

Practice Guide for Caseworkers

Teaming

MITEAM COMPETENCY

Teaming is a collective effort that necessitates a team approach. Caseworkers will form a team comprised of the important people in the child and family's life that meets, talks and plans together. Caseworkers will ensure team functioning by making sure the team has the ability and cultural competence to design effective services and supports, adjust as may be needed and use collaborative problem-solving.

FIDELITY MEASURES

Observation:

- Helps the individual(s) identify people who are supportive.
- Addresses reasons for reluctance to including specific team members.
- Prepares the family team members (informal and formal) for participation on the team.
- Facilitates teaming.
- Accesses skilled team members (formal and informal) to serve family's goal.
- Asks the individual(s) what the team members (informal or formal) have done to provide support.
- When developing or adjusting the plan, asks for team member's input.

Documentation:

- A team that provides support to the child(ren)/youth and family has been formed.
- The worker prepares the family team members (informal or formal) for participation on the team.
- The family's suggestions and comments are documented in the case file.
- The team member's suggestions and comments are documented in the case file.
- Documentation indicates the worker maintained contact with the family and support persons between in-person meetings.
- The family's team meets within the required timeframes (FOM 722-6B).
- There is evidence in the documentation that the team implements specific safety activities to address safety concerns of the child(ren)/youth.
- There is evidence in the documentation that the team addresses specific permanency plans.
- There is evidence in the documentation that the team addresses specific issues of well-being for the child(ren)/youth.

Interview:

- The individual(s) was able to identify helpful activities of the worker.
- The individual(s) reports the worker acknowledged the unique culture of the family/household.
- The individual(s) described specific examples where his/her input was utilized in decision-making.
- The individual(s) reports the work includes informal resources as support.

In Supervision:

- The worker was able to identify:
 - How the parent participates in the process of change.
 - Positive supports for the individual(s).
 - What progress has been made so the family's team is taking ownership of the case planning process and fully participating in the shared decision-making.
 - How he/she educates the family about the importance of teaming.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How committed the family's team is in supporting the family's plan. 	
<p>POLICY REQUIREMENTS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth 16 and older must have a discharge meeting 90 days before dismissal or 30 days after an unplanned court discharge. • Semi-annual permanency meetings must begin at 14 years old and occur once every six months for the purpose of discussing permanency goals/plans and identifying supportive adults. (Meetings must be facilitated by someone other than the assigned caseworker if youth is in Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care.) • For incarcerated parents, caseworker must provide and document notice of the FTM by mail or telephone, contact the facility where the parent(s) is(are) incarcerated and request parent participation in the meeting, provide a copy of the 1105, and request signature and return of the document. • For incarcerated parents, caseworkers must provide notification of court intervention, change in permanency goal and return home family team meetings. • All children age 11 or older should be invited to FTMs unless it is determined that it would be harmful to a child's safety or well-being. • Initial FTM pre-meeting discussions must occur in person. Subsequent discussions may occur over the phone. • During FTM pre-meeting discussions, caseworkers must discuss the purpose of the FTM, confidentiality, family story, strengths, proposed participants, non-negotiables and family needs. They must also provide the family with a Pre-Meeting Discussion brochure (MMDHHS-PUB-1160) if they have not received one. 	
<p>HOW TO USE YOUR SUPERVISOR</p>	<p>Schedule, prepare and actively participate in regular case conferences with your supervisor to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies for identifying the appropriate individuals to be part of the family team. • Barriers to identifying, recruiting and engaging the appropriate individuals in the family team process and meetings. • Ways to use team members as key supporters for the family in order to achieve positive outcomes. • Completed teaming activities, the outcome of that effort, pending activities and possible next steps to support the development and utilization of the family team. • Whether to hold separate or joint family team meetings in domestic violence cases, and how best to plan for safety for the adult and child survivor, prior, during, and after the team. 	
<p>KEY CASEWORKER ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>WHERE IN THE LIFE OF THE CASE</p>	<p>PRACTICE GUIDANCE TECHNIQUES</p>
<p>KCA 3 TEAMING FORMATION</p> <p><i>Form a family team.</i></p>	<p>From initial contact to permanency or case closure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with child/youth, parents and family who they want to be members of their team. • Involve both parents (including non-custodial parents) and their extended families and relations unless there are identified safety concerns. • Ask members of the family team what resources and/or supports they may be able and willing to provide to the child and parent.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help the family identify individuals beyond their immediate family network who can or have supported them in the past. Team membership can include: the child, parents, caregivers, family members, fictive kin, community support worker, guardian, key interveners, teacher and any other persons invited by the child and family. Professionals providing treatment and other service providers should also be included. • Identify and understand any reluctance to include relevant participants, particularly absent parents. Address reasons for reluctance and make needed adjustments to the team and process. • Recruit the persons who have been identified to become members of the family team. • Seek commitments from those people identified to participate as members of the family team. • Help the parent and child understand the importance of having motivated, qualified persons on the team and actively participating. • Form a family team and ensure the ongoing coordination and functioning of the team. See DPG form a family team.
<p>KCA 4 TEAMING</p> <p>COORDINATION</p> <p><i>Prepare members of the family team for participation on the team and for upcoming decisions that will be made.</i></p>	<p>From initial contact to permanency or case closure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the family with a general orientation to the teaming and the Family Team Meeting (FTM) processes. The overview should provide the family with information they need to know so that they can prepare to take ownership of the case planning process and fully participate in the FTM. • Prepare family members to tell their own story describing their current needs, strengths and level of functioning. Team members should be prepared to explain what happened to bring them to the attention of MDHHS. Their strengths need to be contextualized with their potential trauma history identifying how those strengths can assist the parent and child in recovering from the impact of past trauma and how they will prevent future maltreatment and keep their children safe moving forward. • Prepare the family and other identified team members for having an open and honest discussion. Discuss confidentiality and privacy rights and other considerations. • Create an agenda for the meeting with input from the team. Ask the family and other team members what they hope to accomplish at the meeting. • Ask parents and other team members to suggest ground rules they feel may be helpful in the meeting and throughout the teaming process. • Set a convenient time and location for meetings for team members. • Identify and address cultural and linguistic needs of the team, including the need for an interpreter or for additional or customized supports.
<p>KCA 5 TEAMING</p> <p>FUNCTIONING</p> <p><i>Ensure members of the team meet and participate in shared decision-making on a regular basis.</i></p>	<p>From initial contact to permanency or case closure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene and facilitate formal family team meetings to ensure team members are engaged in important decisions. See DPG convene facilitate mtgs. • Keep team members informed and engaged in the teaming process. Set up an email list for members of the family team. Send regular updates. • Prepare members of the team for upcoming decisions that will be made. • Ensure the team meets often enough (i.e. in person, phone) to make informed decisions and fully support the family. • Identify ways to support the team’s participation in team meetings and decision-making (e.g. provide transportation to meetings/appointments; supervise visits; attend family team meetings and court hearings with the parents; mentor the parent in the areas needing improvement (i.e. parent/child attachment/bonding, organizational skills, home maintenance, budgeting, or other life skills). • Acknowledge the parents’ care for their children as their motivation to participate in the system to regain custody. • Encourage caregivers to understand and address the impact of trauma on the child or youth. See DPG caregivers impact of trauma.