



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT
OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

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Volume:	III	Case Management	
Chapter:	B	Case Planning	5-10-2010
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Purpose **3-20-2017**

The case plan is an individualized working agreement which clearly delineates specific action to be taken by family members and CP&P. The family and child who are the subject of the plan should be the primary authors of the plan. In order to establish an effective case plan, it is necessary to engage the family and their support network in a strength based, solution oriented, consensus building process.

The case plan is based on mutual understanding and acceptance of what the problems are and what changes need to take place. It is the Division's view that family involvement in the case planning process will increase the rate of successful goal achievement and result in reduction of risk of future maltreatment.

The plan specifies the services or actions needed to:

- Address the issues/needs related to the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child.
- Resolve the problems which caused the Division to become involved with the family.
- Achieve the case goal. See [CP&P-III-B-4-400](#), Case Goals.
- The case plan provides:
- A written working agreement which states the problems that need to be resolved and the proposed solutions;
- A record to help the participants remember what each person promised to do for the child and family;

- A yardstick to mark progress (or lack of progress) throughout the life of a case;
- A useful monitoring and accountability tool for the family, the Worker, Supervisors, Managers, the courts, and others involved in providing services to the family.

The case plan is written in a “family friendly” format, allowing family strengths, needs, concerns, goals and tasks to be in the family’s own words. Integrate targeted outcomes documented in the Family Agreement into the formal case plan (CP&P Form [26-81](#), Case Plan Assessment). See [CP&P-III-B-5-500](#), Family Engagement.

The goal is for a single, coordinated case plan to be in place for all agencies or providers involved with the family. The CP&P Worker takes the lead by bringing individual service providers together in the planning and development process.

When domestic violence is alleged or present, prepare separate case plans with: a) the batterer, and b) the non-offending parent/caregiver and the child. See [CP&P-VIII-B-1-100](#), Domestic Violence, Section K, Case Planning.

Authority 4-28-2008

- N.J.A.C. 3A:12-1.6, Process of developing the case plan
- N.J.S.A. 30:4C-53, Placement of Child Outside Home; Notice; Filing; Form; Contents; Jurisdiction of Court; Notice of Permanent Placement

Time Frames 5-28-2013

The case plan is prepared:

- Within sixty (60) calendar days of SCR assigning a CPS report or a CWS referral to the field office for investigation or response; or
- Within thirty (30) calendar days of a child entering (or reentering) out-of-home placement; and
- Every six months thereafter.

Case planning may occur at any time during the life of a case when case circumstances change and a new plan is needed. The Investigator, during the intake, or the permanency Worker, may complete the initial case plan.

If an investigation extends beyond sixty (60) days, the assigned Worker/Investigator is required to complete a Case Plan, CP&P Form [26-81](#), Case Plan Assessment, to justify continued investigation efforts for a prolonged period of time. See [CP&P-II-C-5-125](#), Good Cause to Extend Investigations Beyond 60 Calendar Days.

Developing a Case Plan 5-10-2010

The Worker personally interviews all household members to gather information to assess the full circumstances of the family and the need for services.

Engage the family members to develop the case plan. Encourage parents to invite other interested relatives (including paternal relatives), friends, neighbors, ministers - any and all who can provide support and help to the family. Routinely engage fathers and their families in the process from the very beginning. If it is not possible to hold a family team meeting, consult all interested parties and incorporate their issues and concerns into the case plan.

When domestic violence is alleged or present, hold separate family team meetings, and prepare separate case plans with: a) the batterer, and b) the non-offending parent/caregiver and the child. See [CP&P-VIII-B-1-100](#), Domestic Violence, Section J, Decision Making (Immediate Action Required), and Section K, Case Planning.

The Worker completes the following in preparation for the development of an effective case plan, in a protective services case:

- The CP&P Form [22-24](#), New Jersey CP&P Caregiver Strengths and Needs Assessment; and
- The CP&P Form [22-25](#), New Jersey CP&P Child Strengths and Needs Assessment.

Note: The top three strengths and the top three needs identified in these forms automatically pre-fill the Strengths and Needs Tab of the Case Plan Window in the NJS application.

For an in-home case plan, complete the following:

- CP&P Form [22-22](#), New Jersey CP&P Safety Assessment;
- CP&P Form [22-23](#), New Jersey CP&P Family Risk Assessment;
- CP&P Form [22-26](#), New Jersey CP&P Family Risk Reassessment.

For an out-of-home case plan, complete the following as well:

- CP&P Form [22-6](#), New Jersey Child Safety Assessment (Resource Homes); and
- CP&P Form [22-27](#), New Jersey Family Reunification Assessment.

Case Plan 11-30-2012

The written case plan is documented in New Jersey SPIRIT (NJS), Case Plan Windows, to produce the CP&P Form [26-81](#), Case Plan Assessment. The form includes:

- The reason the Division became involved with the family;
- The results that must occur before the case is closed;
- The case goal for each family member receiving services and progress made towards achieving the goal;
- The schedule for contacts between the Worker and the family members. See [CP&P-III-C-3-100](#), In-Person Visits with Clients and Out-of-Home Providers (MVRs); and
- The services or actions intended to meet identified needs, and who is responsible to provide the services and complete activities within the projected time frames.

For children out of home, the Case Plan includes:

- The authority for placement, by court order or parental consent (for residential or independent living placements);
- The efforts made to prevent placement, the reasons for making the placement or for continuing the placement, and the efforts made to reunify the family;
- The secondary/concurrent goal, when the primary goal is reunification;
- An assessment of the current placement for the particular child;
- The efforts made to find a missing parent or relative;
- The plan for visits between the child and parents, siblings and other relatives. See [CP&P-IV-A-5-100](#), Visitation Between the Child and His or Her Family;

- The views of the child, parent, and caregiver toward the placement and the case plan;
- For children under CP&P guardianship, efforts made towards adoption or Kinship Legal Guardianship (KLG).

Note: When a child's case plan is Kinship Legal Guardianship (KLG), supported by a KLG subsidy, see [CP&P-IV-D-2-200](#), Case Plan Documentation When KLG Is Child's Permanency Placement, for additional required case plan components.

Complete vs. Modified Version of the Plan

4-28-2008

When the Worker prints either case plan form from the Case Plan Window, the Worker has the option to select either "a," COMPLETE REPORT, which contains confidential information, or "b," MODIFIED REPORT, which automatically excludes some confidential information. The case plan form instructions clearly state how reports are to be distributed. See CP&P Form [26-81](#).

Repeated Placement Plan

11-9-2009

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 30:4C-53.3(c)1-5, whenever a child re-enters placement after having been returned home, the Division prepares a repeated placement plan, with the goal of reunification through the safe return of the child to his or her parents.

If this is not possible, the Division:

- Prepares for the State's assumption of guardianship for the purpose of finding the child an adoptive home; or
- Plans for an alternative permanent placement, kinship legal guardianship (KLG), if termination of parental rights is not appropriate.

The plan is prepared within 30 calendar days after the child is again placed, and submitted to the court. The case plan includes:

- Reasons for the repeated placement, including a description of the problems or conditions in the home which necessitated the child to be removed again;
- Specific actions to be taken by the parent or guardian to eliminate the identified problems, and a specific time limit for taking action;
- Services to be provided to the child, parents or guardian, and the resource parents;

- A search for missing parents and extended family, in the event adoption or KLG becomes the case goal (see [CP&P-III-C-4-100](#), Identification and Search for Parents and Relatives, and [CP&P-III-B-2-100](#), Locating a Missing Parent);
- Efforts made to place the child in his or her former resource home to provide continuity, if in the child's best interest;
- Efforts to place the child with siblings (see [CP&P-III-B-2-200](#), Case Management Activities Related to Reasonable Efforts; [CP&P-IV-A-3-200](#), Federal and State Legal Requirements; [CP&P-IV-B-2-100](#), et seq., Resource Home Selection; [CP&P-IV-B-2-200](#) et seq., Efforts to Promote Placing Siblings Together; [CP&P-IV-A-11-100](#), Child Strengths and Needs; [CP&P-IV-A-11-100](#), Suitability of Kin to Meet Child's Needs and Make a Commitment to the Child; and [CP&P-IV-D-2-200](#), Placing Siblings Together; and
- Efforts made to obtain a certified copy of the child's long form birth certificate within 30 days of the child's placement, if the Division does not already have one from the child's previous placement(s). See [CP&P-II-C-2-700](#), Identify Child's Place of Birth and Obtain Long Form Birth Certificate; [CP&P-III-C-6-100](#), Requesting Long Form NJ State BVS Certificates from DCF BVS Liaison; and the CP&P Form [26-8](#), Request for NJ Birth/Death/Marriage/Civil Union/Domestic Partnership Certificate, located in the on-line Forms Manual.

When the Division has established an exception to the requirements to provide reasonable efforts toward family reunification, or a child has been in placement for 12 of the most recent 22 months, a permanency plan for the child must be documented and include reasonable efforts by the Division to achieve that plan.

Related Policy **4-28-2008**

- [CP&P-III-B-4-400](#), Case Goals
- [CP&P-III-C-6-100](#), Case Recording
- [CP&P-IV-A-5-100](#), Visitation Between the Child and His or Her Family
- [CP&P-III-B-6-600](#), Structured Decision Making, SDM™

Related Forms **3-20-2017**

- CP&P Form [26-81](#), Case Plan Assessment
- CP&P Form [26-83](#), Visitation Plan
- CP&P Form [26-87](#), Desired Family Outcomes and Specific Activities
- CP&P Form [11-10](#), Health Passport and Placement Assessment
- CP&P Form [5-43](#), Transitional Plan for Adolescents
- CP&P Form [5-16](#), Child's Education Record
- CP&P Form [22-6](#), New Jersey Child Safety Assessment (Resource Homes)
- CP&P Form [22-22](#), New Jersey CP&P Safety Assessment (In-Home Cases)
- CP&P Form [22-23](#), New Jersey CP&P Family Risk Assessment
- CP&P Form [22-24](#), New Jersey CP&P Caregiver Strengths and Needs Assessment
- CP&P Form [22-25](#), New Jersey CP&P Child Strengths and Needs Assessment
- CP&P Form [22-26](#), New Jersey CP&P Family Risk Reassessment for In-Home Cases
- CP&P Form [22-27](#), New Jersey Family Reunification Assessment
- CP&P Form [22-45](#), Guideline for Minor Parents in Resource Care

Related NJS Windows

4-28-2008

- Case Plan Window
- Legal Action Window
- Legal Status Window
- NJS Desktop - the NJS User Guide and Cheat Sheets involving Case Plans