

Executive Summary

The following executive summary includes the primary descriptive paragraph and a list of the provisions for each of the eight standards. This summary captures the core directives of each standard and the information required to implement that standard effectively.

1. Organization and Structure

The family treatment court (FTC) has agreed-upon structural and organizational principles that are supported by research and based on evidence-informed policies, programs, and practices. The core programmatic components, day-to-day operations, and oversight structures are defined and documented in the FTC policy and procedure manual, participant handbook, and memoranda of understanding (MOUs).

Provisions

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| <i>A. Multidisciplinary and Multisystemic Collaborative Approach</i> | <i>F. Communication and Information Sharing</i> |
| <i>B. Partnerships, Community Resources, and Support</i> | <i>G. Cross-Training and Interdisciplinary Education</i> |
| <i>C. Multidisciplinary Team</i> | <i>H. Family-Centered, Culturally Relevant, and Trauma-Informed Approach</i> |
| <i>D. Governance Structure</i> | <i>I. FTC Policy and Procedure Manual</i> |
| <i>E. Shared Mission and Vision</i> | <i>J. FTC Pre-Court Staffing and Court Review Hearing</i> |

2. Role of the Judge

Judicial leadership is critical to the effective planning and operation of the family treatment court (FTC). The FTC judge works collectively with leaders of partner agencies and other stakeholders to establish clear roles and a shared mission and vision. He or she has the unique ability to engage the leaders and stakeholders in the development, implementation, and ongoing operations of the FTC. The judge is a vital part of the operational team, convening meetings that encourage team members to identify shared values, voice concerns, and find common ground. Additionally, the judge's development of rapport with participants is among the most important components of the FTC.

Provisions

- A. Convening Partners*
- B. Judicial Decision Making*
- C. Participation in FTC Pre-Court Staffing*
- D. Interaction with Participants*
- E. Professional Training*
- F. Length of Judicial Assignment to the FTC*

3. Ensuring Equity and Inclusion

Family treatment court (FTC) has an affirmative obligation to consistently assess its operations and those of partner organizations for policies or procedures that could contribute to disproportionality and disparities among historically marginalized and other underserved groups. The FTC actively collects and analyzes program and partner organization data to determine if disproportionality or disparities exist in the program; if so, the FTC implements corrective measures to eliminate them.

Provisions

- A. *Equitable FTC Admission Practices*
- B. *Equitable FTC Retention Rates and Child Welfare Outcomes*
- C. *Equitable Treatment*
- D. *Equitable Responses to Participant Behavior*
- E. *Team Training*

4. Early Identification, Screening, and Assessment

The process of early identification, screening, and assessment provides the greatest opportunity to fully meet the comprehensive needs of children, parents, and families affected by substance use disorders (SUDs) that come to the attention of the child welfare system. Family treatment court (FTC) team members and partner agencies screen and assess all referred families using objective eligibility and exclusion criteria based on the best available evidence indicating which families can be served safely and effectively in the FTC. Team members use validated assessment tools and procedures to promptly refer children, parents, and families to the appropriate services and levels of care. They conduct ongoing validated assessments of children, parents, and families while also addressing barriers to recovery and reunification throughout the case. Service referrals match identified needs and connect children, parents, and family members to evidence-based interventions, promising programs, and trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and family-centered practices. FTC team members take on varying roles for this process to occur in a timely and efficient manner.

Provisions

- A. *Target Population, Objective Eligibility, and Exclusion Criteria*
- B. *Standardized and Systematic Referral, Screening, and Assessment Process*
- C. *Use of Valid and Reliable Screening and Assessment for Parents and Families*
- D. *Use of Valid, Reliable, and Developmentally Appropriate Screening and Assessment for Children*
- E. *Identification and Resolution of Barriers to Recovery and Reunification*

5. Timely, High-Quality, and Appropriate Substance Use Disorder Treatment

Substance use disorder (SUD) treatment is provided to meet the individual and unique substance-related clinical and supportive needs of persons with SUDs. For participants in family treatment court (FTC), it is important that the SUD treatment agency or clinician provide services in the context of the participants' family relationships, particularly the parent-child dyad, and understand the importance of and responsibility for ensuring child safety within the Adoption and Safe Families Act timeline for child permanency. A Treatment provider's continuum of services includes early identification, screening, and brief intervention; comprehensive standardized assessment; stabilization; appropriate, manualized, evidence-based treatment including medications if warranted; ongoing communication with the FTC team; and continuing care. The parent, child, and family treatment plan is based on individualized and assessed needs and strengths and is provided in a timely manner including concurrent treatment of mental health and physical health.

Provisions

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| <i>A. Timely Access to Appropriate Treatment</i> | <i>G. Treatment for Pregnant Women</i> |
| <i>B. Treatment Matches Assessed Needs</i> | <i>H. Culturally Responsive Treatment</i> |
| <i>C. Comprehensive Continuum of Care</i> | <i>I. Evidence-Based Manualized Treatment</i> |
| <i>D. Integrated Treatment of Co-Occurring Substance Use and Mental Health Disorders</i> | <i>J. Medication-Assisted Treatment</i> |
| <i>E. Family-Centered Treatment</i> | <i>K. Alcohol and Other Drug Testing Protocols</i> |
| <i>F. Gender-Responsive Treatment</i> | <i>L. Treatment Provider Qualifications</i> |

6. Comprehensive Case Management, Services, and Supports for Families

Family treatment court (FTC) ensures that children, parents, and family members receive comprehensive services that meet their assessed needs and promotes sustained family safety, permanency, recovery, and well-being. In addition to high-quality substance use and co-occurring mental health disorder treatment, the FTC's family-centered service array includes other clinical treatment and related clinical and community support services. These services are trauma responsive, include family members as active participants, and are grounded in cross-systems collaboration and evidence-based or evidence-informed practices implemented with fidelity.

Provisions

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| <i>A. Intensive Case Management and Coordinated Case Planning</i> | <i>G. Trauma-Specific Services for Children and Parents</i> |
| <i>B. Family Involvement in Case Planning</i> | <i>H. Services to Meet Children's Individual Needs</i> |
| <i>C. Recovery Supports</i> | <i>I. Complementary Services to Support Parents and Family Members</i> |
| <i>D. High-Quality Parenting Time (Visitation)</i> | <i>J. Early Intervention Services for Infants and Children Affected by Prenatal Substance Exposure</i> |
| <i>E. Parenting and Family-Strengthening Programs</i> | <i>K. Substance Use Prevention and Intervention for Children and Adolescents</i> |
| <i>F. Reunification and Related Supports</i> | |

7. Therapeutic Responses to Behavior

The family treatment court (FTC) operational team applies therapeutic responses (e.g., child safety interventions, treatment adjustments, complementary service modifications, incentives, sanctions) to improve parent, child, and family functioning; ensure children’s safety, permanency, and well-being; support participant behavior change; and promote participant accountability. The FTC recognizes the biopsychosocial and behavioral complexities of supporting participants through behavior change to achieve sustainable recovery, stable reunification, and resolution of the child welfare case. When responding to participant behavior, the FTC team considers the cause of the behavior as well as the effect of the therapeutic response on the participant, the participant’s children and family, and the participant’s engagement in treatment and supportive services.

Provisions

- A. *Child and Family Focus*
- B. *Treatment Adjustments*
- C. *Complementary Service Modifications*
- D. *FTC Phases*
- E. *Incentives and Sanctions to Promote Engagement*
- F. *Equitable Responses*
- G. *Certainty*
- H. *Advance Notice*
- I. *Timely Response Delivery*
- J. *Opportunity for Participants to Be Heard*
- K. *Professional Demeanor*
- L. *Child Safety Interventions*
- M. *Use of Addictive or Intoxicating Substances*
- N. *FTC Discharge Decisions*

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

The family treatment court (FTC) collects and reviews data to monitor participant progress, engage in a process of continuous quality improvement, monitor adherence to best practice standards, and evaluate outcomes using scientifically reliable and valid procedures. The FTC establishes performance measures for shared accountability across systems, encourages data quality, and fosters the exchange of data and evaluation results with multiple stakeholders. The FTC uses this information to improve policies and practices in addition to monitoring the strengths and limitations of various service components. Evaluation results and data are also critical components of effective stakeholder outreach and sustainability helping the FTC “tell its story” of success and needs.

Provisions

- A. *Maintain Data Electronically*
- B. *Engage in a Process of Continuous Quality Improvement*
- C. *Evaluate Adherence to Best Practices*
- D. *Use of Rigorous Evaluation Methods*