

Guidance 39 Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Teams

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 concerns of unmanaged or undiagnosed mental health, substance use, or co-occurring disorders of parent(s) / guardian(s). Creating a team-based approach in a system of care allows the early identification and coordination of immediate access to services and support to families through navigation of the child welfare and treatment processes.

II. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Teams are intended to be an adaptation of Florida's Family Intensive Treatment (FIT) model by providing early engagement strategies for access to behavioral health treatment services for families. However, unlike the FIT model, Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Teams allow for flexibility with eligibility and treatment approach.

Program Goals

The goals of Multidisciplinary Child Welfare Teams are to:

- Provide early identification of unmanaged or undiagnosed mental health, substance use, or co-occurring disorder of parent(s) / guardian(s).
- Provide timely access to intensive behavioral health services to address concerns related to abuse or neglect, as well as address food insecurity and housing instability.
- Establish a multidisciplinary approach to community treatment services and safety planning.
- Coordinate safety planning, service delivery, and engagement strategies with Child Protective Investigators (or other Department representatives), 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.
- 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; and
- At the time of referral have:
 - Active child welfare involvement; and
 - Concerns that the parent(s) / guardian(s) have an unmanaged or undiagnosed mental health, substance use, or co-occurring disorder.

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 Multidisciplinary Child Welfare 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.