

Module 2: The FASP

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Introduction and Rationale

This module provides an overview of the FASP and its purposes, types, time frames, statuses, and component parts.

The FASP is the primary tool for documentation of all information and casework activity related to an ongoing child welfare services case in NYS. It reflects and supports the OCFS Framework of Practice by serving as both a guide and a tool for conducting and recording casework with families. It provides a uniform framework for gathering and documenting assessment information, supporting and recording decisions, and developing and approving plans to address a family's most significant child welfare issues, needs, and concerns.

The FASP is specifically designed to support a family-focused approach to casework practice; the client is the child's family, and the focus of the work is to support the family in providing a safe, permanent home where children can grow and thrive. When placement is necessary, the focus continues to be on the family and on enhancing their ability to provide a safe, permanent home that can meet the children's needs. When reunification with family is not possible or deemed contrary to the children's best interests, then it is child welfare staff's mission to secure a permanent family for the children through adoption. Where permanency through adoption is not possible or preferable, the goal is to secure other permanent living arrangements for the children, and develop connections to supportive adults.

Work toward these shared outcomes involves a complex array of actions, decisions, and interventions involving many individuals and multiple service systems. This requires coordination since there may be conflicting priorities, unanticipated dilemmas, and unintended outcomes.

Purposes of the FASP

The FASP serves many purposes, including:

- A tool for focusing casework activity on the key outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being
- A tool for gathering and recording information with the family about their current functioning
- A tool for assisting, supporting, and documenting case decision making
- A record of plans and steps taken with the family to meet their needs and to achieve the outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being
- A means of communicating with families about the plans developed with them
- A means of communication among various service providers and entities working with the family
- A means of assessing change or progress with the family
- A basis for supporting legal action when necessary and appropriate to case circumstances
- A historical record of family functioning, child's history, and previous agency intervention
- A guide for supervisors in assessing the effectiveness of casework activity, and providing constructive feedback/guidance to workers
- A guide for casework practice consistent with accepted standards
- A reminder of key casework principles and regulations that govern child welfare intervention
- A means of accountability to local, state, and federal funding and oversight bodies

When Is the FASP Completed?

Case Initiation Date (CID)

FASP due dates are established in relation to the Case Initiation Date (CID). The CID is based on whichever of the following came first: indication of a CPS report, removal of a child, court order, or application for services.

Due dates for FASPs are as follows:

- If the CID is based on indication of a CPS report, then the Initial FASP is due within seven days from the indication.
- If the CID is based on any other of the three remaining circumstances, then the Initial FASP is due 30 days from the CID.
- The Comprehensive FASP is due 90 days from the CID.
- The Initial Reassessment FASP is due 210 days (approximately seven months) from the CID, and a Reassessment FASP is due every six months thereafter until the case is closed.

FASP Types and Time Frames

The following chart represents the date by which a submitted FASP must be approved in CONNECTIONS in order for it to be deemed “on time.”

Type of FASP	Can Be Launched	Due Date* (Date by which FASP must be approved)
Initial	Immediately upon opening the stage	<p>For an Indicated CPS case where the CID is the Date of Indication, the Initial FASP is due seven days from the date of the approval of the Investigation Conclusion.</p> <p>For all other cases (i.e., Non-CPS), the Initial FASP is due 30 days from the CID. If a State Central Register (SCR) report is indicated within this 30-day period, the above seven-day window applies for completion of the Initial FASP.</p>
Comprehensive	Within 30 days prior to its due date	90 days from the CID
Reassessment	Within 60 days prior to its due date	210 days (approximately seven months) from the CID and every six months thereafter
Plan Amendment	<p>Plan Amendments are completed throughout the life of a case whenever a status change occurs <i>between</i> FASP cycles. If a status change occurs when the next coming due FASP can be launched, the status change information should be recorded within that coming due FASP rather than in a Plan Amendment. A Plan Amendment can only be launched once an Initial FASP has been approved. Changes prior to the Initial FASP should be included in the Initial FASP.</p> <p>A Plan Amendment is the first FASP to appear in the CCR, noting that the child has been freed; it should be completed before the next FASP is launched.</p> <p>Plan Amendments should be completed within 30 days of the triggering event or change.</p>	

*In order to support the process of review, approval, and the possible need for revision/resubmission, agency/local district procedures will likely require FASPs to be submitted for approval in advance of the

actual due date. Plan FASP documentation/submission accordingly and be respectful of other individuals' time constraints in the documentation process.

FASP Statuses

The CONNECTIONS My To-Dos tab informs assigned workers that a FASP is ready to be launched, or is overdue. A FASP can be in one of six statuses:

- *Not Launched:* The FASP has yet to be launched.
- *In-Process:* The FASP has been launched and is in the process of being completed. There can only be one "In-Process" FASP per case, at one time. If a FASP was submitted for approval and it was rejected, the FASP's status will revert from "Pending" to "In-Process."
- *Pending:* The FASP has been submitted for approval and is awaiting that approval.
- *Approved:* The submitted FASP has been approved. If there is more than one required approver, all approvers in the chain must approve the FASP in order for that FASP to be considered "Approved."
- *Missed:* FASPs marked as "Missed" were never launched, are now significantly overdue, and the currently due FASP has been launched. Once a FASP is marked as "Missed," it can never be launched.
- *Template Format:* If a FASP is "In-Process" (not submitted and/or approved) for a very long period of time, it may cross into the launch period for the next FASP coming due. When this occurs, and the next available FASP is launched, the overdue FASP is dropped to "Template Format."

Once this occurs, it is available only as a Report Viewer/Word document. The information displays in a different format and the interactive windows are not available. The template may be updated for 60 days, enabling the worker to finish documenting information and case activity related to that plan period. After 60 days, it becomes frozen. The FASP in Template Format status cannot be submitted for online approval; it must be done manually, and it is suggested that a note be entered on the Progress Notes tab stating when it was approved and by whom.

One benefit of the electronic record is that each FASP automatically populates with previously entered information (e.g., demographics, background, PPGs). When a worker allows a FASP to drop to Template Format status, system efficiency is lost due to the inability of the system to carry information forward to future FASPs. Thus, a worker will be required to reenter much previously entered information, including the original reason for case opening, family background, and demographic information.

If multiple FASPs exist that have not been completed, workers should complete any overdue FASPs in chronological order.

Who Completes the FASP?

All workers with a CONNECTIONS role in a case will contribute to the FASP in accordance with their role in that case. (See *Module One* for information on CONNECTIONS roles.) Ultimately, it is the Case Planner who is responsible for creating a clear, coherent, and complete picture of the case in the FASP.

Components of the FASP

All FASP components are listed in a “Tree” seen on the left side of the FASP window. These components are organized in a manner that can be compressed or expanded based upon the needs of the specific case. The FASP Tree will display those components necessary to be completed for that specific case based on the FASP type, as well as the Program Choice(s), PPG(s), and age of the tracked children.

FSS or CCR Stage Components

Stage Composition

Progress Notes

FASP (Initial/Comprehensive/Reassessment)

- Tracked Children Detail (PPG and Program Choice)
- Safety (CPS)
- Safety (Non-Protective)
- Family Update
- CPS Risk Assessment Profile (CPS)
- Risk Assessment Profile (Non-Protective)
- Strengths, Needs and Risks (Family, Parent/Caretaker, and Child)
- Foster Care Issues
 - Appropriateness of Placement
 - Adjustment and Functioning
 - Permanency Progress/Concurrent Planning
 - Family/Child Visitation
 - Life Skills Assessment
 - Discharges
- Non-LDSS Custody
- Family Assessment Analysis
- Service Plan
- Programmatic Eligibility
- Service Plan Review

The information prefilled in the FASP comes forward from:

- The Stage Composition tab (names and dates of birth of family members in the Person List grid)
- The Family Relationship Matrix
- The Tracked Children Detail window (Program Choice and PPG)
- Previous FASPs that have been completed and approved

It is important that the information recorded in these areas is complete and accurate, since CONNECTIONS brings that information forward into subsequent FASPs.

Customization of the FASP

No two families follow exactly the same path; therefore, any system of documentation must be flexible enough to account for differing family events and needs.

A key feature of the FASP is the ability to customize it based upon the time frame, type, and needs of the family at a given time. While some portions of the FASP are universal, forming the core of the Assessment and Service Plan (i.e., Strengths, Needs and Risks (SNR); Family Assessment Analysis; and Service Plan), some sections are designed specifically to support key assessment, decisions, and planning at specific times and in specific case situations. Customization enables workers to complete only those portions of the FASP that are applicable to a given family, and skip over those that do not apply to the specific needs of that family.

For example:

- The FASP displays the correct version of the Safety Assessment and Risk Assessments based on the children's Program Choice(s).
- The FASP displays the appropriate Strengths, Needs and Risks (SNR) and those individuals who need to be assessed in a given case.
- For a child in foster care, CONNECTIONS will generate applicable windows.
- For a child with a PPG of Discharge to Adoption, the FASP will generate relevant windows.

Customization of the FASP will depend upon key parameters in a case:

- The type of stage
- The type of FASP (Initial, Comprehensive, Reassessment, or Plan Amendment)
- The adults listed on the Stage Composition tab
- Identification of Primary/Secondary Caretakers
- The ages of the children in the family
- The Program Choice(s) selected for each tracked child
- The PPG selected for each tracked child

CONNECTIONS will know which questions to present to the worker, and which not to present, based upon the above parameters in the case. As key information within a case is updated, the FASP will change as key parameters within CONNECTIONS are updated. Workers assigned to a case should communicate with each other regarding any recent changes in the family prior to launching a new FASP.

It is absolutely essential that a worker accurately identify and update each of the above defining parameters as needed, as these will define the customization of the FASP. *Module 3: Stage Composition and Tracked Children Detail* provides guidance in accurately identifying these parameters.