



BELMONT COUNTY

SERVICE COORDINATION MECHANISM

A GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

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OVERVIEW OF SERVICE COORDINATION IN BELMONT COUNTY

Belmont County Family and Children First Council's Service Coordination Mechanism identifies the process for coordinating and streamlining services to families and children needing or seeking assistance. This document serves as guidance for the coordination of services in Belmont County, Ohio. All plans of care shall be developed in accordance with the County Service Coordination Mechanism (SCM). The intent is to provide services and supports to families with multiple and complex needs while utilizing a collaborative cross system team approach. The Belmont County Family and Children First Council utilizes members of the Cluster team to support the individualized needs of families with children ages 0-21.

AGENCIES INVOLVED

The primary agencies responsibilities for the development, implementation, and review of the Belmont County Service Coordination Mechanism include:

- Belmont County Department of Job and Family Services
- Belmont County Board of Developmental Disabilities
- Mental Health and Recover Board serving Belmont, Harrison, and Monroe Counties
- Belmont County Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile Division
- Belmont County Family and Children First Council (FCFC)/Cluster

Levels of Service Coordination, Intervention, and Criteria

Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as overriding or affecting decisions of the Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile Division regarding placement.

FCFC Service Coordination guides and tracks youth and families with multi-system needs through an array of services, spanning all levels of intensity and care. Families or agencies can be the referral source for service coordination. Not all families referred will require the same level of assistance. The different levels of service coordination within the continuum of care are as follows:

1. Information and Referral
2. Service Coordination
 - Collaborate with previously identified or existing resources and supports

- Determine family mission and vision
- CANS Assessment (Childhood Strength and Needs) or other state approved assessment
- Development of a strength-based/family-centered plan of care
- Safety planning and monitoring as needed
- Level of Care decision making
- Neutrally facilitated planning process
- Transition planning

All interventions and supports must be tied to a goal on the plan of care that is approved through the team process. Services provided are to be in the least restrictive environment. Service Coordination is based on family need; however, supports provided under Family Centered Support dollars (FCSS) has some restrictions. Youth in the custody of Child Protective Services, OhioRISE Tier 2 or 3 are eligible for FCFC Cluster Service Coordination but are not permitted to utilize FCSS funds for supports. Intervention levels across the continuum of care are as follows:

1. Family Supports

- a. Service Coordination
- b. Family Peer Support/Advocacy
- c. Safety and Adaptive Equipment
- d. Family Chosen-Respite (including some camps)
- e. Structured Activities to Improve Family Functioning
- f. Transportation Assistance (gas vouchers and cab fares)
- g. Social/Recreational Activities

2. Therapeutic Services

- a. Mentoring
- b. Therapeutic Respite (Tomorrow's Youth Project)
- c. Non-Clinical, In-Home Behavioral Supports
- d. Parent/Child Coaching
- e. Outpatient Services
- f. Intensive Home-Based Therapeutic Services

3. Out of Home Placement

- a. Kinship Placement
- b. Foster Placement
- c. Therapeutic Foster Placement
- d. Residential Treatment

THE PROCESS

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

The Belmont County Family and Children First Council Coordinator will meet with any family or agency, upon request, to discuss FCFC Service Coordination/Cluster Services. Additional efforts to inform the community will be made through social and marketing events.

REFERRAL PROCEDURE

Information regarding services can be received from the FCFC Coordinator. Families not currently involved in service coordination or agencies wanting to refer for service coordination should contact the FCFC Coordinator to discuss options.

Referrals to Cluster Services may be submitted to the Belmont County Cluster Facilitator. Prior to a Cluster referral, the person making the referral shall:

- **Meet** with the family to evaluate their needs.
- **Identify** people/agencies that the family want involved as part of the individualized team.
- **Collect** all pertinent information and documentation for the family's case (this may include psychological evaluations, behavior plans, individualized education plans, strength and needs assessment, behavior plans, care plans, or other pertinent information).
- **Conduct a clinical team meeting to discuss a Cluster referral** and complete a referral form if not already completed.
- **Obtain a release** of information for identified members of the Belmont County Cluster Team along with permission to enter information into the Ohio Automated Service Coordination Information System (OASCIS).
- **Complete a PRC application**, including income verification if applicable, and agree to resubmit within 30 days of any future request. If information requested is not received within 30 days, services can be terminated.
- **Schedule a** meeting with the Cluster Facilitator, including families and attendees the family may request. Email and phone number shall be provided to the Cluster Facilitator for anyone requesting to be invited.

MEETING PROTOCOLS

INITIAL AND SUBSEQUENT MEETING NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Cluster meetings are scheduled on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Thursday of the month at 10:00 a.m. Meetings are held on a virtual platform to protect the privacy of others. A family can request an in-person meeting through the meeting facilitator. The initial meeting will be scheduled at one of the regular meetings. Referral information will be included in the meeting packet. Cluster team members and families receive an email invitation with approximate review times prior to the meeting. If a family's situation is an emergency or crisis, an additional meeting can be held to meet the family's needs. The Cluster Team decides when the next review should occur, and the facilitator sends email notification prior to those subsequent meetings.

Non-Emergency and Emergency Out-of-Home Placements: A principal intent of the Plan of Care is to provide early identification and intervention to prevent out-of-home placement, with reasonable and appropriate alternatives being exhausted prior to considering an out-of-home placement. A meeting to review the Plan of Care must be held prior to a non-emergency out-of-home placement. A meeting must occur within 10 days of an emergency out-of-home placement per Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 121.37.

Procedure for Monitoring Progress and Tracking Outcomes: Belmont County FCFC has spreadsheets in place to track and monitor youth services and the time spent in these services or placements. Progress in services is monitored and decisions are made through Cluster meetings and recorded in meeting minutes. The OASCIS system is utilized to track progress on the plan of care. OASCIS also includes required demographic information for youth served once a consent is obtained. A Cluster report is provided every other month at the Family and Children First Council Meeting. The Service Coordination Mechanism is reviewed annually, and a program report is evaluated with council to address service gaps and enhance services for children.

Procedure for Protecting Confidentiality: It is a family's right to be assured that protecting their confidentiality is of the highest priority. Families sign a release of information allowing Cluster team members to communicate. Each participating agency is required to sign a confidentiality agreement annually.

Addressing the Strengths, Needs, and Cultural Diversity of the Family: The intake process involves gathering information. Early in the Service Coordination Process, an

assessment tool is utilized to determine strengths, needs, and cultural diversity. This assessment is updated at minimum every 90 days or when a change in circumstance warrants an updated assessment.

Plan of Care: An agency involved with the family initiates a referral to discuss services and team members. During team meetings, service and responsibilities are designated and documented in meeting minutes. The plan of care encompasses the strength and needs assessment, along with the input of the family and team, to develop goals and appropriate timelines for goals. The plan is reviewed quarterly at minimum to check progress and responsibilities of team members. Crisis and safety plans are developed on an as needed basis.

Service Coordination Regarding Alleged Unruly Children and Diversion from Juvenile Court System: Our local Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile Division, operates a diversion program to help avoid alleged unruly children from entering the court system. The court and probation officers work closely with the service coordination team to develop plans for crisis, safety, and alternate paths for success. Those plans are in place for youth in diversion as well as those adjudicated to be unruly or delinquent. The court also offers a Parent Project which provides tools for parents to assist with keeping the youth out of the court system.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS INCLUDING JUDICIAL REVIEW

Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as overriding or affecting decisions of a juvenile court regarding out-of-home placement, long-term placement, or emergency out-of-home placement.

Belmont County Family and Children First Council agrees any conflict between service partners and/or families must not impede the delivery of services. When discrepancies are not able to be resolved, council is committed to help resolve as follows:

FAMILY TO AGENCY/AGENCY TO AGENCY/SERVICE PLAN: If a family has a dispute with any of the involved agencies or the service plan, they should provide verbal or written notification to the FCFC Coordinator. Together, they will determine if the dispute can be resolved directly with the other agency, the Cluster team, or if a formalized dispute resolution process is preferred. If a resolution does not occur within 14 days of voicing the original concern to the FCFC Coordinator, the formalized process will be implemented.

FORMALIZED DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY: If a formalized resolution is the determined course of action, a family or agency may contact the Council Chair or have the FCFC Coordinator contact the Chair on their behalf. The Chair will initiate a formal meeting with the Executive Council, family, and any other involved parties within 14 days of being notified. The resolution of this meeting will be sent to all parties in writing within 7 days. If a resolution does not occur, the failed dispute will be referred to the Belmont County Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile Division Judge.

COURT LEVEL DISPUTE RESOLUTION: When the provision of services cannot be resolved through the designated dispute resolution process, the final arbitrator of individual case resolution will be the presiding Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile Division Judge. The Council Chair or designee of the chair will file a motion for hearing with the court that will include the information of prior resolution attempts and treatment information.

FISCAL STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT FCFC SERVICE COORDINATION

All funding decisions are made through a team process for the individualized needs of families. All local community resources are utilized prior to using funding through the Belmont County Family and Children First Council. Family Centered Service and Support Funds (FCSS) are allocated by the state. The state also required the Local Public Childrens Services Agency (PCSA) to provide an allocation to the FCFC. Both funds have restricted use and are discussed with the team and signed by the FCFC Coordinator and Chair. The purpose of Service Coordination is to utilize local resources, maintain fiscal responsibility, and encourage and refer for services in the home and community to prevent the need for out of home placement. Funds must be tied to the individual plan of care. Service Coordination may be funded through a combination of TANF and pooled funds provided by Belmont County Department of Job and Family Services, Belmont County Board of Developmental Disabilities, and The Mental Health and Recovery Board serving Belmont, Harrison, and Monroe Counties.

Belmont County Family and Children First Council or OhioRISE may apply to the Ohio Department of Medicaid for Multi-System Youth (MSY) funding. A state team reviews applications to determine if MSY funding restrictions are being met and if the funding is appropriate. MSY funding is to prevent custody relinquishment for the sole purpose of

obtaining necessary services. MSY funding can be utilized as part of a transition plan to return youth back to their local homes and communities. The agency that submits an MSY application is responsible for monitoring the process and reporting to FCFC/Cluster and MSY state team for review.

QUALITY ASSURANCE OF SERVICE COORDINATION MECHANISM

The County Service Coordination Mechanism (SCM) is reviewed and monitored annually by the Executive Council. Once reviewed, it is presented to full council and voted on by the mandatory council members by the end of each calendar year. The Belmont County SCM is located on the FCFC tab within the Belmont County Job and Family Services website www.belmontcdjfs.com.