CORE TENETS OF FLORIDA’S PRACTICE MODEL

Protect the vulnerable, promote strong families, and advance family resiliency.

WHAT WE WILL ACCOMPLISH

CORE PRACTICES

ENGAGE

Build rapport and trust with the family and other persons who support the family as the six information standards are explored. Empower the family by seeking information as to its strengths, resources, and family solutions. Demonstrate respect for the family as they exist in their social network, community, and culture.

PARTNER

Identify formal and informal partners who have the knowledge and information needed about the family and/or family conditions. Provide team leadership and facilitation to achieve optimum communication, clear roles and responsibilities, and accountability.

GATHER INFORMATION

Gather information consistently, from the family and other team members, throughout the course of all interventions to update the six information standards (see back). Update information as underlying issues, including trauma, are identified and the family situation changes.

ASSESS & UNDERSTAND

Assess information gathered for sufficiency. Identify unsupported observations or unverified statements. Reconcile information inconsistencies. All team members have a shared understanding of the information and how it should inform interventions.

PLAN FOR CHILD SAFETY

Develop and implement short-term actions to supplement parent/caregiver capacities to keep child safe in the home or in care. For a child in temporary care, identify when parent progress will be sufficient to return the child with an in-home safety plan.

PLAN FOR FAMILY CHANGE

Work with the child, family, and other team members to identify appropriate interventions and the supports necessary to build parent protective capacities. Seek to identify what will need to happen in order for the family and its support network to succeed with maintaining changes over the long term.

MONITOR AND ADAPT

Provide linkages to services and help the family navigate formal systems. Troubleshoot and advocate for access when barriers exist. Modify safety actions and case plans as needs change. Support the child and the family with transitions, including alternative permanency options when reunification will not occur.
DRAFT CPI Quality Assurance Tool
Table of Contents

Introduction—On 12/19, it was mentioned that the CPI QA Tool might need to include an item on “impending danger.”

Florida Safety Decision Making Methodology

Item 1: Safety Related Information Collection Interviewing Protocol
1.1 Child Victim Interview
1.2 Child Victim Observations
1.3 Other Child Interviews
1.4 Other Child Observations
1.5 Perpetrator Interview
1.6 Non-maltreating Parent/caregiver Interview
1.7 Other Household Members Interviews
1.8 Relatives (not in household) Interviews
1.9 Collateral Interviews

Item 2: Present Danger Assessment and Safety Plan
2.1 Accuracy of Present Danger Assessment
2.2 Appropriate Safety Plan Sufficient
2.3 Safety Plan Managed Actively
2.4 Expediting Information Collection to Ensure Safety
2.5 Collaborative Decision Making

Item 3: Information Collection on Family Functioning in Assessing Child Safety
3.1 Sufficient Information regarding the Extent of Maltreatment
3.2 Sufficient Information regarding the Nature of Maltreatment
3.3 Sufficient Information regarding Child Functioning
3.4 Sufficient Information regarding Adult Functioning
3.5 Sufficient Information regarding General Parenting
3.6 Sufficient Information regarding Disciplinary Practices
3.7 Reasonable Worker Diligence

Item 4: Safety Assessment, Analysis and Plan
4.1 Safety threats are identified accurately
4.2 Analysis regarding the Safety Plan is accurate, logical, and understandable
4.3 The Safety Plan is sufficient, understandable, feasible, and sustainable

Item 5: Family Functioning Assessment - Quality
Other Practice Standards

Item 6: Family Engagement and Teamwork

- 6.1 Efforts to Engage Family Members
- 6.2 Child Protection Team
- 6.3 Substance Abuse Professionals
- 6.4 Mental Health Professionals
- 6.5 Domestic Violence Professionals
- 6.6 Law Enforcement Professionals
- 6.7 Children’s Legal Services
- 6.8 Community-Based Care

Item 7: Supervisory Consultation and Guidance

- 7.1 Initial supervisory guidance
- 7.2 On-going supervisory guidance
- 7.3 Supervisory guidance was followed.

Item 8: Safe Case Closure
Introduction

The Florida Safety Decision Making Methodology for child protection is a continuum of intervention services that begins when a child abuse or neglect referral is received by the agency and concludes when a case closes and children are in a safe and permanent home. The effectiveness of this system of services is contingent on all stages of service working together to achieve these outcomes. As a family proceeds through certain steps or decision-making points across stages of service, the safety of the child remains paramount.

The single most critical function of child protective investigators is the complex process of assessing child safety at every stage. The CPI assessment is crucial to addressing a child’s immediate safety and, through safety analysis, determining the need for an ongoing safety plan. The CPI assessment is not only fact-finding; it also includes establishing rapport with family members and engaging them in the safety intervention process.

Making good decisions about safety is based on gathering sufficient information.

- **Nature and extent of maltreatment.** What is the nature and extent of the maltreatment?
- **Circumstances of maltreatment.** What circumstances accompany the maltreatment?
- **Child functioning.** How does the child function day to day?
- **Parental discipline.** How does the parent discipline the child?
- **General parenting.** What are the overall parenting practices?
- **Adult functioning.** How does the parent manage his/her own life?

The Florida Safety Decision Making Methodology highlights the following critical factors:

- Present danger (refers to an immediate, significant and clearly observable serious harm or threat of serious harm occurring to a child requiring immediate CPS protective response);
- Impending danger (state in which family conditions, behaviors, attitudes, motives, emotions and/or situations are out of control and, while the danger may not be currently active, it can be anticipated to have serious effects on a child at any time) which is assessed on an ongoing basis, and
- Risk of future abuse or neglect (reasonable potential that children in a family will be abused or neglected in the foreseeable future (3-12months).

Role of Quality Assurance

Continuous review and adjustment is a necessary part of assuring the effectiveness and necessary modification of a safety intervention system. Quality assurance evaluates safety intervention practice and decision-making against standards that form the safety intervention model and guide casework practice and decision-making. Quality assurance provides feedback to management in order to control quality, establish benchmarks for competency, and reveal the need for adjustment or enhancement.
Item 1

Safety Related Information Collection Interviewing Protocol

1.0 The degree to which interviews and observations were sufficient to guide decisions and determine, with a high degree of accuracy, what is occurring in the family.

Response Rating:

☑ Optimal ☑ Acceptable ☑ Conditional ☐ Unacceptable

RESPONSE GUIDE - Description of CPI Practice

Optimal: Performance was consistent and complete. There was demonstration of a high level of skill communicating with the family/collaterals and soliciting the information needed for this item.

Acceptable: Performance was consistent and complete. While acceptable performance is noted, communication and solicitation skills to gather all of the necessary information could be improved.

Conditional: Performance was not consistent or complete. There was demonstration of a minimal level of communication and solicitation skills with the family and collaterals to gather the information needed in this item. The level of performance requires supervisory guidance and oversight to ensure improvement.

Unacceptable: Performance was not consistent or complete. Performance was consistently below the level of skill considered acceptable or conditional and requires immediate corrective action. Unacceptable performance might have had child safety implications.

1.1 Alleged child victim(s) is interviewed.

☑ Yes: Interview was completed.

☑ No: Interview was not completed.

1.2 Alleged child victim(s) is observed in the context of parent/legal guardian child interactions.

☑ Yes: Observations were complete.

☑ No: No observations were conducted.

1.3 Other children in the home are interviewed.

☑ Yes: Interviews were completed.

☑ No: No interviews were completed.

1.4 Other children in the home are observed.

☑ Yes: Observations were completed.
Core Concepts: The CPI conducted a face-to-face interview with all of the alleged child victims and other children in the home, addressing each alleged maltreatment or any other identified maltreatment learned during the course of the investigation. The CPI considers the child’s age and developmental level. Prior to the interview, the CPI will attempt to determine whether the child has special needs related to developmental and/or physical disabilities or whether special accommodations bear consideration.

1.5 Perpetrator(s) is interviewed.

☐ Yes: Interview was completed.

☐ No: Interview was not completed.

☐ No: Interview was not completed because law enforcement did not allow.

1.6 Non-Maltreating Parent/caregiver is interviewed.

☐ Yes: Interview was completed.

☐ No: Interview was not completed.

☐ No: Interview was not completed because law enforcement did not allow.

Core Concepts: Interviews with the alleged perpetrator(s) and non-maltreating parent/caregiver include bio-parent, paramour, grandmother acting as parent, etc. The interview with perpetrator should be conducted face-to-face. Interviews with the non-maltreating parent/caregiver may be conducted via telephone. This interview allows the CPI to discern the role of the parent/caregiver(s) and other household member and assess their attitudes toward the child victim(s), “other” children in the home, and other parent/caregivers. In addition, the interview helps assess knowledge of the alleged maltreatment, circumstances surrounding the maltreatment and any underlying conditions that may be contributing to the alleged maltreatment.

1.7 Other household members are interviewed.

☐ Yes: Interviews were completed.

☐ No: No interviews were completed.

1.8 Relatives not in the household are interviewed.

☐ Yes: Interviews were completed.

☐ No: No interviews were completed.

Core Concepts: Interviews with other household members and relatives not in the household include when relevant, grandparents, adult siblings, adult children, etc. This interview provides their knowledge of the alleged maltreatment and their perspective of the parent/caregiver’s attitudes toward the child victim(s), “other” children in the home, and other parent/caregivers as well as assesses knowledge of the alleged maltreatment, circumstances surrounding the maltreatment and any underlying conditions that may be contributing to the alleged maltreatment.
1.9 **Collateral contacts are interviewed.**

- Yes: *Interviews were completed.*
- No: *No interviews were completed.*
- No: *No interviews were completed because they were not needed.*

**Core Concepts:** Interviews with collaterals include when relevant, doctors, school, neighbors, etc. Relevant collateral contacts are important because they are generally individuals who have contact with the child or otherwise have pertinent knowledge about the child, the child’s condition, and/or the alleged circumstances or maltreatment.

Item 2

Present Danger Assessment and Safety Plan

There was discussion on 12/14 and 12/19 about whether “safety plan” or “safety planning” should replace “protective actions.”

2.0 The degree to which the CPI applied critical thinking skills to ensure a thoughtful and deliberate process in understanding, and applying available information in the strategic decisions (e.g., safety, child placement, substantiation, and case disposition) during the Family Functioning Assessment.

Response Rating:

- Optimal
- Acceptable
- Conditional
- Unacceptable

RESPONSE GUIDE - Description of CPI Practice

**Optimal:** Performance was consistent, comprehensive and complete. There was demonstration of a high level of skill analyzing and applying the information gathered to make all decisions in the item.

**Acceptable:** Performance was consistent, comprehensive and complete. While acceptable performance is noted, skills analyzing and applying the information gathered to make all decisions in the item could be improved.

**Conditional:** Performance was not consistent, comprehensive or complete. There was demonstration of a minimal level of skill analyzing and applying the information gathered to make all decisions in the item. The level of performance requires supervisory guidance and oversight to ensure improvement.

**Unacceptable:** Performance was not comprehensive and complete. Performance was consistently below the level of skill considered acceptable or conditional and requires immediate corrective action. Unacceptable performance might have had child safety implications.

**Core Concepts:** Present Danger refers to an immediate, significant and clearly observable serious harm or threat of serious harm occurring to a child requiring immediate CPI protective response.

When it is determined there is a need to engage crisis oriented services, an early engagement staffing should be held so the CPI can work in collaboration with the CBC to address family needs. Examples of immediate service needs may include removal, at risk childcare, food, housing, clothing, referral to domestic violence shelter, assistance with a domestic violence injunction, emergency hospitalizations to address substance abuse or mental health concerns, or other community services. Staffings may prevent unnecessary placements by initiating in-home non-judicial or in-home judicial family preservation services in the child’s own home. The intent of a staffing is to gather all interested parties to participate in a collaborative effort to make the most informed and beneficial decisions concerning services for the family, case planning, and possibly moving a child into out-of-home care given the unmanageable present or impending danger threat(s).

The CPI should be providing appropriate follow up on the services deemed necessary to ensure immediate safety and mitigate impending threats to child safety.
2.1 Present Danger Assessment is accurate and information gathered supports its conclusions.

**Core Concepts:** The assessment provides a clear explanation regarding how decisions were made. There is a logical link between facts and professional decisions, i.e., who was involved in making the decision, and what facts influenced a given decision.

- **Yes:** Assessment was accurate and supported by all of the information.
- **Partial:** Assessment was supported by some of the information.
- **No:** Assessment was not accurate and not supported by the information.

2.2 Safety Plan is sufficient to control for safety while information gathering proceeds.

**Core Concepts:** When the assessment indicated a need to take action to ensure child safety, the CPI considered the least intrusive approach and worked with the family and various support systems in determining the best plan to move forward. Promissory safety plans are not used.

- **Yes:** Appropriate safety plan action taken to control for child safety.
- **Partial:** Safety plan action taken but not sufficient to control for child safety.
- **No:** Safety plan action needed but no action taken to control for child safety.

2.3 Safety Plan is managed actively throughout the remainder of the investigation. **Need core concepts.**

- **Yes:** Safety plan action managed throughout investigation.
- **Partial:** Safety plan action managed inconsistently throughout the investigation.
- **No:** Safety plan action not managed.

2.4 Information collection and other aspects of the investigation are expedited in order to ensure that the safety plan can be determined and revised as needed. **Need core concepts.**

- **Yes:** Information collection and investigative actions were expedited as needed.
- **Partial:** Some information collection and investigative actions were expedited as needed.
- **No:** No information collection and investigative actions were expedited as needed.
2.5 There is collaborative decision-making related to safety plan.

Core Concepts: As appropriate, efforts were made to convene emergency discussions and/or team meetings with parent/legal guardians, extended family members, and professionals (CPT, CBC, substance abuse professional, domestic violence advocate, law enforcement, etc.) to determine the most appropriate and least intrusive and to determine available safety actions and safety plans.

☑ Yes: Safety plan action included collaborative decision-making.

☑ Partial: Some safety plan action included collaborative decision-making.

☑ No: No safety plan action included collaborative decision-making.

Item 3

Information Collection on Family Functioning in Assessing Child Safety

3.0 The degree to which there is adequate information collected and analyzed to assess child safety and identify present and/or impending danger.

Response Rating:

☑ Optimal ☐ Acceptable ☐ Conditional ☐ Unacceptable

RESPONSE GUIDE - Description of CPI Practice

Optimal: Performance was consistent, comprehensive and complete. There was demonstration of a high level of skill communicating with the family/CPT/others, soliciting the information needed for this item, and analyzing information.

Acceptable: Performance was consistent, comprehensive and complete. While acceptable performance was noted, communication and solicitation skills with the family/CPT/others to gather all of the necessary information in the item could be improved.

Conditional: Performance was not consistent, comprehensive or complete. There was demonstration of a minimal level of communication, solicitation, and analysis skills with the family/CPT/others to gather the necessary information in the item. The level of performance requires supervisory guidance and oversight to ensure improvement.

Unacceptable: Performance was not comprehensive and complete. Performance was consistently below the level of skill considered acceptable or conditional and requires immediate corrective action. Unacceptable performance might have had child safety implications.

GUIDING LANGUAGE

Core Concepts: Impending danger is a state in which family conditions, behaviors, attitudes, motives, emotions and/or situations are out of control and, while the danger may not be currently active, it can be anticipated to have serious effects on a child at any time. Commonly impending danger threats to child safety are not obvious or occurring at the onset of CPS intervention or in a present context. These threats are identified and understood upon more fully evaluating and understanding individual and family conditions and functioning. Without safety intervention, these threats could lead to serious harm. Impending danger refers to a family situation in which a child is not in immediate or present danger but exists in a general state of danger because of what is understood to be happening within his or her family.

The family functioning assessment process includes: gathering information or evidence in order to assemble an information base and interpret information accurately to guide the decision making process with regard to child safety. This domain assesses the degree to which critical decisions are carefully reasoned by the CPI at strategic decision points. Strategic decision points are those that fundamentally alter the path of potential outcomes for the child and family involved, such as, diversion to community resources, in-home safety planning or child removal and placement.
This conclusion is based on the CPI’s understanding of a family gained from the information they have collected from the family, other collateral contacts and experts. The determination of child danger is precise in focus: information is gathered and analyzed in the six constructs to develop an understanding of family dynamics and functioning. Standardized information gathering is crucial; while present danger is readily identifiable and likely observable at the time of initial contact; impending danger is more elusive and requires focused professional information gathering and assessment. The four questions that the CPI must address in order to make safety decisions are:

1. What is the extent of the maltreatment and what is the nature of the maltreatment?
2. How do the children in the family function?
3. How do the adults in the family function?
4. What are the general parenting practices and disciplinary practices of the parent/caregivers in the family?

3.1 There is sufficient information regarding extent of maltreatment. *(What is the extent of the maltreatment?)*

**Core Concepts:** Sufficient refers to identification of type(s) of maltreatment; details about symptoms (injuries, conditions present); details about severity; identify the person responsible for the harm and finding. Appropriate information gathered from CPT, as needed and that the information provided is understood. The extent of maltreatment is concerned with the maltreating behavior and the immediate physical effects on a child. It considers what is occurring or has occurred and what the results are (e.g. hitting, injuries.) Information that will help the CPI assess the extent of maltreatment includes:

- Type of maltreatment
- Severity of the maltreatment
- History of the maltreatment
- Description of specific events
- Description of emotional and physical symptoms
- Identification of the child and maltreating parent/caregiver

☑ Yes: All information was included, sufficient, and analyzed.

☑ Partial: Some information was excluded, insufficient, or not analyzed. *(The reviewer must check excluded and not analyzed items in the box below.)*

☑ No: All information was excluded, insufficient and not analyzed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excluded Information:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Child/Children emotional/physical injuries</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Type(s) of maltreatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Alleged perpetrator identified (role or relationship to child/children)</td>
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<td>□ If appropriate, CPT information</td>
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3.2 There is sufficient information regarding nature of maltreatment. (*What surrounding circumstances accompany the maltreatment?*)

*Core Concepts:* Sufficient refers to circumstances and events associated with the maltreatment: (where, when, who, how, who saw, what led to the event, where were other family members); duration of maltreatment; patterns and length of time any type of maltreatment has been occurring (including g reported and unreported child protective services (CPS) history); explanation for maltreatment including responses of both alleged perpetrator and non-maltreating parent/caregiver; attitudes of parent/caregivers respective of maltreatment (even when no maltreatment exists); other factors that may have contributed and should be considered (substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, cognitive deficiency/developmental or physical disability, and financial hardship).

- **Yes:** All information was included, sufficient, and analyzed.
- **Partial:** Some information was excluded, insufficient, or not analyzed. (The reviewer must check excluded and not analyzed items in the box below.)
- **No:** All information was excluded, insufficient and not analyzed.

**Excluded Information:**
- Circumstances and events associated with maltreatment
- Duration, frequency, and history of maltreatment
- Details about Parent/caregiver behavior associated with the maltreatment (substance abuse, extent of self-control, etc.);
- Any response of the perpetrator/non-maltreating parent/caregiver providing explanation for maltreatment
- Attitudes of Parent/caregiver(s) about maltreatment

3.3 There is sufficient information regarding child functioning. (*How does the child function on a daily basis? Include pervasive behaviors, feelings, intellect, physical capacity and temperament*)

*Core Concepts:* Child functioning is concerned with a child’s general behavior, emotions, temperament and physical capacity. It addresses how a child is from day to day rather than focusing on points in time (i.e., CPS contact, time of the maltreatment event.) A developmentally appropriate standard is applied in this area of inquiry. Information that will help assess child functioning includes: capacity for attachment; general mood and temperament; intellectual functioning; communication and social skills; expressions of emotions/feelings; behavior; peer relations; school performance; independence; motor skills; physical and mental health; and functioning within cultural norms.

- **Yes:** All information was included, sufficient, and analyzed.
- **Partial:** Some information was excluded, insufficient, or not analyzed. (The reviewer must check excluded and not analyzed items in the box below.)
- **No:** All information was excluded, insufficient and not analyzed.
3.4 There is sufficient information regarding adult functioning. *(How does the adult function in respect to daily life management and general adaptation?)*

**Core Concepts:** Adult functioning is concerned with how the adults/parent/caregivers in the family feel, think and act on a daily basis. This assessment focuses on adult functioning separate from parenting. For instance, how do the adults in the family behave regardless of whether they are parents or not. Information that will help assess adult functioning includes communication and social skills; coping and stress; management; self-control; problem solving; judgment and decision making; independence; home and financial management; employment citizenship and community involvement; rationality; self-care and self-preservation; substance use; mental health physical health and capacity; and functioning within cultural norms.

- **Yes:** All information was included, sufficient, and analyzed.
- **Partial:** Some information was excluded, insufficient, or not analyzed. *(The reviewer must check excluded and not analyzed items in the box below.)*
- **No:** All information was excluded, insufficient and not analyzed.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excluded Information:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child development (physical, social, emotional, cognitive)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child peer relations and school behavior &amp; performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child daily routines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child functioning consistent with cultural norms</td>
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3.5 There is sufficient information regarding general parenting. *(What are the overall, typical, pervasive parenting practices used by the parent/legal guardian? (do not include discipline)*

**Core Concepts:** General parenting provides the general nature and approach to parenting which forms a basis for understanding parent/caregiver-child interaction in more substantive ways. Information that will help the CPI assess general parenting includes:
- Reasons for being a parent/caregiver
- Satisfaction in being a parent/caregiver
- Parent/caregiver knowledge and skill in parenting and child development
- Parent/caregiver expectations and empathy for a child
- Decision making in parenting practices
- Parenting style
- History of parenting behavior
- Protectiveness

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<tr>
<td>Adult/Parent/caregiver social and coping skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult/Parent/caregiver employment</td>
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<td>Adult/Parent/caregiver community involvement</td>
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3.6 There is sufficient information regarding parental disciplinary practices. (What are the disciplinary approaches used by the parent/legal guardian, including the typical context?)

Core Concepts: Parental disciplinary practices are concerned with the manner in which parent/caregivers approach discipline and child guidance. Discipline is considered in the broader context of socialization - teaching and guiding the child. This is broken out from parenting generally because this aspect of family life is highly related to both potential for future maltreatment and threats to child safety. Information that will help the CPI assess parental disciplinary practices includes disciplinary methods; concept and purpose of discipline; context in which discipline occurs; and cultural practices.

- Yes: All information was included, sufficient, and analyzed.
- Partial: Some information was excluded, insufficient, or not analyzed. (The reviewer must check excluded and not analyzed items in the box below.)
- No: All information was excluded, insufficient and not analyzed.

Excluded Information:
- Parent/caregiver attitudes about discipline
- Parent/caregiver discipline knowledge

3.7 There is reasonable worker diligence and effort to collect information in all areas.

Core Concepts: Reasonable diligence and effort refers to behavior that demonstrates thoroughness, conscientiousness, specific care to seeking detail, repetitive attempts and exertion to get information and to include relevant people in the information gathering process. Diligent efforts help clear up confusion; fill in the gaps; reconcile differences; and qualify facts and data. Reasonable is a subjective standard but can be qualified by what seems sensible and logical; influenced by what is known; what is not known; what is important to know; what good practice and decision making depends on.

- Yes: All information was included, sufficient, and analyzed.
- Partial: Some information was excluded, insufficient, or not analyzed. (The reviewer must check excluded and not analyzed items in the box below.)
- No: All information was excluded, insufficient and not analyzed.
Item 4
Safety Assessment, Analysis and Plan

4.0 The degree to which viable and feasible safety intervention strategies are planned and implemented in response to the identified need.

Response Rating:

- Optimal
- Acceptable
- Conditional
- Unacceptable

RESPONSE GUIDE - Description of CPI Practice

Optimal: Performance was consistent, comprehensive and complete. If appropriate, there was demonstration of a high level of skill for preparing an accurate, feasible and sustainable safety plan.

Acceptable: Performance was consistent, comprehensive and complete. While acceptable performance is noted, skill for preparing an accurate, feasible and sustainable safety plan, if appropriate, could be improved.

Conditional: Performance was not consistent, comprehensive or complete. There was demonstration of a minimal level of skill for preparing an accurate, feasible and sustainable safety plan, if appropriate. The level of performance requires supervisory guidance and oversight to ensure improvement.

Unacceptable: Performance was not comprehensive and complete. Performance was consistently below the level of skill considered acceptable or conditional and requires immediate corrective action. Unacceptable performance might have had child safety implications.

Core Concepts: Safety Plan refers to the written documentation of the safety plan action that establishes how safety threats will be managed during the time a child is deemed unsafe. The safety plan is implemented and active as long as safety threats exist, the child is vulnerable to those threats, and parent/legal guardian protective capacities are insufficient to ensure a child is protected. The safety plan is designed along a continuum of least to most intrusive intervention: in home; a combination of in home and out of home; and out of home.

Safety plans are the specific course of action deemed necessary to immediately control present and/or impending danger threats to ongoing child safety. The CPI must:

- Consider all factors that pertain to child vulnerability,
- Address the parent/legal guardian’s protective capacities, or lack thereof,
- Explore identified safety threats and how they are manifested, and
- Explore and explain other factors that mitigate the safety threat.

Pertinent family members should actively participate in identifying intervention strategies that are the foundation of the safety plan. Reasonable and doable activities and action steps must be clearly articulated and understood by all involved parties. The safety plan should be focused on the specificity of the situation at hand and written in plain language. Reviewers must determine if the safety plan adequately controls and manages these threats and if it actually provides a plan to address identified gaps in parent/legal guardian’s protective capacities. The safety plan must include engagement of needed services and formal and informal supports as needed.
4.1 Safety threats are identified accurately. Core concepts needed?

- Yes: Safety threats identified accurately.
- Partial: Some safety threats identified.
- No: No safety threats identified.

4.2 Analysis regarding the Safety Plan is accurate, logical, and understandable. Core concepts needed?

- Yes: Analysis is accurate, logical, and understandable.
- Partial: Analysis is not accurate, logical, or understandable.
- No: Analysis is not accurate, logical and understandable.
- NA – Child is Safe

4.3 The Safety Plan is sufficient, understandable, feasible, and sustainable. Core concepts needed?

- Yes: Safety plan is sufficient, understandable, feasible, and sustainable.
- Partial: Safety plan is not sufficient, understandable, feasible or sustainable.
- No: Safety plan is not sufficient, understandable, feasible and sustainable.
- NA – Child is Safe


Hyperlink?
Item 5
Family Functioning Assessment (FFA) Quality

5.0 The FFA is well written, grammatically correct, and free of spelling errors.

Core Concepts: A copy of the FFA may be requested by subjects of the investigation, attorneys and the judiciary for various reasons. It is important that the document represents professional handling of the information received to include appropriate use of grammar, syntax, and correct spelling throughout.

☐ Yes  ☐ No
Other Practice Standards
**Item 6**

**Family Engagement and Teamwork**

6.0 The degree to which the CPI engaged the family and other professionals in assessing needs, making decisions, setting goals, and achieving desired outcomes.

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**Response Rating:**

- Optimal
- Acceptable
- Conditional
- Unacceptable

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**RESPONSE GUIDE - Description of CPI Practice**

**Optimal:** Performance was consistent, comprehensive and complete. There was demonstration of a high level of skill necessary for engaging the family and working with other professionals to achieve the desired outcomes.

**Acceptable:** Performance was consistent, comprehensive and complete. While acceptable performance is noted, skill necessary for engaging the family and working with other professionals to achieve the desired outcomes could be improved.

**Conditional:** Performance was not consistent, comprehensive or complete. There was demonstration of a minimal level of skill necessary for engaging the family and working with other professionals to achieve the desired outcomes. The level of performance requires supervisory guidance and oversight to ensure improvement.

**Unacceptable:** Performance was not comprehensive and complete. Performance was consistently below the level of skill necessary for engaging the family and working with other professionals to achieve the desired outcomes and requires immediate corrective action. Unacceptable performance might have had child safety implications.

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**Core Concepts:** Family engagement is the foundation of good casework practice that promotes the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families in the child welfare system. Engagement goes beyond simple involvement by "motivating and empowering families to recognize their own needs, strengths, and resources and to take an active role in working toward change" (Steib, 2004). To build on a family's resources and kinship connections, family engagement activities focus not only on the immediate family but also on the active involvement of parent/legal guardians, extended family, and the family's natural support systems. Engaging families includes developing agreement on a safety plan, to the extent possible, family needs, and offering families some choices as to interventions that align with the family's values and culture. Effective behaviors include (1) Use of a broad range of active listening skills and keen observation of family dynamics to "hear" what the family is saying. (2) Ability to engage extended family and other experts required to adequately understand family and develop consensus as to necessary safety interventions (law enforcement, Child Protection Team, domestic violence advocate, substance abuse professional, mental health and other professionals).

Child welfare staff, family members, service providers, and community representatives make critical decisions together regarding removal, change of placement, and reunification/permanency. Assessment of family strengths and needs are determined and safety plans for children are constructed through engagement and input from all stakeholders. The goals of shared decision making are very important for maintaining and
supporting an inclusive environment and decision making capacity. Teamwork improves the agency's decision making process in order to ensure that children are only removed when they truly need to be individualized and appropriate interventions for children and families.

### 6.1 There are reasonable efforts to engage family members.

**Core Concepts:** Reasonable efforts were made to engage the family members in the process of collecting information; family members informed why information was needed and how gaining or lack of gaining the information would impact decisions. Family members were interviewed face to face, separately and privately and parent/legal guardian/child interactions observed. Efforts were made to identify relatives or family supports who could support an in-home safety plan or become an out-of-home parent/caregiver. Efforts were made to learn about family culture and traditions. Translator services were used when needed.

- Yes: *All family members were engaged.*
- Partial: *Some family members were engaged.*
- No: *No family members were engaged.*

**Excluded Actions/Efforts:**
- Included family members
- Informed Family Members why Information is Needed
- Family supports (including relatives) were Identified
- Family culture/custom was considered and accommodated

### 6.2 Teaming with the Child Protection Team occurred when necessary.

**Core Concepts:** The role of the CPT is to provide expertise in evaluating alleged child abuse and neglect, assessing threats to present or impending danger, protective factors, and providing recommendations for interventions to protect children and enhance a parent/caregiver’s capacity to provide a safer environment when possible.

1. The child abuse, abandonment, and neglect reports that must be referred to child protection teams for an assessment and other appropriate available support services in cases involving:
   a) Injuries to the head, bruises to the neck or head, burns, or fractures in a child of any age.
   b) (Bruises anywhere on a child 5 years of age or under.
   c) Any report alleging sexual abuse of a child.
   d) Any sexually transmitted disease in a prepubescent child.
   e) Reported malnutrition of a child and failure of a child to thrive.
   f) Reported medical neglect of a child.
   g) Any family in which one or more children have been pronounced dead on arrival at a hospital or other health care facility, or have been injured and later died, as a result of suspected abuse, abandonment, or neglect, when any sibling or other child remains in the home.
   h) Symptoms of serious emotional problems in a child when emotional or other abuse, abandonment, or neglect is suspected.
2. A face-to-face medical evaluation by a child protection team is not necessary when:
   a) The child was examined for the alleged abuse or neglect by a physician who is not a member of the child protection team, and a consultation between the child protection team board-certified pediatrician, advanced registered nurse practitioner, physician assistant working under the supervision of a child protection team board-certified pediatrician, or registered nurse working under the direct supervision of a child protection team board-certified pediatrician, and the examining physician concludes that a further medical evaluation is unnecessary;
   b) The child protective investigator, with supervisory approval, has determined, after conducting a child safety assessment, that there are no indications of injuries as described in paragraphs (1)(a)-(h) above; or
   c) The child protection team board-certified pediatrician determines that a medical evaluation is not required.

☐ Yes: **Teaming occurred and the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was comprehensive and complete.**

☐ Partial: **Teaming occurred but the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was limited in some capacities.**

☐ No: **Teaming did not occur when necessary.**

☐ NA (Not needed/Not Appropriate)

63 **Teaming with substance abuse professionals occurred when necessary.**

**Core Concepts:** Teaming with the local substance abuse professionals help the CPI identify substance abuse treatment needs and to support retention and success in substance abuse treatment for child welfare cases. FIS are substance abuse professionals who are employees of contracted substance abuse providers. Most are co-located with child welfare protective investigation or CBC case managers. FIS provide adult substance abuse outreach, screening, intervention, and case management. FIS do not function as the primary treatment counselor or the investigator. Their role is to serve as a consultant to, and coordinator with, child welfare and a motivator/supporter for families. FIS responsibilities are to:

- Accept referrals;
- Provide initial screening;
- Provide the linkage for further assessment/treatment as indicated;
- Provide case management;
- Motivate and support the family and assist in removing barriers to successful substance abuse treatment outcomes;
- Track and report on the progress of individuals referred;
- Provide information and recommendations for development and case management of the joint family service plan; and
  Work with the child welfare CPI or case worker to ensure compatibility between the substance abuse treatment goals and child welfare’s plans and interventions and safety management.

☐ Yes: **Teaming occurred and the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was comprehensive and complete.**

☐ Partial: **Teaming occurred but the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was limited in some capacities.**

☐ No: **Teaming did not occur when necessary.**
6.4 Teaming with mental health professionals occurred when necessary.

Core Concepts: Teaming with mental health professionals is critical when a parent/caregiver has a mental illness with symptoms that may be impacting their ability to care for their children. A mental health professional may also be required to understand the specific impacts on children of inadequate protective capacities and other exposures to trauma. Children with untreated mental health problems can be at greater potential for substance abuse, educational failure, juvenile delinquency, imprisonment, or homelessness.

- Yes: Teaming occurred and the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was comprehensive and complete.
- Partial: Teaming occurred but the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was limited in some capacities.
- No: Teaming did not occur when necessary.
- NA (Not needed/Not Appropriate)

6.5 Teaming with domestic violence professionals occurred when necessary.

Core Concepts: Teaming with the local domestic violence professionals in appropriate cases is essential to relevant safety planning, securing additional services and supports. Many times child welfare cases involve domestic violence, partner violence or family violence. In homes where domestic or partner violence occurs, fear, instability, and confusion may interfere with the love, comfort, and nurturing children need. These children may live in constant fear of physical harm from the person who is supposed to care for and protect them. They may feel guilt at loving the abuser or blame themselves for causing the violence. There are currently 42 certified domestic violence centers in Florida that provide crisis intervention and support services to adult victims of domestic violence and their children free of charge, 24 hours a day, and 7-days a week. Mandated services include emergency shelter, 24-hour crisis and information hotline, safety planning, counseling, case management, child assessments, information and referrals, education for community awareness, and training for law enforcement and other professionals. Many centers also provide legal and court advocacy, transportation, relocation assistance, life skills training, transitional housing, daycare, outreach services, rape crisis intervention, and prevention programs in local schools.

- Yes: Teaming occurred and the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was comprehensive and complete.
- Partial: Teaming occurred but the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was limited in some capacities.
- No: Teaming did not occur when necessary.
- NA (Not needed/Not Appropriate)
Teaming with law enforcement occurred when necessary.

Core Concepts: When appropriate, CPIs should work closely with law enforcement on child protective investigations and criminal investigations of child abuse or neglect. The role of law enforcement in child abuse cases is to investigate to determine if a violation of criminal law occurred, identify and apprehend the offender, and file appropriate criminal charges. The role of the CPI is to assess if maltreatment occurred, the circumstances surrounding the maltreatment, gather information necessary to determine a plan for action for the child’s safety and continued placement. CPI is a social intervention, not a criminal investigation. Pre-planning activities in Item 1 should determine the need for law enforcement to assist in an investigation.

- Yes: Teaming occurred and the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was comprehensive and complete.
- Partial: Teaming occurred but the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was limited in some capacities.
- No: Teaming did not occur when necessary.
- NA (Not needed/Not Appropriate)

Teaming with Children’s Legal Services occurred when necessary.

Core Concepts: If there is any likelihood that the investigations case will require the court’s attention, CPIs must work closely with Children’s Legal Services (CLS) at the earliest stages of the investigation. CLS acts as Florida’s legal authority on child welfare issues, with the goal of successfully advocating for the care, safety, and protection of Florida’s abused, abandoned and neglected children. CLS attorneys advocate for the best interests of abused, abandoned and neglected children and strive to achieve permanency, stability, and security as mandated by Chapter 39 of the Florida Statutes and corresponding federal laws. CLS is considered a critical partner is ensuring child safety.

- Yes: Teaming occurred and the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was comprehensive and complete.
- Partial: Teaming occurred but the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was limited in some capacities.
- No: Teaming did not occur when necessary.
- NA (Not Needed/Not Appropriate)
6.8 Teaming with Community-Based Care occurred when necessary.

Core Concepts: CPIs must work closely with Community-Based Care throughout an investigation. The CPI and the case manager should demonstrate shared responsibility or contact and communication, planning, decision-making, evaluating, and collaborative problem-solving. The CBC is considered a partner in ensuring child safety.

- Yes: Teaming occurred and the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was comprehensive and complete.
- Partial: Teaming occurred but the interaction and sharing of expertise and information was limited in some capacities.
- No: Teaming did not occur when necessary.
- NA (Not Needed/Not Appropriate)

Reference:
Item 7
Supervisory Consultation and Guidance

7.0 The degree to which the CPI supervisor provided consultation, support, and guidance to ensure sufficient information was collected to support a quality assessment and decision-making.

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**Response Rating:**

- Optimal
- Acceptable
- Conditional
- Unacceptable

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**RESPONSE GUIDE - Description of CPI Practice**

**Optimal:** Performance was consistent, comprehensive and complete. There was demonstration of a high level of skill necessary for a constructive and responsive relationship between the CPI supervisor and CPI.

**Acceptable:** Performance was consistent, comprehensive and complete. While acceptable performance is noted, the skill necessary for a constructive and responsive relationship between the CPI supervisor and CPI could be improved.

**Conditional:** Performance was not consistent, comprehensive or complete. There was demonstration of a minimal level of skill necessary for a constructive and responsive relationship between the CPI supervisor and CPI. The level of performance requires supervisory guidance and oversight to ensure improvement.

**Unacceptable:** Performance was not comprehensive or complete. Performance was consistently below the level of skill necessary for a constructive and responsive relationship between the CPI supervisor and CPI and requires immediate corrective action. Unacceptable performance might have had child safety implications.

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**Core Concepts:** Quality and adequacy refer to enough depth and breadth in all information collection a) to provide a reasonable understanding of family members and their functioning and b) to support and justify decision making. Information is specific, behaviorally stated, precise, relevant and comprehensive.

There is evidence of adequate supervisory support and guidance throughout the investigation based on skill level and/or needs of CPI. Information descriptive of individuals, situations, and issues is complex and dynamic. Information provided:

- Explores contextual issues;
- Explains the relationship between relevant pieces of information;
- Interprets the relationship between what is manifested and what can be inferred with respect to what is not immediately apparent;
- Clarifies “surface information” that is incomplete, non-specific or is not significantly relevant.

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**7.1 Initial supervisory guidance Core concepts needed?**

- Yes: Supervisory guidance was adequate.
- Partial: Supervisory guidance was provided but inadequate in some capacities.
- No: Supervisory guidance was not provided.
7.2 On-going supervisory guidance Core concepts needed?

- Yes: Supervisory guidance was adequate.
- Partial: Supervisory guidance was provided but inadequate in some capacities.
- No: Supervisory guidance was not provided.

7.3 Supervisory guidance was followed. Core concepts needed?

- Yes: Supervisory guidance provided was followed.
- Partial: Supervisory guidance provided was followed inconsistently.
- No: Supervisory guidance provided was not followed.
Item 8
Safe Case Closure

8.0 The degree to which the plan for closing the investigation case was thoughtful, individualized, and matched to the child and family's present situation, preferences and long-term view for child safety.

Response Rating:

- Optimal
- Acceptable
- Conditional
- Unacceptable

RESPONSE GUIDE - Description of CPI Practice

Optimal: The CPI carefully considered all of the information gathered throughout the course of the investigation in planning for safe case closure. This includes optimally and thoughtfully reflecting on the family's present situation, preferences and long-term view for child safety.

Acceptable: The CPI carefully considered the most critical facts gathered throughout the course of the investigation in planning for safe closure. This includes acceptably and thoughtfully reflecting on the family's present situation, preferences and long-term view for child safety.

Conditional: The CPI minimally planned for safe case closure as evidenced by a lack of thoughtful reflection of information gathered or the family's present situation, preferences and long-term view for child safety.

Unacceptable: The CPI did not consider all of the information or the most critical facts gathered throughout the course of the investigation in planning for safe closure. There were notable omissions in thoughtfully reflecting on the family's present situation, preferences and long-term view for child safety.

Core Concepts: The CPI must carefully consider all of the information gathered during the investigation to ensure closing the investigation will not generate additional safety concerns. If there were multiple parties involved, the CPI should consider their input in the decision-making process, including but not limited to, having multi-disciplinary staffings when appropriate to assure all involved parties share information in the best interests of the child and family. There was a smooth transition of the case from the CPI to the CBC.

Reference: