

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 II: Content  
*[This Impact Analysis should be used in conjunction with the “FASP – Parts I 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 (UCR). They began to use a revised template for CPS UCRs in December 2003. The changes to the process of UCR template completion are discussed in the Impact Analysis document, “FASP – Part I: Process.” This Impact Analysis will address format and content changes to the UCR (Initial, Comprehensive, Reassessment and Plan Amendment), now renamed the Family Assessment and Service Plan (FASP).

**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 major components of the assessment and service plan (assessing safety and risk, updating case information, planning for permanency, analyzing the assessment, and developing and evaluating service plans) remain.
- Workers continue to assess and utilize individual and family strengths in case planning.
- Workers continue to involve families in developing the service plan and to document that involvement.
- Assessment requirements continue to differ depending upon case (CPS or non-CPS, Placement, etc.) and FASP (Initial, Comprehensive, Reassessment) type.
- The two-tiered Safety Assessment, introduced in the December 2003 CPS UCR template, remains.
- CPS caseworkers continue to use the Risk Assessment Profile to guide their assessment and decision-making concerning the level of risk. They include that information in the initial assessment and service plan.
- Non-CPS cases will continue to use a non-protective safety assessment narrative format.

**What is New or Changes:**

- The format of the Assessment and Service Plan, and the content of individual components, is changed.
- Selected information from prior work will come forward and pre-fill selected FASP components.

NYS Office of Children and Family Services  
CONNECTIONS Case Management

- The original needs/concerns that prompted opening of the services case will be documented in the Initial FASP. This will automatically display in all subsequent FASPs for worker information.
- The Safety Assessment (SA) in CPS FASPs will be pre-filled from the last approved SA for the worker's review and modification as appropriate.
- The Risk Assessment Profile (RAP) is required in all FASPs for protective cases.
- The list of PPGs has been revised to conform to ASFA goals; subgoals have been added.
- The FASP supports a fuller, more accurate assessment through the analysis of safety factors, risk elements and risk rating, the underlying conditions that sustain behaviors that create risk, and both family and child functioning, strengths, and needs.
- The FASP includes an increased emphasis on documenting the family's perspective.
- The FASP includes new scales that reflect the expectation that caseworkers assess family and child strengths as well as needs, and that provide guidance to the worker as to areas that need to be assessed.
  - Workers will be required to document their assessment of all tracked children and each primary and secondary parent/caretaker individually through new Strengths, Needs, and Risk scales. Assessments of non-tracked children, other caretakers and more than one family are available as an option.
- A new component, Foster Care Issues, is required to be completed individually for each placed child. This incorporates and revises UCR template sections Appropriateness of Placement, Permanency Planning, Concurrent Planning, and Visiting Plan and Review. The system will present required questions based on Program Choice, PPG, and child age. The system provides for copying of appropriate entries to other children in the stage to avoid redundant data entry.
  - The Foster Care Issues questions support the rapid achievement of permanency and reflect the standards of practice of the federal Child and Family Services Review.
  - A Life Skills Assessment is required for all children in foster care, aged 14 and over.
- The FASP asks workers, as part of the Assessment Analysis, to specifically state the improvements/changes that need to be made, instead of merely stating the "problem." This will be carried forward by the system to guide service planning.
- Documentation of needed services / service status by individual must be completed as part of the Service Plan, if the local district has opted to require this.
- Strengths identification has been added to each component of the service plan.
- For the most part, there is no prescribed order for completion of FASP components. Limited components, however, must be completed in sequence. For example, Strengths, Needs, and Risk scales must be completed prior to the Risk Assessment Profile in Comprehensive/Reassessment FASPs.

**Implications/Considerations:**

**System**

1. Workers must make sure that the Program Choice and PPG is correct for all tracked children before launching a FASP (initiating work on a new FASP).

NYS Office of Children and Family Services  
CONNECTIONS Case Management

2. Workers must make sure that the Primary and Secondary Parent/Caretakers are correctly identified before working on FASP components. Changing them after a FASP is in process requires the re-completion of certain components.

**Program**

1. Build 18 is introducing changes to both practice (through revisions to UCR) and process (UCR will be completed online) at the same time. It is crucial that supervisors and workers distinguish the “what” from the “how.” Quality supervision will be essential to realization of practice benefits.
2. The Family Assessment and Services Plan content reflects OCFS commitment to the Framework of Practice, i.e., evidence-based, family-focused, outcome-focused, strengths-based casework with a continual emphasis on child safety, permanency and well-being.
3. Caseworker and supervisory staff skills in the areas of engagement, assessment, communication, family-involved planning, and supporting change will be more clearly reflected in the FASP than in the UCR.
4. The system provides aids within the FASP (ex. Assessment Summary, carrying forward of “Needed Improvements” to the Service Plan tab) to support good case planning. The usefulness of these aids is fundamentally related to the employment of sequential case planning (full assessment prior to assessment analysis prior to service planning) by workers. Sequential work is supported but not mandated by the system.
5. The system mandates entry in specified fields prior to submission for approval. Supervision needs to support quality of worker response.

**Recommendations:**

1. Workers should understand the philosophy and intent of the new structured decision-making tools (Safety Assessment and RAP) and the approach to full family and child assessment. They should be comfortable with the use of decision and assessment support protocols prior to Build 18 implementation.
2. Staff should attend the training that will be provided on the programmatic and practice dimensions of the FASP.
3. Supervisors and Directors should assess their staff’s ability to assess families’ strengths, needs and functioning, including youth’s level of life skills, so that the documentation requirements fit well with their case practice.
4. Districts need to determine if they will require worker completion of “Services Needed” as part of Service Plan.