**Section 315.130 Developing the Case Plan**

Based on the information gathered during the assessment process described in Section 315.100 and through negotiation during the caseworker's contacts, visits, and at the initial family meeting, the caseworker and family shall develop a plan of intervention that is based on the family's strengths and needs and that addresses how the children's needs for health and safety will be met.

a) Purpose of the Case Plan

The case plan is a written plan that is established between the Department and the children and family served, and any involved service providers. The purpose of the case plan is to:

1) formulate goals for the child based on the child's needs for health, safety, and well-being that were identified during the assessment process;

2) identify what actions the family, the caseworker, caregiver, and others will take to meet the needs of the child and achieve permanency;

3) identify what additional interventions and services will be provided to the family, the caregiver, and the child in order to meet the child's needs and achieve permanency; and

4) ensure that the parents and children have frequent visitation and contact with one another, and that sibling groups develop and/or preserve their relationships.

b) State and Federal Requirement

Case plans are required by the Children and Family Services Act [20 ILCS 505/6a] and the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 675) regardless of whether the child and family are served directly by the Department or through purchase of service providers. The case plan must ensure that the health and safety of the child are the paramount concerns that guide all service, placement, and planning provisions.

c) Time Frames

1) Visitation and Contact Plan. The initial visitation and contact plan shall be completed by the siblings’ caseworkers, foster parents and children/siblings and forwarded to the juvenile court no later than 10 days after the award of temporary custody when the child has siblings who are also in substitute care. The visitation and contact plan shall be reviewed by the caseworker regularly and changed and updated as specified in 89 Ill. Adm. Code 301.220 (Sibling Visitation).

2) Case Plan. The initial case plan shall be completed by the caseworker and forwarded to the juvenile court no later than 45 days after placement and must be reviewed at least once every six months thereafter. The case plan shall be changed and updated as the child and family's situation changes and shall be reviewed regularly as specified in Section 315.150 (Revising the Case Plan).

d) Contents of the Case Plan

Case plans shall contain the following information:

1) The names of the children for whom the Department is legally responsible or to whom the Department is providing services;

2) The health and safety factors that have resulted in placement of the children away from the family home and an identification of any problems that are causing continued placement of the children away from the home;

3) What outcomes would be considered a resolution to these problems and the strengths the family possesses to achieve these outcomes;

4) A description of the type of placement, the reasons for the out of home placement; the reason why the child has been put in their current placement, the resources or other support that will be necessary to maintain the placement; and, where a residential placement has been deemed necessary, a description of how and when a plan for moving the child to the least restrictive, most homelike placement consistent with the child's best interest can be developed;

5) The services to be provided to the parents, for each child while in care, and the foster parents (if necessary, when the child is placed in foster care) that may best resolve these problems;

6) The health care to be provided to the child and the mental health care to be provided to address the child's serious mental health needs as well as a description of the child's physical, developmental, educational or mental disability and any non-educational specialized services the child is receiving or should receive for each disability. If an Individual Treatment Plan (ITP) or Rehabilitative Services Plan exists for the child, it shall be attached to the case plan. To the extent available and accessible, the case plan shall incorporate the health records of the child, including:

A) the names and addresses of the child's health provider;

B) a record of the child's immunizations;

C) the child's known medical problems; and

D) the child's medications;

7) A description of the educational program/services the child is receiving or needs to receive (including information regarding Early Intervention, Head Start, or Pre-Kindergarten services for preschool children). To ensure educational stability, the placement should take into account the appropriateness and proximity to the child's school, and if the child is unable to remain in the same school, a plan for enrolling in the new school. If an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) exists for a child, the IEP or IFSP shall be included in the record. To the extent available and accessible, the case plan shall incorporate the education records of the child, including:

A) the names and addresses of the child's educational providers;

B) the child's grade level performance; and

C) the child's school record;

8) Who will provide the services, how often they will be provided, and an explanation of why these services will meet the needs of the child;

9) If children placed out of the parents' home are placed a substantial distance (more than 150 miles) from the home of the parents or in a different state, the reasons why the placement is in the best interests of the children;

10) If children placed out of the parents' home are placed in a different state, a requirement that the child be visited periodically, but not less frequently than every six months by a caseworker of the Department or of the state in which the child has been placed, as required in Section 315.110 (Worker Interventions and Contacts);

11) If siblings are placed apart from one another, the reasons why they are placed apart and what efforts have been and are being made to find a joint placement for the sibling group;

12) The permanency goal for each child and the reason for selecting the goal;

13) In the case of a child for whom the permanency plan is adoption or other permanent living arrangement, documentation of the steps the Department is taking to find an adoptive family or other permanent living arrangement;

14) In the case of a child for whom the permanency plan is independence or for a child 16 years of age or older, as appropriate, a written description of the programs and services that will help the child prepare for the transition from foster care to independent living;

15) The responsibilities of the family and the child (when appropriate) in fulfilling the case plan;

16) The responsibilities of the Department and purchase of service providers, if any, to assist the family in fulfilling the case plan;

17) When children and families are separated and a court order does not prohibit visitation, a parent-child and/or sibling visitation and contact plan, in accordance with 89 Ill. Adm. Code 301 (Placement and Visitation Services). This plan shall include the time and place of visits, the frequency of visits, the length of visits, and who shall be present at the visits. The plan shall also note the permissible modes of communication siblings may use between visits to stay in contact with one another;

18) Whether the name, address, and telephone number of the foster parent/relative caregiver may be released to the parent as determined by the assessment conducted in accordance with Section 315.100(b)(3);

19) The time frames for achieving the permanency goal and the objectives to resolve identified problems and the specification of any consequences to the child and family if the time frames are not met;

20) A statement that the parents or children may disagree with the case plan and that they may have their disagreement recorded;

21) An explanation of how parents or children may request an appeal and fair hearing; and

e) Child and Family Teams shall be used when developing the case plan and shall include:

1) A statement of the reasonable and good faith effort of the Department to identify and include all the individuals described in 42 U.S.C. 675a(c)(1)(B)(ii) on the child's family and permanency team; (42 U.S.C. 675a(c)(1)(B)(iii)(I))

2) All contact information for members of the family and permanency team, as well as contact information for other family members and fictive kin who are not part of the family and permanency team unless prohibited by provisions found in Section 315.100(b)(3); (42 U.S.C. 675a(c)(1)(B)(iii)(II))

3) Evidence that meetings of the family and permanency team, including meetings relating to the assessment required under 42 U.S.C. 675a(c)(1)(A), are held at a time and place convenient for family; (42 U.S.C. 675a(c)(1)(B)(iii)(III))

4) If reunification is the goal, evidence demonstrating that the parent from whom the child was removed provided input on the members of the family and permanency team; (42 U.S.C. 675a(c)(1)(B)(iii)(IV))

5) Evidence that the assessment required under 42 U.S.C. 675a(c)(1)(A) is determined in conjunction with the family and permanency team; (42 U.S.C. 675a(c)(1)(B)(iii)(V))

6) A statement regarding the placement preferences of the family and permanency team relative to the assessment that recognizes children should be placed with their siblings unless there is a finding by the court that such placement is contrary to their best interest; and (42 U.S.C. 675a(c)(1)(B)(iii)(VI))

7) If the placement preferences of the family, permanency team, and child are not the placement setting recommended by the qualified individual conducting the assessment under 42 U.S.C. 675a(c)(1)(A), the reasons why the preferences of the team and of the child were not recommended. (42 U.S.C. 675a(c)(1)(B)(iii)(VII)).

(Source: Amended at 48 Ill. Reg. 9558, effective June 24, 2024)