

Permanency Staffing Guide

When the Child Welfare Case Management Provider (CWCMP) believes progress toward reunification is not being made, a staffing shall be held. The staffing shall include CWCMP staff and any others the team decides have information that can facilitate permanency for the child. The staffing is an opportunity for the team to look critically at what has and has not been provided to the family/child and to focus on deciding the most appropriate next steps. Detailed planning and involving people who can help access the necessary services are essential to breaking down planning barriers for children and families.

Generally, a full case planning meeting is held soon after the staffing to address the issues discussed during the meeting. Individual case plans shall be updated with time lines for tasks to be completed and shall be closely monitored. If barriers arise, they shall be addressed and new plans developed as needed.

At the Staffing, the team shall ensure the following has occurred:

- Paternity has been established.
- The Indian Child Welfare Act was followed, if applicable.
- A copy of the child's birth certificate and social security card are included in the case file.
- Grandparents' addresses and any involvement they have and or want to have are documented in the case file.
- The names and addresses of all relatives/kin who might be a support or resource to the family or the child are documented in the case file.
- Documentation is in the case file which supports staffing team decisions that a relative/kin is not an appropriate resource.

At the Staffing, the team shall review the case plan:

- What services have been provided to assist the parents(s) with reintegration?
- Was the non-custodial parent included in the reintegration case plan?
- Was the non-custodial parent given tasks toward reintegration on the case plan?
- If the non-custodial parent has not been involved in the reintegration case planning, do staffs know where he/she can be located?
- If the non-custodial parent contact information is not included, has CSS been contacted to see if they have an address/telephone number for him/her?
- Is the non-custodial parent paying child support?
- What assigned tasks did the parent(s) achieve?
- What assigned tasks did the parent(s) fail to achieve?
- If there were any barriers to the completion of tasks by the parent(s), were actions taken to remove the barriers?
- Is the child in a relative/kin placement?
- If the child is in a relative/kin placement, would adoption or guardianship with this relative/kin be an appropriate permanency option for this child?
- Would the parent(s) agree to place the child for adoption or guardianship with this relative/kin?
- Is there adequate documentation to recommend termination of parental rights to the county/district attorney? The goal is to assure that parental rights be terminated only for those children for whom the plan of adoption is appropriate.
- Are siblings placed together? If not, what would need to occur for the siblings to be placed together?
- Are visits occurring?

Permanency Staffing Guide

- If siblings are separated, is there documentation of the therapeutic reasons why the siblings were not placed together and of what can be done to resolve the problems?
- Is information in the file well-documented?

At the staffing, the team shall review the child's special needs: If the special needs of the child indicate, invite vocational rehabilitation staff, the mental health or I/DD staff and other local staff who could assist with the staffing decision.

- How old is the child?
- What is the child's connection with the parents or other family members?
- Is the child eligible for SSI? Other benefits? If the child is not currently eligible, but a possibility exists that he/she could be eligible, have the appropriate parties been contacted to apply for services?
- Is the child currently, or has the child in the past, been placed in a residential or hospital setting? If yes, for how long?
- If yes to the above question, is the child now or did he/she successfully complete the program?
- What steps or plans are in place to move the child into a family setting?
- Has an IEP been completed? If yes, what is the basis of the IEP?
- Does the child have a I/DD diagnosis? If yes, has the child been evaluated for the waiver?
- Does the child receive mental health therapy? What is the diagnosis?
- If yes to the above, is the child taking medication? Has the child been evaluated for services?
- What are the child's physical health needs?

At the staffing, the team shall review relationships:

- If the child is 14 yrs or older, does he/she want to be adopted? If not, staff must explore other permanency options. Do not move toward termination of parental rights unless adoption is clearly the goal and the child agrees to the case plan goal.
- If an Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) is selected as the case plan goal, staff shall continue to work to establish and strengthen necessary relationships while continuing to evaluate guardianship or adoption as permanency options.
- Re-evaluate relatives/kin to assess as potential permanent placement(s). Assess any barriers to placement with relatives/kin and develop a plan to remove barriers if possible.
- Is the child in a placement that could become a permanent family for him/her? Are there barriers? Can they be removed?
- What family relationships need to be preserved even if the child is adopted?
- What action steps need to be taken to facilitate this?
- Who does the child want as an adoptive family? What are the child's strengths/interests?
- With whom does the child have a close relationship (i.e. Sunday school teacher, school counselor, coach, parent of a friend, troop leader, etc.