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## OVERVIEW

The Family Team Meeting (FTM) is an essential component of MiTEAM, Michigan's Child Welfare Practice Model. FTMs serve as the primary forum for safety planning, collaborative service planning, service identification, and assessing progress. The FTM represents a child-centered, family-driven, strength-based, team-guided approach, designed to engage families in developing plans for the safety, permanency, and well-being of their children and family.

FTMs should include child welfare staff, parents, caretakers, foster parents, children, youth, and may also include extended family, friends, neighbors, community-based service providers, community representatives, tribal representatives, for Indian children, or other professionals involved with the family.

During the FTM, participants work together to create a plan for safety, placement, and permanency tailored to the individual needs of each child. This process provides a forum to share ideas and opinions and stresses the importance of the family's perspective and involvement. In addition, this process encourages full participation of all participants, honest communication, and promotes dignity and respect.

## DEFINITIONS

**Family Team Meeting (FTM):** A deliberate and structured approach to involving youth, families and caregivers in case planning through a facilitated meeting of family and their identified supports.

**CPS Case Opening:** When the department has determined a preponderance of evidence exists that a person responsible for a child's health or welfare is also responsible for abuse/neglect of that child. Safety and risk are assessed and a service plan is developed.

**Court Intervention:** When the department requests in-home court jurisdiction or placement in out-of-home care.

**Case Closure:** The process of ending agency involvement with a family or child.

**Family Story:** A specific account of the family's functioning and history from their perspective.

**Pre-Meeting Discussion:** A planned discussion in which the case-worker initiates a detailed discussion about the process of a FTM.

**Safety Plan:** Is a set of preventive measures developed to ensure steps are put into place to maintain the safety of the child(ren). Situations where a safety plan is required include, but are not limited to:

- Unsupervised parenting time.
- Sibling on sibling violence.
- Domestic violence.
- Sexual abuse.
- Parental history of causing injury through physical discipline.
- Substance abuse of parent or child.
- Mental illness of parent or child.
- Suicidal behavior of parent or child.
- High-risk behavior of a child.
- Reunification.
- Safe sleep measures for children age 12 months and younger.
- Age appropriate behavior management plans.

**Action Plan:** Is a clear and specific plan that addresses immediate needs by outlining support for the child and family.

**Transition Plan:** Is a plan that addresses the needs of the child during placement or placement change.

**Visitation Plan:** Is a specific plan that addresses parent/child contact.

## FAMILY TEAM MEETING PROTOCOL

Case planning is a cooperative effort in which the child and family's strengths and needs are assessed in partnership with the family, caseworker, and other team members. FTMs are held to facilitate this process, which involves developing a road map for moving children to permanence promptly, while also addressing safety and well-being. The [Michigan Family Team Meeting Protocol](#) has identified all required steps that must be accomplished during the FTM.

## Caseworker's Guide to Pre- Meeting Discussions and Family Team Meetings

The [DHS-1107, A Caseworker's Guide to Pre-Meeting Discussions and Family Team Meetings](#), is a tool that provides details for how to facilitate a successful and interactive pre-meeting discussion and FTM. The DHS-1107 is to be reviewed prior to conducting pre-meeting discussions and FTMs.

## Coordinating Multiple FTMs

When appropriate, different types of FTMs may be combined to address multiple case management activities. Each meeting must be documented in MiSACWIS using the FTM hyperlink and all of the appropriate forms must be completed for each type of meeting.

**Example:** The case plan reassessment FTM may also include permanency goal review at six months in care **and** permanency goal change.

## Types and Timeframes

FTMs must occur within the required time frames as outlined in the following tables:

CPS	
Type	Time Frame
Case Opening (ISP)	Within 30 calendar days before or 14 calendar days after case opening.
Open/Close	Prior to disposition.
Case Plan Reassessment (USP)	Within 30 calendar days before the case plan due date.

<b>Court Intervention</b>	Within seven business days of the date of the preliminary hearing.
<b>Case Closure</b>	Within 30 calendar days before case closure or one business day after unplanned court ordered dismissal.
<b>Request by Family</b>	Within 14 calendar days of the request date.

FOSTER CARE	
Type	Time Frame
<b>Case Plan Development/ Reassessment</b>	<p>Initial Case Plan (ISP) - within 30 calendar days before the case plan due date.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> This FTM may be combined with the CPS Case Opening (ISP) FTM.</p> <p>Updated Case Plan (USP) - within 30 calendar days before the case plan due date.</p> <p>Permanent Ward Service Plan (PWSP) - within 30 calendar days before the case plan due date.</p>
<b>Permanency Goal Review at Six Months in Care</b>	Within 30-calendar days from the date the child has been in care for six months.
<b>Permanency Goal Change</b>	Within 30 calendar days before the date of the goal change.
<b>Placement Preservation/ Disruption</b>	<p>At least three business days prior to a planned change of placement or no later than three business days after an unplanned placement change.</p> <p>Planned and unplanned placement changes include reunification, placement in a residential setting, step-down from a residential or hospital setting, return from AWOLP, or request for change in foster home/relative placements.</p>
<b>Semi-Annual Transition Meeting</b>	<p>Within 30 calendar days after the youth's 14th birthday and every six months thereafter.</p> <p>For youth entering out-of-home placement at age 14 or older, the semi-annual transition meeting must be held within 30 calendar days of the removal date; see this item for specific meeting requirements.</p>
<b>90-Day Discharge Planning Meeting</b>	<p>Youth age 16 or older must have a 90-Day Discharge Planning meeting within 90 calendar days before dismissal or within 30 calendar days after an unplanned court dismissal; see this item for specific meeting requirements.</p> <p>Youth in Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care (YAVFC) must have a Discharge Planning Meeting within three business days of discovery that YAVFC eligibility requirements are not being met.</p>

FOSTER CARE	
Type	Time Frame
Case Closure	Within 30 calendar days before the case closure date or one business day after unplanned court ordered dismissal.
Request by Family	Within 14 calendar days of the request date.

## SEMI-ANNUAL TRANSITION MEETING

Beginning at age 14, semi-annual transition meetings must occur once every 180-calendar days to discuss a youth's permanency goal and identify supportive adults.

**Note:** For youth participating in Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care; see [FOM 722-16, Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care](#), for specific requirements that must be addressed during the meeting.

### Case Plan Team Members

Youth may select up to two adults, who are not the youth's foster parent/caregiver or caseworker, to be a part of his/her case planning team. The team members' role is to be the youth's advisor and advocate for his/her permanency, wellbeing, and normalcy, through the application of the [Rights and Responsibilities of Children and Youth in Foster Care](#); see [FOM 722-6J, Rights of Children in Foster Care](#). The team member will assist the youth in developing his/her case plan by participating in semi-annual transition meetings. Case planning team members must be invited to each semi-annual transition meeting.

The supervising agency may reject an individual selected by a youth, at any time, if the supervising agency has good cause to believe that the individual would not act in the best interests of the child. The caseworker must document the reasons for rejecting an individual chosen by the youth, in the case service plan.

#### ***Additional Participants***

Additional participants in the semi-annual transition meeting should include all persons the youth identifies as supportive; it is not meant

to be a one-on-one meeting with the youth. Participants may include but are not limited to the following:

- Foster parents.
- Biological parents.
- Relatives.
- Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).
- Education planner.
- Permanency Resource Monitor (PRM).
- Lawyer guardian ad litem.
- Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative coordinator.
- Therapists.
- The youth's friends.
- School staff.
- Employers.
- The youth's supportive adult(s), if applicable.
- Tribal representatives for American Indian children.
- Anyone the youth considers to be a support person.

### **DHS-901, Semi-Annual Transition Plan Report**

The [DHS-901, Semi-Annual Transition Plan Report](#), must be updated to reflect progress toward goals during each meeting. Once completed, the DHS-901, Semi-Annual Transition Plan Report, becomes the youth's transition plan. A copy of the DHS-901, Semi-Annual Transition Plan Report, must be given to the youth and all individuals responsible for assisting the youth. The original plan must be uploaded into MISACWIS.

**Note:** Progress toward the youth's goals must also be documented in all case service plans.

The meeting must cover all areas identified in the DHS-901, Semi-Annual Transition Plan Report, including but not limited to:

- Housing.
- Supportive relationships.
- Independent living skills.
- Education.
- Employment.
- Transportation.
- Financial management skills.
- Review of the youth's credit report.
- Emotional/mental/physical health.

- Substance abuse.
- Participation in age and developmentally appropriate activities.
- Other areas that will assist the youth in successfully transitioning from foster care.

During the meeting, the following must be identified:

- Goals for each area.
- One or more supportive adults assisting the youth in achieving each goal.

**Note:** The DHS-901, Semi-Annual Transition Plan Report, is completed in lieu of the DHS-1105, Family Team Meeting Report.

### Coordinating Multiple FTMs

If another FTM is held within 30-days of the required semi-annual transition meeting, the meetings may be combined to address all identified areas. Each meeting must be documented in MiSACWIS using the FTM hyperlink and all of the appropriate forms must be completed for each type of meeting.

### 90-DAY DISCHARGE PLANNING

All youth transitioning out of foster care at the age of 16 or older must have a 90-day discharge plan in place, which must be developed prior to the youth's exit from care. The discharge plan is established during the 90-day discharge planning meeting. The meeting is held for all youth exiting foster care, regardless of permanency goal. **A youth's foster care program type should not be closed until the 90-day discharge planning meeting occurs.**

**Note:** For youth participating in Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care, see [FOM 722-16, Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care](#), for specific requirements and time frames.

The discharge plan must be youth-driven and the youth must be involved in every aspect of the plan development. This meeting must include the youth's support network; it is not meant to be a one-on-one meeting with the youth. The youth's [two] case planning team members and any additional participants that the youth identifies must be invited to the 90-day discharge planning meeting; see *Case Plan Team Members* in this item.

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## DHS-902, 90-Day Discharge Plan Report

The [DHS-902, 90-Day Discharge Plan Report](#), must be completed during this meeting. A copy is to be given to the youth and any individuals responsible for assisting the youth. The original plan must be uploaded into MISACWIS. The DHS-902 addresses the following areas:

- Housing.
- Health insurance.
- Education.
- Mentors/supportive adults.
- Continuing support services.
- Workforce/employment services.
- Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care; see [FOM 722-16](#).

**Note:** The DHS-902, 90-Day Discharge Plan Report, is completed in lieu of the DHS-1105, Family Team Meeting Report.

## Coordinating Multiple FTMs

If the 90-day discharge planning meeting is held concurrently with any other type of FTM, each meeting must be documented in MiSACWIS using the FTM hyperlink and all of the appropriate forms must be completed for each type of meeting.

## FTM FACILITATION

FTMs must be facilitated by the assigned caseworker with the following exceptions:

- Federal requirements **mandate** a neutral facilitator for a YAVFC youth's semi-annual transition meetings.

**Note:** A neutral facilitator is a person without case management responsibility of either the child or the parents who are the subject of the review.

- Caseworker and supervisor determine there is a safety concern.

**Note:** If it is determined that the meeting is to be facilitated by another individual, the supervisor must assist in coordinating and identifying another facilitator. The name of the identified facilitator

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must be documented in social work contacts and must have completed the Family Team Meeting training.

### **MULTIPLE AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

When multiple agencies are providing services to the family and/or child, the agency with family responsibility is required to collaborate and involve all other child placing agencies involved with the family in all FTMs.

If a placement preservation/disruption FTM is needed, the agency providing services to the child must include the agency with family responsibility in the FTM.

### **PARENT/ CAREGIVER PARTICIPATION**

Parent/caregiver participation in a pre-meeting discussion or FTM is voluntary. If a parent/caregiver declines to attend or participate in the pre-meeting discussion or FTM, the meeting must proceed with other participants in attendance. If no other participants are identified, the caseworker and supervisor must proceed with a case conference to assess and plan for the child's safety, permanency, and well-being.

The caseworker must make active efforts to engage the parent or caregiver in the FTM process until case closure. Engagement efforts and a parent's denial of participation must be documented in the case service plan.

### **INCARCERATED PARENT PARTICIPATION**

When a parent is incarcerated, the caseworker must complete the following activities:

- Provide and document notice of the FTM to the incarcerated parent by mail or telephone.
- Contact the facility and request permission for the parent to participate in the FTM by telephone.
- If time allows, send a copy of the DHS-1105, Family Team Meeting Report, and ask the parent to sign and return it.

- Notify the parent's attorney of the meeting.

**Note:** The attorney must be allowed to attend.

- Send the incarcerated parent a copy of the DHS-1105, Family Team Meeting Report, and document the date the report was sent in social work contacts.

Caseworkers must provide prior notice to an incarcerated parent for the following FTMs only:

- Court Intervention.
- Change in permanency goal.
- Return home.

If circumstances permit, agencies may arrange for an incarcerated parent's participation in other types of FTMs.

## CHILD AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION

All children age 11 or older should be invited and allowed to attend FTMs. The caseworker must evaluate, on a case-by-case basis, whether attendance would be harmful to a child's safety or well-being. If the child is not invited, the reasons must be documented in the narrative section of the DHS-1105, Family Team Meeting Report, and the case plan.

**Note:** For children younger than 11 years old, the caseworker, and his/her supervisor may determine if it is appropriate for the child to attend all or a portion of the FTM.

## SECURITY

The caseworker must discuss any security needs and safety concerns prior to the FTM to ensure adequate security at the meeting site. Family members may be excluded if they pose a credible safety threat to the group or if attendance would violate a personal protection order, no contact-bond, probation, parole, or other court order. In some of these cases, a telephone conference must be explored.

All participants must be provided with security information, whenever a FTM will include the attendance of a family member with a known history of violent or threatening behavior.

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**DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE CASES**

In domestic violence cases, if the batterer is present, arrangements must be made to ensure the non-offending parent's and child's safe arrival and departure from the meeting location. If a personal protection order mandates that the parties must not come in contact, the possibility of a telephone conference must be explored, if not in violation of the court order. The caseworker and his/her supervisor must carefully evaluate a decision to exclude a parent. Additionally, the caseworker and supervisor should evaluate the child's attendance based on safety.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

The confidentiality of information shared at the FTM must be addressed. Privacy and respect are emphasized, but participants must be informed that information from the meeting may be used for case planning, in subsequent court proceedings if necessary, and in the investigation of a new allegation of abuse or neglect should such information arise. The caseworker must explain confidentiality and mandated reporting to all participants as it pertains to the FTM.

The confidentiality statement identified on the DHS-1105, Family Team Meeting Report, the DHS-901, Semi-Annual Transition Plan Report, and the DHS-902, 90-Day Discharge Plan Report, allows the parent(s)/youth to give permission for specific information regarding their case to be discussed for the purpose of the FTM. If a participant refuses to sign the report, the meeting will continue. Staff must be fully aware that specific information as outlined in SRM 131, Confidentiality, is not open for discussion unless the participant reveals the confidential information or signs the release of information.

**FTM PRACTICE  
GUIDANCE****Documentation**

The DHS-1105, Family Team Meeting Report, is used to capture family demographics, FTM logistical information, needs, strengths, action steps, safety concerns and the safety plan, and any recommendations made for the family during the FTM. The DHS-1105, FTM Report, must be completed for every FTM.

**Exception:** The DHS-902, 90-Day Discharge Plan Report, and the DHS-901, Semi-Annual Transition Plan Report, are completed in lieu of the DHS-1105, Family Team Meeting Report; see Semi-Annual Transition Meeting and 90-Day Discharge Planning in this item.

## Participants

The caseworker must encourage parents and children to identify and invite support persons they would like to attend; see Additional Participants in this item for suggestions.

**Note:** Tribal representatives for Indian Children must be invited regardless of the parent's preference.

Once the FTM is scheduled, the caseworker must coordinate efforts to invite participants to the meeting. Notification of the purpose, date, time, and place of the meeting can be provided by any reasonable method including mail, telephone, or verbal notification.

**Note:** If the caseworker has made reasonable efforts to notify a participant, a FTM may be held without the attendance of a participant.

## Prior to the FTM

### *Pre-Meeting Discussion*

The purpose of the pre-meeting discussion allows the parent, youth, and/or caregiver to have an active role in planning and facilitating the FTM. The family's first pre-meeting discussion with the assigned caseworker must occur in person; subsequent pre-meeting discussions may occur in person or by telephone. The pre-meeting discussion must be held prior to the FTM and must be documented in the social work contacts within MiSACWIS. The [MDHHS-Pub-1160, A Family's Guide to Pre-Meeting Discussions and Family Team Meetings](#), is available to help educate families on the case planning process. The MDHHS-Pub-1160, should be distributed to case members during the first pre-meeting discussion.

## Location

If safety permits, the FTM may take place at the parent, youth, and/or caregiver's home or a community site. FTMs must be held at the local MDHHS or placement agency office when safety or

security concerns arise or a participant's special needs must be accommodated.

## Date and Time

FTMs may need to be held during nontraditional work hours that will accommodate family and essential participants. Notification of the purpose, date, time, and place of the meeting can be provided by any reasonable method including mail, telephone, or verbal notification by either the caseworker or family.

## Special Needs/ Reasonable Accommodations

To promote the safety, well-being, and successful participation of all participants, the caseworker must identify and assist in resolving barriers to participants' attendance at the FTM before it takes place. Reasonable accommodations must be provided when inviting individuals with special needs. A participant's special need may include, but is not limited to the following.

### ***Transportation***

The caseworker must explore transportation options with families who identify this as a barrier.

### ***Childcare***

The caseworker must explore available childcare options with the family in order to support all primary caretakers' attendance at the FTM. If a need is identified, the caseworker must assist the caregiver with childcare arrangements prior to the meeting.

### ***Adaptations***

The caseworker must explore available options when a family member needs additional assistance in order to participate. These may include but are not limited to, a foreign language interpreter, interpreter for the hearing-impaired, wheelchair access, or phone access for an incarcerated parent.

For information on non-discrimination in service delivery; see [Non-Discrimination in Service Delivery](#).

For information about securing a foreign language interpreter; see [APF 113, Interpreter and Translator Services](#).

For information on interpreters for the deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing; see [Deaf & Hard of Hearing Applicant Accommodations](#).

## During the FTM

The caseworker must assist the FTM team members in the completion of the following stages as appropriate:

- Welcome & Introduction.
  - Purpose of meeting.
  - Agenda items.
  - Non-negotiable(s).
  - Identify desired outcomes.
  - Confidentiality.
  - Ground rules.
  - Family story.
  - Explanation of charting.
- Identification of the Family's Strengths and Needs/Concerns.
  - FTM members will identify the family's strengths.
  - FTM members will identify the family's concerns/needs.
  - Throughout the meeting, the FTM members must address how needs/concerns are connected to the desired outcomes.
  - FTM members will address strengths that will help the family achieve the desired outcome.
- Brainstorming.
  - FTM members are given the opportunity to contribute solutions to address needs/concerns.
- Plan Development.
  - **Safety Plan:** the safety plan must include proactive and reactive steps to address specific behavioral concerns and must meet all requirements outlined in the glossary of this item.
  - **Action Plan:** an action plan is required at the conclusion of each meeting; the plan must define goals, identify the approach that will be used to

achieving those goals, and describe measures to accomplish the goals.

- **Transition Plan:** the transition plan is created when movement of a child occurs and must meet all requirements outlined in [FOM 722-02, Placement Preparation](#), and [FOM 722-03, Placement Change](#).
- **Visitation Plan:** the visitation plan must be discussed and documented prior to the conclusion of a FTM. The visitation plan must meet all requirements outlined in [FOM 722-06I, Parenting Time Requirements](#).
- Recapping.
  - Each FTM member must be aware of any steps they are to take and the time line in which the steps must be completed to support the family in achieving the desired outcome(s).
  - Charting: the caseworker must chart during the process of the FTM so all participants can identify the strengths/needs concerns.
  - The DHS-1105, Family Team Meeting Report, must be completed at the conclusion of the FTM.

## Post FTM

Following the FTM, the caseworker is responsible for the following:

- Completing the DHS-1105, Family Team Meeting Report, checking it for accuracy, identifying areas needing follow-up, and recording the outcome data.
- Providing the DHS-1105, Family Team Meeting Report, to all participants (in person and by phone), legal parents, and casework supervisor. These documents must also be uploaded into MISACWIS.

The caseworker must enter the FTM information in MiSACWIS using the FTM hyperlink within seven business days of the FTM.

**Note:** The caseworker's supervisor must review activities assigned to the caseworker during monthly case consultations. Assigned

activities and any resolution must be documented in the parent agency treatment plan.

## LEGAL BASE

### **Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, 42 USC 620 et seq**

During the 90-day period immediately prior to the date on which the child will attain 18 years of age provide the child with assistance and support in developing a transition plan that is personalized at the direction of the child.

Periodic reviews for voluntary foster youth extending until age 21 are completed during the semi-annual transition meeting. A neutral person without case management responsibility must facilitate the FTM.

### **Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, Public Law 113-183**

Youth in foster care who are ages 14 and older are allowed to help develop their own case plan – and any revision to the plan – and are able to select up to two individuals who are not a foster parent or caseworker to be a part of their case planning team.