



State of South Carolina Department of Social Services

Child Welfare Policies and Procedures: Chapter 16: Special Topics

Subject:	1651 Concurrent Planning
Authority:	S.C. Code Ann 63-7-1680
Standards:	Guiding Principles and Standards Practice Model (GPS)
Application:	Foster Care Case Managers and Supervisors; Adoption Specialists and Adoption Supervisors
Purpose:	To set forth policy and procedures for concurrent planning by South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) Child Welfare Case Managers and Supervisors. Concurrent planning seeks to reduce the delay in achieving permanency for children and youth in foster care and promote the child's safety and well-being. It involves identifying and working toward the permanency goal of reunification established with the Child and Family Team (CFT) while simultaneously collaborating with the CFT to develop a concurrent permanency goal in the event reunification cannot occur. This includes a permanency goal of custody, guardianship, or termination of parental rights and adoption.
Policy Statement:	Unless otherwise directed by the court, SCDSS Child Welfare case managers collaborate with the Child and Family Team (CFT) to determine the need to establish a concurrent permanency goal within six (6) months following a child's entry into foster care. The concurrent permanency goal must be detailed on the Family Permanency Plan including concerted efforts to achieve the concurrent permanency goal.
Policy Administration:	The policy owners are the Director of Child Welfare Operations and the Director of Permanency Management.
Definitions:	Case consultation: Case consultation (formerly known as "staffing"): A guided discussion between a supervisor and case manager during the case management process intended to: 1. Foster a learning environment aimed at the professional development of the case manager. This includes promoting the development of case manager critical thinking and self-reflection skills; and the support of learning across each core practice skill through the lens of each guiding principle. 2. Focus on the achievement of policy and organizational expectations including those processes required on a specific frequency, the quality of the implementation of casework processes, and context within which services are delivered. 3. Assure the practice and decision-making by the case manager adheres to

SCDSS policy and GPS (Guiding Principles and Standards).

4. Provide a safe environment that supports case manager well-being, identifies and addresses secondary trauma, and encourages self-efficacy.

Child and Family Team (CFT): A group of family members, fictive kin, friends, professionals, and other invested stakeholders who join together to support a family, provide protection, and develop a Family Permanency Plan for the child to achieve safety, permanency and well-being. The team includes the child when developmentally appropriate. Other members of the team are chosen by the family.

Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM): A family-centered, culturally-responsive, goal-oriented, problem solving process that brings together the Child and Family Team to make decisions about the safety, permanency, and well-being of their children in the development of an individualized Family Permanency Plan.

Concerted efforts: The case manager's coordinated and repeated actions designed to achieve Family Permanency Plan goals. For example, case managers must put forth concerted efforts to:

1. locate children, youth and families,
2. gather information from children, youth and families to complete informal and formal assessments,
3. prepare children, youth, and families for important events such as court, Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs), or Foster Care Review Board (FCRB),
4. engage children, youth and families in active participation in case planning and services,
5. determine whether other entities or caregivers have completed requirements such as health care visits or follow up treatment,
6. reinforce family strengths and accomplishments, and;
7. facilitate lasting change.

Concurrent planning: involves the parallel pursuit of an alternative permanency goal that would best serve the child in the event reunification cannot occur.

Family Permanency Plan (formerly case plan/service plan/treatment plan/placement plan): The sole plan developed collaboratively with the family to describe the reasons for SCDSS involvement, and the actions and services required to change behaviors and reduce safety concerns and risks, and promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child and family.

Joint case consultation (formerly known as "staffing"): A guided discussion between a supervisor, case manager and other county, regional, and/or state office personnel (i.e. agency attorney(s), well-being team, placement, etc.), as well as providers and other associated resources that may be needed, based on the circumstances of an individual case.

Procedures:

A. Identifying a Concurrent Permanency Goal

1. The case manager prepares for the 6-month Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM) by gathering and reviewing essential documents to assist the child and family team with establishing a concurrent goal. This includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Birth Certificate(s) and Social Security Information
 - b. Medical Records

	c. Educational Records d. Relative Assessments e. Service Provider Progress Reports for Child and Family 2. The child and family team will establish a concurrent permanency goal at the 6-month child and family team meeting. The child and family team must consider progress made towards the primary permanency goal when establishing the concurrent permanency goal at the 6-month child and family team meeting. 3. The child and family team will consider one of the following concurrent permanency goals to increase timely permanency for child. Refer to Permanency Planning Hearings. a. custody b. guardianship; c. termination of parental rights/adoption, d. another planned permanent living arrangement (APPLA) 4. The case manager documents the concurrent goal on the Family Permanency Plan and details next steps towards achieving the concurrent goal.
B. Concurrent Permanency Goals	1. If the child and family team establish a concurrent permanency goal of custody or guardianship, the case manager: a. Gathers information from or regarding individuals who may be interested in providing kinship care to the child or seeking custody or guardianship of the child. b. The case manager adheres to policy and procedure regarding kinship care referrals and licensure 2. If the child and family team establish a concurrent permanency goal of termination of parental rights/adoption: a. The case manager consults with their supervisor to requests a joint case consultation with the regional adoption office within two (2) business days of the child and family team meeting. b. The supervisor schedules the joint case consultation with the regional adoption office within five (5) business days of the request. The consultation must occur within ten (10) business days of the request. i. The supervisor documents the joint case consultation on DSS Form 3062A. c. If adoption services are recommended from the joint case consultation, the adoption service line must open upon receipt of the required documentation but no later than seven (7) business days from receipt. d. If the regional adoption office does not recommend opening adoption services to align with the established concurrent permanency goal, the request for final decision will be escalated to the county director and Adoption administrator. e. The child and family team will be notified if the concurrent permanency goal of termination of parent rights/adoption is not recommended.

	3. A concurrent permanency goal of termination of parental rights/adoption will not be considered prior to six months of the child's entry into foster care, unless otherwise directed by the court. 4. A concurrent permanency goal of APPLA can only be considered for a child 16 and older and after all other concurrent permanency goals have been exhausted as a concurrent permanency goal. a. This recommendation must also be supported by documentation that ruled all other permanency options. 5. To prepare for an upcoming permanency planning hearing, the case manager and supervisor hold a joint case consultation with county legal staff to discuss the permanency goals established by the child and family team.
C. Evaluating and Monitoring a Concurrent Permanency Goal	1. The established concurrent permanency goal will be evaluated by the child and family team at all subsequent child and family team meetings following the 6-month CFTM. 2. The child and family team will discuss progress made towards the concurrent permanency goal in addition to progress made towards the primary permanency goal. 3. The child and family team will collaborate to establish the continued need for the concurrent permanency goal determined by progress made towards primary permanency goal.
D. Documentation	1. The concurrent permanency goal will be documented on the Family Permanency Plan and documented in CAPSS in the Legal Tab. 2. Concerted efforts to achieve the concurrent permanency goal will be documented on the Family Permanency Plan. 3. The supervisor documents the joint case consultation on DSS Form 3062A.
E. Supervisory Case Consultation and Monitoring Expectations	1. The supervisor assesses progress toward the primary permanency goal during monthly case consultations. 2. The supervisor conducts the joint case consultation with the regional adoption office regarding an established concurrent permanency goal of TPR/Adoption by the child and family team. 3. The supervisor monitors management reports regarding permanency planning. 4. The supervisor completes periodic case reviews to ensure the Legal Tab reflects the established permanency goal and concurrent permanency goal.
Forms	DSS Form 3062A – Adoption Assessment and Joint Case Consultation form DSS Form 3062 – Supervisor Case Consultation form