



**State of Florida
Department of Children and Families**

Rick Scott
Governor

David E. Wilkins
Secretary

DATE: June 17, 2011

TO: Regional Directors

THROUGH: Pete Digre, Assistant Secretary for Operations

FROM: Jamie Self, Ed.D., Executive Director of Family and Community Services

SUBJECT: Partnership Plan (Bilateral Agreement) Implementation
ACTION REQUESTED: In collaboration with the CBCs in your region, implement the Partnership Plan and locally selected instruments

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information about the Partnership Plan (Bilateral Agreement) instruments and options for implementation.

BACKGROUND: In the spring of 2011, a statewide workgroup of foster parents, community-based care (CBC) and DCF staff was convened to examine practice needs, develop instruments, and compile recommendations for options for implementation of the Partnership Plan (Bilateral Agreement). Many CBC staff and foster parents participating in the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) expressed a common need. They wanted a framework for licensing, case management, and support of foster families that was consistent with a true partnership approach. The Partnership Plan (Bilateral Agreement) and accompanying assessment instruments are the resulting work products.

The documents attached to this guidance are consistent with the minimum requirements set forth in administrative code. CBC agencies are encouraged to implement a Partnership Plan process (including the minimum requirements in rule) that best meets the needs of the local system of care.

ACTION REQUIRED: In collaboration with the CBCs in your region, review the Partnership Plan and the assessment instruments described on the next page. Implement in accordance with rule and your local needs.

The first of two Partnership Plan training videos is available at:
<http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/qpi/pship/Pship.html>

A second video will be available within the next few weeks. The videos feature partners (foster parents, case managers, protective investigators, etc.) from throughout Florida's child welfare system sharing their perspectives on partnership. Regional and CBC staff are encouraged to use these videos to train parents and staff in the manner that works best for your communities.

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Form or Assessment Instrument Attached	Policy or Optional Practice
Partnership Plan (replaces bilateral agreement)	Required by 65C-13.030 (1)(e)
Case Manager/Case Worker Review of Foster Parent (replaces Service Worker's Review of Licensed Out-of-Home Caregivers' Performance CF-FSP 5223)	Required by 65C-13.028 (1)(g)
Community Input (CF-FSP 5225) Document not attached as there are no changes from the version on DCF Forms.	Required by 65C-13.028(1)(g)
Exit Interview About Foster Parent (with child or youth)	Required by 65C-13.028(1)(h) and 65C-28.017
Foster Parent's Review of Investigator	Optional
Foster Parent's Review of Case Worker/Case Manager	Optional
Investigator Review of Foster Parent	Optional

The following factors for consideration may be helpful to your implementation:

- Our goal is high quality care for every child
- Each system of care has flexibility in implementing the plan and the instruments
- Options are provided for assessing partnership throughout the system of care (foster parents' perspectives as well as staff's and youth's perspectives)
- Instruments for assessing partnership include numerical scales and narrative comments
- Comments are especially important in assessing the child/youth perspective
- CBCs are encouraged to identify trends or patterns when assessing practice
- In early 2012 and as part of QPI, CBCs will be asked about the value of the overall partnership process and the need for changes to the partnership plan and/or the assessment instruments

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have any questions, or for additional information please contact Gay Frizzell at 850-717-4653 or Gay_Frizzell@dcf.state.fl.us.

Attachments

cc: Barbara Palmer, Assistant Secretary for Administration
Mary Cagle, Children's Legal Services Executive Director
Carole Shauffer, Youth Law Center Executive Director