

3. Transfer of a Case

A. When a Child Remains in the Parents' Home

When a caseworker receives a case after the CPS assessment has been completed, the CPS worker will have already prepared the case for transfer. It is critical for the receiving caseworker to understand the circumstances of the case as soon as possible and that, upon transfer, **the receiving worker is responsible for safety management**. The caseworker must understand the behaviors, conditions or circumstances that made a child unsafe and how the in-home safety plan is managing child safety. **Managing child safety with an ongoing safety plan is critical** when the child remains in the parents' home. These cases need careful scrutiny because we are relying on participants in the ongoing safety plan to assist Child Welfare in managing child safety while the child remains in the parents' home. The following actions provide for continuous case oversight and make the transition from one worker to another more supportive for the family.

Procedures:

These procedures are presented in a sequential order, but in the course of case management may not occur in the order in which they are detailed in this manual. In whatever order they occur, the caseworker is responsible for all the activities.

- Review and confirm legal authority for services
 1. If the family has been willing to work with Child Welfare, is retaining legal custody of the child, and, if the family has not signed a Service Application (CF 304), at the first contact, have the parents complete the form. A signed Service Application provides written documentation of Child Welfare's authority to provide services. The caseworker and family must both understand, that although the family is voluntarily entering into services, Child Welfare may invoke court authority to keep a child safe.
 2. Follow up on any procedures to determine father's legal status (See Chapter II, Identifying Legal Parents, for additional information on the CPS worker's responsibilities in determining paternity, and Chapter VIII for further details on legal and court procedures.)
 3. Follow up on any unfinished determinations of a child's Indian or refugee status as described in procedures in Chapter II.
 4. Follow up on any actions or assessment to determine if a non-offending parent is willing and able to care for the child as described in procedures in Chapter II.
 - a. Follow procedures for reunification with a parent in another state. (See Section 14 at the end of this chapter for procedures for ICPC reunification.)
 - b. Follow procedures for reunification with a parent in a foreign country. (See Section 14, D at the end of Chapter III for procedures for reunification with a parent in a foreign country.)
- Review records and contact the CPS worker
 1. Thoroughly review the case records, gain an understanding of the child and family,

- pay particular attention to the identified safety threats and how the child's safety is being managed in the ongoing safety plan.
2. In most cases both CPS worker and the caseworker will be present at the Child Safety Meeting, which provided firsthand information about the family.
 3. If the receiving worker was not present at the Child Safety Meeting, have face-to-face contact with the sending worker no longer than five working days from the date the case is transferred. If at all possible, involve the supervisors as well. Be prepared to ask questions if you are unclear on any of the case record documentation.
 - a. When face-to-face contact with the sending worker within 5 days is not possible, consult with your supervisor and receive approval for an exception to the required contact.
 4. Together, review the identified safety threats, the CPS assessment information, and any other currently available information pertinent to the case.
 5. Confirm the ongoing safety plan. (Detailed procedures are outlined in next section of this chapter.)
- Meet the family and the child (when the child remains in the home)
 1. The caseworker may have met the family during a Child Safety Meeting, but if not, complete the following actions.
 2. Whenever possible, schedule a time for a joint home visit with the CPS worker. Whether or not a joint visit is possible, the caseworker must visit the child and the family within five working days of receiving the case.
 3. If a joint home visit is not possible, try to schedule a time in the office where the family is introduced by the CPS worker to the new caseworker. A face-to-face case transfer with the family provides a venue for introductions and consistent information to the family.
 4. Activities during the meeting with the family may include:
 - a. The CPS worker's explanation to the family that the case is being transferred and why
 - b. The CPS worker's introduction of the child/ren to the caseworker
 - c. The CPS worker's and caseworker's review of the ongoing safety plan with the parents; and
 - d. The caseworker's introduction of the next phase of the case planning process. This meeting may be the initial meeting to begin the Introduction Stage of the protective capacity assessment.
 5. If a joint meeting with the CPS worker is not possible, have face-to-face contact with the parents and children within five working days of receiving the case.
 6. When meeting the family:
 - a. Introduce yourself and explain why the case is being transferred to you.
 - b. Explain your role and responsibilities.

- c. Make inquiries on how the family is coping and assess how behaviors, conditions or circumstances within the family are impacting child safety.
- d. Assess and confirm that the ongoing safety plan is working and that the child is safe in the parents' home.
- e. Begin the protective capacity assessment.

B. When a Child Has Been Placed in Substitute Care

In addition to the casework procedures outlined above, the caseworker has the additional responsibilities of meeting the child (if this has not occurred when meeting with the child's parents), confirming the safety of the child in the substitute care environment and reviewing the Visit and Contact Plan.

Procedure:

- Meet the Child
 1. Whenever possible, schedule a time for a joint visit with the CPS worker and the child in the substitute placement.
 2. If a visit with the child in the home is not possible, try to schedule a time in the office or another location familiar to the child where the child is introduced to the caseworker. A face to face transfer with the child provides the child with a sense of understanding who you are and why you are coming to visit.
 - a. Activities during the meeting with the child may include:
 - The CPS worker explaining to the child that a new person will be visiting and working with the family to assure that he or she is safe;
 - Assuring the child that you will work with his or her family; and
 - Letting the child know why there are restrictions on family contact if those exist.
 3. Review the Visit and Contact Plan.
 4. Answer the child's questions to the best of your ability.
 5. Observe and gather information from the child to assist in assessing the child's adjustment to substitute placement, physical and emotional well being, and safety in the substitute placement.
 6. Depending on the child's age and development, provide the child with ways to contact you.
 7. Provide the child with your name and phone number.
 8. Prior to ending this first visit, provide the child with the information on when he or she will see or hear from you again.
- Meet the Substitute Caregiver
 1. Explain your role in the case and establish ways to communicate information. Provide your business card, your email address and the name and phone number of your supervisor.

2. Ask the substitute caregiver about the child and his or her adjustment to the placement. Inquire about any special concerns or questions regarding meeting the child's needs.
3. As soon as known, provide the substitute caregiver information on school enrollment, medical, dental and mental health care (Refer to Chapter IV for detailed procedures regarding Services to Children.)
4. Confirm the child's safety by following procedures in 'Monitor the Child Welfare Case Plan through Required Contact' in Section 9 of this Chapter.
5. If a joint meeting is not possible, have face-to-face contact with the child within five working days of receiving the case.

Regardless of all other case activities, the length of time between face to face contacts with a child must not exceed 30 days.

- Review the Contact and Visitation Plan

The CPS worker will have developed a Temporary Visit and Contact Plan (CF 0831A) for the parents and the child at the time the child was removed from the parents' home.

1. Review the Temporary Visit and Contact Plan to ensure:
 - a. Visits and contacts are occurring as planned;
 - b. The contact and visit plan conforms with the ongoing safety plan; and
 - c. Siblings are able to visit each other if they are not in the same substitute care setting, or if some siblings are in the parents' home.
2. Develop and prepare an Ongoing Visit and Contact Plan (CF 0831B)
 - a. Ensure the Ongoing Visit and Contact Plan conforms with the ongoing safety plan, siblings can visit with each other if not placed with the same substitute caregiver, and that Child Welfare has arranged for as much visiting and other contact as is reasonably necessary to support the child's attachment to his or her family.
 - b. Have the Contact and Visitation Plan translated into a language the parents understand, if the primary language of the parent is other than English.
 - c. Complete a CF 0010 A to request translation and refer to the Child Welfare AR 06 002 dated 6/30/06 located at http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/childwelfare/ar/2006/cw_ar_06_002.pdf.
3. Ensure culturally relevant and language appropriate services are being provided when necessary to meaningful visitation.
4. Ensure there is as much contact as reasonably possible with the parents, knowing that frequent contact promotes timely reunification, and is good for the parents and the child.
5. Address any barriers to visits or contact.
 - a. **For example:** Arrange transportation, reschedule at more convenient times, provide for alternative means of supervision, allow for phone, email, or other contact, allow the parents to accompany the child to school events, church,

medical appointments, or other supervised family activities, as appropriate.

6. Review the reasons for supervision, if supervision is required, and determine whether supervision continues to be necessary.
7. Revise the Visit and Contact Plan as necessary.

C. Case Transfer From Ongoing Worker to Ongoing Worker

Procedure:

- When it is necessary for a case to be transferred, the procedures for records and case review, contact with the prior caseworker, and contact with the child, parents, and child's substitute caregiver are the same as outlined in A. and B. above.
- If a Child Welfare Case Plan has not been developed or updated within the past 3 months, the sending worker completes a case transfer narrative using CF 333f, Case Transfer Narrative in FACIS.
- When the case has been open for several months, the initial protective capacity assessment and the Child Welfare Case Plan have already been documented. The receiving worker is responsible for a complete review of the protective capacity assessment, the Child Welfare Case Plan, the ongoing safety plan, and all documentation of parents' progress in meeting the Expected Outcomes of the Child Welfare Case Plan and the Conditions for Return of the child.
- Upon receipt of the case, the receiving worker is responsible for ongoing safety management.



Forms and References

Forms

- CF 304, Service Application
<http://dhsforms.hr.state.or.us/forms/databases/FMPRO>
- CF 0831A, Temporary Visit and Contact Plan
http://dhsresources.hr.state.or.us/WORD_DOCS/CE0831A.doc
- CF 0831B, Ongoing Visit and Contact Plan
http://dhsresources.hr.state.or.us/WORD_DOCS/CE0831B.doc
- CF 1149, Safety Plan
http://dhsresources.hr.state.or.us/WORD_DOCS/CF_1149.doc
- CF 333f, Case Transfer Narrative (FACIS)

References

- DHS Child Welfare Policy I-B.1.1 Authority for Providing Services
http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/childwelfare/manual_1/i-b11.pdf
- DHS Child Welfare Policy I-E.3.5 Visits and Other Types of Child and Family Contact
http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/childwelfare/manual_1/i-e35.pdf
- DHS Child Welfare Policy I-B.3.1 Developing and Managing the Case Plan
http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/childwelfare/manual_1/i-b31.pdf