

Guidance 39
Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Teams
Family Intensive Treatment (FIT), Tier 2 Variation

I. LEVEL OF CARE DESCRIPTION

Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Teams are designed to enable community providers to provide intensive services to families in the child welfare system with parental substance use and unmanageable or undiagnosed mental health concerns. Creating a team-based approach in a system of care allows the early identification of at-risk families, coordination of immediate access to services, and support to families through their navigation of the child welfare and treatment processes.

II. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Teams are intended to be an adaptation on Florida's FIT model and provide early engagement strategies for access to behavioral health treatment services for at-risk families.

Program Goals

The goals of Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Teams are to:

- Provide early identification of at-risk families and timely access to intensive behavioral health services for parent(s) / guardian(s) to reduce abuse, neglect, food insecurity and housing instability.
- Establish a multidisciplinary approach to community treatment services and safety.
- Coordinate planning, service delivery, and engagement strategies with Community-Based Care Lead Agencies, Child Welfare Case Management Organizations, Managing Entities, and other providers of services.
- Identify family-driven pathways to recovery and promote sustained recovery through cultural and gender-sensitive treatment and involvement in recovery-oriented services and supports.
- Promote increased engagement and retention in treatment services.
- Facilitate concurrent planning between child welfare case planning and treatment plan goals, to integrate the family's strengths and needs with their dependency case plan.
- Advocate and assist in navigating the child welfare process.
- Reduce the number of out-of-home placements when safe to do so; and
- Reduce rates of re-entry into the child welfare system.

III. SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Teams work collaboratively with families to explore their culture, beliefs, and values and work together to identify strengths, as well as family needs. Through that process, goals for treatment are developed and adjusted as needed. The family and Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Teams also work together to identify other, non-clinical supports needed. This can include coaching parents to address ineffective coping mechanisms and teach and model strategies to positively manage children while balancing everyday stressors like working, legal, financial, and healthcare.

Eligibility

The Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Teams serve families that may not meet traditional FIT team eligibility. Families to be served must:

- Be eligible for publicly funded substance abuse and mental health services pursuant to section 394.674, Florida Statutes; including persons meeting all other eligibility criteria who are under insured;
- Meet the criteria for a substance use disorder and / or unmanageable or undiagnosed mental health condition;
- Have at least one child between the ages of 0 and 10 years old; and
- At the time of referral:
 - A child in the family has been determined to be “unsafe” and in need of child welfare case management and placed in-home or out-of-home;
 - For children in out of home care, the family must have a child welfare case management plan with the permanency goal of reunification, or a concurrent case plan that includes reunification as a permanency goal; and
 - The family is willing to participate or the caregiver is court ordered to participate. In either case, enhanced efforts to engage and retain the caregiver(s) in treatment are expected as a critical element.

Coordination With Other Entities

The Network Service Provider must collaborate with the family receiving services to identify and access services available from other child and family serving agencies to address systemic needs including, but not limited to, primary health care, child welfare, juvenile justice, corrections, and education. At a minimum, case management shall continue in the event any family members enrolled in FFPSA Team services are admitted to a therapeutic placement or in short term crisis stabilization.

Incidental Expenses

Incidental expenses pursuant to chapter 65E-14.021, Florida Administrative Code, are allowable under this program Network Service Providers shall follow state purchasing guidelines and any established process for review and approval and shall consult the Managing Entity regarding allowable purchases.

IV. OUTCOME MEASURES

The Managing Entity shall include appropriate performance measures in each subcontract addressing:

- Successful completion of treatment or satisfactory progress in recovery
- Improvement in caregiver protective capacities
- Stable housing environment
- School attendance, gainful employment or other significant indicators of successful community involvement.