



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

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Chad Poppell
Secretary

DATE: November 6, 2019

TO: Regional Managing Directors
Sheriff's Offices Conducting Child Protective Investigations
Community-Based Care Lead Agency CEOs

THROUGH: Patricia Babcock, Deputy Secretary *Patricia Babcock*

FROM: Patricia Medlock, Assistant Secretary of Child Welfare *PM*
Taylor M. Hatch, Assistant Secretary of Economic Self-Sufficiency *Taylor Hatch*

SUBJECT: Guidance to incorporate Office of Economic Self-Sufficiency Program Employees to Participate in the Office of Child Welfare Multidisciplinary Staffing Process

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide implementation guidance for statewide collaboration between the Office of Child Welfare (OCW) and the Economic Self-Sufficiency (ESS) Program to reduce families in crisis. This guidance will include direction for ESS employees to assist in OCW's multidisciplinary staffing process.

BACKGROUND: The Office of Child Welfare and the Office of Economic Self-Sufficiency have committed to increase collaboration efforts to strengthen services and resources provided to families in need. To ensure the Department of Children and Families is fulfilling its mission, Secretary Poppell has established that the agency will reduce the number of families in crisis from ~ 380,538 to ~ 308,370 by June 30, 2021, by optimizing systems integration and service coordination.

Over the years, our programs have worked together locally to support Florida's families; however, an ever-increasing shared client base makes this need to collaborate all the more critical. ESS can help individuals and families by determining eligibility for food, cash and medical assistance. Additionally, ESS can provide care coordination and case management to better understand our customers barriers to economic independence. With this information, ESS will work with the client, other state agencies and local partners to help resolve and remove these barriers. These services can be used to allow a family to safely remain together and support reunification. Stronger service coordination efforts between both programs will allow us to provide supportive services earlier to families in crisis, increase our prevention contacts, and decrease re-entry into the child welfare system.

ACTION REQUIRED: Effective immediately, each Region should develop a process for implementing participation of ESS team members as standing members of the multidisciplinary staffing team on an ongoing basis to be fully implemented by November 22, 2019. This process should enhance collaboration and communication between both programs.

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Mission: Work in Partnership with Local Communities to Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

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CONTACT INFORMATION: For additional questions or clarification regarding this memorandum, please contact Ginger Griffeth via email at Ginger.Griffeth@myflfamilies.com or via phone at 850-717-4654.

cc:

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Center for Child Welfare