CHILDREN'S DIVISION POLICY

# Memorandum

Missouri Department of Social Services

**CDP26-27**

**DATE:** October 29, 2026

**TO:** Children's Division and Foster Care Case Management

**FROM:** Sara Smith, Children's Division Director

**SUBJECT:** **Family Centered Services (FCS) Referral and Case Opening Process**

**OVERVIEW:**

This policy memorandum establishes a streamlined process for Family Centered Services (FCS) case referrals and case opening procedures. The protocols outlined in this memorandum will serve as interim practice guidance while formal policy development is underway. Policy updates are anticipated by mid-2027.

The purpose of these protocols is to establish standardized procedures for submitting, reviewing, and assigning FCS referrals, as well as conducting case staffing and collaborative opening home visits.

**FCS REFERRAL SUBMISSION:**

FCS referrals must be submitted through Qualtrics, which serves as the system for managing and assigning FCS referrals. The referral submission link is available and on the Children's Division (CD) intranet.

**CASE STAFFING:**

Following the assignment of an FCS referral, a case staffing must occur between the assigned FCS worker and the referring worker.

The purpose of the case staffing is to clarify information provided in the referral and establish a shared understanding of the concerns and circumstances that prompted the referral for services. The staffing should result in clearly established bottom lines, identified safety goals, and the development of a preliminary agenda for the opening home visit.

**OPENING HOME VISIT:**

The opening home visit is a collaborative effort between the referring worker and the assigned FCS worker. The purpose of the opening home visit is to facilitate a clear, collaborative transition to FCS services. This visit should ensure the family understands why services are being offered, what to expect throughout service provision, and any identified safety threats, risk factors, and established bottom lines.

**PROTOCOLS:**

There are two protocols that provide guidance for implementing these procedures.

**FCS Referral Protocol**:

This protocol outlines the procedures for submitting FCS referrals and establishes expectations for case staffing and collaborative opening home visits. It applies to all staff involved in submitting FCS referrals and participating in the referral and case opening process.

**FCS Referral Review (Qualtrics) Protocol**:

This protocol establishes procedures for reviewing, assigning, and managing FCS referrals through Qualtrics. It primarily applies to designated primary and backup referral reviewers, as well as leadership responsible for overseeing the FCS program.

For questions or concerns, please contact:
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**CHILD WELFARE MANUAL POLICY AND/OR COLLATERAL DOCUMENTATION:**

Family Centered Services (FCS) Referral Review Protocol

Family Centered Services (FCS) Referral Submission and Case Opening Protocol

**NECESSARY ACTION:**

1. *Review this memorandum with all Children's Division and Foster Care Case Management team members.*
2. *Review Child Welfare Manual chapters and forms as indicated above.*