

Facilitator Role and Qualifications

While the assigned caseworker has primary responsibility to be sure that participants are identified and prepared for the meeting, the facilitator often makes the many detailed contacts and arrangements that are necessary to accomplish these tasks. It is especially helpful for participants to have contact with the facilitator before the meeting and become more comfortable with the meeting process. Facilitators may be child welfare staff or contracted providers. The local child welfare office maintains a current list of approved and/or contract facilitators.

Facilitator Role:

- Coordinate with the caseworker to communicate the purpose of the meeting to participants, and describe how the meeting will proceed, including ground rules
- Conduct each meeting in a respectful manner that promotes and encourages the participation of each person attending
- During the meeting, guide participants to:
 - a) Share all concerns and recommendations for reducing, mitigating, eliminating or managing the safety threats and increasing the family's ability to protect the child. Some participants may need guidance to phrase these in a constructive manner, focusing on the needs of the children and parents. Using the language of "concerns" often reduces defensive attitudes and helps move the meeting towards positive action. Recommendations for change should describe what needs to exist to meet the children's needs. These often flow out of the concerns previously stated.
 - b) After all recommendations have been heard, then ask the group to focus on areas of agreement and recommend actions for the family and service providers.
- Document agreement on decisions and actions to be taken.
- Document areas where agreement was not achieved.
- Schedule subsequent meeting(s) when appropriate.

Facilitator Qualifications:

- Has completed Meeting Facilitator training.
- Experienced as a team member in Oregon Family Decision-making Meetings.
- Knowledgeable about child welfare laws, policies and procedures.
- Able to routinely screen for issues of family violence that may require separate meetings for each legal parent, or exclusion of a participant that may put others at risk.
- Skilled in basic engagement and meeting facilitation.
- Able to be objective; and decline to facilitate in any case where objectivity cannot be maintained.

Accommodations: The facilitator, in conjunction with the caseworker, and using local child welfare office protocols, arranges for:

- A translator when necessary

- An interpreter for hearing-impaired clients
- An advocate for a client with mental illness or developmental delays.
- Site access