and/or any other agency staff working with the child and/or caregiver is expected to attend all reviews.

- I. Agency staff encourages participation and input from all parties present. No party outside of required agency personnel or legal parties to the case (including GAL and substitute caregiver) participates in the review without the consent of the parent. All parties present at reviews are treated with respect and are considered active participants in the review and decision making of the child.
- J. Meeting participants receive a handwritten, shorter meeting summary as they leave the meeting. Required parties receive the court stamped version of the case review or SAR by mail. The court stamped version is mailed by the Case Review department to the parties listed on the SAR cover sheet.
- K. If a review needs to be rescheduled due to a conflict with court, an emergency with the child, or an emergency with the family, the WOR or supervisor will contact the Case Review department immediately. Reviews are not rescheduled for the convenience of agency staff.
- L. If a review is missed by the WOR and needs to be rescheduled, the attendance of the Supervisor and Senior Supervisor is mandatory.

**SEE ALSO:**

- **Ohio Administrative Codes:**
  - 5101:2-38-09 – PCSA Requirements for Completing the Case Review
  - 5101:2-38-10 – Requirements for Completing the Semiannual Administrative Review
- **Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services Policies and Procedures Manual**
  - Policy 5.01.01 – In-Home Supportive Services
  - Policy 5.01.02 – Case Plan / Family Service Plan
  - Policy 5.02.01 – TDM / Staffings Policy
- **Ohio’s Child Protective Services Worker Manual and CAPMIS Field Guides**

**FORMS / TOOLS:**

SAR Report Cover Sheet  
Navigating SARA  
Family Tree  
Case Review / SAR Summary Cover Letter  
Custody SAR & Case Review Preparation Tool