

## Memorandum of Understanding

- I. **Purpose.** This Memorandum of Understanding explains the steps for requesting home studies, making, and receiving requests for supervision services between counties in Florida, and managing regular and ongoing case supervision activities to and from another county within the state. Procedures are included to ensure the timely completion of home studies. Children and families and young adult independent living program participants are closely tracked following a request for supervision services in another county. Procedures are also included for handling unexpected relocations of children and other family members.
- II. **Scope.** This MOU applies statewide to the Participating Lead Agencies and its designees who provide case management and supervision of children and families.
- III. **Explanation of Terms.** For this MOU, the following definitions shall be understood to mean:
  - A. “Caregiver” means a licensed facility, including DJJ Facilities, licensed caregiver, or an unlicensed, approved relative or non-relative caregiver with whom the court has placed a child.
  - B. “Case” means an ongoing supervision case.
  - C. “Case Manager” means a Child Welfare Professional or contracted provider responsible for providing supervision and/or case management services to children and families.
  - D. “Child Welfare Check(s)” means visits that are performed that satisfy the definition of a face-to-face home visit. These are checks performed before receiving a request for out-of-county supervision and/or completing an approved home study.
  - E. “Contact” means any correspondence to include telephone, e-mail, virtual, or facsimile.
  - F. “County of Jurisdiction” means the county where the court of jurisdiction is located.
  - G. “Custodian” means a person or entity to whom a court of competent jurisdiction in Florida has granted custodial rights for a child.
  - H. “Department” means the Department of Children and Families, unless otherwise specified.
  - I. “Designee” means a person, contractual provider, or other agency or entity named by the Lead Agency.
  - J. “Extended Foster Care” (EFC) is a program that continues care for all youth reaching 18 years of age in the legal custody of the Department. A youth can remain in EFC if they participate in a qualifying activity and reside in a supervised living arrangement. The program ends at the age of 21, or 22, with a qualifying disability,

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<sup>1</sup> This MOU does not apply to intraagency transfers between counties.

- K. "FSFN" means the state automated child welfare information system and will include the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS).
- L. "Family" means the collective body of persons, consisting of a child and a parent, legal custodian, or adult relative.
- M. "In Writing" means an FSFN entry, e-mail, facsimile, or a handwritten note, letter, or memo as appropriate.
- N. "Independent Living Needs Assessment" means a systematic procedure to identify a youth's basic skills, emotional and social capabilities, strengths, and needs to match the youth with appropriate independent living services. The assessment addresses basic living skills, job readiness, money management abilities, decision-making skills, goal setting, task completion, and other transitional living needs.
- O. "Independent Living Services" means services to assist older children in foster care and young adults who were formerly in foster care to obtain life skills and education for independent living and employment, have a quality of life appropriate for their age, and assume personal responsibility for becoming self-sufficient adults.
- P. "Independent Living Skills Plan" means an individualized plan that reflects the strategy for building a youth's life skill competency, particularly in areas of assessed need.
- Q. "Informal Needs Assessment" means evaluating independent living skills during typical interactions or through observation such as routine home visits.
- R. "Non-Removal Parent" means the parent with whom the child was not removed when the abuse, neglect, or abandonment occurred.
- S. "Out of County Services (OCS) Liaison" means a person who is assigned by the Participating Lead Agency or region who will be responsible for sending and receiving requests for home studies, requests for Out of County supervision, as well as any other communication related to such requests.
- T. "Out of County Supervision" means those activities performed by the assigned Out of County Case Manager in the county where the child and/or other family members are located.
- U. "Parent or Legal Custodian" refers to the meaning defined in s. 39.01(56), F.S.
- V. "Parent Without Allegations" means a parent who was not involved in the act of abuse, neglect, or abandonment that may or may not have been residing with the child at the time said abuse, neglect, or abandonment occurred.
- W. "Participating Lead Agencies" refers to the Lead Agencies who have signed and agree to follow the MOU jointly drafted and agreed to by all parties.

- X. "Receiving Case Manager" means the Child Welfare Professional or contracted provider staff in a receiving county that will be or is responsible for performing a home study or serving a child, family, or parent.
- Y. "Receiving County" means the county to which a request is made regarding a case while supervision services continue to be needed; the county to which a parent has relocated; and if the permanency goal is reunification, the counties that serve families under non-judicial services when they relocate.
- Z. "Receiving Unit" means the Lead Agency/Community Based Care provider unit in a receiving county that will be or is responsible for performing a home study or serving a child, family, or parent.
- AA. "Relocation" means a court-authorized placement of a child in a county other than the county of jurisdiction; a court-authorized movement of a family or a parent to a county other than the county of jurisdiction; a court-authorized move of a child when they are released to a parent in a county other than the county of jurisdiction; and the relocation of a parent and child to a different county for non-judicial cases.
- BB. "Request for a Home Study" means a request made to another county to perform a home study on the home of a parent, parent without allegations Other Parent Home Assessment (OPHA), relative or non-relative, which is being considered as a placement resource for a child or where a child has already been placed by the court after the background checks have been completed.
- CC. "Request for Out of County Supervision" means a request made to another county to provide supervision services to a child or family who is planning/desires to relocate or has relocated to another county; or when a parent has relocated or is planning to relocate to another county and the permanency goal is reunification.
- DD. "Sending Case Manager" means the Child Welfare Professional or contracted provider staff in the county of jurisdiction that initiates a request for a home study; a request of a child, family, or parent for supervision in another county; or a request for emergency placement; and the unit responsible for a case in the county from which a child or family has unexpectedly relocated.
- EE. "Sending County" means the county where the court of jurisdiction is located and that requests a home study, refers a child or family for supervision in another county, or requests an emergency placement; the county that requests services in another county when a parent has relocated, and the permanency goal is reunification; and counties that refer a child or family for the continuation of voluntary supervision by another county or the county from which a child or family has unexpectedly relocated.
- FF. "Sending Unit" means the Lead Agency/Community-Based Care provider unit in the county of jurisdiction that initiates a request for a home study; a request of a child, family, or parent for supervision in another county or a request for emergency placement; and the unit responsible for a case in the county from which a child or family has unexpectedly relocated.

- GG. “Shared Living Plan” means a document that contains detailed information about the living arrangement between applicable parties.
- HH. “Supervised Living Arrangement” refers to a young adult living independently under a supervised arrangement, approved by the Community-Based Care lead agency, pursuant to subsection 39.6251(4), F.S.
- II. “Supervised Living Arrangement Assessment” means a document that contains an evaluation of the young adult’s living environment.
- JJ. “Transfer of Jurisdiction” means the legal transfer of a case between counties/judicial circuits.
- KK. “Young Adult” means an individual 18-21 years of age, or in the case of youth-adult with disabilities, 22 years of age.
- LL. “Youth” means children 13-17 years of age under the Department’s protective supervision.

**IV. Non-Judicial Cases Must Receive the Same Consideration as Court Ordered Cases.** Whenever a parent and child under Non-Judicial services relocate to another county, supervision services must be initiated as they are for court-ordered cases and will continue until there is an agreement between the sending and receiving counties that supervision is not needed or has been staffed and approved by the lead agency for transfer. Written notification of case closure must be provided between counties when services are terminated. The provisions of this agreement shall not apply to open investigations in a sending county where the lead agency in the sending county has/is not providing services or supervision. Such cases shall be governed by CFOP 170-7.

- A. **Transmission of a Non-Judicial Request.** The Sending County must send the following:
  - 1. A completed and signed copy of the “Out of County Services Non-Judicial Transmittal” form, Exhibit A to this MOU, to verify which documents and information have been provided with the request and to provide pertinent contact and tracking information.
  - 2. A cover letter that includes:
    - a. Reason for the Non-Judicial Services
    - b. Child’s Full Name
    - c. Child’s Date of Birth
    - d. Name/Address of child and parent
    - e. Case Manager’s name, Supervisor’s Name, and Phone Number
    - f. Date family began working with non-judicial services
    - g. Current level of cooperation parent/child
  - 3. Attachments to include if not available in FSFN:
    - a. FFA-Ongoing
    - b. Non-Judicial Case Plan
    - c. Current Progress Update
    - d. Current Safety Plan

**V. Placement Without OCS Request.** If a child is placed without a court order or home study, the child's safety is paramount. Sending lead agency shall take immediate and all reasonable steps to address placement to include court action. Upon notice of a child being within an Agency's geographic area of supervision, the Receiving Lead Agency shall arrange for an initial visit within 24 hours, follow-up with a home study, and arrange visitation a minimum of every thirty (30) days in the home until a court order is received or arrangements are made for the child to be moved to another location. If there are concerns regarding the child's safety in the home, the worker should contact the Sending Agency and the Abuse Hotline or local CPI to coordinate efforts to have the child removed from the home or services put in place to ensure the child's safety.

**VI. Home Studies**

**A. Initiating a Home Study Request.** Except for parent or reunification home studies, when a family is identified, the Sending Case Manager should contact the family to verify they are interested in being a resource for the child. The Sending Case Manager should obtain information on all household members and have a provider number created for all home study requests that do not involve a parent. The Sending Case Manager will prepare a packet of information on the child and family and submit it to the Receiving OCS Liaison to include:

1. A completed and signed copy of the "Out of County Services Transmittal" form, Exhibit A to this MOU. This is to verify which documents and information have been provided with the request and provide pertinent contact and tracking information.
2. A cover letter (Exhibit C) that includes:
  - a. Reason for the Request
  - b. Child's Full Name
  - c. Child's Date of Birth
  - d. Name/Address of Proposed Caregiver
  - e. Case Manager's, Supervisor's Name, and Phone Number
  - f. Information regarding any missing documents and when they can be expected (must be within thirty (30) days or written status reports should be issued every thirty (30) days until the completion of the study)
  - g. Medical needs (to include dental and psychological needs)
3. Attachments to include if not available in FSFN:
  - a. Current Court orders showing legal status and any activity since the last JR
  - b. JRSSR or PDS & Shelter Order (within the last 6 months)
  - c. Any Psychological Evaluations
  - d. Child Behavioral Health Assessment (CBHA)
  - e. Individual Education Plan (IEP)
  - f. Current Case Plan
  - g. School Records
  - h. TPR Orders-must have (Adoption Cases)
  - i. Child Study (Adoption Cases)

**B. Transmission of a Home Study Request.** All requests should be transmitted through FSFN. After a review by the Sending Lead Agency OCS Liaison, the request for a home study should be uploaded into FSFN (child's electronic record.) If FSFN (child's electronic record) is not available, the Receiving OCS Liaison must be contacted to discuss the most expeditious means of transmitting the request, and the request must be uploaded as soon as FSFN (child's electronic record) becomes available. The Receiving OCS Liaison should review the request for a home study within three (3) business days of receipt. Initial contact with the family must be made no later than five (5) business days of the request being uploaded into FSFN. The request must be assigned within three (3) business days of receipt by the Receiving Lead Agency.

**C. Receiving Case Manager Expectations for Completion of Home Study Requests.** Upon receipt of the request, the assigned Case Manager should contact the family and provide them information about background screenings, scheduling the home study, and ensuring the information obtained regarding household members is up to date. The family should be informed that all household members should schedule background screens for those aged 12 and older, including local law enforcement callouts and fingerprints, as required, within five (5) business days. A note should be entered in FSFN with the details of the initial contact. After five (5) business days, follow-up should be made with the background screening unit to ensure the family has scheduled screenings. If they have not, the family should be contacted. A letter/e-mail sent out giving them five (5) additional business days to schedule the screenings, stating that if screenings are not scheduled within that timeframe, it could lead to the denial of the home study. The home study should be completed as previously scheduled with the family. All efforts to complete the home study and contacts with the family should be documented in FSFN. The home study or a status report must be provided within thirty (30) business days of the request being received by the Lead Agency. After thirty (30) business days, weekly notes must be entered into FSFN [child's electronic record] to show the status of the home study and the efforts being made.

If a sending agency needs to conduct a home study in another receiving jurisdiction for time-sensitive placements, this must be agreed upon in writing through the sending lead agency and the receiving lead agency before the home study is conducted. Once the home study has been conducted, the lead receiving agency will review the final product to assist with protective supervision once the court has changed placements. These permissions must be conducted in writing from lead agency to lead agency.

**D. Completion of the Home Study.** After the home study is completed and approved, the Receiving OCS Liaison should be notified. It will take three (3) business days to provide the completed home study to the Sending OCS Liaison. The Home Study should be uploaded into FSFN (child's electronic record). All home study requests, including adoptions and extended foster care living situations, will be timely submitted and reviewed by the lead agency for sufficiency.

**VII. Case Plan Assistance.** When a parent is in a different county than the child and a request is made for Out of County Services, the parent must receive services in accordance with the case plan to fully support the parent in meeting the permanency goal and these efforts documented, which should include documented monthly face to face contact as required in 65C-30.007(2) (b).

**A. Initiating a Case Plan Assistance Request.** When a parent is identified who needs Out of County services, the Sending Case Manager will prepare a packet of information on the child and family and submit it to the Sending OCS Liaison to include:

1. A completed and signed copy of the "Out of County Services Transmittal" form, which is Exhibit A, to verify which documents and information have been provided with the request and to provide pertinent contact and tracking information.
2. A cover letter (Exhibit C) that includes:
  - a. Reason for the Request
  - b. Child's Full Name
  - c. Child's Date of Birth
  - d. Parent(s)'s Name
  - e. Parent(s)'s Date of Birth
  - f. Sending Case Manager's and Supervisor's Name and Phone Number
  - g. Information regarding any missing documents and when they can be expected (must be within thirty (30) days or written status reports should be issued every thirty (30) days until documents are received)
  - h. Medical needs (to include dental and psychological needs)
3. Attachments to include if not available in FSFN:
  - a. Current Court orders showing legal status and any activity since the last JR
  - b. JRSSR or PDS/FFA & Shelter Order (within the last 6 months)
  - c. Any Psychological Evaluations
  - d. Child Behavioral Health Assessment (CBHA)
  - e. Individual Education Plan (IEP)
  - f. Current Case Plan (child's electronic record)
  - g. School Records

**B. Transmission of a Case Plan Assistance Request.** All requests should be transmitted through FSFN. After reviewing the Sending OCS Liaison, the request for case plan assistance should be uploaded into FSFN [child's electronic record]. If FSFN [child's electronic record] is not available, the Receiving OCS Liaison must be contacted to discuss the most expeditious means of transmitting the request [EXHIBIT B "Contacts"], and the request must be uploaded as soon as FSFN [child's electronic record] becomes available. The Receiving OCS Liaison should review the request for case plan assistance within three (3) business days of receipt. Initial parent contact must be made no later than five (5) business days of the request being uploaded into FSFN. The request must be assigned within five (5) business days of the request being uploaded into FSFN.

- C. Receiving Case Manager Expectations for Case Plan Assistance Requests.** Upon receipt of the case plan assistance request, the parent should be contacted. Initial face-to-face contact with the parent should be made within two (2) business days of review by the Receiving Case Manager of the request by the Sending Lead Agency. Face-to-face visits should continue every thirty (30) days until reunification occurs or the case plan assistance request is closed. All parent contacts or attempted contacts should be documented in FSFN. Case Plan assistance may also include but is not limited to; assistance in obtaining the parent's signature on the case plan, assisting a parent with obtaining services needed for the completion of their case plan, and obtaining voluntary consents for relinquishing parental rights. All contacts with the parents and service providers must be documented in FSFN. All referrals made will be loaded into the FSFN file cabinet. Referrals for parents will be made within seven (7) business days of request. Linkage will be documented within seven (7) business days of referral and every seven (7) business days until intake.
- D. Closure of a Case Plan Assistance Request.** A request for case plan assistance is ongoing unless one of the following occurs.
1. The parent moves outside of receiving county.
  2. The parent is deceased.
  3. The parent is deemed no longer a participant for the purposes of reunification (this will be determined by the sending agency).
  4. The worker is never able to contact the parent. Attempts must be documented in FSFN, and the attempts must span at least 6 weeks.
  5. The parent refuses contact with the worker after initial contact is made or refuses services. The parent's refusal must be documented in FSFN.
  6. Supervision is terminated by court order.

## **VIII. Supervision of Children**

- A. OCS for group home placements and EFC Shared Living Arrangements**
1. Upon identification of a planned placement in a shelter, group or therapeutic group placement, or Extended Foster Care Supervised Living Arrangement in another county, the sending county will notify the receiving county's placement supervisor of the intent to place, including the planned placement date.
  2. The Receiving Lead Agency will provide relevant information, including a current contract and contract status (e.g., good standing, corrective action plan), rate, and any current corrective action plans the group provider is completing.
  3. All other elements of initiating a request for supervision will be followed as outlined below.
- B. Initiating a request for supervision.** When a child moves outside of the county of jurisdiction, a request is to be submitted no later than three (3) business days from placement in the receiving county by the Sending Case Manager, who will prepare a packet of information on the child and family and submit it to the Receiving OCS Liaison to include:



1. A completed and signed copy of the “Out of County Services Transmittal” form, Exhibit A to this MOU. This is to verify which documents and information have been provided with the request and provide pertinent contact and tracking information.
2. A cover letter (Exhibit C) that includes:
  - a. Reason for the Request
  - b. Child’s Full Name
  - c. Child’s Date of Birth
  - d. Name/Address of Proposed Caregiver
  - e. Sending Case Manager’s and Supervisor’s Name and Phone Number
  - f. Information regarding any missing documents and when they can be expected (must be within thirty (30) days or written status reports should be issued every thirty (30) days until the completion of the study)
  - g. Medical needs (to include dental and psychological needs)
3. Attachments to include if not available in FSFN:
  - a. A copy of the completed home study if not completed by the Receiving Lead Agency
  - b. Current Court orders showing legal status and activity since the last JR, including the child’s current placement information. If the current order does not reflect the current placement, this MUST be documented in the cover letter. The sending case manager should obtain and provide the order, which must be sent within forty-five (45) days of the initial request.
  - c. JRSSR or PDS/FFA & Shelter Order (within the last 6 months)
  - d. Family Functioning Assessment
  - e. Any Psychological Evaluations - Mental Health Diagnosis Mandatory for Qualified Residential Treatment Program Child Behavioral Health Assessment (CBHA)
  - f. Individual Education Plan (IEP)
  - g. Current Case Plan-if not available in FSFN School Records
  - h. Guardian ad Litem contact information
  - i. Attorney contact information (CLS, parent, GAL)
  - j. Current mental health counselor’s contact information
  - k. Copy of child’s birth certificate, ID, Social Security number, and Medicaid number
  - l. List of services provided and new services recommended
  - m. Medication’s list and 5339, if applicable
  - n. Medical, dental, and optical services required
  - o. DJJ fact sheet
  - p. Substance abuse treatments
  - q. Placement letter
  - r. Placement agreement
  - s. Visitation allowances/restrictions
  - t. Supervision requests
  - u. Transportation requests
  - v. Discharge form from prior placement with a recommendation of continuity of services
  - w. Signed and dated Caregiver Input forms as to the child’s progress (in any format)

- C. Transmission of a Supervision Request.** All requests should be transmitted through FSFN. After a review by the Sending OCS Liaison, the request for supervision should be uploaded into the FSFN (child's electronic record.) If FSFN (child's electronic record) is not available, the Receiving OCS Liaison must be contacted to discuss the most expeditious means of transmitting the request (EXHIBIT B "Contacts"), and the request must be uploaded as soon as FSFN (child's electronic record) becomes available. The Receiving OCS Liaison should review the request for supervision within three (3) business days of receipt.

Face-to-face contact with the child must be made no later than five (5) business days of the request being uploaded into FSFN. The request must be assigned within three (3) business days of receipt by the Receiving Lead Agency

**D. Case Management Expectations for Supervision**

1. Responsibility of the sending county will be to:
  - a. If notified of potential placement disruption, the sending county will immediately coordinate services with the receiving case manager to prevent disruption and begin the process of finding a suitable placement if services fail.
  - b. If all services have been exhausted and a new placement is needed immediately, the sending county must complete removal within 24 hours unless other arrangements are made with the receiving county. On-call phone numbers shall be provided to all agencies to facilitate communication in the event of a placement disruption after 5:00 pm weekdays and between 5:00 pm on Friday through 8:00 am on Monday.
  - c. Provide any documents that were not provided when the child, family, or parent was referred for case supervision services and necessary for the receiving county to effectively serve the child, family, or parent.
  - d. When the sending case manager schedules staffing, the receiving case manager should be invited to attend via phone. If the receiving case manager cannot attend, their input should be presented by the sending case manager in their absence. The documented conversation should be inputted into FSFN.
  - e. Provide updated court orders and information as it becomes available.
  - f. Perform all court activities and inform the receiving county of court actions and court-ordered requirements.
  - g. Keep FSFN (child's electronic record) updated (including psychotropic medications).
  - h. Immediately alert the receiving case manager of any extraordinary activity.
  - i. Initiate and maintain the case plan, including coordination with the receiving county in modifying the case plan and identifying services as needed. If any party to the case plan resides in the receiving county, the plan must be sent for signature to the service unit in that county at least twenty (20) business days before the date it must be provided to the court. The receiving county must be advised of any assistance needed in ensuring the completion of the case plan.
  - j. Take the lead in arranging visitation between a child in an out-of-home placement and their parent and sibling(s) or with other persons ordered by the court to have visitation with the child.

- k. Document in FSFN all case activities performed in the sending county and update case information as required.
  - l. Review the FSFN case file on an ongoing basis to remain aware of case activities and case status in the receiving county.
  - m. Request information from the receiving county at least twenty (20) business days before it is needed to prepare for a judicial review.
  - n. Immediately notify the receiving case manager and Receiving OCS Liaison of case closure or movement of the child (ren).
  - o. If the child (ren) runs away or is missing, the Sending Case Manager is ultimately responsible for following up per required procedures. All reporting requirements will be observed.
2. The responsibility of the receiving county will be to:
- a. Assign a Case Manager in FSFN (child's electronic record) when the supervisor makes the assignment.
  - b. Upon receipt of an assignment, the assigned receiving case manager is to contact the sending case manager either via phone or e-mail to discuss the case before the assigned receiving case manager calls the resource to set up an appointment. A documented conversation or attempt should be documented in FSFN.
  - c. Alert the appropriate Liaison and Sending Case Manager of any extraordinary activities or occurrences (e.g., incident report, runaway child, delinquent acts, need for surgery, and need for psychotropic medication). Notification should be by telephone, a voicemail message, and FSFN documentation. Both liaisons and sending case managers must be notified of all critical incidents within 24 hours for non-critical incidents or sooner for critical incidents. This must be followed by FSFN documentation within two (2) business days and according to the current CFOP.
  - d. If there are any issues that arise in the home that may lead to disruption, the OCS Liaison in both the sending and Receiving County and Sending Case Manager should be immediately notified and services initiated to remedy the situation.
  - e. If a placement disrupts after services have been explored, assist the sending county in identifying another suitable placement. Note: final responsibility for placement will remain with the sending county.
  - f. Make initial face-to-face contact with the child or family no more than two (2) business days following the receipt of the request by the receiving unit supervisor and no later than five (5) business days of receipt by the Receiving Lead Agency. This must be done whether the receiving county agrees with the request for case supervision.
  - g. Reasonable efforts will be made to see all children within thirty (30) days of the child's last documented home visit of when a request is received. The Sending Case Manager and the appropriate Liaison should be contacted if a request is received. There is no possibility of a face-to-face visit within thirty (30) days of the previous visit.
  - h. Conduct the minimum number of face-to-face contacts with the child and caregiver or family in the home every thirty (30) days as required, or more frequently if necessary or requested in the safety plan, and conduct required contacts with a parent with whom reunification is planned.

- (1) All out-of-county supervision visits should be completed and recorded per requirements of 65C-30.007 every thirty (30) days.
  - (2) Document child's education process as required by administrative code within FSFN educational tab for each visit.
3. All necessary contacts and services must also be made with any parent or other party to the case plan who resides in the receiving county to assist that parent or other party in complying with the case plan and to monitor case plan compliance.
  4. Assist in arranging visitation between a child in an out-of-home placement and their parent and sibling(s) or with other persons ordered by the court to have visitation with the child.
  5. Provide written notification to the sending county of recommended changes for the case plan.
  6. Obtain any required signatures on the case plan and case plan updates and return them to the unit in the sending county within ten (10) business days of receiving the case plan or update from the sending county.
  7. Document in FSFN all case activities performed in the Receiving County and update the case information as required.
  8. Obtain updated photographs and fingerprints if not previously taken for FSFN.
  9. Within ten (10) business days of receiving notification of a pending judicial review, will ensure pertinent information is in FSFN.
  10. If for any reason court action becomes necessary in a Non-Judicial case under Out County supervision, initiate the court involvement in the county where the child and family reside. This is necessary due to the logistics involved in attending court hearings by family members (particularly parents) throughout the life of the case.
  11. If the child (ren) runs away or is missing, the receiving case manager will assist the sending case manager in coordinating the search. All reporting requirements will be observed. The receiving case manager shall remain assigned as secondary to the FSFN case for thirty (30) days to assist in coordinating efforts to locate and, if the child is recovered locally within that timeframe, to assist in the recovery.
  12. All out-of-county supervision visits should be completed and recorded per requirements of 65C-30.007 every thirty (30) days.
- E. **Closure of Supervision.** Supervision will not be closed until one of the following criteria is met.
1. The court case closes.
  2. The child moves out of the county. If the move is within the county, a new transmittal should be requested for an updated home study of the new residence.

3. The child reaches the age of majority.
4. The child is missing, abducted, absconded. The Receiving Case Manager should ensure that a police report is filed and the Sending Case Manager notified. If the child is gone more than 72 hours and has not recovered, the receiving case manager is to continue to be assigned as secondary in FSFN for an additional thirty (30) days in FSFN but should still attempt to assist the sending case manager, when applicable, with attempts to locate the child.
5. The child is deceased.

**IX. Young Adult Supervision and Services**

- A. Coordination Involving Transitioning Youth Services and Extended Foster Care Requests.
1. Extended Foster Care Requests should be sent in the same manner as other requests for supervision with the sending agency's Transitional Youth Services Coordinator contact information included.
  2. The receiving OCS Liaison will send a copy of the request to the Transitional Youth Services Coordinator or designee in the receiving county within three (3) business days of the need for OCS.
  3. The Transitional Youth Services Coordinator in the receiving County will have three (3) business days to contact the sending county Transitional Youth Services Coordinator to discuss the young adult, their needs, and any cost of services required. Financial responsibility remains with the sending (primary) agency.
  4. Assignment in FSFN and first contact shall be made within five (5) business days of request being received.
  5. Transition staffing's should be coordinated by the Sending Case Manager. If the child is in a residential setting, the residential staff should be included in staffings.

- X. Post Adoption Support Services.** Requests for Post Adoption Support shall be conducted like requests for case plan assistance. The party requesting assistance shall include the contact information for their Post Adoption Liaison and what assistance is being sought. The agency responsible for the adoption subsidy shall be responsible for services costs upon their review and approval. Receiving agencies shall assist in locating and referring the clients to services in their area.

- XI. Unexpected Relocation of a Child or Family.** A child, family, or parent should not relocate without the prior knowledge of the receiving county. Also, in the absence of a court order, such relocations must never occur before the agreement of the receiving county. However, if such an unexpected relocation does occur, the sending county must notify the appropriate OCS Liaison by telephone within one (1) business day. This must be a verified contact, and leaving a voice mail message is not sufficient. If the OCS Liaison is not available, the backup should be contacted. The telephone contact must be followed by a written request within two (2) business days.

- A. These unexpected relocations have been known to occur following a home study or other prior knowledge of the child or family by the receiving county or with no prior knowledge. At times, the court may approve relocation or order placement without allowing the sending county to provide a prior request for Out of County supervision.
- B. For children relocated by the Department of Juvenile Justice, at minimum, an Out of County Services Transmittal must be submitted within two (2) business days of the sending case manager becoming aware the child has moved. The full OCS should be provided within five (5) business days after submitting the transmittal.
- C. Unexpected relocations occur when a child is accepted in an out-of-county licensed group home facility following a placement disruption. Best practice for out-of-county group placements includes prior communication with the receiving county contract department to ensure the provider is under contract or otherwise in good standing and verify the bed-day rate. Should the child welfare licensed group home facility not be contracted and not be in good standing or other concerns exist regarding the appropriateness of the placement, the receiving lead agency may need to deny courtesy supervision. If the sending lead agency still wishes to pursue placement and before actual placement, the conflict resolution procedures regarding the request for OCS.
- D. Upon a county, or unit, learning that a child or family who requires supervision has moved to or has been placed in its jurisdiction, the child must be seen in the caregiver's home by the receiving county within two (2) business days of receipt of the request by the receiving case manager and no later than five (5) business days of receipt by the Receiving Lead Agency. The Receiving Case Manager assigned will provide monthly child welfare checks during the home study process, and for an additional (30) days after the home study has been completed unless other arrangements are made between the sending and receiving agencies.
- E. To ensure the safety and well-being of the child, the receiving county must perform a home study and appropriate background screenings of the relative or non-relative placement, parental home, or another living arrangement if this has not already been done. The results of the home study and background screening must be provided to the sending county upon receipt of the results. If there are any suspicions or occurrences of abuse or neglect, an abuse report must be submitted to the Abuse Hotline, and the Sending Case Manager notified immediately and provided with a copy of the Incident Report.
- F. If there was no prior notification of the relocation provided to a Liaison in the receiving county, the appropriate Liaison (EXHIBIT B "Contacts") in the receiving county must be notified by the receiving Case Manager within one (1) business day following the knowledge of the child's relocation. This Receiving OCS Liaison will document the relocation and track the case until a home study has been completed. A formal request for supervision has been received, and there are no issues regarding the appropriateness of the relocation. The assigned receiving case manager will maintain documentation of the case and any related placement until supervision has been terminated or the child, family, or parent has relocated out of the area.

- G. Whether or not a home study has already been completed or is required, the sending county must provide the receiving county with all available required documents and information required for a request for a home study (see VII. Home Studies). Also, the additional available documents and information that are required for a request for Out of County supervision must be provided (see IX. Supervision of Children), including a completed and signed copy of the "Out of County Services Transmittal" form, which is Exhibit A to this Memorandum of Understanding. Any information not available when the request is made must be submitted within (30) days or a status report regarding the efforts to obtain the documents.
- H. If a home study has not been completed for a relative or non-relative placement, the receiving county will conduct a home study within thirty (30) days of learning of the child's relocation and inform the sending county within two (2) business days of the results or provide a status report. If a home study is not completed within thirty (30) days, a written status report must be entered as a note in FSFN every seven (7) days until the home study is completed.
- I. Supervision must be provided while the two counties determine if the relocation is appropriate and what further actions are necessary to resolve the situation. If the court in the sending county has already ordered placement of a child or approved the relocation of a family, both counties will coordinate with appropriate attorneys to reach an agreement regarding whether a change in the court order addressing placement is needed and what information may be needed to properly inform the court. If necessary, conflict resolution procedures should be used.

**XII. FSFN Documentation.**

- A. Home Study Documentation. All actions taken regarding requests for home studies or requests for Out of County supervision must be documented in the Case File in FSFN (child's electronic record) by the Sending Case Manager.
  - 1. Home study activities and documentation are to be maintained in FSFN by the receiving county.
  - 2. The assigned receiving Case Manager should be entered into FSFN (child's electronic record) within three (3) business days of receipt by the Lead Agency. The supervisor receiving a request for a home study has two (2) businesses to process each request. The receiving case manager should be entered in the FSFN case as "Type: Out of County," "Responsibility: Home Study," and "Role: Secondary."
- B. Case Supervision Documentation. Once a Receiving Case Manager has been assigned out of county supervision responsibility, the case manager must be immediately assigned in FSFN (child's electronic record) and begin documenting all case supervision activities they perform. The receiving county should enter the Case Manager in FSFN (child's electronic record) within three (3) business days of receipt by the Receiving Lead Agency.

1. The receiving case manager should be entered as participant specific for each child under the supervision and must be entered under each participant as "Type: Out of County," "Responsibility: Case Management and/or Supervision," and "Role: Out of County."
2. For a Case Plan Assistance case, the Receiving Case Manager should be entered into FSFN (child's electronic record) as "Type: Out of County," "Responsibility: Case Management and/or Supervision," and "Role: Secondary."
3. The receiving case manager should document all case activities performed.
4. Case Manager Contact Information. All Case Managers and supervisors should have their FSFN detail updated periodically. The Case Managers should have their phone number, cell phone number, and e-mail address entered into FSFN if available.

**XIII. Communication Following Request for OCS.** Once a request for services has been received, communication between the two counties regarding the case will be performed directly between the case managers involved.

**XIV. Conflict Resolution.** When there is a disagreement between the sending and receiving counties, conflict resolution procedures must be initiated and concluded with a final agreement on how to proceed. The appropriate designated Liaisons in each Lead Agency will first attempt to resolve the conflict. If they cannot resolve the issues timely, the Lead Agency CEOs or their designee will be asked to become involved. The receiving county may not unilaterally choose to deny supervision or cease supervision or reduce the level of supervision without first discussing it with the designee up to and including the sending county's CEO. The sending county must ensure proper procedures are followed pursuant to Rule 65C-30.018, F.A.C.

- A. The OCS Liaisons will work to resolve any disputes regarding the appropriateness of a request for a home study, a request for Out of County supervision, an unexpected relocation, case plan assistance, and Independent Living requests.
- B. Disputes regarding post-adoption will be resolved between the two post-adoption contacts. This process will be elevated to higher levels of authority as necessary until resolution is reached.
- C. Disputes regarding the timeliness of work will be resolved between the case management contacts. This process will be elevated to higher levels of authority as necessary until resolution is reached.

**XV. Continuation of Supervision by the County of Jurisdiction.** The only exception to requesting case supervision by the receiving county is when the child or other person who requires case supervision services lives in or has relocated to an adjoining or nearby county and the Case Manager from the county of jurisdiction elects to continue to perform all necessary case supervision activities rather than referring the case to the other county. The appropriate Liaison in the receiving county must be notified for permission in these cases. Florida Administrative Code must be followed regarding the retention of jurisdiction in these cases.



- A. The decision by the county of jurisdiction to retain supervision responsibility must be based solely on the best interest of the child. Factors that should be considered include, but are not limited to, the relationship established with the child and family, the Case Manager's knowledge of resources in the other county, and the ability of the Case Manager to perform all necessary tasks without involving Child Welfare and Community-Based Care staff in the other county.
- B. The county of jurisdiction will retain jurisdiction when services are terminated if the county retained supervision responsibility.

**XVI. Case Closure.** Cases shall not be closed, and jurisdiction shall not be transferred to the contracted service provider in the receiving county before specified actions being taken:

- A. Before recommending case closure to the court or closing a non-judicial supervision case, the sending case manager in the county of jurisdiction shall inform the receiving case manager of the planned action and ensure that the receiving case manager has an opportunity to comment the advisability of the planned action. This information from the receiving county must be presented to the Court. Once terminated, the receiving county will have no continued responsibility to the family.
- B. Cases involving court-ordered supervision shall not be terminated without court approval. Case supervision activities in the receiving county cannot be terminated before the closure of the case or court-ordered transfer of supervision responsibility to another county. The receiving county must be provided with a copy of the court's termination order within two (2) business days of being signed.
- C. FSN should be updated immediately with the closure information and transmittal of closure sent to the receiving county.
- D. In Non-Judicial Cases, supervision activities in the receiving county cannot be terminated before agreement by the sending and receiving counties involved that termination of supervision is appropriate. If necessary, conflict resolution procedures shall be used to resolve a disagreement about the appropriateness of terminating supervision.
- E. No adoptions cases will have supervision end dated in FSN before the adoption finalization date.

**XVII. Level 1 Licensure of Relative/Non-Relative and Fictive Kin.** Level 1 Child Specific Licensure is designated for relatives, non-relatives, and fictive kin seeking licensure for a specific child or children. The Level 1 licensure will be completed in accordance with DCF Operating Policy 170 – 11, Chapter 12, Foster Home Licensing, and all applicable Florida Administrative Codes.

- A. Initiating a Level 1 Licensing Request. Upon the child(ren)'s placement with the relative/non-relative or fictive kin resource, the sending county forwards the Level 1 request on the "Request for Level 1" form (EXHIBIT B), transmittal (Exhibit A), and a cover letter (Exhibit C) to the Receiving Licensing Unit through the designated Out of County Point of Contact for appropriate assignments.

- B. To prevent duplicate providers, the licensing staff will complete a provider search in FSFN and verify the provider number linked to the out-of-home placement before creating a new provider.
- C. The receiving Licensing Unit will contact the caregiver within two (2) business days of receipt by the designated Out of County Point of Contact.
  - 1. The caregivers should be informed of the Level 1 licensing process and be provided with information related to requirements to become a licensed caregiver, as well as the benefits of licensure before beginning the process.
  - 2. This shall include required training, necessary forms, and the Environmental Health inspections to be completed.
  - 3. A note should be entered with the details of the initial contact in the Provider tab.
  - 4. At the point that the licensing entity contacts the family, a secondary licensing assignment shall be made to the provider in FSFN.
  - 5. At the time of the caregiver expressing interest in pursuing licensure, an “Application for License to Provide Out-of-Home Care for Dependent Children” (form CF-FSP 5007, available in DCF Forms) must be completed. The completion of the application for licensure signifies the family’s initiation of the licensure process.
  - 6. Upon completion of the application, a primary licensing assignment shall be made to the provider in FSFN. All efforts to complete the licensing process and contacts with the caregiver should be documented in FSFN.
  - 7. The receiving Licensing unit will submit the request for Licensure to the DCF Regional Licensing Authority within forty-five (45) business days receiving of the request by Out of County POC or status report to the sending county. After forty-five (45) business days, weekly notes must be entered into the FSFN Provider Tab to show the status of the licensing packet and the efforts being made to complete it.
- D. Completion of the Licensing Packet.
  - 1. After the licensing packet is complete, the receiving Licensing unit will submit it to Department of Children and Families Regional Licensing Authority for review, approval, and issuance of the DCF Level 1 License.
  - 2. The Receiving Licensing unit will send the sending county a completed transmittal, cover letter, and copy of the DCF license.
  - 3. The sending county will then complete the agency’s placement change process to initiate Level 1 payments to the licensed caregiver.

#### E. Non-Participation Form

1. If at any time after completion of the application, a family chooses to no longer participate in the licensing process, the Notice of Non-Participation in Licensure form should be completed and uploaded into FSFN.
2. Upon completion of the form, the primary licensing assignment in FSFN must be ended.
3. The receiving licensing unit shall ensure that a "Notice of Non-Participation in Licensure" (form CF-FSP 5443, available in DCF Forms) is signed by the relative, non-relative, or fictive kin caregiver should the caregiver not be interested in the process of licensure.
4. The "Notice of Non-Participation in Licensure" shall be uploaded into the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) in the provider file cabinet under the provider created during the child's initial placement.

#### F. Ongoing Supports for Licensed Caregivers

1. The courtesy case manager shall make available to licensed caregivers any identified and available services and supports in collaboration with the sending county case manager.
2. Licensed caregivers shall be made aware of supports through their local foster/adoptive parent association (when applicable) or other supports that may be available for licensed caregivers.
3. Quarterly contacts shall be completed by the receiving licensing agency for the Level 1 licensed caregiver(s) to assess the need for additional supports. This contact shall be documented as a chronological entry under the provider in FSFN.
4. Ongoing Supports for Children in Level 1 homes. The receiving case manager shall make available to licensed caregivers any available services and supports necessary to care for children in their care in collaboration with the sending case manager.

#### G. Re-Licensure

1. The receiving licensing unit is responsible for ensuring all requirements of re-licensure are met before submission of the licensure packet.
2. The approved re-licensing packet shall be uploaded into FSFN in the provider file cabinet and submitted to the DCF Licensing Authority for review, approval, and issuance of the updated Level 1 license.
3. The Receiving Licensing unit will send the sending county a completed transmittal, cover letter, and copy of the updated DCF license.

## **XVIII. Transfer of Jurisdiction**

- A. Each request for transfer of jurisdiction should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. For a case to be considered for transfer of jurisdiction, the case shall meet the following guidelines:
1. The child (ren) in the case should be adjudicated dependent or when adjudication is withheld, and it is determined to be in the best interest of the child, expediting permanency or promoting the efficient administration of justice. And;
    - a. Parent(s) have resided in the receiving county a minimum of 3 months,
    - b. There is an existing request for case plan assistance, and
    - c. The parent(s) should be partially compliant with their current case plan.
    - d. An exception to this provision shall be the immediate transfer of jurisdiction in situations where the receiving agency/jurisdiction previously retained jurisdiction of the case.
  2. In cases under non-judicial supervision, primary supervision responsibility shall not be transferred to the receiving county unless the receiving lead agency agrees with the transfer; the appropriate single points of contact for both the sending and receiving agencies shall help coordinate the transfer.
- B. The Receiving Lead Agency should be contacted, and a signed Judicial Transfer Form (Exhibit D) received before a recommendation being made to the court. The receiving agency must respond within (5) business days of receipt of the request. They may ask for an extension, but this must be in writing (e-mail will suffice). The sending agency must consult the appropriate Liaison to coordinate the transfer. After the court has transferred jurisdiction, a copy of the file should be kept. The original sent overnight to the appropriate contact with a copy of the completed and approved Judicial Transfer Form attached (Exhibit D.)
- C. If the sending agency has followed all applicable procedures and received case acceptance before a case being transferred, the receiving agency shall become financially responsible upon the court order of the transfer. If the receiving agency has not been notified of the transfer before the court order, they will not become financially responsible until each of the following has occurred:
1. The sending agency has notified the receiving agency and provided a copy of the court order.
  2. The receiving agency has reviewed and accepted the case. The review should be completed within one (1) business day of notification. If there has been verbal contact (e-mail or voice mail is not sufficient) and there has been no response provided before the end of business on the 2nd day, it will be assumed accepted, and the receiving agency shall accept full financial responsibility for the case as of that date the case was transferred.
  3. The legal case has been received by the clerk of court in the circuit to which the case was transferred.

**XIX. Financial Responsibility**


- A. The sending agency shall always have the final responsibility to pay for services provided to children and families living outside of their agency jurisdiction unless other arrangements have been made with the receiving agency.
- B. An effort should always be made by the receiving agency to find appropriate community services for children and families in care.
- C. If payment is required, the Sending Lead Agency contact should be notified so payment can be coordinated between agencies.

**XX. Transfer of Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children cases**


- A. When a family or prospective caregiver relocates from one county to another county, the receiving case manager that received the original case should immediately notify their Receiving Lead Agency Contact and submit a notice to the sending state informing that the family has relocated and is no longer in residence in the originating county.
- B. Status Report and case closure should be uploaded in NEICE as well as an e-mail sent to both ICPC FL specialist and liaison in the new county where the family has relocated.
- C. A copy of the case file will be forwarded to the new county of residence through the sending OCS liaison.
- D. The Sending Lead Agency Contact should notify the appropriate receiving lead OCS Liaison within two (2) business days. The sending Florida agency will transfer any open FSFN case(s) to the receiving agency and remain on the case until a new primary worker has been assigned by the new county of residence.
- E. Documents will not be available in NEICE until the new case has been created by the Central Compact ICPC case specialist and assigned to the new county ICPC liaison.

*Final Draft 10/13/2021*

Date: 10/25/2021

DocuSigned by:  
  
 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phil Scarpelli, CEO  
 Community Based Care of Brevard, Inc.  
 d/b/a Brevard Family Partnership

Date: 10/25/2021

DocuSigned by:  
  
 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Larry Rein, CEO & President  
 ChildNet, Inc.

Date: 10/25/2021

DocuSigned by:  
*Nadereh Salim*  
Nadereh Salim, CEO  
Children's Network of Southwest Florida

Date: 10/25/2021

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Esther Jacobo, Director  
Citrus Family Care Network

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Carol DeLoach, CEO  
Communities Connected for Kids, Inc.

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Karin Flositz, CEO  
Community Partnership for Children, Inc.

Date: 10/25/2021

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Rebecca Kapusta, Chief of  
Community-Based Care  
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Embrace Families

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Mark Jones, President  
FamiliesFirst Network of Lakeview

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Family Support Services of North Florida

Date: 10/25/2021

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Teri Saunders, CEO  
Heartland for Children

Date: 11/1/2021

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John Cooper, CEO  
Kids Central, Inc.

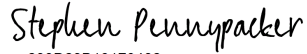
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Irene Toto, CEO  
Kids First of Florida, Inc.


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Mike Watkins, CEO  
NWF Health Network

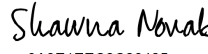
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Stephen Pennypacker, President & CEO  
Partnership for Strong Families, Inc.

Date: 10/25/2021 \_\_\_\_\_

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Safe Children Coalition

Date: 10/25/2021 \_\_\_\_\_

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Shawna Novak, CEO  
St. Johns County Family Integrity Program

*The signature of Shawna Novak indicates that St. Johns County has adopted these procedures, but should not be construed as creating any contractual obligation on the part of the county*