

Updated Foster Care Review Determination Questions

- 1. Is placement necessary as of today?**
Are there concerns of imminent risk/danger that exist for this child that require placement or continued placement as of today?
- 2. Is the current placement appropriate?**
Based on the child's needs, is the approved placement designed to meet the needs? Is the level of care appropriate to meet the child's needs?
- 3. Were there any concerns for the child's safety identified through this review process?**
Did the review information indicate a safety concern for the child that is not being addressed? This includes any concern of safety in the child's life.
- 4. Has the substitute care provider fulfilled all placement expectations to meet the child's needs?**
Did the substitute care provider adhere to the Child Placement Agreement and fulfill all placement expectations to meet the needs of the child?
- 5. Has DCF taken steps to ensure the child's placement resource followed the reasonable and prudent parent standard?**
Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard means the standard characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the health, safety, and best interests of a child while at the same time encouraging the emotional and developmental growth of the child, that a caregiver shall use when determining whether to allow a child in foster care to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities. (See 42 USC 675)
- 6. Has DCF taken steps to ascertain whether the substitute care provider offered child regular opportunities to engage in age or developmentally appropriate activities, working to help develop this child/youth's special talent / interest /gift?**
Has DCF verified with the substitute care provider and child that the child has been offered opportunities to engage in appropriate activities based on his/her age and development?

Age or Developmentally Appropriate Activities means:

 - (i) activities or items that are generally accepted as suitable for children of the same chronological age or level of maturity or that are determined to be developmentally-appropriate for a child, based on the development of cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities that are typical for an age or age group; and
 - (ii) in the case of a specific child, activities or items that are suitable for the child based on the developmental stages attained by the child with respect to the cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities of the child. (See 42 USC 675)
- 7. Has DCF completed the necessary steps to address the needs of the family, during the period under review?**
Did DCF complete tasks required by policy, including but not limited to: meeting with family members; assessing the family's needs and engaging the family in the development of an Action Plan that identifies what must be accomplished in order to attain and maintain child safety, achieve the child's permanency plan and/or to close the case; completing needed

referrals, and pursuing permanency for every child? Has the youth 14+ been given the opportunity to identify 2 persons to assist them in the development of the action plan?

Ensure a birth certificate has been secured for the child. Ensure the father named on the birth certificate, as well as any named father, are assessed and included in Action Planning. A recommendation for paternity testing may be needed based on circumstances.

8a. Did mother/caregiver 1 participate in the Action Plan?

For children under age 18 whose parents maintain parental rights: Did the parent participate/engage in the plan's actions/tasks/services/supports?

8b. Did mother/caregiver 1 demonstrate observable changes to reduce or alleviate danger or need for placement or to achieve desired outcomes?

For children under age 18 whose parents maintain parental rights, did the parent demonstrate behavioral changes as indicated in the Action plan to support achievement of outcomes that promote the safety, permanency and well-being of the child? Did the parent demonstrate the behavioral changes needed to reduce or eliminate the identified needs/dangers/risks?

9a. Did father/caregiver 2 participate in the Action Plan?

For children under age 18 whose parents maintain parental rights, did the parent participate/engage in the plan's actions/tasks/services/supports?

9b. Did father/caregiver 2 demonstrate observable changes to reduce or alleviate danger or need for placement or to achieve desired outcomes?

For children under age 18 whose parents maintain parental rights: Did the parent demonstrate behavioral changes as indicated in the Action plan to support achievement of outcomes that promote the safety, permanency and well-being of the child? Did the parent demonstrate the behavioral changes needed to reduce or eliminate the identified needs/dangers/risks?

10a. Did the child 14 and over participate in the Action Plan?

For children 14 and over, did he/she participate/engage in the plan's actions/tasks/services/supports?

10b. Did the child 14 and over demonstrate observable changes to achieve desired outcomes for his/her safety, permanency and well-being?

Did the child demonstrate behavioral changes, as indicated in the Action Plan, to support achievement of outcomes that promote his/her safety, permanency and well-being?

11. What progress has been made toward achievement of child/young adult's Permanency Plan?

Have necessary actions and essential changes for achieving the child's Permanency Plan been demonstrated? Consider ASFA guidelines: such as reasonable efforts provided in a timely manner to reunify family, filing of TPR when child under age 18 has been in care for 15 of the past 22 months unless exception is documented, timely recruitment, etc.

For children with a goal of adoption, be sure a child permanency, assessment and adoption disclosure information form are current to the child's needs and development. If not, recommend an update be completed.

12. What is the most appropriate Permanency Plan determined by the FCR Panel for the child?

The most appropriate Permanency Plan for the child, as determined by the Foster Care Review Panel. See Permanency Planning Policy for Permanency Plan definitions.

13a. What is the projected date for achieving the child's Permanency Plan?

The date determined by the Foster Care Review Panel to achieve the child's Permanency Plan.

13b. If the child's Permanency Plan from a prior FCR is maintained at this FCR, what was the projected date at the prior FCR?

The Permanency Plan determined to be most appropriate for the child at the prior FCR is being maintained. What date was projected by the FCR panel, at the prior FCR, to achieve the Permanency Plan?

13c. Initial projected date to achieve child's Permanency Plan

The Permanency Plan determined to be most appropriate for the child at the prior FCR is being maintained. What date was initially projected by the FCR panel to achieve this Permanency Plan?

Foster Care Review Policy at a Glance for Volunteers

The purpose of Foster Care Review is to engage key participants in a timely review of the progress being made to address the reason(s) for the Department's involvement with the family and to achieve permanency for the child in the most appropriate setting while meeting the child's needs for safety and well-being. The Foster Care Review provides a periodic review of the provision of services and efforts as well as providing oversight and guidance for the next period of action planning, decision-making and casework. Volunteer Case Reviewers play an integral role in the Foster Care Review panel by bringing a voice from the community and participating in decision making with equal authority during the review process. The Foster Care Review policy has been updated to incorporate several key items already in practice and to reflect existing federal law and practice standards. The Foster Care Review policy implementation date is January 1st, 2019.

Key Policy Updates

- Ensure key participants are invited and given an opportunity to participate:
 - Secondary workers, family resource workers, supervisors, family attorneys and children 14 and up are mandatory invitees
 - Invitation timeframes are shifting to provide more timely notification of reviews
 - Alternative methods of participation when an invitee cannot attend in person
 - Ensures transportation is arranged for children 14 and up
- Emphasizes family engagement/participation in action planning
- Shifts focus from compliance to observable changes in action plan area of focus
- Refines FCR meeting procedures regarding preparation, participation, and follow-up – Clearly defined roles and responsibilities

Updated Determinations

At the completion of the Foster Care Review, the panel makes determinations and may make recommendations. The following determinations have been updated to reflect existing practice, federal law and strengthen practice.

- Whether any concerns for the child's safety were identified during the Review process;
- Whether the child's placement is necessary and appropriate;
- The participation of each individual as follows for the period under review:
 - Did the parent/guardian, child age 14 and older, participate in the Action Plan and did they demonstrate observable changes that reduce or alleviate danger, or the need for placement, or achieve the desired outcomes to improve the child's safety and well-being?
 - Has the Department adequately addressed the needs of the family? and
 - Has the substitute care provider fulfilled all placement expectations to meet the child's needs?
- The extent of progress made toward achievement of the child's permanency plan;
- The child's permanency plan and the projected date by which the plan is to be achieved; and
- Whether the Department has taken steps to:
 - ensure the child's placement resource is following the **reasonable and prudent parent standard**, if applicable; and
 - ascertain whether the child has regular, ongoing opportunities to engage in **age or developmentally appropriate activities** (including by consulting with the child in an age-appropriate manner about the child's opportunities to participate in the activities).