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I. Definition and Purpose of Placement Stability (PS) Team Decision Making (TDM)

All moves have the potential to be traumatic to children. All parents, children, and caregivers deserve a voice and choice in making decisions that may result in a move for a child. Inclusivity, transparency, and ensuring all rights are respected are critical to decision making.

A. Definition

1. A PS-TDM is a facilitated meeting that is held for all placement related decisions (except removal, reunification, adoption) to decide or recommend whether a child already in care a) can remain in their current placement setting with supports or if a new placement is needed or b) in the case of positive moves, what services, actions or resources can be put in place to ensure the move will lead to stability and timely permanency.
2. The meeting seeks to make a live decision or recommendation, which means that the meeting is intended to be held before a child leaves their placement, unless there is an immediate and serious safety threat. PS-TDM meetings strive to include a diverse group: the placement provider, child or youth, the birth family, friends or others who support the child and/or family, agency staff, service providers, current and past placement providers, community partners, tribal representatives, and others.
3. Team Decision Making Key Elements reflect the defining features and core values of TDM.

B. Purpose

1. To involve youth, placement providers, parents, community organizations, formal and informal support systems, service providers, past placement providers, and agency staff, to provide a supportive environment for thoughtful decisions about the child's well-being, stability and care, and specifically where a child should safely reside.
2. The focus of the PS-TDM is to maintain the current placement and provide stability whenever possible. The group carefully reviews the circumstances presenting threats to the stability of the placement and seeks to identify supports, resources and services to enhance the youth and placement provider's ability to address the instability and maintain the child safely in the current placement.
3. If a placement move is necessary, the team decides on the best and least restrictive level of care and creates a trauma-informed transition plan that supports

the child's well-being and safety and maintains connections to family and community.

4. A PS-TDM is also required for positive moves, such as moves to a lower level of care or to kin, in recognition of the fact that all moves are inherently disruptive and require careful consideration and planning.

II. Referral Process

A. Criteria

A member of the Case Welfare Case Management Provider Team (CWCMP) or Child Placing Agency (CPA) staff requests a PS-TDM meeting when one of the following criteria to hold a PS-TDM has been met:

1. The CWCMP or CPA staff becomes aware of issues threatening placement stability; or
2. The CWCMP or CPA staff becomes aware of the need to consider a different level of care or a positive move.

B. Timeframe for Convening a Meeting

PS-TDM is convened as soon as possible, prior to formal notice to move a child and in time to explore how additional supports, resources, or services can preserve the current placement setting. The meeting must be held:

1. Within 5 working days of the CWCMP Case Manager becoming aware of concerns or tension in the placement, and prior to formal notice to move a child;
2. If formal notice to move a child has been received, the meeting is held within 3 working days of formal notice.
3. When an emergency move has already occurred, the meeting is held immediately, and no later than within 1 working day of the move.
4. When a positive move is anticipated, the meeting is held as soon as possible, and at least 2 weeks prior to a child's move.

C. Scheduling Process

Each CWCMP will maintain their own internal scheduling process to be followed. Shared processes are:

1. The Case Manager shares with the PS-TDM scheduler information about any issues that may affect scheduling, such as:
 - size of the group
 - historical or present concern of intimate partner violence between invited participants
 - current protection from abuse, or no contact court orders

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- current law enforcement investigation
- concerns for participants mental health
- history of violent behavior
- accessibility needs of participants
- needs for language or American sign language interpreter
- child care needs, etc.

The scheduler takes this information into consideration in scheduling and shares pertinent information with the Facilitator.

- a. If Intimate Partner Violence is a current issue in either the resource family home or between the child's parents who are both planning to attend the PS-TDM, the facilitator will discuss with the supervisor the application of Initial TDM DV protocols in the PS-TDM meeting.

III. PS-TDM Meeting

PS-TDM meetings are most effective when there is participation by a group of people representing diverse perspectives regarding the situation and the decision to be made. If an invited participant is either unable or unwilling to participate, the meeting will still be held.

A. Who Participates and Roles

1. (CWCMP) Staff

- a. CWCMP Case Manager
 - i. Convenes the PS-TDM meeting
 - ii. Confers and prepares with CPA Foster Care Worker
 - iii. Invites and prepares the youth for the meeting
 - iv. Identifies and invites a broad array of participants including those in the child's support network, the child's service providers, GAL and CASA, the birth or adoptive parents, tribal representative (if applicable), grassroots community partners, and agency attorney if needed.
 - v. Prepares for the meeting, including a review of the child's placement history, history of concerns and strengths, services utilized, mental health assessments, medical and educational needs.
 - vi. Confer with the Child Protection Specialist (CPS) or law enforcement if there is an open investigation to determine if there are any restrictions on topics covered in the PS-TDM or contacts between the participants
 - vii. Advocates for connections and maintenance of sibling bonds
 - viii. Makes final decision (along with their supervisor) if team consensus with participants cannot be reached
 - IX. Following the PS-TDM, implements the decisions and action plans

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Practice Note 1: When Case Manager changes have occurred within the past 30 calendar days or there is a known upcoming case transfer, both case managers are invited and strongly encouraged to participate in the meeting.

- b. CWCMP Case Manager Supervisor
 - i. Reviews the family's circumstances and prepares for the PS- TDM meeting with the Case Manager in advance.
 - ii. Attends all PS-TDM meetings. Sends a designee if not able to attend.
 - iii. Remains open to new ideas by listening and considering input and ideas from the group regarding safety, stability, and placement planning.
 - iv. Supports the Case Manager's role as convener of the PS-TDM team and actively participates in group discussion to generate appropriate safety and well-being decisions.
 - v. Following the PS-TDM, ensures the decision and action plans are completed by the worker.
- c. PS-TDM Facilitator
 - i. Dedicated non-case carrying staff person.
 - ii. Selected based on experience in the field, as well as broad knowledge of laws, agency policies and procedures, community resources, and best practice.
 - iii. Leads the group through a structured 6-stage process, focusing on child wellbeing, stability and safety and modeling respectful family engagement throughout.
 - iv. Seeks to bring the group to a consensus decision that meets the child's well-being, connections and safety needs and provides the placement provider the support, services, and resources they need.
- d. CWCMP Kinship Worker or Non-Related Kin (NRKIN) Worker
 - i. Provides consultation and recommendation to Case Manager about convening a PS-TDM.
 - ii. Communicates regularly with the Case Management Team about the safety, well-being, and stability of the child in the placement.
 - iii. Invites and prepares the placement provider and their supports.
 - iv. Provides support to the child and the placement.
 - v. Offers information regarding needed resources and services.
 - vi. Assists in developing a well-planned transition for all moves.
 - vii. Maintains connections including placing siblings together whenever possible.
- e. CWCMP Program President
 - i. When all other placement options have been explored through PS-TDM and the PS-TDM team is recommending placement of a child age twelve (12) or younger in a congregate care setting, the CWCMP Program President or their designee must immediately be brought into

the meeting for approval. The PS-TDM meeting facilitator is responsible for contacting the Program President or their designee. The decision by the CWCMP Program President or their designee becomes the official decision and recommendation and when applicable, the final agency position and recommendation to the Court.

f. DCF Agency Staff

- i. May include representatives of programs such as DCF foster care liaison, independent living staff, CPS, adoption staff, or agency attorney.
- ii. Actively participate in team discussion to address the issues contributing to the placement instability and generate ideas for services, actions or resources to support the child's well-being, stability, and connections

2. Placement Providers (e.g. relative, non-related kinship, foster parents, previous placements, congregate care providers, including PRTF and Q RTP staff)

- a. Attend PS-TDM meetings held regarding children in their care and participate as essential team members.
- b. Shares day-to-day knowledge about the child or youth.
- c. Share observations, concerns, met or unmet needs, and other information to help illuminate why a change may or may not be needed.
- d. Share what immediate supports could support maintaining the current placement.
- e. Assist with planning and implementing a visitation plan, if applicable.
- f. Provide support to the child or youth participating.
- g. Advocate for both the needs of their home, the child or youth, as well as for placement stability.
- h. Assist with safety planning and service recommendations for current and future placements.
- i. Assist in developing a well-planned transition for all moves, including step down from congregate care or transition from a treatment facility.

3. Child/Youth

- a. Children/youth age 10 and over are invited and encouraged to attend in person unless a specific and credible reason exists for them not to participate. Accommodations can be made for children/youth to participate in certain stages of the meeting if full attendance is determined not appropriate.
- b. Shares what they think is creating concerns in the home
- c. Shares ideas on how to reduce the concerns or conflict in the home
- d. Shares what they or others could do differently to make things work better in the home
- e. If a positive move or if a move is recommended by the team, provides input on what support, resources, and actions could provide stability, continuity, and connection to family and community and support well-being.

f. If the child/youth is unable to attend, their voice should be represented in the meeting by those present or through another method created by the child such as written input, pictures, etc.

4. Birth or Adoptive Parent(s)
 - a. Provides information on the needs of the child
 - b. Are treated as valuable members of the team
 - c. Provide input on their progress toward reunification

Practice Note 2: When placement providers, birth or adoptive parents, and family members are not able to be present, telephone and video-conferencing participation is encouraged; but should be used only as a last resort if active efforts to allow for in-person participation have failed.

5. Supports for the youth, placement provider, or birth or adoptive parents
 - a. Provide support to the child, parents, and placement provider.
 - b. Share information and opinions about how best to support placement provider and child
 - c. Help generate positive options for the child's placement
 - d. Support child's well-being, stability, and consistent connections
 - e. Provides ongoing support to the family and/or youth whether or not the child leaves placement.

6. CPA Foster Care Worker (Placement Support Staff) (*e.g. Child Placing Agency Workers*)

- a. Provides consultation and recommendation to Case Manager about convening a PS-TDM.
- b. Communicates regularly with the Case Management Team about safety, wellbeing and stability of the child in the placement.
- c. Invites and prepares the placement provider and their supports
- d. Provides support to the child and the placement.
- e. Offers information regarding needed resources and services.
- f. Assists in developing a well-planned transition for all moves
- g. Maintains connections including placing siblings together whenever possible.

7. Professionals involved with the youth or placement provider
 - a. Invited to provide support for and advocate on behalf of the child and placement provider and provide information regarding needed resources and services.
 - b. Help develop a transition plan for youth who are being moved or being discharged from congregate care.
May include;
 - GAL and CASA

- Community service providers from entities such as mental health and community developmental disabilities organizations (CDDOs), managed care organizations (MCOs), education, drug and alcohol treatment, intimate partner violence advocate.
- Tribal representative
- Family finding specialists, adoption recruiters
- In-home service providers

8. Grassroots Community Partners/Representatives

Persons who currently or potentially serve as the placement provider, youth, or birth family's informal supports. They could share a neighborhood, a place of worship, an ethnic identity, or other connection with the youth, placement provider, or birth or adoptive family.

- Provides support for the youth and placement provider.
- Bring cultural and neighborhood perspectives to the discussion.
- May provide resources, services, and nontraditional supports.
- Creates potential for long-term stability, connection, well-being, and safety for the youth.

9. Attorneys for the family

PS-TDM is a CWCMP internal meeting, intended to develop a recommendation about if a placement can be preserved and if not, where a child will live, it includes no legal obligations about who must be invited. If a family chooses to invite their attorney, the facilitator will explain the purpose and function of the TDM meeting to the attorney at the outset.

B. PS-TDM Meeting Etiquette

Make the youth, placement provider, and birth or adoptive parents as comfortable as possible during the meeting so they can discuss their concerns. Because the meeting is about critical issues involving child(ren) and family, agency staff must give their full attention to the discussion. By doing so, staff are indicating the importance of what is being said in the meeting and being respectful of all the participants in the room. No cell phone use is permitted, and other electronic devices such as laptop or tablet computers may only be used, if necessary, to identify a resource or service.

The facilitator leads the meeting using a structured process which includes 6 stages:

1. Introduction (includes introductions, stating the purpose and goal, creating shared agreements)
2. Identifying the situation (to ensure a common understanding of what led to the meeting and why the team has assembled)
3. Assessing the situation (to focus on the magnitude of the situation, immediate needs and concerns for children's well-being, understanding of relevant history of the child, past and present services, and any supports in place, participants')

understanding of the concerns along with identifying strengths and protective factors to mitigate the concerns)

4. Developing Ideas (to brainstorm ideas to preserve the placement and address needs and concerns as well as relevant strengths and supports. In situations when a positive move is being discussed, brainstorm trauma-informed ideas for a well-planned transition, that maintains connections and consistency and supports well-being and stability)

5. Reaching a decision (with a goal of consensus around whether a child already in care can remain in their current placement setting with additional support or if a new placement is needed. In situations when a positive move is being discussed, reach a decision about a plan and timing for the move that supports stability, well-being, connections, and consistency).

a. The CWCMP Case Manager and Supervisor maintain the responsibility to make a decision if consensus by the PS-TDM team (all those present for the meeting) cannot be achieved. The decision-making process follows this framework

i. Team comes to a consensus on a decision.

ii. If the PS-TDM team cannot come to a consensus the facilitator determines if participating CWCMP staff, CPA staff, DCF Staff, and the tribal representative can come to a consensus.

iii. If the participating CWCMP staff cannot come to a consensus, the CWCMP Case Manager and Supervisor make the final decision for the team.

6. Recap/closing (to ensure all attendees understand what has been decided and what the follow-up steps will be. Copies of the PS-TDM Meeting summary are provided to participants)

IV. Preparation: Expectations for the Case Manager, the Placement Provider's Worker and their Supervisors

A. Preparing to Lead the Discussion

1. The Case Manager and their Supervisor jointly prepare for the PS-TDM meeting using the Worker Quick Presentation Outline and Supervisor PS-TDM Meeting Consultation Guide to prepare for the meeting.

2. The Case Manager and their Supervisor prepare to lead the discussion regarding the concerns underlying the placement instability and to explore how additional supports can or should preserve the current placement setting, or that a child is in need of a different level of care.

3. Or, the Case Manager and their Supervisor prepare to lead the discussion regarding the child's readiness to move to a placement at a lower level of care or

positive move, and to create transition plans that will lead to stability and timely permanency

B. Preparing Youth, Placement Provider, Parents, and Other Participants

Roles:

The Case Manager is responsible for:

Preparing the child and their parents for the meeting.

Preparing the Case Coordinator if the child is in a congregate care placement

The worker assigned to the caregiver's home is responsible for preparing the placement caregiver(s).

Duties include:

1. The worker assigned to the caregiver home is responsible for inviting the placement caregiver(s).

Explains that the reason for the urgency of the PS -TDM meeting is to address the reasons the child's current placement is becoming unstable and identify supports to help maintain it or make a decision that a new placement is needed. The worker assigned to the caregiver home also informs the placement provider that the PS TDM meeting will be held even if the placement provider is unable or unwilling to attend the meeting.

The worker assigned to the caregiver home works with the placement provider to determine who to invite, and explains certain individuals are expected to participate based on their role or connection to the case (facilitator, supervisor, and other professionals related to the case). Encourages the placement provider to identify formal/informal support persons and assist them in making invitations if necessary.

2. The Case Manager works with the youth and if appropriate, the placement provider to ensure the attendance of children/youth age 10 and over, unless a specific and credible reason exists for them not to participate.

3. The Case Manager prepares the children/youth to participate in the PS-TDM meeting and helps them identify possible supports to invite to the meeting. If the youth is unable to attend, the Case Manager gathers input from children/youth not in attendance, no matter their age, so their voice can be represented during the meeting. If the children/youth have concerns about meeting with any participants that may be involved in the meeting, the Case Manager will address these concerns before and after the PS -TDM.

4. The Case Manager identifies other persons to attend the meeting and invites them or informs the scheduler who will invite them (depending on agency's

scheduling process), such as current or past service providers, appointed CASA and/or GAL, tribal representative, or community representatives. In addition, the Case Manager obtains progress reports from all current service providers if they are unable to attend the meeting and is prepared to explain the community representative's presence.

5. The Case Manager will explain to the child's birth or adoptive parents the PS-TDM meeting will be held, the purpose of the meeting, and invite them to join.

6. The Case Manager will explain to the Congregate Care Case Coordinator the reason for the need for a PS-TDM to ensure a smooth transition that takes into account stability, well-being, and long-term permanency. The Case Manager works with the Congregate Care Case Coordinator to focus on the existing transition plan for the youth being discharged.

Practice Note 3: The Case Management Team should not communicate with the PS-TDM facilitator prior to a PS -TDM meeting, other than to convey safety and special needs information that may impact the process.

V. Review Process

If a participating CWCMP staff member, CPA staff member, DCF staff member, or Tribal representative, including the facilitator, feels the team's final decision does not adequately ensure child wellbeing and safety, is too restrictive, or violates a law or Department policy, a request should be made for an immediate review during the PS- TDM meeting. The facilitator notifies the designated review manager (CWCMP Director), not in the worker's chain of command. The review process will include all PS-TDM participants. The decision made by the CWCMP Director becomes the official and final agency recommendation.

VI. Privacy

The confidentiality of information shared at the PS-TDM meeting is not guaranteed. Privacy and respect are emphasized, but placement providers are informed that information from the meeting may be used for case planning, in subsequent court proceedings if necessary, and in the investigation of an allegation of abuse or neglect should such information arise.

VII. Responsibilities at End of and After PS-TDM Meeting

- A. The CWCMP Case Manager or designated person
 - 1. Follows through with necessary action(s) based on the team decision and meeting summary.
 - 2. Follows up and meet with the youth to debrief the meeting and discuss the outcome of the meeting and next steps as age-appropriate.

3. Files the TDM summary form in the case record.
4. Participates in the debrief and provides feedback.

B. CWCMP Supervisor

1. Supports the Case Manager (or Team member identified by the Case Manager) to implement the meeting's recommendations and next steps.
2. Participates in the debrief and provides feedback to Case Manager, Facilitator and Worker assigned to the Placement Provider.

C. Worker Assigned to the Placement Provider (ex. CPA Foster Care Worker, CWCMP Kinship Worker, CWCMP NRKIN Worker, Congregate Care Case Coordinator)

1. Support the CWCMP Case Manager in implementing the meeting's recommendations and action steps.
2. Follow up with the placement provider to debrief the meeting if they participated or discuss the outcome of the meeting and next steps if they were unable to attend.
3. Follow through with necessary action(s) based on the team decision and meeting summary, including to assure the decision, meeting recommendations, and next steps are implemented.
4. Support the placement providers in implementing any team recommendations and action steps applicable to them.

D. PS-TDM Facilitator

1. Provides a recap of the meeting, completes the TDM summary form, and provides it to all participants and key individuals who were unable to attend in the agreed-upon matter.
2. Provide a feedback survey to all participants of the meeting.
3. Inputs the required data into the TDM data application for each meeting within one business day.
4. Hold a debrief immediately after the TDM with CWCMP Case Manager, CWCMP Supervisor, and Worker assigned to the placement provider, to share feedback about the TDM process, preparation, and participation in the meeting with the purpose of learning and improving the TDM process.

