

Ten Month Placement Review (Case Practice Guide, page 34-36)

Step One - Family Discussion

This is a critical decision-making time in which the Division must prepare for the Permanency Hearing and either:

1. Approve an ASFA exception based on the improved circumstances of the parents and likelihood of family reunification or 2. Recommend the termination of parental rights for the purpose of adoption. Because so much hangs in the balance, this is a two-step process which begins with a Family Engagement/Family Team Meeting in which all relevant parties are strongly encouraged to participate.

The family discussion is conducted by the Casework Supervisor in order to assess case progress in regard to the child's permanency plan. Participants: Casework Supervisor, Supervisor, Caseworker, Parents, child (depending on age and appropriateness), caretaker, and any other interested parties (as appropriate). The Area Concurrent Planning Specialist may attend, if needed. Purpose: Review is meant to assess the likelihood of family reunification within the timeframes recommended by state and federal law (ASFA). Hold a frank and focused discussion with the parents and family concerning their progress in remedying the conditions that led to their child's placement. Assess parent's readiness to resume child's care based on the progress to date. If parents have made significant progress - and family reunification is likely - discuss accelerating parent-child visitation. If family reunification is likely, discuss openly what type of support and/or monitoring will be needed during the child's transition home; adjust the service plan accordingly. If reunification seems unlikely based on the parent's lack of significant progress, this is the time to discuss the permanency plans available to the child (usually adoption or Kinship Legal Guardianship). Discuss with family and child(ren) that child is entitled to attend the permanency hearing.

Step Two - Litigation Conference

The litigation review is arranged and conducted by the Area Concurrent Planning Specialist in order to prepare for the Permanency Hearing.

Participants

Area Concurrent Planning Specialist, Casework Supervisor, Supervisor, Caseworker, PRS and/or Guardianship DAG, and others (as appropriate). **The Resource Support worker and/or supervisor are required to attend if the child is not placed with kin or fictive kin or if the child is placed with kin or fictive kin and the home is still in presumptive status.**

Purpose

Review is meant to establish the agency's recommended permanency goal in preparation for the Permanency Hearing typically held at the 12th month of placement.

- Review parent's progress in remedying conditions that lead to placement and determine if case goal should remain family reunification.
- Review the case record for required documentation to support the case goal.
- List any remaining tasks to be completed by the Permanency worker prior to the Permanency Hearing.
- Determine whether a family situation warrants an adoption goal; if so, discuss with DAG whether there are sufficient grounds to file a guardianship petition.
- Prepare for possible case transfer to an adoption worker and assignment to a paralegal.
- If adoption is the recommended case goal, an adoption worker is assigned as the co-worker (assignment coordinated between the Concurrent Planning Specialist and the adoption Casework Supervisor). Plans set for permanency worker to begin introducing the role of the adoption worker to the child and caregiver, however case responsibility remains with the permanency worker until goal is formally determined through the Permanency Hearing.

Practice Considerations within 12 months of placement, Case Practice Guide, page 37

- Adjust and strengthen case plan and service provision based on ongoing teaming with the family, their progress, the results of the 5-month review, and court reviews
- With the agreement of the family, conduct the ten-month family discussion in conjunction with the FTM
- Assess parental progress with services and track and adjust accordingly
- Document planning and other activities thoroughly and accurately, especially concerning parental change
- Obtain periodic updates from providers and informal supports regarding changed behaviors and achievement of goals
- Work with the team on how their continued involvement can support the family, even when the agency is no longer involved
- Assess the permanency of the child's placement in terms of the caregiver's ability to meet child's needs and their willingness to commit to potential permanent plan
- Continue to monitor the child's adjustment to placement and assess whether any additional supports or services are needed
- Assess the visitation plan in view of progress towards reunification. Adjust the frequency, duration or location of visits accordingly. Document each child's visits with parents and siblings, noting the interactions and participants
- Ensure that all case documentation is thorough, accurate and up-to-date, and that assessments, reports and evaluations are discussed at the 10-month pre-permanency hearing litigation conference
- Identify the goal to be presented at the permanency hearing
- Complete any outstanding assessments of birth relatives and document results in case record
- Complete the reunification assessment (in consultation with the resource worker) and caretaker strength and needs assessment at 9 months from date of placement (CP&P 22-27, see appendix).
- Discuss permanency Hearing and any special arrangements or considerations the child or young person may need
- Discuss child's attendance at permanency hearing and any special arrangements, notifications that are needed