

NYS Office of Children and Family Services
CONNECTIONS Case Management

Impact Analysis

Subject: Assessment and Service Planning

Functional Area: Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP) – Part I: Process
[This Impact Analysis should be used in conjunction with the FASP – Parts II and III Impact Analyses.]

Brief Description of Current Function/Process:

Workers currently use an electronic or paper template to document required assessment and service plans in the uniform case record (UCRs) according to prescribed timeframes and formats. There are multiple versions of UCR templates and the district determines which UCR series is appropriate for the specific type of case, except for CPS cases for which the State prescribes the version that must be used. The template includes all possible plan components; workers complete those components relevant to the case. UCRs are completed by the Case Planner; they must be approved by the Case Manager. Where multiple workers are involved in a case, workers submit their part of the plan to the Case Planner, who compiles all contributions and submits a paper or electronic copy to the Case Manager for approval. In some instances, this has taken the form of separate assessments and service plans simply bundled together. A copy of the Assessment and Service Plan, or part of it, can be printed and given to the family.

What Remains the Same:

- Workers continue to assess and plan with families for children’s safety, permanency, and well-being, and to document the development, review and amendment of those assessments and plans on a prescribed timeline.
- The Case Planner continues to be responsible for coordination of case planning and completion of assessment and service plans.
- The Case Manager must still approve the assessment and service plan.
- The timeline for development and approval of assessment and service plans remains essentially the same.

What is New or Changes:

- CONNECTIONS will replace the electronic or paper template. These will not be available after implementation of Build 18. *[Note: An exception exists for NYC Advocate Cases.]*
- The UCR - Initial, Comprehensive, Reassessment and Plan Amendment - is renamed to Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP).
- All workers assigned to the Family Service Stage (FSS) will document their work within a single, shared FASP.
- Workers will enter their contribution to specified FASP components in draft format. The Case Planner will compile the draft entries of all workers into a single narrative and modify as appropriate. This ‘Case Planner Summary’ constitutes the official FASP document.

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- The CONNECTIONS system will customize the FASP according to Program Choice, PPG, and age of tracked children, and will present only the relevant/required components for completion.
- Workers may opt to complete additional non-required components.
- The timeline for submission of the Initial FASP is slightly altered for indicated and opened CPS cases. Where the CID is the date of indication of a CPS report, the FASP is due 7 days after approval of the Investigation Conclusion. Similarly, CPS related status changes must be recorded on Plan Amendments within 7 days of the status change.
- Unlike the UCR templates which can be opened and worked in at any time, there are system rules governing who can start (launch) a new FASP, when they can do it, and preconditions for launching it.
 - A worker must be assigned a role in the Family Services Stage in order to launch (initiate work on) the FASP. Any assigned worker, not just the Case Planner or Case Manager, can launch the FASP.
 - The system limits how far in advance of its due date a FASP may be launched. This supports documentation of current case status within the FASP. The Initial FASP may be started upon opening of the Family Services Stage. The Comprehensive FASP may not be started more than 30 days before its due date. A Reassessment FASP may not be started more than 60 days before its due date. If a Plan Amendment status change is required, other than a CPS related status change, and it is within 60 days of a Comprehensive or Reassessment FASP due date the information is to be recorded directly in the Comprehensive or Reassessment FASP.
 - The relationship of each family member to all other family members must be identified prior to launching of the Initial FASP. This is done through completion of the Family Relationship Matrix on the Stage Composition tab and is essential to system customization of the FASP.
 - A child's PPG and Program Choice must be entered or updated prior to launching a FASP in order to get the correct customized components of the FASP.
 - A Primary Caretaker must be identified. This is done on the Stage Composition tab.
 - A late FASP may not be launched if it is more than 365 days overdue, even if the next FASP has not been launched.
- Only one FASP in the stage can be in the process of being developed and approved at a time. For example, if a foster care worker launched the Comprehensive FASP prior to CPS worker completion of the Initial FASP, the Initial FASP could no longer be completed, except in template format. A CONNECTIONS template, which will include all possible FASP components (it will not be customized to the case), will become available for completion on the system. The template will freeze after 60 days (it can no longer be worked in). This special template is not to be confused with current UCR templates that are being replaced by the CONNECTIONS case management system.
- The system will cue Case Planners and Case Managers when a FASP is coming due or overdue.

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Implications/Considerations:

System

- Because any worker assigned to the stage may launch a FASP, it is essential that there be communication among assigned workers prior to launching to ensure that:
 - Program Choice and PPG are correct for all tracked children. This is necessary to system presentation of the correct FASP components.
 - Primary and Secondary Parent/Caretakers are correctly identified. Changing a parent/caretaker after a FASP is in process requires the re-completion of certain components.
 - Completion of work on currently in-process FASPs or Plan Amendments is not hindered. It continues to be important that all assessment and service plans are completed and included in the case record, even if they are not completed exactly on time. However, the system can only support work on one FASP at a time. In order not to block workers from completing the FASP that is coming due, the system, upon the launch of a new FASP or Plan Amendment, will drop an in-process FASP or Plan Amendment into a Template Format. Workers will then have 60 days to complete work within the template format, at which point the template will be frozen. System efficiencies are not available within the template and data from the template does not carry forward to the next FASP. FASP/PAs that have been pending for supervisory approval for more than 7 days will also be marked as 'Template Format' upon the launch of a new FASP/PA and cannot be approved online. Previously due FASPs that were never launched will be marked as 'Missed' upon the launch of a new FASP/PA and will not be able to be completed even in template format. The system will provide warnings to alert workers when FASP initiation will affect overdue or in-process work.
- Because completion of child assessment scales and foster care issues is restricted to the Case Planner and Case Worker who is associated with the child, workers need to associate themselves to the child prior to work in the FASP.
- Because Family and Parent/Caretaker assessment scales, and Service Plan Outcome and Activity Plans are accessible to all workers in the stage, workers need to be careful not to overwrite entries by other workers in the stage.
- Workers will have the ability to print their draft entries to FASP components, but only until the FASP is approved. The FASP freezes upon approval and the view and printing of draft components is no longer available.
- Until the implementation of Build 19 when CONNECTIONS becomes the system of record in New York State, workers still need to record the assessment and service plan in CCRS (Plan Type, Service Needs and Status, Program Choice, PPG, Worker Function, Case Status) and record placement (movement), legal and adoption activities. It is important that this data conforms to that in CONNECTIONS. As the PPGs have been revised in CONNECTIONS, a mapping guide will be provided to assist workers. Workers will continue to receive cues from CCRS for entry of assessment and service plan data.

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Program

- The online FASP reinforces and supports the Case Planner's function to coordinate case planning by all workers assigned to a family.
- It also necessitates that workers be aware of how their actions impact the work of others assigned to the case.
- Workers may need to obtain and document essential family relationship information earlier in the case than usual in order to allow launch of the Initial FASP.
- CONNECTIONS supports communication among workers assigned to a case and coordinated work with a family. It does not replace the need for workers to talk with one another.

Recommendations:

1. Develop procedures to facilitate work within a shared FASP in cases with multiple workers. Define individual worker responsibility and timeframe for entry of FASP components. Consider development of launch protocols. (Case Planner District/Voluntary Agency).
2. Review timelines for contract agency submission of FASPs since this will be done electronically. (Case Manager District).
3. Determine procedure for documentation of Caseworker completion of assigned FASP components (Voluntary Agency).
4. Develop procedures to assure accurate and timely CCRS entry in the interim period between Builds 18 and 19.