



Series: Operating Procedures COA: RPM 7
 Procedure Name: FSFN Documentation
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 Effective Date: 07/01/2011
 Applicable to: Brevard C.A.R.E.S. Staff

SUBJECT: Brevard C.A.R.E.S. Procedure for State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) Documentation

PURPOSE: To outline the Brevard C.A.R.E.S. procedure for the documentation of activities into the State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) for families referred to Brevard C.A.R.E.S. The proper application of this procedure will ensure that Brevard C.A.R.E.S. fulfils its commitment to ensure care for families using a strength based approach and adhering to the ten principles of wraparound including ensuring timely, accurate and detailed documentation of family activity.

REFERENCE: Department of Children and Families OP 170-1 Chapter 12: Case Note and Meetings Documentation

FS Chapter 39 Proceedings Related to Children

FS Chapter 839.13 Falsifying Records

PROCEDURE:

Each child record in FSFN must contain a specific record of all case activities provided by the investigator, case manager or other child welfare professionals working on the case who have FSFN access. Notes create a point-in-time log of the child welfare professional’s activities. Case notes and documentation of meetings create an audit trail for compliance with federal and state requirements. Case notes are a vitally important record of activities pertaining to any given case and are used to transfer information about a case within the Department, among case managers and service providers and in court. Up-to-date notes ensure that information known and activities that have been occurred are known to any other person who needs to access immediate and relevant information about a case or provider. A child welfare professional’s notes may be subpoenaed and used as evidence in legal proceedings.

Case Chronological Recording

- a. All case activities, including contacts and attempted contacts with a child, the child’s parent or caregiver and collaterals must be entered in FSFN no later than ~~two-business days~~ 48 hours after the actual contact or other event. Documentation will include

- (1) Who was present
- (2) Where the meeting/contact occurred
- (3) Type of contact
- (4) What was discussed
- (5) Date of meeting/contact (day, month and year)
- (6) Purpose of the contact
- (7) Interactions between all family members
- (8) Contact attempts for non-offending parents.
- (9) Safety plan discussion
- (10) Individual conversations with each verbal child

b. Notes are automatically date and time stamped with the date and time that the note was entered. The staff member responsible for the note entry will enter the actual contact begin ~~and end~~ date and time. The staff member will also complete the note category, type and participants that the note pertains to.

c. When a face-to-face contact is required, the “Face to Face” hyperlink on the FSFN case note page should be completed in order to document for each participant selected whether a face to face contact was completed, attempted or not attempted. A “Reason Not Seen” will be provided for face-to-face contacts that were attempted or not completed.

d. Case notes will provide the most pertinent facts gathered and observations about the child or family that will be used in developing or updating a family assessment or FFA-O, Progress Update, ~~Other Parent Home Assessment, any type of home study~~ or other case record documentation.

(1) Case notes will contain cohesive information that provides a summary of what was learned as a result of the contact or effort to achieve the contact.

- (a) Progress towards completion of care plan objectives within the required timeframes
- (b) Effectiveness of current services and identification of additional services needed
- (c) Observations of the child’s development, physical condition and interaction with the parent or caregiver and household members

- (d) Assessment of progress in tasks and services aimed at ensuring the child's well-being, including educational, emotional, developmental, physical or mental health needs **and behavior change rating, (pre-contemplation, contemplation, action or maintenance.)**
- (e) When the child is scheduled for a Child Health check-up according to the periodicity schedule and whether steps are being taken to ensure the child receives this service
- (f) Interviews with children should be documented as being done not in the presence of the caregiver,
- (g) All interviews should focus on safety, permanency and well-being and evidence supported in the case notes
- (h) Safety and risk assessment should be updated and documented at each contact.
- (i) When applicable, case notes must also address sufficiency of the current safety plan and whether it is the least intrusive.
- (j) Discussion about absent parent.**

(2) Notes can be brief, capturing the most important facts learned including behaviors/conditions observed. Notes do not have to be in a formal sentence or paragraph structure or provide a flowing narrative.

(3) Case notes shall not contain a specific reference to the child's or any other family member's HIV infection or AIDS. A general term such as child's "chronic illness" will be used.

(4) Conclusions, opinions or analyses that are gathered from persons contacted must be labeled as such and attributed to the person making them. Notes may only reflect phrases, quotes, sentence fragments, lists. Examples may include:

(a) Discussed school attendance, grades, child's friends and activities.

(b) Explored possible ways to help child (parent, caregiver, etc.).

(c) Mother stated her worries about child's hitting and biting behaviors in child care; concerns about husband's abusive and controlling behaviors (won't allow her to work outside home; inadequate weekly allowance for household expenses; not allowed to have cell phone; not allowed to use car).

(5) Case notes will provide evidence of the following:

e. When a child makes a disclosure of maltreatment to a Brevard C.A.R.E.S. staff member that is likely to result in a criminal investigation, more detailed documentation should be provided as follows:

(1) To the extent possible, document the questions that the child welfare professional asked to elicit the child's response.

(2) Document as closely as possible the child's statements.

f. A FSFN user may create a chronological note for another user provided he or she logs into FSFN using his or her unique and assigned User ID and password. Under no circumstances should a FSFN user ever log into the system using another person's User ID and password.

(1) If the "Staff Member Making Contact" is not the same as the person for whom the FSFN user is creating the note, this should be clearly documented and explained in the chronological note narrative section.

(2) The FSFN user for whom the note was created is responsible for validating the accuracy of the information.

Handwritten Field Notes. Contact notes may be handwritten in the field and scanned into the case note page in FSFN as long as the child welfare professional's supervisor considers them to be legible.

a. The staff member is required to create a note in FSFN to capture the note type, date, time, persons contacted, and a summary of the important facts gathered. The note should include a statement to see the associated scanned note.

b. A word document may be created and the contents copied to the Contact Note text field. It should be noted that use of the following two characters "< the symbol for less than" and "> the symbol for greater than" will result in text being deleted in FSFN when narrative from a word document is copied.

c. Supervisors will work with staff to ensure that handwritten case notes are:

(1) Legible;

(2) Succinct; and,

(3) Relevant.

Supervisor Review

a. The supervisor must review each case note recording at least monthly and review the complete case file every 90 days. The supervisor should provide guidance and direction to the staff member in rectifying any deficiencies in documentation and any barriers to the safety, well-being or permanency of the child(ren). Supervisors should look at the supervisor review as an opportunity to mentor their staff. Supervisors must enter their case reviews into FSFN using the Supervisor Review note type for each child in the case.

b. The Supervisor Review must include:

(1) Date of Supervision and individuals present

(2) Topics discussed including progress and barriers as it relates to the Care Plan and any guidance/direction given by the supervisor as it relates to overall case activities

(3) Tasks and who is responsible

(4) Follow-up on tasks identified in previous supervisor reviews

(5) When the review also serves the dual purpose of a required supervisor consultation, a cross reference should be entered in Supervisor Case Consultation page to ensure credit for required consultation (do not enter same details or “cut and paste;” only enter a brief cross-reference).

c. The FSFN Supervisor Consultation page will be used to document all the following:

(1) All consultations with investigators associated with any type of safety planning and management activities such 2nd Tier Consultations, other secondary case reviews and any Rapid Safety Feedback.

(2) All required consultations with case managers associated with FFA-O or Progress Updates.

(3) The Note type of “Supervisor Consultation” should be used for consultations associated with including any required safety plan management activities such as approval of a Family-Made Arrangement, and other case planning/monitoring activities.

Team Meetings

The FSFN Meeting page will be used to formally document meetings, participants and meeting outcomes. The Meeting page may also be used to schedule a meeting and notify intended participants.

a. The case transfer conference will be recorded using “Meetings” functionality in FSFN, selecting Case Transfer meeting (ESI) to document that the meeting has been completed and any follow-up information that is necessary to complete the transfer. The supervisor will document the actual date and time that the case has been accepted by using the “Case Accepted” box on the Case Transfer meeting page.

b. The following information about meetings will be recorded:

(1) Date and time of meeting.

(2) Brief statement as to reason for meeting and outcomes, in particular any decisions made.

(3) Participants.

(4) Meeting type as listed above.

- c. When a required monthly face-to-face contact with a parent/legal guardian occurs during a meeting, in addition to the meeting documentation the contact should be documented in Case Notes. The face-to-face contact note should describe any conversation with the parent that is not reflected in the Meeting note. A cross reference to the Meeting note should also be provided.
- d. Other than face-to-face contacts, there should not be a duplicate entry in Case Notes about a meeting documented in the meetings page.
- e. The Meeting type "Supervisor Meeting" should be used when the supervisor, staff member and another program manager and/or specialist meet and there is not an existing meeting value for a required purpose.

Family Support Services

Family Support functionality in FSFN will be used to document all C.A.R.E.S. Wraparound Program services provided to families. The following information must be documented in FSFN as indicated below:

- a. The begin date and the date case is closed. The date the family agrees to engage in services as verified by the service provider is considered to be the begin date.
- b. A brief summary of the reason for the family referral and the recommendations from the assessment will be described in the "Status Begin Comments" narrative field. The summary will include services to be provided and expected outcomes.
- c. The Family Support Type will be "Prevention".
- d. The FSFN Family Support module requires the creation of a "Risk Factor" page which can be updated based on subsequent assessments. The initial risk level entered must be the risk level as determined by the actuarial risk tool completed at the conclusion of the investigation. Any subsequent risk levels determined by assessments completed by the service provider shall be documented using either the "Update" or "Closure" options, as appropriate.
 - (1) When a family has been referred for family support services due to Human Trafficking and there was no actuarial risk assessment completed by the child protective investigator, then the risk level will be entered as Very High.
 - (2) The FSFN Family Support module requires the creation of a "Risk Factor" page which can be updated based on subsequent assessments. "Risk factor" as used on this page in FSFN does not refer to the items that were marked on the actuarial risk assessment. Rather, the service provider should conduct an assessment of barriers to sustainable safety and, collaboratively with the family, identify areas of family life that will be addressed.
- e. Any additional assessments that the service provider refers the family to (such as mental health and substance abuse) shall be uploaded into case notes.
- f. Status Ending Comments should include a summary of the reason for case closure including a family's refusal to begin or continue receiving services offered. Summary must include the documentation of successful interventions. If there is a "close the loop" staffing, the outcome and efforts to reengage the family must be documented.

- g. If a case remains open over 12 months, rationale for continuing Family Support Services must be captured in a case note.
- h. Contact notes will summarize the essence of what happened during each contact as it related specifically to the Family Support Services being provided.

Falsification of Records

- a. Pursuant to the Florida Statute 839.13(1), 'if any judge, justice, mayor, alderman, clerk, sheriff, coroner, or other public officer, or employee or agent of or contractor with a public agency, or any person whatsoever, shall steal, embezzle, alter, corruptly withdraw, falsify or avoid any record, process, charter, gift, grant, conveyance, or contract, or any paper filed in any judicial proceeding in any court of this state, or shall knowingly and willfully take off, discharge or conceal any issues, forfeited recognizance, or other forfeiture, or other paper above mentioned, or shall forge, deface, or falsify any document or instrument recorded, or filed in any court, or any registry, acknowledgement, or certificate, or shall fraudulently alter, deface, or falsify any minutes, documents, books, or if any person shall cause or procure any of the offenses aforesaid to be committed, or be in anywise concerned therein, the person so offending shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.'
- b. This information shall be included in the individual's personnel file.

Altering, Destroying, Defacing, Removing, Discarding Records

- a. Pursuant to Florida Statute 839.13(2)(a), 'any person who knowingly falsifies by altering, destroying, defacing, overwriting, removing, or discarding an official record relating to an individual in the care and custody of a state agency, which act has the potential to detrimentally affect the health, safety, or welfare of that individual, commits a felony of the third degree.'
- b. Pursuant to Florida Statute 839.13(2)(b), 'any person who commits a violation of paragraph (a) which contributes to great bodily harm to or the death of an individual in the care and custody of a state agency commits a felony of the second degree.'
- c. Pursuant to Florida Statute 839.13(2)(c), 'any person who knowingly falsifies by altering, destroying, defacing, overwriting, removing, or discarding records of the Department of Children and Families or its contract provider with the intent to conceal a fact material to a child abuse protective investigation, protective supervision, foster care and related services, or a protective investigation, as defined in Chapter 39 commits a felony of the third degree.'

- d. For the purposes of these paragraphs, the term 'care and custody' includes, but is not limited to, a child abuse protective investigation, protective supervision, foster care and related services, as defined in Chapter 39.

Disposing/Archiving or Correcting/Updating Records

- a. Pursuant to Florida Statute 839.13(2)(d), 'this section does not prohibit the disposing or archiving of records as otherwise provided by law. In addition, this section does not prohibit any person from correcting or updating records.'

BY DIRECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE
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KATHRYN PARKER
Executive Director
Brevard C.A.R.E.S., Inc

Signature Date: 04/09/2021