

 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>State of Connecticut</i> JUDICIAL BRANCH COURT SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION POLICY AND PROCEDURES</p>	POLICY NO. 3.8	EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 2003	PAGE 1 OF 8
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APPROVED BY: William H. Carbone, Executive Director	TITLE: FAMILY SERVICES FAMILY SUPERVISION CASE REVIEW		

1. **Policy** Family Services Supervisors will routinely review the casework performed by all Family Relations Counselors (FRC's). The review process is designed to promote and foster the effective supervision of the cases referred to the office, so as to ultimately ensure the highest quality of service delivery to the Criminal and Civil Court, clients and stakeholders. The information gained within these reviews will be incorporated into the employee's annual Performance Appraisal, recognizing areas of skill and addressing areas for improvement with an appropriate action plan.

2. **Definitions**
 - A. Family Relations Counselor (FRC) A CSSD employee accountable for providing services relative to the resolution of family and interpersonal conflict in the family relations and criminal sessions of the court.
 - B. Family Services Lead Counselor (FSL) A CSSD employee accountable for independently performing a full range of tasks relative to the resolution of family and interpersonal conflict in the family relations and criminal sessions of the court, and for acting as a working lead for FRCs.
 - C. Family Services Supervisor (FSS) A CSSD employee accountable for supervision staff and operations of a family services office(s).
 - D. Regional Manager A CSSD employee accountable for managing the staff and operations of a function(s) within an assigned CSSD region(s).
 - E. Defendant A person arrested for a crime in a domestic violence case.
 - F. Victim/Complainant A person who suffers injury or is harmed as a result of a domestic violence incident. The person may be listed as a victim/complainant on the police incident report, or may be subsequently identified through the court process.
 - G. Arraignment The first court appearance after a person has been arrested for domestic violence.

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- H. Assessment Separate appointments with the defendant and the victim to explore issues and collect data in preparation for writing a report to the court with specific case and intervention recommendations.
- I. Negotiation A conflict resolution process in which the FRC meets with the attorneys, Pro Se parties and/or the clients to the action with respect to the legal actions pending before the Court. The role of the FRC is to facilitate discussions and to assess and recommend potential solutions.
- J. Mediation An intervention intended to resolve disputes and manage conflict by facilitating the identification and exploration of issues in the decision-making process.
- K. Evaluation A process of assessing a family that includes and extends beyond providing impartial information and expert opinion to the court, by enhancing the parent's participation in a family-focused process. This process is designed to educate the parents as to how the separation/divorce will impact the child(ren), and allow the parents to explore alternative resolutions to their dispute. The outcome of the process will either result in an agreed upon parenting or visitation plan, or a recommendation to the family and court as to what is in the best interest of the child(ren).
- L. Conciliation At any time prior to the expiration of the ninety (90) day period in a legal separation or divorce action, either party or counsel may submit a request for conciliation to the Clerk of the Court. There will be two (2) mandatory sessions held with the parties to explore the possibility of reconciliation, or of resolving emotional problems which might lead to continuing conflicts following the divorce. All communication within these sessions is confidential, except that the conciliator will report to the Court as to whether or not the parties attended the sessions.
- M. Civil Restraining Order (TRO) Any family or household member, or persons who have been or are involved in a dating relationship for which they have been subject to a continuous threat of present physical pain or physical injury by another family or

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household member, may make application to the Court for a Civil Restraining Order.

3. Operational Procedures


A. Family Civil Procedure

(1) Supervision of Court Negotiation / TRO Services

- a. The FSS will, on a yearly basis, observe not less than 12 hours of court negotiations performed by all FRC Trainees; 8 hours of court negotiations performed by every FRC 1; and 4 hours of court negotiations performed by every FRC 2. The FRC's skills in this area and compliance with policies and procedures for court negotiations will be assessed.
- b. The FSS will document their observations and assessments on the Negotiation Assessment Guidelines Form, (Attachment A), addressing all areas listed on the form.

(2) Supervision of Mediation / Conciliation Services


- a. The FSS will observe one (1) mediation /conciliation performed by each FRC 1 and FRC 2, twice a year. The direct observations should occur during the second and fourth quarters of the FRC's Performance Appraisal year. The FSS will assess the FRC's skills in this area, and compliance with policies and procedures for mediations.

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- b. During the first and third quarters, each FRC 1 and FRC 2 will complete a self-assessment on one of their mediations, and the FSS will review those self-assessments.
- c. The FRC trainee will be observed for one (1) mediation / conciliation per quarter, by either the FSS or a senior FRC, with the FSS conducting at least those observations in the second and fourth quarters. The FRC Trainee will also complete a self-assessment on one (1) mediation each month they are not observed, which will be reviewed by the FSS.
- d. The FSS will document their observations and assessments on the Mediation Assessment Guidelines form (Attachment B). This form will also be used by the counselor for their self-assessment.

(3) Supervision of Evaluation Services

- a. The FSS will meet with each FRC doing evaluations on a monthly basis, to review every active custody/visitation evaluation on their caseload, to assess the counselor's compliance with policies and procedures, and their understanding of the case. In addition, the FSS will review the information and recommendations the FRC will make in every case, prior to their presentation at the final meeting with the parties and/or their attorneys.
- b. The FSS will take notes on each case addressing the areas indicated on the Monthly Evaluation Assessment Guidelines form (Attachment C).
- c. The FSS will review every custody/visitation evaluation report before it is submitted to the Court, assessing the written report for format, content, and quality of the conclusions, assuring that the report supports the recommendations presented. The FSS will discuss the assessment with the FRC.
- d. On a yearly basis, the FSS will select four (4) random evaluation


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reports for written review on each FRC Trainee, FRC 1, and FRC 2, and will complete the Written Evaluation Assessment Guidelines form (Attachment D).

- e. On a yearly basis, the FSS will observe at least two (2) Initial Conjoint meetings and two (2) Final Conferences for all FRC Trainees; at least one (1) Initial Conjoint and one (1) Final Conference for each FRC 1 and FRC 2. The FSS will assess the FRC's skill level conducting those meetings. These observations should correspond to the FRC's Performance Appraisal year.
- f. The FSS will document observations and assessments of the Initial and Final meetings on the corresponding Initial Conjoint Assessment Guidelines form (Attachment E), and the Final Conference Assessment Guidelines form (Attachment F).

B. Family Criminal Procedure


- (1) The FSS will review all assigned FRC Trainees, FRC 1's, FRC 2's, and Lead FRC's based on the following frequency:
 - a. FRC Trainees – At least once a month for the first four (4) months of service, and at least once every two (2) months thereafter.
 - b. FRC 1 – At least once within every four (4) month period.
 - c. FRC 2 – At least once within every six (6) month period.
 - d. Lead FRC – At least once within each twelve (12) month period.

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- (2) The FSS will ensure that the following activities are evaluated during the review of FRC Trainees, FRC 1's, FRC 2's and Lead FRC's:
 - a. Ensure compliance with all CSSD Policies and Procedures including, but not limited to thorough and timely completion and submission of documentation and reports; professionalism when interacting with stakeholders and clients.
 - b. Review of at least six (6) randomly selected recent client files, and observe no less than three (3) intake interviews and six (6) assessment interviews (3 defendants and 3 victims).
 - c. All observations and assessments will be documented by the FSS on the corresponding Criminal Family Services Case Review form (Attachment G).

C. Supervisory Response to Civil and Criminal Case Reviews


- (1) The FSS will discuss the results of each review with the FRC, using this opportunity to acknowledge areas of skill, recognize positive performance and areas of growth, and to support the professional efforts put forth by the FRC. The FSS will also, when necessary, identify areas where continued skill development and further in-service training may be needed to enhance the FRC's performance. The FSS will provide the FRC with the mentoring and direction necessary to facilitate their professional growth, and in conjunction with the FRC, develop an action plan to satisfactorily address these areas.
- (2) In an effort to support and encourage the FRC's continued professional development, the FSS will, at least quarterly, meet with the FRC to review and assess the counselor's attention to their continuing education, as demonstrated in their steps to satisfy the annual training in-service requirements. The FSS will also use this opportunity to direct the FRC to specific areas of training that would augment and/or enhance their performance.

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- (3) The FSS will review and assess the "Employee's In-Service Training Record" to assure compliance with recommended training in accordance with CSSD Policy and Procedure 2.21, Staff Training.
- (4) Chronic problems with specific employees will be brought to the attention of the Regional Manager, for development of further action plans and appropriate response.
- (5) The FSS will maintain a file for each FRC, where case review forms will be retained.
- (6) The FSS will incorporate the results of the case reviews and compliance with the annual training in-service requirements into the FRC's annual Performance Appraisal.

D. Regional Manager's Family Services Supervisory Responsibilities

- (1) The Regional Manager will meet with the Family Services Supervisor (FSS) at least once every six (6) months to discuss office performance, and to randomly review the Supervisor's documented Counselor assessment tools / forms.
- (2) Any chronic problems noted by the Regional Manager during the review will be discussed with the Supervisor. An action plan to address / resolve the problem areas will be developed.
- (3) The Regional Manager will ensure that feedback is provided to the Supervisor in a timely fashion in order to be incorporated into the employee's Performance Appraisal.
- (4) The Regional Manager will review a draft of the employee's Performance Appraisal prior to the Supervisory review with the employee.

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

NEGOTIATION ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Counselor Name _____ Supervisor Name _____

Date of Supervisor Assessment _____

Assess the Counselor's Skills in Negotiations, addressing the following areas as appropriate:

- **Introduction of process to client**
- **Interaction with clients/attorneys**
- **Assessment of underlying issues**
- **Understanding of Child Support Guidelines, legal issues impacting family matters, etc.**
- **Quality/appropriateness of recommendations**

Overall Status: Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

Areas Needing Improvement: (specify)

MEDIATION ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

MEDIATOR _____ **Supervisor's Name** _____

Self Assessment Case Name _____

Supervision Assessment FSU number _____

Assessment Date _____

Managing the Mediation Process:

1. Introduction to mediation is thorough (goal of mediation, role of mediators, ground rules, etc.) clear (understandable to clients) and concise (showing sensitivity to client's normal anxiety)
2. Control of the mediation process is established and maintained appropriately, in accordance with client's capacities to gradually assume increasing control themselves.
3. Issues (stated and unstated) for each parent are identified, re-framed when necessary, and addressed.
4. The pace of the process is consistent with the goals, purpose and philosophy of mediation as well as the unique capacities and characteristics of the clients. When appropriate, trial solutions are employed.
5. Any solutions or agreements are thorough (address all current and anticipated issues) and in detail that is appropriate to the client's capacity to cooperatively work together in the future.
6. Mediation is ended, regardless of result, with a discussion and clear understanding of future dispute resolution options.

ASSESSMENT (include any or all of the above in your assessment):

Managing the Clients:

1. The emotionality of the clients (anxiety, anger, hostility, depression, guilt, aggression, etc.) is managed effectively, sensitive to the needs of both clients.
2. Any power imbalances that exist are identified and possible solutions are fully explored.
3. The causes of any impasses are identified and possible solutions are fully explored.
4. The focus of the mediation becomes the children and the future.
5. The clients feel their positions and feelings are acknowledged and understood by each other and by the mediators.
6. The clients become able to communicate effectively and directly with each other as they explore options and solutions.

ASSESSMENT (include any or all of the above in your assessment):

Managing the Mediators:

1. Issues of neutrality (transference, bias, own values) do not impact mediation.
2. Mediators use language that is compatible with clients.
3. Mediator's statements are not lecturing or digressive in nature.
4. Mediators connect with each client, avoiding ineffectual confrontive or argumentative encounters with clients.
5. The teamwork between the mediators is smooth, balanced and effective.
6. The power of the mediator is utilized to manage a process that helps clients explore the causes and possible solutions to their conflict, not to direct clients to agreements.

ASSESSMENT (include any or all of the above in your assessment):

Overall Status: Satisfactory Unsatisfactory
 Areas Needing Improvement: (specify)

Monthly Evaluation Assessment Guidelines

Counselor Name _____ Supervisor Name _____ Date of Supervision _____ Case Name _____ FSU number _____
1) Interviews Conducted -
2) Information obtained - Collateral, from parties, etc.
3) Counselor's Assessment of information thus far collected -
4) Tasks for the coming month -

EVALUATION PROGRESS REPORT FORM

Activities	Date
1. Case Referred-----	_____
2. Case Assigned-----	_____
3. First Appointment Letters Mailed-----	_____
4. Initial Conjoint Meeting Held-----	_____
5. Appointment Letters For Individual Appts. Mailed-----	_____
6. Individual Interviews with Mother-----	_____
7. Individual Interviews with Father-----	_____
8. Individual Interviews with Other Principals-----	_____
9. Collateral Letters Mailed-----	_____
10. Dates of Home Visits-----	_____
11. Interviews with Children-----	_____
12. Appointment Letters sent to Schedule Final Meeting-----	_____
13. Final Conference Held-----	_____
14. Agreement Submitted to Court-----	_____
15. Agreement Report/Case Summary Completed-----	_____
16. Non-Agreement Report Submitted to Supervisor-----	_____
17. Final Revisions to Report Completed & Approved-----	_____
18. Report Submitted to Court-----	_____
Overall Status: <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Areas Needing Improvement: (specify)	

Written Evaluation Assessment Guidelines

Counselor Name _____ Supervisor Name _____
Date of Supervisor Assessment _____ Case Name _____
FSU number _____

1) Quality of report (i.e. was it clear and understandable, was it balanced and objective, did the content of the report support the recommendations?).

2) Areas for improvement

Overall Status: : Satisfactory Unsatisfactory
 Areas Needing Improvement: (specify)

INITIAL CONJOINT ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Counselor Name _____ Supervisor Name _____
Date of Supervisor Assessment _____ Case name _____
FSU number _____

Assess the Counselor's Skills within the initial conjoint meeting, addressing the following areas as appropriate:

- Counselor's explanation of his/her role as an evaluator
- Explanation of the evaluation format/process
- Development of criteria and issues for the evaluation
- Gathering of information about present status of case (i.e. Court history, family situation, etc.)
- Gathering appropriate information on collateral contacts
- Professional presentation and interaction with the clients

Overall Status: Satisfactory Unsatisfactory
 Areas Needing Improvement: (specify)

FINAL CONFERENCE ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Counselor Name _____ Supervisor Name _____
Date of Supervisor Assessment _____ Case Name _____
FSU number _____

Assess the Counselor's Skills within the Final Conference, addressing the following areas as appropriate:

- Description of the purpose of the meeting
- Sets appropriate ground rules for the meeting
- Provides the appropriate written documents to the parties
- Presentation of assessment and recommendations
- Establishes closing expectations for reporting back agreement/non-agreement; and how counselor will proceed with the Court
- Professional presentation and interaction with the clients

Overall Status: Satisfactory Unsatisfactory
 Areas Needing Improvement: (specify)

CLIENT NAME, 3 RD FILE REVIEWED:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	
CLIENT NAME, 4 TH FILE REVIEWED:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	
CLIENT NAME, 5 TH FILE REVIEWED:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	
CLIENT NAME, 6 TH FILE REVIEWED:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	
CLIENT NAME, 1 ST INTAKE OBSERVATION:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	

CLIENT NAME, 2 ND INTAKE OBSERVATION:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	
CLIENT NAME, 3 RD INTAKE OBSERVATION:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	
CLIENT NAME, 1 ST ASSESSMENT OBSERVATION:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	
CLIENT NAME, 2 ND ASSESSMENT OBSERVATION:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	
CLIENT NAME, 3 RD ASSESSMENT OBSERVATION:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	

CLIENT NAME, 4TH ASSESSMENT OBSERVATION:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	
CLIENT NAME, 5TH ASSESSMENT OBSERVATION:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	
CLIENT NAME, 6TH ASSESSMENT OBSERVATION:	<input type="checkbox"/> DEFENDANT <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM
REVIEW STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> SATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/> UNSATISFACTORY (SPECIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT)	
NOTES:	