



Key Concept: Conditions for Return

Conditions for Return means a *written* statement of specific *behaviors, conditions or circumstances* that must exist within a child's home before a child can safely return and remain in the home with an in-home ongoing safety plan.

The **Conditions for Return** are a part of the case planning activities and are established after a child is removed from home. **Conditions for Return** are clearly identified and documented in the written Case Plan and should be provided in writing to the child's parents/caregivers. Conditions for Return also may be contained within a court order.

Other things to keep in mind about the concept of **Conditions for Return**

- Caregivers do not necessarily have to change in order for children to be reunified with their families
- Impending danger threats do not necessarily have to be reduced or eliminated in order for children to be safely reunified with their families. They must however be managed by an in-home safety plan that is supported by the parent(s)/caregiver(s).
- What is necessary for children to be reunified with their family is the establishment of well-defined circumstances within a child's home that mitigate against threats to child safety

Conditions for Return example:

IMPENDING DANGER THREAT

The family situation results in no adult in the home routinely performing parenting duties and responsibilities that assure child safety.

Mary impulsively leaves her child to party; 6 year-old Brittany is alone often for several hours to more than a day at a time.

Conditions for Return:



- A responsible adult is in the home providing care and supervising Brittany all the time whenever she is not in school.
- A plan for supervision by a suitable babysitter exists whenever Mary is away from the home.
- Mary is willing and able to arrange for a babysitter in her home.

To gain a better understanding of the concept of **Conditions for Return**, you are encouraged to reference the Child Welfare Procedure Manual, Chapter 3, Sections 5F, 11 and 14. The Procedure Manual can be found at http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/safety_model/index.html#pm

Definitions from Oregon Child Welfare Administrative Rule that support this concept are as follows:

Case Plan means a goal oriented, time limited individualized plan for the child and the child's family, developed by the Department and the parents or legal guardians, that identifies the family behaviors, conditions, or circumstances, safety threats to the child, and the expected outcomes that will improve the protective capacity of the parents or legal guardians. The family plan described in ORS 417.375(1) is incorporated into the case plan to the extent that it protects the child, builds on family strengths, and is focused on achieving permanency for the child within a reasonable time.

Conditions for return mean a written statement of the specific behaviors, conditions, or circumstances that must exist within a child's home before a child can safely return and remain in the home with an in-home ongoing safety plan.

Ongoing safety plan means a documented set of actions or interventions that manage a child's safety when the Department has identified one or more safety threats to which the child is vulnerable and determined the parent or caregiver is unable or unwilling to protect the child. An ongoing safety plan can be in-home or out-of-home and is adjusted when necessary to provide the least intrusive interventions.