
 <p style="text-align: center;">State of Connecticut JUDICIAL BRANCH COURT SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION POLICY AND PROCEDURES</p>	POLICY NO. 3.22	EFFECTIVE DATE: April 1, 2019	PAGE 1 of 10
	SUPERSEDES: <p style="text-align: center;">NEW POLICY</p>		
APPROVED BY: <p style="text-align: center;">Gary A. Roberge, Executive Director</p>	TITLE: <p style="text-align: center;">FAMILY SERVICES EARLY INTERVENTION</p>		

1. **Policy** CSSD Family Services will screen and accept referrals from the Court to provide Case Management for custody and visitation matters that meet the criteria for Early Intervention (EI). Additionally, Family Services will regularly provide formal Informational Sessions designed for litigants early in the court process and individuals in the community seeking information regarding the Family Civil Court.



Links for this policy:

[JD-FM-223](#)
[JD-FM-230](#)
[JD-FM-252](#)
[Family Relations Counselor](#)
[Family Services Supervisor](#)
[Lead Family Relations Counselor](#)

2. **Definitions** – see [Exhibit I](#)

3. **Referrals**

- A. The case status must be pendente lite for a referral to Early Intervention, unless otherwise ordered by the court.
- B. The Court may directly make referrals to Early Intervention.
- C. A recommendation can be made for the service by CSSD-Family Services if a custody/visitation action is pending and it has been determined that Early Intervention is an appropriate intervention.
- D. Early Intervention generally is a two (2) month service. However, in some instances, the parties, with approval and order of the Court, can extend participation for a period, not exceeding three (3) months.
- E. With a referral for EI, referrals can concurrently be made for Mediation, Conflict Resolution Conference, and General Case Management.

4. **Intake Process and Case Assignment**

- A. As part of a negotiation, the Family Services staff will identify parties who have conflict with the ability to cooperate, communicate, or reach a lasting agreement on a parenting plan. The Family Services staff will recommend EI to the parties for their consideration. The Family Services staff will provide a verbal description of the two-month EI service.



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- B. If there is an agreement, the Family Services staff will prepare and submit to the Court a Request for Referral by Family Services, form [JD-FM-230](#), selecting the Case Management box on the form.
- C. The Family Services staff will also prepare and submit to the Court a Request for Order – Family Services Case Management, form [JD-FM-252](#). In the allotted text box the Family Services staff must include:
1. An indication that the matter is being referred to Early Intervention
 2. A list of any educational services that will be included in the referral (i.e. Parenting Education Program, Family Services’ Informational Session, and/or Connecticut Online Skills for Cooperative Parenting)
 3. A statement to the fact that the parties will contact their assigned FRC prior to filing any additional parenting related motions, in an attempt to resolve the issue. The only exception to this will be for emergency custody/visitation issues
 4. Any distinct General Case Management responsibilities to be completed by Family Services
 5. A requested date for a report back to the Court
- D. The parties will be provided with a two (2) month continuance date for a Status Conference with the Court. If possible, the parties will be given their initial appointment at the time of the referral, which will be scheduled within fourteen days.
- E. In the event the Court makes a bench referral for Early Intervention without the prior involvement of Family Services, then the Family Services staff will prepare and forward to the Court a Request for Referral by Family Services, form [JD-FM-230](#), with Case Management selected. The Family Services staff will also prepare as described above and submit to the court the Request for Order-Family Services Case Management, [JD-FM-252](#).
- F. To initiate the referral process, the FRC will enter the case information in CMIS and select Early Intervention from the Scope of Referral drop down list.



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G. For case assignment purposes, the FRC will submit the referral in CMIS to the office supervisor. Each file will contain a copy of the [JD-FM-230](#) and the [JD-FM-252](#), from the court.

5. Early Intervention

A. The Role of the Family Relations Counselor (FRC):

1. The FRC will establish specific objectives for the parties at the beginning of the process. The objectives will be updated throughout the pendency of the case and completed at the conclusion of the process. These objectives are to be discussed with the parties as the major outcome for Early Intervention.
2. The FRC will identify the steps needed to complete the specified objectives. These steps will be determined as a part of Early Intervention and will be supplemented by the FRC as necessary.
3. The FRC will provide a structured intervention centering on short-term stabilization of parenting interactions.
4. The FRC assigned will be available on a regular basis to assist the parties in resolving conflict and to help establish or comply with a parenting plan.
5. The FRC will offer education and guidance regarding potential solutions to the barriers that create conflict between the parties.
6. The FRC will provide on-going case coordination and monitoring of court orders (including completion of educational programs).
7. The FRC will complete all court-ordered responsibilities.
8. The FRC will identify and address emergency situations that require expedited hearings.
9. The FRC will report interim and final agreements to the Court.



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B. Client Contact

1. The FRC will hold an initial joint meeting within 14 days of referral to review program expectations. This meeting can occur at the time of the negotiation if appropriate and if there is time for substantive discussion.
2. The FRC will review educational opportunities and a timeframe for completion with the parties.
3. The FRC may conduct additional in-person meetings (separate from the initial joint meeting) with the parties. These meetings may be individual or joint depending on the needs and dynamics of the case.
4. The FRC will be proactive and have regular contact with the parents to monitor the parenting plan. The exact number of contacts will be determined in accordance with the needs of the specific case.
5. The FRC will complete any additional responsibilities ordered by the Court.

C. Court Updates

1. The FRC will complete the Case Management Oral Report (**CSSD Attachment A**) outlining the information that will be orally shared with the Court. The FRC will review this information with the office Supervisor prior to reporting to the Court.
2. Prior to reporting to the Court, the FRC will meet with the parties to discuss their participation in Early Intervention and attempt to resolve the pending custody/visitation dispute.
3. If at any time, the parties reach an agreement to a parenting plan, the FRC will assist in the preparation of an agreement. The FRC will arrange with the Family Civil Clerk's Office to have the agreement presented to the Court for order.
4. If a party is represented by counsel, any and all agreements reached should be reviewed/discussed with the attorney. All counsel associated with a case should be contacted and provided notice by the FRC before agreements (interim or final) are



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presented to the Court.

5. The FRC will report to the Court, at established continuance dates or as ordered, the parties' participation and compliance with Early Intervention. The FRC will offer an Action Plan at the Status Conference regarding next steps in the court process required to resolve the remaining parenting disputes. If additional GCM tasks were ordered, the FRC will report the information obtained to the Court. The FRC will not offer recommendations regarding custody and access to the Court.

6. File Maintenance

- A. The FRC will maintain a well-documented and accurate record of their work, keeping both the paper file and CMIS-II up-to-date with all information.
- B. The FRC will enter all referrals to educational services in CMIS in a timely manner and update the status/closure of the referral as required.
- C. The FRC will complete the Court Date/Agreement section when appropriate. All court dates to report on Early Intervention activity will be entered in this section. Interim agreements, either court-ordered or informal, will be entered in this section. In addition, a case note will be entered providing further description of the event.
- D. The FRC will enter cases notes on all interactions associated with EI in CMIS. The case notes include interactions associated with client contact, collateral contact, and court activity. Case notes will be recorded in a timely manner, and as soon as practical after the event or activity has occurred but, normally no more than two (2) business days from the date of the event.
- E. All correspondence received during Early Intervention will be retained in the Family Services case file. These documents will be scanned into CMIS once the application for scanning is incorporated into the system.



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7. Case Closure

- A. Cases will be closed in CMIS by the end of the next business day after the court date when the Court terminates Early Intervention. At the conclusion of the case, the FRC will complete the Referral Outcome tab in CMIS and enter information regarding the outcome, final parenting plan, and action plan.
- B. The FRC will close the referral in CMIS completing both the outcome and the associated outcome type.
1. Cases will be closed with the outcome of “Successful” if the parties completed EI, made identifiable progress, completed educational service(s) during the referral, or were able to resolve the original court motion.
 2. The referral will be closed as “Unsuccessful” if the case was terminated from EI due to lack of progress or compliance by the parties.
 3. The case will be “Withdrawn” if the parties did not cooperate with the initiation of the service and the matter was returned to court for further action.
- C. The Final Parenting Plan will be completed with one of the following Outcomes:
1. Agreement
 2. No Agreement
 3. Not Applicable - If the FRC did not address the actual parenting schedule with the parents
- D. The Action Plan Recommendations will be completed with one of the following:
1. Hearing
 2. Final Judgment
 3. Referral for Service



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4. Educational Program Referral
5. Further Court Action
- E. If the parties have reached an agreement, the FRC will complete and submit the Notice To Court Family Services Unit, form [JD-FM-223](#), indicating that the service has been completed and the parties intend to submit an agreement to the court.
- F. The FRC will complete a Summary Report in CMIS and will be approved by the Family Services Supervisor (FSS). The Summary report will include, but not be limited to an overview of the FRC's involvement in the case and the status of the case when it was closed.

8. Family Services Supervisor (FSS) Role and Responsibility

A. Case Assignment Responsibility

1. The FSS will review the Early Intervention referral and Court Order forms for accuracy prior to assigning the case.
2. The FSS will confirm that the case has been entered correctly in CMIS and direct clerical staff to establish a paper file for the case.
3. The FSS will make every reasonable effort to assign the case within two business days of the referral notification date.

B. Case Supervision

1. During the course of regular monthly supervision, the FSS will review every Early Intervention with the FRC to assess their understanding of the case, review progress, and determine the quantity of contacts the FRC had with the parties.
2. The FSS will be available at other times to discuss the cases with the FRC assigned, based on the needs of the matter referred for Early Intervention.



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3. The FSS will review CMIS case notes with the FRC in every Early Intervention matter and ensure that the FRC understands and addresses the dynamics involved in the case.
4. The FSS will review the Early Intervention tab in CMIS and ensure the FRC is maintaining the file appropriately.
5. The FSS will review the Early Intervention Oral Report with the FRC in every case prior to the FRC's oral presentation to the Court.
6. The FSS will read and approve the case summary in CMIS before the matter is closed.

9. Professional Conduct

- A. The FRC will conduct him/herself in a professional manner; treating clients with courtesy and respect throughout the Early Intervention process.
- B. The FRC will strive to be accurate, objective, fair and independent in his/her work.
- C. The FRC will address all gathered information in a balanced manner.
- D. During the course of Early Intervention, the FRC shall not have substantive ex-parte communications about the case with the Court except of an administrative nature or with mutual consent of all parties.
- E. The FRC will not offer legal advice or conduct any therapeutic intervention with anyone involved in Early Intervention.

10. Exceptions

Any exception to this policy will require prior written approval from the Division's Executive Director.



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EXHIBIT I

Definitions

- A. Early Intervention Early Intervention (EI) is a Case Management model designed to assist parents with short-term management and the stabilization of parenting interactions. The target population is the litigants primarily demonstrating early stages of conflicted, pendente lite court involvement. The goal is to enhance parental capacity in order to collaborate and formulate mutual decisions regarding the well-being/care of their children.
- B. Family Relations Counselor (FRC) A CSSD employee with the qualifications and training who performs the functions outlined in the job description that can be accessed by clicking the following link: [Family Relations Counselor](#)
- C. Family Services Informational Sessions Educational presentations to assist parents in navigating the court system by providing vital information as it relates to the court process. The sessions shall be conducted by Family Services staff and utilize the approved CSSD Family Services' outline.
- D. Family Services Supervisor (FSS) A CSSD employee with the qualifications and training who performs the functions outlined in the job description which can be accessed by clicking the following link: [Family Services Supervisor](#)
- E. Lead Family Relations Counselor (LFRC) A CSSD employee with the qualifications and training who performs the functions outlined in the job description which can be accessed by clicking the following link: [Lead Family Relations Counselor](#)
- F. Negotiation A conflict resolution process in which Family Services staff meets with the attorneys, Self-Represented Litigants, and the parties to the case with respect to the motions pending before the Court. The role of the Family Services staff is to facilitate discussions and to assess and recommend potential solutions.
- G. Self-Represented Litigant A person who files an appearance to represent him or herself.

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CASE MANAGEMENT – Oral Report to the Court

Court Location:	Family Relations Counselor:	Docket No.:	Referral Date:	Status Conference Date:
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Plaintiff:	<input type="text"/>	Atty:	<input type="text"/>	Self Rep.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Defendant:	<input type="text"/>	Atty:	<input type="text"/>	Self Rep.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Case Background/Court Referral Info:

Duties/Assignment

Information for the Court