

Safety Methodology Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

30-Day Visit

Practice Area: Case Management

Question	Policy
The 30 day visit done by case management will be done at which home? For example, if the child lives with the mother but the case plan and FFA-Ongoing is for the father, where will the visit be done?	Visits every 30 days must occur with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child in their current placement • Caregiver of the child • Parent(s) who are focus of FFA and case plan

Case Plans

Practice Area: Case Management

Question	Policy
After a case plan has been approved in FSFN and by the court, can it be updated if new impending danger threats are identified (then obviously filed with court and approved again when court accepts)?	Yes, new FSFN functionality supports modifying case plans after they have been approved by the court through the use of case plan worksheets.
When case plan outcomes are typed in FSFN, they show up on the JR. Is there a way to have them show up on the Case Plan when it is printed? They currently do not show up in the Case plan.	Yes the outcomes will show up on the Case Plan.
Will the case plan in FSFN still have the copy and paste functionality (from the previous case plan)?	Yes, the Case Plan template is launched from the legal module and pulls in the most recent information from the most current FFA-Ongoing/Progress Update and Case Plan worksheets. This allows you to make modifications and update the tools and then launch the case plan template, having it dynamically update to include your most recent information.
Since the case plan will build from FSFN, will there be a translate option so one can be generated for a Spanish or Creole speaking family as it's very time consuming for the Dept. or Case Manager to draft a case plan in the families primary language?	No, currently, there is not an option to translate the case plan from FSFN.
Chapter 39 currently requires the case plan to be completed by 60 days from removal, so depending on how long it takes the CPI to complete the FFA and make the safe/unsafe decision, and depending on the sequence of hearings ordered by the judge, DCMs may be unable to complete the FFA-Ongoing in time to know what should be in the case plan based on the danger threats and PC's/Child Needs, etc... Also, if mediation is	The FFA-Investigation should be completed within 14 days of the identification of present danger and should be prioritized for transfer upon the identification of impending danger (child being determined to be unsafe). The FFA-ongoing should be completed within 30 days of case transfer to support the timely completion of the case planning process.

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ordered, we would be developing a case plan without being able to complete any of the FFA.	
When you have two FFAs (two parents, two households) how does that go into one case plan?	FSFN functionality supports the merging of case plan worksheets that are associated with separate FFAs.
Will we still be required to complete a case plan on non-judicial cases?	Yes, we will still do a case plan on non-judicial cases. The case plan is the road map for achieving adequate caregiver protective capacities.

Child Strength and Needs

Practice Area: Hotline and Investigations

Question	Policy
Will the Child Needs Assessment offer “N/A” as a response on age specific questions?	An “N/A” option is not available for age specific questions in the Child Needs Assessment. The Child Needs that don’t apply due to age restrictions will be disabled and will not allow for a rated selection to be made.

Commencement

Practice Area: Investigations

Question	Policy
Will commencement time frames change?	Yes, the amended rule, 65C-29 defines an immediate response “as soon as possible, but no more than (4) hours.” Time begins at the time the report is transmitted to the CPI for investigation. Until the amended rule is published, current time frames will apply.

Conditions for Return

Practice Area: Investigations and Case Management

Question	Policy
Where will Conditions for Return be documented?	Conditions of return will be documented in the FFA-Investigation, FFA-On-going and Progress Updates under the Safety Summary and Planning tab.

Case /Contact Notes

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Practice Area: Investigations and Case Management

Question	Policy
What are the requirements for the documentation of contact notes?	Case/contact notes should be a brief synopsis of key information gathered and should be entered within 2 working days of the contact. The entries should be used to inform your assessment of family functioning. New functionality allows contact/case notes to be scanned into the system and attached to the case note in FSFN.

Danger Threats

Practice Area: Case Management

Question	Policy
Will the danger statement and family strategy only go on the FFA? Or will it also display in the Case plan or JR?	The danger statement and the family goal will appear on the case plan. Only the danger statement and identified barriers will appear in the Judicial review. The other elements of the family change strategy (ideas for change and barriers) will be consistently re-evaluated and only displayed in the FFA-Ongoing and Progress Update.
Remove the numbers on danger threats.	The numbers have been removed on all newly developed curricula, the DCF Reference Guide, and in the FSFN tools for the Family Functioning Assessment.
Some concern on danger threat related to child showing serious emotional symptoms as to how it relates to children, who are ungovernable, behaviorally disordered or otherwise problematic due to their own behavior (Child shows serious emotional symptoms requiring intervention and/or lacks behavioral control and/or exhibits self-destructive behavior that parent/legal guardian/caregiver is unwilling or unable to manage.) Examples: Anorexic child who refuse to eat despite the parents' attempts to get help the child is still in danger; a diabetic teen who refuses insulin treatment or medications	<p>The focus of the FFA assessment is whether the parent has the requisite caregiver protective capacities to manage the child's behavior. The caregiver protective capacities assessed would include whether in response to the child's behavior the parent takes action (which includes being assertive and responsive, having adequate energy, and using resources to meet basic needs); demonstrates adequate skill to fulfill caregiver responsibilities; is adaptive; has a history of protecting; is self-aware (understanding the relationship between their own actions and results for children; what they do and the effect on the child); caregiver is intellectually able/capable; caregiver recognizes and understands threats to the child; recognizes the child's needs; understands his/her protective role; plans and is able to articulate a plan to protect child; is tolerant as a caregiver; etc.</p> <p>If all of the protective capacities are evident as supported by information gathered and validated, there would not be any basis for determining that the child is unsafe as the family would know how to use resources including the use of crisis oriented medical or mental health care when needed.</p>
The definition of Vulnerable Child on the Danger Threat Guide indicates that a Vulnerable Child is one who is 0-6 years old; however past trainings have indicated the child has to be vulnerable to the situation. Some clarification on this is needed. Which one is correct?	Both age and situation should be assessed when determining if a child is vulnerable. All family conditions and other information gathered should be reconciled to determine if you have a vulnerable child.

Dependency Petition

Practice Area: Investigations and Case Management

Safety Methodology Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Question	Policy
Can the department file for dependency when a family arrangement, established in response to present danger, is still necessary when impending danger has been determined?	Yes, the department may file for dependency when a family arrangement is in place and impending danger has been determined.
When a private petition is filed, is a FFA-Ongoing created? Who creates the FFA-Ongoing?	Case Management staff will have the ability to create an FFA-Ongoing.

Case Transfer

Practice Area: Investigations and Case Management

Question	Policy
Will the Early Service Interventions (ESI) process change?	Yes the case transfer process will change. Case transfer will occur when a FFA-investigation is completed and the child is determined to be unsafe.

Family-designated Arrangements

Practice Area: Investigations and Case Management

Question	Policy
Where there is a family arrangement made to place a child with family members, is there a funding source to assist with care of the child?	There are no new funding sources available to relatives or non-relatives who provide an out-of-home family arrangement for a child. They may be eligible for TANF/Cash assistance or one time CBC flexible funds support upon approval. The Relative Caregiver Program (RCP) is an option for all relative placements who meet the criteria (removal and placement by DCF) outlined in rule and statute. The RCP provides Medicaid for the child and some Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA).
When a family identifies their own placement arrangement for a child in response to present or impending danger, will a background check and home study still be required?	Yes, family-designated caregivers must have a complete local, state and national criminal history and abuse history background checks prior to a child's placement.

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<p>There are concerns that the wording on out-of-home family arrangements needs to be carefully considered. If the plan does not work and we need to shelter, the courts will say that we already sheltered by doing an out of home family arrangement and were past our 24 hour time frame.</p>	<p>It is not a shelter if it was a plan the family came up with. If we determine there is present or impending danger and the family makes arrangements to have the child stay elsewhere <i>temporarily</i>, we can make this the safety plan and must monitor it daily. If things occur and this plan can no longer work, then we will be able to show reasonable efforts when we do shelter.</p>
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Family Engagement

Practice Area: Investigations and Case Management

Question	Policy
<p>How to engage families when the protocol is to bring police on all contacts with families?</p>	<p>The investigator has the lead role for conducting the investigation and the manner in which the family is approached. Having a law enforcement office accompany the investigator does not preclude the use of engagement skills and strategies. As part of the opening interview with the family, the investigator should explain any local protocols that are followed for all investigations. It should be noted that curriculum and training for law enforcement officers includes the same engagement skills and expectations.</p>

Family Functioning Assessment (FFA) - Investigations

Practice Area: Investigations

Question	Policy
Will supervisors be able to send FFA back to CPI or CM for further work?	YES
There is a question regarding adding the non-custodial parent on the abuse and neglect petition. The concern was related to the FFA not including information about the non-custodial parent.	There will be new requirements for conducting an “Other parent home assessment” when a non-maltreating/non-custodial parent is being considered for placement. This assessment will be different from an FFA and will serve the purpose of determining if the other parent can be expected to provide responsible care and be aligned with the safety plan established. The new Case Plan Worksheet functionality in FSFN allows non-custodial parents to be added to the case plan.
If we have 2 abuse reports for a family, one for mom's home and one for dad's home, we must do 2 separate FFAs. Will both cases be under the same case shell which is currently named after the mother? Or will there be 2 separate case shells?	The CPI will create separate FFAs for each household and both would appear under the same case shell named after the mother.
Will the FFA be locked at certain points so that edits can no longer be made?	Yes, supervisors will be able to edit FFAs as long as the FFA is active. For investigations the FFA will be locked when the investigation is approved by the supervisor.
Will FFA be filed in court?	Yes, the FFA will be filed in court when judicial intervention is required and will be part of discovery and when deemed acceptable by the judiciary can be filed in place of a PDS.
What are the requirements for non-household investigations?	<p>FFAs are not completed for a non-household investigation. The requirements for a non-household investigation are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pre-commencement activities; • completing all record checks, review all background information provided by the Hotline and available in FSFN or other databases; • contact the reporter if additional information is needed Commencement activities; • contact the alleged child victim, the non-household alleged perpetrator Parent/legal guardian; and • Complete Present Danger Assessment - Upon completion of the Present Danger Assessment and supervisory consultation, the supervisor may close the investigation with no further investigative activities recommended. <p>The ongoing safety of the child is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardians and as such, it is incumbent upon the investigator to discuss and plan with the parent/legal guardian for the child’s safety and to determine the parent/legal guardian’s responsibility to act.</p>

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	The investigator shall reach a finding regarding the allegations and maltreatment related to the non-household investigation on the non-household alleged perpetrator's household and proceed with closing the investigation.
How are split cases handled when everyone is in the same household?	We must determine if the allegations in the home apply to only one family or both families. If there are victims and alleged perpetrators in both families then it would be handled like a companion case with 2 FFAs, one for each family. If not, then only one FFA is needed. There is no specific caregiver who is evaluated more than the other when they all live in the same home. They all are assessed for the same protective capacities.
Do we involve non-maltreating parents in the FFA?	If they reside in the same home, they are included in the FFA because they are a caregiver in the home. If they reside separately, they would not be added into the FFA; however, should be contacted regarding the report as a collateral.
What are the times frames for completing the FFA when present danger is identified?	For investigations, the timeframe established in the amended 65C-29 is 14 days for completing an FFA once present danger is determined. The law continues to allow up to 60 days for an investigation to be completed. However, given the need for active management and oversight of a safety plan in response to present danger, it is imperative for the investigator to complete information gathering in an expedited manner (within 14 days) in order to determine whether an ongoing safety plan to manage impending danger is needed and a case plan to address diminished caregiver protective capacities.

Family Functioning Assessment (FFA) On-going – Case Management

Practice Area: Case Management

Question	Policy
If there is an open services case with an open FFA-Ongoing, do we start a new FFA if a new intake comes in? If we do a new FFA on the new intake does it carry over to case management? How will a new investigation on an on-going case be handled?	A new investigation on an on-going services case will require the completion of a new FFA Investigations. The case manager will receive a FSFN generated alert that a new investigation is being conducted. The CPI and the case manager will be expected to closely collaborate in the development of the new FFA Investigations as the case manager will know the current status of child functioning, adult functioning, parenting approach, and disciplinary practices. The investigator will be expected to review what was previously learned about the family in past investigations, including any investigations completed using the FFA Investigations.
When will case managers be required to scale protective capacities?	Case managers will be required to scale protective capacities the first time the FFA-Ongoing is created and every 3 months or at critical junctures thereafter in a Progress Update.
For scaling of Caregiver Protective Capacities in the FFA-Ongoing, will you be able to see the historical scaling's of Caregiver Protective Capacities and Child Needs scaling?	Yes. In addition, the case manager will be able to evaluate client progress (daily, monthly, etc.) and when a Progress Evaluation is created, it will automatically pull in previous progress evaluation information.

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Will information from the FFA populate the Unified Home Study?	No; however, child functioning and child strengths/needs information should match descriptions of child needs.
In the FFA-Ongoing Motivation for Change section are there going to be buttons/selections for relapse?	The FFA-Ongoing does have a section available for relapse to be selected. This is located on the Protective Capacity Analysis and Family Change Strategy tab in the FFA-Ongoing.
Adoption workers currently use the family assessment tool. Will this change to the FFA and will the FFA-Ongoing transfer over to the adoptions worker? Will they only be working in the child functioning domain?	Yes, the FFA will replace the family assessment tool. Yes, the adoption workers will use the FFA-Ongoing and the Progress Update to assess child functioning and child needs.
Do we stop doing the FFA-Ongoing when the goal of reunification is eliminated? What does this process look like?	The FFA-Ongoing will continue; however, some parts will not be assessed, i.e. Protective Capacities, Motivation for Change, etc. Other parts will continue to be assessed, i.e... Child's Needs, Child Functioning, etc.
When a family is under Permanent guardianship and the court has been notified to re-open supervision, do case managers use the old FFA from previous involvement or create a new one? Who has the ability to do so?	Case managers have the ability to re-open supervision, and should reflect this action in an updated FFA-Ongoing and a Progress Update as applicable.
If we do a safety plan and someone moves in the home as a informal safety service provider will they need to be added to the FFA and assessed as a household member in a caretaking role through the normal course of assessment?	An individual serving as an informal safety service moving into the home is intended to be a temporary safety action. Therefore, the individual would not be considered a household member. They would, however, need to be addressed in the FFA-Ongoing/ Progress Update in terms of the effectiveness of the safety plan in managing the danger threat - their role, observations, and input as part of measuring the effectiveness of the safety plan.

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<p>Can and should multiple FFA “strings” (for lack of a better term, “string” is being used to describe the series of FFAs related to the same intake) exist in a services case? For example, Intake “A” has been investigated and transferred to case management with the <i>Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment “A”</i> completed and approved. The case manager completes the <i>Family Functioning Assessment – Ongoing</i> and subsequent <i>Progress Updates</i> for Intake “A”. While still providing services to the family a new intake, Intake “B” is received. The CPI completes the <i>Information Collection and Family Functioning Assessment</i> for Intake “B”; does case management need to complete a <i>Family Functioning Assessment – Ongoing</i> (and subsequent <i>Progress Updates</i>) for Intake “B” or may the case manager update the case from a <i>Progress Update</i> for Intake “A” and add the particulars from Intake “B” to avoid two sets or “strings” of FFAs running concurrently in a case?</p>	<p>The case manager would incorporate the information from Intake “B” into there already existing “string” of FFA – Ongoing and Progress Updates. They should not create a new “set” of FFA – Ongoing and Progress Updates. (OCW, 12/11/15)</p>
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Family Functioning Assessment (FFA) - General Guidance

Practice Area: Investigations or Case Management

Question	Policy
<p>Will the FFA-Investigation, FFA-Ongoing and Progress Update be retained as history or will the FFA have to be updated the way the current Family Assessment is?</p>	<p>Each FFA, FFA-Ongoing, and progress update tool will be retained as history as a stand-alone document as created and approved. In addition, the most recent tool will pre-fill into the new tool being created; carrying forward the most recent historical information to be considered/reviewed to inform the most updated analysis as long as the case remains open.</p>
<p>Can you copy information that has not changed from a prior FFA?</p>	<p>Information in previous assessment tools can be cut and pasted into new version of the assessment tools for information that does not pre-fill forward (for instance closed investigation with an FFA-investigation a month ago).</p>

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<p>Our current practice regarding TPR is for the other parent to also be offered services and a case plan. Based on transformation, if they are a non-offending caregiver and we have no allegations against them, we would not be doing an FFA on the other parent's home, and they would not be part of a case plan. So what happens if the other parent does not want to be or cannot be a placement for the children, and we plan to TPR the primary caregiver? The current policy is that we would have to TPR the other (non-offending) parent as well so that the children are eligible for adoption. There were many questions regarding this issue especially if the other parent is in jail/prison.</p>	<p>Pursuant to s. 39.806, F.S. there are several grounds to terminate parental rights. The case manager must always staff the case with a CLS attorney to determine the most appropriate grounds for TPR.</p>
<p>If someone moves into the home during ongoing services, would we add them to the case; would the system require us to assess their adult functioning, parenting, parenting general and caregiver protective capacity?</p>	<p>Yes, if someone moves into the home and assumes a caregiver role, we would add them to the case and assess adult, parenting and disciplinary practices and caregiver protective capacities.</p>
<p>Will the information in the FFA transfer over and pre populate in the Pre-dispositional Study (PDS) and Case Plan?</p>	<p>Yes. For the elements in the Pre-dispositional Study (PDS) that correspond to the FFA, the PDS says "Refer to FFA." The expectation is that the FFA will be attached to the PDS and submitted to the Court. The Danger Statement and portions of the Family Strategy will pre-populate the Case Plan. Other information, such as Child Functioning, Adult Functioning, Parenting Domains, etc. are available on the Case Plan Worksheet as a reference to support the completion of the Case Plan.</p>
<p>What, if any, historical information from the most recent FFA will populate into a new intake? What historical information will populate into the FFA-Ongoing? Can any of the information be edited?</p>	<p>A new FFA is completed when there is a new intake. Historical information from a separate investigation will not populate into a new investigation. A FFA-Ongoing can be associated/prefilled from an Investigation with an associated FFA-Investigation within the FSFN Case (open or closed). The information would be editable.</p>
<p>Why aren't the caregiver protective capacities numbered in the reference guide and on tools to help in ease of discussing (refer by #). They feel that consideration was not taken into account for people in the field and the ease in discussion if they were numbered.</p>	<p>The design team decided to move away from numbering because there was concern that the numbering of protective capacities could be translated in the field into interpretations of ranking/priority.</p>
<p>Why is the character space limited in the FFA?</p>	<p>The system requires a character limit for all text boxes. In December 2013, a change request was submitted to substantially increase the characters for the FFA, FFA-ongoing, Progress Update and Case Plan Worksheets. This change request has been given the highest priority and will likely require an "emergency" build. Until this issue has been fixed, users should use the FFA as intended and add any additional information in a word document and</p>

Safety Methodology Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

	scan it into the file cabinet in FSFN.
What will happen to a user's open cases/investigations when they implement the new Safety Decision Making Methodology?	Staff will receive a new FSFN profile that will allow them to take new cases under the Methodology. Investigations initiated using the CSA will be completed using the CSA. Case Managers have the option of continuing to use the current Family Assessment or converting a case to the new assessment tools.

Foster Homes

Practice Area: Investigations or Case Management

Question	Policy
Will abuse reports on foster homes be considered institutional cases? The class felt that an FFA would be warranted, even on foster homes.	Investigations conducted on a foster home will continue to be handled as an institutional investigation. The Safety Methodology was not intended to be applied to institutional investigation.

FSFN

Practice Area: Investigations or Case Management

Question	Policy
When will there be FSFN enhancements to support Transformation (Safety Methodology)?	There are numerous enhancements to support the Safety Methodology. These enhancements are outlined in correspondence to the Regional Managing Directors and can be accessed at the Center for Child Welfare: http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/HorizontalTab/DCFPolicyMemo.shtml
Who can use the new safety methodology tools in FSFN?	Use of the new Safety Methodology FSFN tools is currently limited to Phase-One Implementation sites. As additional sites are added, the functionality will become available to those sites as well.

Hotline Reports

Practice Area: Hotline

Question	Policy
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Safety Methodology Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Will reports submitted via Instant Messaging, e-mail or web be screened using same standards?	Yes, the hotline counselor will apply the same information sufficiency criteria to reports that come in other ways. If a reporter name and contact information is not provided and the hotline counselor is unable to gather enough information to meet threshold criteria for initiating an investigation intake, the report will be screened out.
Will the hotline assign reports differently based on new definition of household?	Yes the hotline will be assigning intakes based on the location of the household where the alleged perpetrator resides. In addition, only the household of the alleged perpetrator will be investigated. The date for this change is estimated to be early 2014.
Will hotline “e-file” the audio recording of the call so that CPI, in the future, can hear it?	Yes, this new functionality is a pending system enhancement. This will be developed and will be available.
What FSFN Reports are available?	The rollout of the new FSFN functionality brings the ability to run several types of reports. A full list of available reports is detailed via “How Do I Guides.” These guides are located at the Center for Child Welfare website: http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/FSFN/FSFNactivation.shtml

Household Members

Practice Area: Investigations or Case Management

Question	Policy
If there is a roommate in the home that provides no care for the child would we have to assess their caregiver protective capacity (CPC) as well in FSFN?	No, the CPI or case manager will only assess caregiver protective capacities on subjects who are in a significant caregiver role for the child.

Information Collection Protocol

Practice Area: Investigations

Question	Policy
The “Information collection protocol” in training recommends that parents be interviewed first. Will this be required?	This is incorrect. The information collection protocol does not recommend the parents be <u>interviewed</u> first. The child should be interviewed first.

Investigations - Other

Practice Area: Investigations

Question	Policy
What are the requirements for “other” investigations (when a person not responsible for care of child is alleged perpetrator)?	“Other” subtypes do not require an FFA. They will be conducted in the same manner that investigations are currently completed. There will be maltreatment findings but a family functioning assessment will not be required. This also includes Human Trafficking cases --CSEC, where the alleged perpetrator is not a parent or legal guardian.

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<p>Will the initial role of the “maltreating caregiver” on an initial intake still be “A/P” or “Alleged Perpetrator?” The language does not appear to align with the model.</p>	<p>Yes, all Intakes will still have the role of “A/P” or alleged perpetrator.</p>
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Investigative Summary

Practice Area: Investigations

Question	Policy
<p>Why is the Investigative Summary remaining when the FFA covers all the information regarding the findings and other items in the Investigative Summary? This seems like duplicative work.</p>	<p>The investigative summary is not duplicative in situations where the investigation is an “Other” investigation an FFA is optional. If an FFA is not completed, the Investigative Summary will need to be developed by the CPI. In investigations that require an FFA, the information from Domain 1 (Nature and Extent of Maltreatment) in the FFA will automatically populate the Investigative Summary.</p>

Jurisdiction

Practice Area: Investigations or Children’s Legal Services

Question	Policy
<p>When a victim is determined to be unsafe from a parent in another county (and the incident occurred at that parents’ house) and judicial intervention is needed, is the petition filed in the county where the victim lives or the county where the “perpetrator” lives?</p>	<p>The petition is filed in the county where the perpetrator resides.</p>
<p>Who has jurisdiction of the child in the following scenario? -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have abuse reports and 2 FFAs for a family, one for mom's home and one for dad's home. The parents live in different counties. We determine that the child is unsafe at both homes and judicial action is pursued against both parents. Which court has jurisdiction? 2. Would both parents have a case plan and court in their respective counties? 3. If so, which court has jurisdiction over the child once he is adjudicated dependent? 4. Also, would there be 2 primary case managers - one for mom and one for dad? If so, who would be responsible for 	<p>Regarding court jurisdiction:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Either or both courts would have jurisdiction since there are two perpetrators of abuse. 2. Both parents in this situation would have case plans. 3. Jurisdiction attaches wherever the petition is filed. 4. The primary caseworker would be the case worker located in the county the petition was filed.

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ensuring the child is seen each month?	
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Non-custodial Parent

Practice Area: Investigations or Case Management

Question	Policy
If non-custodial parents are not included on the FFA as they are not household members, how will they be assessed and added to the case plan?	Non-custodial parents will not be assessed by the case management agency unless the non-custodial parent is being considered for placement. If they are considered for placement, an assessment will be completed using the "Other Parent Home Assessment." If tasks are needed for a non-custodial parent, the case plan has the flexibility to add these tasks.

Out-of Town Inquiry

Practice Area: Investigations

Question	Policy
If a victim lives in one county and the intake goes to another, can or will an O2 be sent to the county the victim lives?	No, a O2 sequence will not be created; an OTI will need to be sent to the county to see the subjects in the other county.

Patently Unfounded

Practice Area: Investigations

Question	Policy
More information is needed on the finding of Patently Unfounded. What does Patently Unfounded actually mean and what cases would this apply to?	This finding is used when the information reported was completely erroneous and inaccurate and no maltreatment occurred, there is no other identified present danger threats, and there are no reported or observed (by the investigator) concerns.

Pre-commencement

Practice Area: Investigations

Question	Policy
How will pre-commencement activities be documented?	Pre-commencement activities should be documented in case notes by the CPI and may be documented by the supervisor in the Supervisor Consultation module by selecting "pre-commencement" in the drop down box in the supervisor consultation module.

Present Danger

Practice Area: Investigations and Case Management

Question	Policy
<p>When we have Present Danger and the Present Danger Plan ends up being a removal, we have 21 days to file the dependency petition. Will the FFA be due prior to that timeframe to determine if impending danger is present, giving us insight on if removal is still warranted? If we determine that there is no impending danger, what will the process look like if we ultimately have a safe child when the present danger plan was removal?</p>	<p>If it is determined that present danger is present and a removal is completed, information collection on the FFA must be done within 14 days. The FFA should be completed prior to filing the dependency petition to ensure all relevant information is presented to the court. If impending danger is not present a staffing will be held to discuss dismissing the dependency action and all parties will work as diligently as possible to ensure reunification is done quickly, while maintaining integrity to the Methodology.</p>

Referrals for Services

Practice Area: Investigations or Case Management

Question	Policy
<p>Can referrals be made prior to the case plan? when? and which ones?</p>	<p>Crisis intervention services are related to safety management services and are to be provided in the interim period during the completion of the FFA. Treatment services occur after complete assessment when the case is transferred to the CBC for ongoing services. Such treatment happens after the FFA is completed and is part of the case plan development. (Feedback from the rules workshop was that we need to allow for the provision of crisis-oriented treatment or treatment when parent is willing, ready and treatment is available.)</p> <p>Generally, until the FFA-ongoing is completed we will not have a true understanding of diminished caregiver protective capacities to refer the parent to treatment; however, in crisis situations, whenever a parent is requesting immediate intervention (i.e. substance abuse intervention) the referral can be made.</p>

Remote Data Collection

Practice Area: Investigations or Case Management

Question	Policy
There was a question brought up about the use of Remote Data Capture by one of the CBCs and whether that would change concerning the documentation of information.	The RDC application will continue to function as currently designed without modification.

Risk Assessment

Practice Area: Investigations

Question	Policy
What is the purpose of the risk assessment after safety determination has been made?	The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify which families, based on a actuarial risk score, should be prioritized for prevention/ family support services.,
On the risk assessment, the directions indicate the assessment is composed of two indices. (neglect/abuse) Under N1 there is an asterisk clarifying some of the allegations require evaluation of information and may be classified as either neglect or abuse dependent upon the circumstances. Choose the most appropriate and only score one index. Does this mean we pick either N1 or A1 and only score? Do we complete both indices columns and take the higher column number for the total risk score?	Both columns must be completed and the higher of the 2 scores is the one used for the final risk classification. The asterisk directives are saying to determine whether the current report is for abuse or neglect and mark the appropriate box (N1 or A1) for that question only.

Safety Management

Practice Area: Investigations or Case Management

Question	Policy
What happens in an on-going services case when an in-home safety plan is no longer viable to ensure for child safety?	When strengthening an in-home safety plan is no longer possible, the case manager is responsible for working with the CPI and CLS to effect an out-of-home placement.

Safety Methodology Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

<p>Who is responsible for safety management and what are the professional certification requirements?</p>	<p>The CPI (fully certified) completes an FFA as a part of the investigation process. The CPI will maintain primary Safety Management responsibilities throughout the course of the Investigation and FFA process. At the conclusion of the Investigation, the CPI will make a determination of whether the child(ren) is safe or unsafe. Case Manager/Child Welfare Professional (fully certified) will assume primary safety management responsibilities and will initiate the FFA-Ongoing to continue the assessment of protective capacities and the development of a case plan.</p> <p>This is not optional. If the determination is safe, the community has the flexibility to determine the most appropriate course of action for the family. This is community driven and the training requirements for the person responsible for this family must be defined by the CBC Lead Agency. If the family is “served” by the CBC, an open FSN case will be maintained and will identify the child as a child receiving Family Support Services throughout the duration of the involvement. If at any point during the life of the case, present or impending danger is identified, a safety plan to control for the threats will be developed.</p> <p>The certified Child Welfare Professional (as identified above) will manage the safety plan and will leverage informal or formal safety service providers to carry out the specific actions within the safety plan. These actions can be assumed by non-certified individuals fully capable of carrying out the specific task. Actually, we encourage our safety managers (certified Child Welfare Professionals) to look for these tasks to be carried out by natural/informal supports such as a relative, neighbor or church connection. These individuals are not certified but are probably the best equipped to carry out the specific tasks and support the family on an ongoing basis.</p>
<p>Who is responsible for safety plans?</p>	<p>The CPI is responsible for monitoring a safety plan up until the case is transferred to case management. Once the case is transferred to case management, the case manager takes on this responsibility.</p>
<p>Will there be a standard, statewide menu of safety plan services?</p>	<p>No, there will not be a statewide list of safety management services that can be used in safety plans due to the individual needs in each Region/Circuit. Regions/Circuits should create a list of specific services available to meet local needs.</p>
<p>Must the professional responsible for oversight of the safety plan be certified?</p>	<p>The <u>oversight</u> of the safety plan will always be the responsibility of the primary CPI or Case Manager (certification is required to maintain employment). At times the CPI or Case Manager may utilize outside formal or informal supports to assist with safety services/actions of the safety plan.</p>
<p>Who must sign safety plans?</p>	<p>Participants of the safety plan, parents/legal guardians, informal supports and the supervisor. The participants who have a task, who have a responsibility in managing the danger threat or augmenting the diminished parental protective capacity to the extent that such task allows for the child to remain home with the PD or ID Safety Plan.</p>
<p>Will safety plan meetings be required after a plan for present danger is put in place?</p>	<p>No, safety plan conferences (as they are called in the rule and methodology) will not be required after a plan for present danger has been put in place; however, safety planning conferences can be held at any time to update or revise a safety plan or address a particular issue that has surfaced since the initial plan was implemented and are strongly encouraged.</p>

Safety Methodology Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Can an investigation or case be closed with an open safety plan?	Investigations can be closed with an open safety plan only if the case has been successfully transferred to case management for ongoing services. A case management case cannot be closed with an open safety plan. An investigation cannot be closed with an open safety plan if the case is not being transferred to case management.
Since safety plans (present and impending) are going to be left with our families will the forms be made across the state in a carbon copy version?	No, this will be left to the discretion of each region.
If safety plans do not have specific actions/tasks for parents to protect their children, the courts will rule it is insufficient because courts require the parents to be accountable for the tasks in the plan in order for the court to be able to enforce it.	The parents may have some actions/tasks. However, if there are not any assigned tasks or actions, it is the parent's responsibility to cooperate with the plan.
How much information can we give safety service providers without violating confidentiality? If we have extended family members as part of our safety plan, we would need to explain why we are utilizing them and for what purpose. In doing this, we would often need to give them information regarding the issues in the family. Does this violate any confidentiality policies?	No, this does not violate confidentiality. In some cases, we will be using service providers or case managers as our safety providers. They already have access to the family's information due to the treatment and services they are providing that were referred by the department. If we use family members, friends, neighbors, etc. as safety providers, then these people would have been identified by the family themselves. If the family has identified specific people to be part of the safety plan, they are in essence allowing these people to be privy to their home situation. A good option would be for workers to encourage the parents to have frank conversations with those designated to be part of the safety plan. This will help the family reach out to their supports and give the safety providers information.
Policy clarification re: removal by CPI and CBC related to safety plan. How does the CPI get back in if investigation is closed and the safety plan disrupts?	<p>The hotline should only be called when there is a new danger threat that must be investigated. An insufficient safety plan that was created to manage specific danger threats is not a reason to call the hotline.</p> <p>The new procedures will affirm that investigators must become involved, even when the investigation is closed. When the case manager has determined there are no other actions possible to strengthen an in-home safety plan and no other non-judicial means can be used to keep the child safe, they must act immediately to shelter the child by involving the CPI. There are circuits currently practicing in this manner. Case managers are not authorized to take children into custody. A child protection investigator must be called to the home to assist the case manager in developing a Judicial out of home safety plan to protect the child. Both the investigator and the case manager will collaborate in staffing the case with CLS to develop a placement plan and petition for sheltering the child.</p>
Is the state working on any plans to contract safety service providers or will that be up to the regions/circuits?	It is up to the regions to determine how they will proceed with safety providers. Each circuit will handle with this locally.

Safety Methodology Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

<p>Safety Plan document revisions: Add CPI (or whoever is managing/oversight for plan) and their supervisor contact information including phone numbers. Addition of how safety plan providers have been deemed sufficient, have capacity to complete their role. Use family friendly terms and language.</p>	<p>These changes have been noted as requests for possible future enhancements. Use of family friendly terms and language should be covered in pre-service and/or in-service training.</p>
<p>Rename safety plan as present danger plan or protective plan to provide clarity Participants found the use of the same term to describe the actions and time within the process as confusing as well as raised concerns about the transfer of the case to CBC's at the point of present danger if not delineated.</p>	<p>The final Safety Plan template asks for the purpose of the plan with the following two choices: Dropdown List Values: -Present Danger Plan -Impending Danger Safety Plan Trainers should use the same terminology in training.</p>
<p>When answering no to any of the five safety analysis questions, does that indicate we are doing a court ordered removal?</p>	<p>Answering no to any of the five safety analysis questions does not mean that we would automatically be doing a court ordered removal. Out of Home plans can also be arranged by the family with no judicial intervention.</p>
<p>Can you have a safe child and unsafe child in the same home?</p>	<p>Yes you can. The safety determination is made for each separate child in FFA.</p>

Special Condition Referrals

Practice Area: Hotline

Question	Policy
<p>Will department still accept Special Condition Referrals?</p>	<p>Yes, the department will continue to accept Special Condition prevention referrals when the Safety Methodology is in place. This is not changing. The four types of Special Conditions referrals are: Parent in Need of Assistance (PNA), Child on Child Sexual Abuse, Caregiver Unavailable and Foster Care Referral (foster home licensing issue).</p>

Supervisory Consultations

Practice Area: Investigations and Case Management

Question	Policy
<p>What requires supervisor approval in FSFN system?</p>	<p>Completed FFA-Investigation and Investigation closure, Supervisor Consultations throughout our work with a family, FFA-Ongoing (overall), Case Plan (overall), Progress Update (overall), Case closure, and Unified Home study.</p>

Safety Methodology Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

<p>What are the timeframes for supervisory consultations?</p>	<p>The initial supervisory consultation is required in all investigations within 5 days of receiving the intake. A telephone consultation such as a discussion from the home or field with a supervisor about present danger and/or safety actions will meet this requirement.</p>
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Safety Methodology Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Training

Practice Area: Hotline

Question	Policy
When will the safety methodology be incorporated into the pre-service curriculum?	The new pre-service curriculum will be available on or before June 2014. In the meantime, the current in-service training modules for the safety methodology have been integrated into the current pre-service curriculum.
Will CPI and Case Managers be trained together in Pre-Service again or will it be divided out for program specific areas like it is now with only certain topic areas being required for each program area?	There will be a “core” curriculum during which CPIs and Case Managers may be trained together. Regions and CBCs have the flexibility to combine the case manager and CPI core track. There will then be specialty tracks.
When will the Florida Certification Board revise the test?	The certification exam has been updated.
Will there be training for Children’s Legal Services (CLS)?	CLS will be expected to participate in the Safety Practice Expert training, supervisory training or frontline training to learn the core constructs. In addition, CLS is developing additional modules that pertain to legal issues related to the implementation of the safety methodology. All staff will be expected to know, understand and utilize the safety language and constructs.
How will stakeholders be trained in the model, so that they will understand why DCF is doing things differently?	Each region is responsible for an implementation plan which does include training and orientation of all internal and external stakeholders
There is a need for additional interviewing skill development, including training, for front line staff.	There is a statewide plan for providing additional in-service training around interviewing skills through the implementation consulting services contract with USF. It is strongly encouraged and recommended to the extent that regions have the resources to offer additional interviewing skills training and coaching to current staff. The new pre-service curriculum to be available on or before June, 2014 will have much more focus and material relevant to interviewing skills.

Other

Practice Area: Investigations or Case Management

Question	Policy
Will the Pre-dispositional Study still exist?	Yes, it will remain up to each Circuit to determine if the PDS is completed by CPI, Case Management, or both.
Use flow chart which displays key decision making through-out the life of a case as a visual aid through-out training	This was a suggestion made to help participants see the big picture of safety decision making, and where they are at any point during the training in terms of the sequence of decisions and actions in any case. A high level flow chart has been created and has been sent to all trainers to print and use. For frontline training, the chart will

Safety Methodology Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

	be further detailed for each sub process (investigations and case management) and included as a poster for use by the trainer at appropriate points during training.
Assessment of existing staff bias and/or values to understand their approach to safety methodology – is there an assessment, how will it be implemented regionally.	The department is implementing a new performance assessment process for all state employees in the fiscal year which began on July 1, 2013. There are new standards which have been developed for investigators and their supervisors which align with the skills identified as necessary for the safety methodology. They are based specifically on the skill set discussed in Module 3 of the Safety Practice Expert and Supervisory curricula. The new performance standards are to be evaluated each quarter.
Are hiring practices going to change to get the right people in the door?	There are currently no statewide initiatives to change hiring practices. This does not preclude any region or other provider from changing their local hiring practices.
Hours of Operation consideration for alternate hours to see children at home.	Child safety, and the work that surrounds assessing and assuring that children are safe, often already takes us out of the “normal working” hours of 8-5. All circuits and sheriff’s offices already operate on a 24 X 7 basis. Interviewing children at school should occur when it is appropriate and necessary given the alleged maltreatment and current assessment of family dynamics. Children should not be interviewed at school for the convenience of the investigator. Best practice would be to always contact parents first before conducting an interview with a child unless there are concerns that the child’s safety will be jeopardized, or the interview compromised.
Will there be extra, ongoing support/staff to assist in managing caseloads at the supervisor level?	There are no current plans to provide extra staff at the supervisor level. For investigations, the Senior CPI and Field Support Supervisor positions have been added to provide some additional support to the supervisor when needed.
Will job titles within CBCs change so that they are consistent across the state?	No, job titles will be at the discretion of CBC although the generic term used in rule and OPM will be “case managers.”
Is there data from the other states who have implemented this model about their successes or weaknesses FL can learn from?	<p>Florida’s Safety Decision Making Methodology is considered a “hybrid model.” There is no other state who has implemented exactly the same hybrid model. The FFA-Investigations, FFA-Ongoing and Progress Update are primarily based on the family functioning assessment developed and promoted by ACTION for Child Protection, Inc. the agency which the Children’s Bureau also contracts with to provide the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services. Initial work on the child strengths and needs component of the FFA-Ongoing was done by Florida’s transformation work groups in collaboration with both ACTION and the Children’s Research Center (the developer of the SDM® tools, based on actuarial risk data). The initial risk tool which investigators would employ at the conclusion of an investigation, after a safety decision has been made, is considered a component of Florida’s hybrid model. The risk tool was developed by OurKids of Miami in conjunction with the Children’s Research Center. As noted, the risk tool does not impact safety determinations.</p> <p>The Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) process is the only consistent evaluation method across all states for purposes of comparing child protection system outcomes. The State of South Dakota is one state which has utilized the safety framework developed in conjunction with ACTION for a number of years, and they make the case that their dedicated implementation efforts regarding the safety framework in response to their poor findings in the first CFSR review is responsible for their most recent federal review and outcomes. The results of</p>

Safety Methodology Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

	South Dakota's second review compared to Florida and the other three largest child welfare jurisdictions are shown in the table below. Further information about the CFSR reviews and process can be found at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/monitoring/child-family-services-reviews
What is the process for roll out?	Each region has an implementation team and in addition, many regions have implementation teams for each circuit. The Regional Champions make recommendations for implementation to the Office of Child Welfare, and the Assistant Secretary for Programs makes the final determination as to who is ready to implement. Safety Methodology training delivery is handled by the Regions and implementation sites will be selected based on their trained capacity in CPI and case management, judicial alignment, and CBC and CLS readiness.