



Effective Date: 10/4/2021	Primary Author(s): Susan Murray, Deputy Director
Authorized Signature: Trenee Parker, DFS Director <i>Trenee Parker</i>	

POLICY 109 – CASE DOCUMENTATION STANDARDS

A. POLICY

Maintaining complete and accurate client records is an essential case management requirement for the agency. Accurate, thorough and timely documentation in the record provides a cumulative summary of the family’s progression at each stage within our system and helps provide accountability for the agency and caseworker for our work with the family. Accurate and up to date information in the case record is essential to ensure that needed information can be accessed for decision making, planning as well as oversight and review by approved parties at all times.

B. PROCEDURES

1. The Division of Family Services will document all casework activities in the electronic record system, FOCUS. Documentation will be factually correct, timely, and updated regularly.
2. Documentation must include **ALL** activities conducted with or on behalf of the children and families we serve. This includes but is not limited to contacts, monthly foster care visits, safety and planning activities, supervisory consultation, collaterals, other meetings and all communications (text, writing, phone, email, in person) used for assessment and decision making.
3. Case record documentation must describe which family members, household members and others are communicating or participating in interventions with our agency and provide a complete and factual account of how the caseworkers and the agency are fulfilling the mandates, laws, regulations, federal requirements and all policies that guide safety assessment and planning activities.
4. Case documentation must document how the family is providing safety and wellbeing for the children and should clearly demonstrate our assessment of the family’s strengths, needs and outline all interventions with the family.
5. Within 1 Business Day:
 - a) All custody and placement events and corresponding note must be documented within one (1) business day of the physical change of placement for any child involved in an active case. This includes children placed in foster care, congregate care, shelter, residential setting, or with a familial or non-familial caretaker.
 - b) All court orders must be documented within one (1) business day of the date of the court order.
 - c) All Child Safety Agreements must be documented within one (1) business day.
 - d) For intake and after hours, the expectation is that all intake activities such as reports, calls, and responses must be completed before the end of the assigned work shift. At times, the duration and complexity of an urgent response is such that it is not possible

to enter complete notes before the end of the shift. Upon supervisory approval, a summary of the response and any next steps should be entered into FOCUS, and the complete notes need to be entered within 24 hours.

6. Within 5 Business Days

- a) All contacts must be documented as soon as possible in the case record but no later than five (5) business days after the contact occurs. This includes required contacts related to initial interviews, treatment response, client (foster care) contacts, family contacts as well as any other contacts with any client type, and also includes updating the contact schedule.
- b) Contacts should be documented using the approved Face to Face Contact Template.

7. Within 14 Business Day

- a) All other case activities will be documented as soon as possible but no later than fourteen (14) business days after the activity occurs. This includes phone calls, attempted contacts, funding requests, collateral information, referrals, professional correspondence, and all other case activity.

- 8. All other case activities and case related events should also be completed in accordance with DFS policy.

C. FOCUS

All documentation should be entered into the appropriate FOCUS events and designated tools, events or records.

D. FORMS

None