Impact Analysis

Subject: Assessment and Service Planning

Functional Area: Non-LDSS Custody Cases

Brief Description of Current Function/Process:

Local districts frequently supervise and provide services to children in the care of a relative or other resource person, but who are <u>not</u> in the custody of the local Commissioner of Social Services. Custody in these cases either remains with the parent or is given by the court to the relative/resource. There are two primary subgroups to these cases, the population of cases in which the court ordered direct placement with the relative/resource under LDSS supervision, and another population of children served by the LDSS where children are formally or informally placed with other than their parents where LDSS has not initiated any court action. Workers currently adapt the UCR templates, answering questions as applicable, to record assessment and service planning for both these populations.

What Remains the Same:

- Workers continue to provide protective and/or preventive services to this population.
- Assessment and planning requirements continues to reflect their unique legal status.
- Workers continue to focus on child permanency for this population.

What is New or Changes:

- There is a new program choice, Non-LDSS Custody, for children in the care of a relative or other resource person, but not in the custody of the local Commissioner of Social Services. The program choice has been added to reflect the unique legal status and planning needs of this population and provide customized questions in the FASP that are similar but not identical to foster care issues. It is not meant to be a substitution for protective or preventive services but can be selected in addition to these choices. It cannot be selected on its own.
- The new program choice intensifies the focus on achieving permanency for this group of children.
- Workers will use a modified 'Foster Care Issues' component of the FASP, which is required to be completed individually for each child in this status. This incorporates and revises UCR template sections Appropriateness of Placement, Permanency Planning, Concurrent Planning, and Visiting Plan and Review. The system provides for copying of appropriate entries to other children in the stage with this program choice to avoid redundant data entry.
- A Life Skills Assessment is required for children, aged 14 and over.

Implications/Considerations:

System

- 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), so that FASP questions are correctly customized.
- At the time that Build 18 is implemented, "Non-LDSS Custody" will not be available when recording Program Choice in CCRS.

Program

- Supervisors should closely monitor the use of this new program choice to ensure its appropriateness. The correct selection of program choice is determined by the child's legal status, not by with whom he or she lives. Incorrectly recording a program choice of "Placement" for children in "Non-LDSS Custody" status will result in system presentation of a more extensive, less appropriate set of questions required for FASP submission. Recording a program choice of "Non-LDSS Custody" for children in the care of a relative/resource, but in the custody of LDSS, is equally incorrect. In this case, recording and monitoring of required legal and foster care placement activities and milestones would be lost.

Recommendations:

1. Local districts should review their caseloads to identify the cases that fit this status, and develop a process for the selection of "Non-LDSS Custody" program choice upon implementation of Build 18.
2. Districts should assess their current model of service for children in this status to determine if the level and focus of casework activities is commensurate with the expectations for the achievement of safety, permanency and well-being outcomes.