



Utilization Reviews and Child and Family Team Meetings

Guide for DCS Providers

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Overview for Utilization Review

The Utilization Review (UR) process supports the placement system by providing the necessary structure to effectively monitor children's progress in treatment and ensure they do not linger in residential care. Engagement of the DCS UR team in collaboration with the provider agency's designated clinical staff will serve as a systematic and robust review process to support placement stability, reduce length of stay, and monitor progress of the child. The expectation of clear communication between DCS and the provider network assures action is taken to address barriers. In addition, the UR review team supports the Child and Family Team process in consistent decision making around discharge planning, level of care changes, and placement stability/disruption meetings for all providers, including agency foster care.

Guidance

Utilization Reviews are scheduled each month for children receiving residential care. The focus of the review will be on the child's progress in treatment, length of stay, and their readiness for discharge or stepdown. Specific activities necessary to move the child toward the stated goals are discussed at each review. Barriers are addressed through a consistent process of tracking and adjusting. The UR Specialist will participate in Child and Family Team meetings for children placed with a provider agency when one or more of the following conditions exists:

1. The team is meeting to discuss the stability of the placement/disruption;
2. The team is meeting to discuss the discharge of a child from residential placement;
3. The team is meeting to discuss a change in level to an existing placement.

UR Specialists are designated are not assigned to participate in routine CFTM's including children placed in DCS foster homes, Primary Assessment Centers or Enhanced Primary Assessment Centers, or otherwise awaiting a placement recommendation. Some additional guidelines follow below:

- CFTM request must be submitted by the provider utilizing the web-based portal. <https://www.tn.gov/dcs/for-providers/placement-central-for-providers/request-a-cftm.html>
- Decision making regarding a disruption or level change can only happen through the CFT process and UR Specialist must be in attendance before any final decision is rendered.
- Updated CANS, and any other pertinent assessments will be updated and the basis for decision making.
- Preparation and participation of key team members when applicable such as mental health clinician, IL and ED Specialist, and Child Health, etc., so a decision can be rendered at the conclusion of the CFTM.
- Disruptions-The 15-Day Notice will only begin once the serving provider submits all internal related documents obtained by their agency for securing an appropriate placement. Such documentation may include, assessments, testing, treatment plans, in-house educational records, etc.

- If the provider is not in agreement with the decision regarding, child's type of placement, level of care; or continuation of a child's current services, the contract agency must document their contention that the CFTM decision is contrary to the best interest of the child and family by using form CS-1062, filing a request for appeal.

The UR Specialist will coordinate with other Network Development program areas to initiate the referral process when a child is ready for transition to a lower level of care to assure for timely identification of placement resources at the desired level of care. The UR team (specialist) will maintain communication with Independent Living and EFC Choices to plan for youth requiring transition to adult services.

Process

This section outlines the processes by which the UR team will engage at all levels with providers, regional staff, and other key team members in the review process for children placed in residential treatment settings with an emphasis on collaboration and transparency.

1. Residential providers will be assigned a UR Specialist who will work with them to coordinate review schedules for every child in residential care upon admission. The UR Specialist will be responsible for the following:
 - The assigned UR Specialist will develop a recurring review schedule with each provider.
 - The UR Specialist will review all relevant information on each child prior to the scheduled meeting including provider progress notes.
 - The assigned UR Specialist will maintain consistent communication with the child's FSW and supervisors to ensure effective permanency planning is occurring and barriers are being addressed at the regional level.
 - The assigned UR Specialist will participate in designated CFTMs and share all relevant information on the child's progress in treatment and readiness for discharge.
 - The assigned UR Specialist will engage with internal and external partners as appropriate to address barriers and assist with transitions, including those related to older youth in need of adult services through EFC Choices/DIDDS.
 - The assigned UR Specialist will collaborate closely within the Network Development division to ensure referrals for any child ready for step down are submitted timely and all relevant information is shared to facilitate the child's transition to the most appropriate setting to meet their needs.
2. The Utilization Review team also supports decision making through the CFTM process for any recommendation by to the provider to change the level of service delivery, disrupt, or discharge the child from their program.
 - The provider will submit a CFTM request utilizing the web-based portal.
 - The UR Specialist will initiate immediate contact with the region to coordinate scheduling the CFTM within the time frames outlined in the PPM.

- If the decision of the meeting requires a new placement for the child, a member of the Network Development team will coordinate with the FSW and assist with completing an updated intake packet to submit to the appropriate ND team to identify and arrange for placement of the child.
- The ND team responsible for locating the new placement will provide updates to the region on their progress.