



Practice Points

Working with Parents of Children in Foster Care

The purpose of this Practice Point is to provide guidance for when a Family-Centered Service Case (FCS) case should be opened on a parent of a child in foster care. Every scenario is unique and requires consideration of several factors. An FCS case can be open on both custodial and non-custodial parents. In the event both parents are receiving services each parent should have an FCS case open in FACES. The children should be listed on both cases as case members, with the whereabouts noted as appropriate.

In situations where the non-custodial or absent parent is not a possible reunification resource, no services are being provided to the non-custodial or absent parent, and there is no active written service agreement with the non-custodial or absent parent, **no** FCS case would need to be opened.

Here are some examples of when staff may choose not to open an FCS case on a non-custodial or absent parent:

- Absent or non-custodial parent who cannot be located through diligent search efforts
- Incarcerated parent who is not a possible reunification resource
- Non-custodial parent whose involvement in the case changes frequently after multiple attempts by the agency to engage the parent

In the examples listed above staff may list the absent or non-custodial parent on the custodial parent's FCS case as a case member with their whereabouts indicated as out of the home. Reasonable efforts to involve the parent should be documented on the child's alternative care case.

When the case goal is APPLA staff may select to close the FCS case on the parents when:

- The birth parent has decided not to be involved in their child's life
- The birth parent is not participating in the APPLA plan
- No services are being provided to the birth parent
- There are no safety concerns with remaining children in the home

Continuing to include the parents in the APPLA case plan and documenting their involvement on the AC function will demonstrate how staff are encouraging permanent connections between the youth and their family.

See [Section 3 Chapter 2](#) Procedures to Open or Reopen a Family for Services of the Child Welfare Manual for more information for more information on opening FCS cases.

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