



# Iowa Department of Human Services

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## GENERAL LETTER NO. 17-C-21

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Child Welfare and Community Services  
Division of Adult, Children and Family Services

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 17, Chapter C, **CASE PLANNING POLICY**,  
Contents (page 1), revised; and pages 10a and 10b, revised.

### Summary

Chapter 17-C is revised to specify the time frame for completing the case notes. Initial case notes shall be completed within the first 60 days from the date the child enters foster care or the date the Department opens a child service case, whichever occurs first. Thereafter, case notes may be completed periodically throughout the life of the case but, at a minimum, must be completed at each six month review and whenever the case plan is revised.

### Effective Date

Immediately.

### Material Superseded

This material replaces the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 17, Chapter C:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
Contents (page 1)	July 27, 2012
10a, 10b	July 27, 2012

### Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your area social work administrator.

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	<u>Page</u>
<b>Life of the Case Phase: Case Planning</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Outcomes .....	1
Decisions .....	1
Criteria .....	1
Scope of Chapter .....	2
Legal Basis .....	2
<b>Case Planning Policy Statements</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Engaging the Family .....	4
Preparing for Case Planning .....	4
Family Meetings .....	4
Participation of the Child .....	4
Informed Consent .....	4a
Assessing Child Safety and Risk .....	4a
Developing a Safety Plan .....	4a
Family Risk Assessment .....	4b
Safe Case Closure .....	4b
Planning for Permanency .....	5
Assessing the Need for Placement .....	5
Efforts to Prevent Removal of a Child .....	5
Social History .....	5
Establishing the Permanency Goal .....	6
Timelines for Permanency .....	6
Reasonable Efforts to Achieve Permanency Goal .....	6
Concurrent Planning .....	6
Termination of Parental Rights .....	7
Transition Planning .....	7
Health Care Treatment Decisions .....	7
Transfer of Records .....	8
Developing the Initial Case Plan .....	8
Family Strengths and Needs .....	9
Addressing Safety Issues .....	9
Goals, Services, and Strategies .....	10
Health and Education Needs .....	10
Completing the Case Plan .....	10a
Documenting Family Participation in the Case Plan .....	10a
Case Notes .....	10a
Reviewing the Case Plan .....	10a
Safety Assessment .....	10b
Risk Reassessment .....	10b
Evaluating the Case Plan .....	10c
Reassessing Strengths and Needs of the Child and Family .....	10c

### **Completing the Case Plan**

**Law:** 42 USCA 675(5)(c)(iii); [Iowa Code section 232.2\(4\)](#)

**Rule:** [441 Iowa Administrative Code 130.7\(234\)](#)

**Policy Statement:** A case plan shall be filed within 60 days from the date the child enters foster care or the date the Department opens a child welfare service case, whichever occurs first.

The recommendation and strategies from the *Child Protective Services Assessment Summary* and the safety plan developed with the family, when applicable, serve as the interim case plan until the full plan is completed.

### **Documenting Family Participation in the Case Plan**

**Law:** 42 USCA 675(5)(c)(iii); [Iowa Code section 232.2\(4\)](#)

**Rule:** 42 CFR 1355.25; [441 Iowa Administrative Code 130.7\(234\)](#)

**Policy Statement:** To the fullest extent possible the Department shall provide opportunities for the family to participate in the development of the case plan. The family will be provided opportunities to make comments or indicate their agreement with the case plan.

### **Case Notes**

**Law:** Statewide Required Practice

**Policy Statement:** Initial case notes shall be completed within the first 60 days from the date the child enters foster care or the date the Department opens a child service case, whichever occurs first. Thereafter, case notes may be completed periodically throughout the life of the case but, at a minimum, must be completed at each six month review and whenever the case plan is revised.

### **Reviewing the Case Plan**

**Law:** 42 USCA 675; [Iowa Code section 232.2](#)

**Rule:** [441 Iowa Administrative Code 130.7\(4\)](#)

**Policy Statement:** The status of each child shall be reviewed periodically but no less frequently than every six months by a court or by administrative review in order to determine:

- ◆ The safety of the child,
- ◆ The continuing necessity for and appropriateness of placement, and
- ◆ The extent of compliance with the case plan and the extent of progress that has been made toward alleviating or mitigating the causes necessitating services.

“Administrative review” means a review open to the participation of the parent of the child, conducted by a panel of appropriate persons, at least one of whom is not responsible for the case management of or delivery of services to either the child or the parents who are the subject of the review.

### **Safety Assessment**

**Law:** Statewide Required Practice

**Policy Statement:** Form 470-4132, *Safety Assessment*, shall be completed at critical junctures throughout the course of the Department’s involvement with the family:

- ◆ Whenever circumstances suggest the child is in an unsafe situation,
- ◆ Before the decision to recommend unsupervised family visits,
- ◆ Before the decision to recommend reunification, and
- ◆ Before the decision to recommend closure of protective services.

### **Risk Reassessment**

**Law:** Statewide Required Practice

**Policy Statement:** Risk is formally and informally reassessed periodically throughout the life of the case. The results of the risk reassessments and the assessment of the family’s functioning are used to gauge progress and determine appropriate services.

Formal risk reassessments are completed using form 470-4134, *Risk Reassessment*:

- ◆ During case permanency plan reviews, and
- ◆ Before case closure

Informal risk reassessments are completed without the use of a tool at the following points during the life of a case:

- ◆ Before reunification,
- ◆ At family team meetings,
- ◆ In unsafe situations,
- ◆ During any contact with child, caregiver, or future caregiver,
- ◆ After review of reports,
- ◆ In clinical case consultations with the supervisor and other professionals,
- ◆ Before unsupervised visits, and
- ◆ Whenever circumstances suggest.