

PLANNING: IN CARE PROGRESS REPORT

Policy no.: 3.9

Effective Date: March 2007; March 28, 2018

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Policy Cross References: Plan for the Child

Legislative References: s.29(1) Plan for the Child

PURPOSE: To outline the process for ongoing case planning for children and youth in care with a focus on permanency planning, identifying supports and services, and monitoring and documenting their progress using the *In Care Progress Report (IPR)*.

POLICY:

1. Planning for a child or youth in care or custody is an ongoing process and it is the responsibility of the social worker, in consultation with the *In Care Planning Team*, to ensure that:
 - a) the child or youth is the primary focus of planning;
 - b) permanency planning for the child or youth is paramount and the plan is documented in the *IPR*;
 - c) planning is based on the child or youth's needs, age and developmental stage, and is consistent with the *Plan for the Child* submitted to Court;
 - d) there is a plan to maintain the child or youth's contact with the parent(s), siblings, extended family or significant others. If a child or youth is not maintaining family contact, the reason why shall be documented;
 - e) there is a recognition of the importance of the child or youth's identity and there is a plan to maintain cultural and community connections;
 - f) the identified supports and services outlined in the *In Care Progress Report (IPR)* are provided and if not, the reason is documented; and
 - g) the established plans are meeting the child or youth's needs.

2. The initial *IPR* shall be completed within six (6) months of a child or youth entering the care or custody of a manager and shall be reviewed and updated **at minimum every six (6) months** from the date the social worker completed the previous *IPR*.

PROCEDURES:

1. The *IPR* documents and monitors ongoing case planning with a focus on permanency planning, progress, and outcomes for every child or youth in the care or custody of a

manager. It also provides a written history of a child or youth's life in care, and contains crucial information when a person who was a child or youth in care requests information about their life in care through the process of file disclosure.

2. The *IPR* form (birth to 18 years of age), outlines the type of information that the social worker will gather, assess and document based on the age of the child or youth. It also contains a *Work Plan* where identified goals and necessary follow up are documented.
3. Where a child or youth in care or custody is placed in a new placement and an *IPR* has been completed, the social worker will verbally share information from the most current *IPR* with the placement provider and give them a paper copy of the current *Work Plan*.
4. The social worker shall develop or review an *IPR* in consultation with the members of the *In Care Planning Team*. Placement providers (e.g. foster parents, residential staff, family-based carers), the child or youth, parent(s) and other members of the *In Care Planning Team* can be a valuable resource in compiling information to inform the *IPR*. This information can be gathered through contact with the placement provider, meetings with parents, case conferences, consultation with counselors, teachers, and others involved in the life of the child or youth. The *IPR* should also be informed by discussions/interviews with the child or youth, where age and developmentally appropriate, or through observations of a child or youth who is unable to engage in conversation based on their age or developmental level.
5. A blank copy of the *IPR* form shall be given to the placement provider to familiarize them with the type of information that is documented on the *IPR* and the information they can track to provide to the social worker (e.g., child's height, weight, last dental or medical appointment, etc.).
6. The social worker shall complete and update the *IPR* including the *IPR Work Plan* for a child or youth in care using the following time frames:
 - a) the initial *IPR* including the *Work Plan* shall be completed within six (6) months of a child or youth entering the care or custody of a manager;
 - b) the *IPR* including the *Work Plan* shall be reviewed and updated at minimum every six (6) months from the date the social worker completed the previous *IPR* until the child or youth leaves care or is placed for the purpose of adoption; and
 - c) the *IPR* including the *Work Plan* shall continue to be completed if a child or youth in care is placed in an out of province placement (OPP). This shall be completed in consultation with the receiving social worker and the staff of the OPP resource.
7. A case conference shall be held with the available members of the *In Care Planning Team* when developing or updating the *IPR* including the *Work Plan*. The social worker may schedule a case conference specific to the *IPR* or discuss the *IPR* at a case conference that is already scheduled as part of ongoing case planning for the child or youth. The composition of the *In Care Planning Team* may vary depending on the age of the child or youth, length of time in care, the types of services required, the level of parental involvement, etc. Where a member of the team is unable to attend a case conference, the social worker must follow up with them individually to seek feedback to inform the *IPR*

and the *Work Plan*.

IPR Work Plan

8. The *IPR Work Plan* is part of the *IPR* and it is a planning tool that is individualized and based on the age, developmental stage, strengths and needs of a child or youth and shall also be completed in consultation with members of the *In Care Planning Team*.
9. The *IPR Work Plan* tracks goals, the tasks required to meet each goal, the persons responsible, and the target dates and completion dates for the key areas in the life of a child or youth. The persons responsible for follow up can be any member of the planning team including the child, youth or a parent. The *Work Plan* may outline a goal(s) for each key area or only goals for select areas, depending on the strengths and needs of a child or youth at the time the *Work Plan* is developed.
10. Goals identified in the *IPR Work Plan* should be clear, simple statements that are:
 - a) specific
 - b) measurable
 - c) attainable
 - d) relevant
 - e) time-limited
11. The social worker shall work with the *In Care Planning Team* to identify tasks and goals they feel can be achieved within 6 months. If necessary, the goals can be prioritized in a manner that best meets the immediate needs of the child or youth and are attainable in the timelines identified. All identified goals should be specific, time limited, attainable goals.

 For example, a child or youth may be experiencing a high level of social anxiety and a goal for the next six months may be for the child or youth to attend counselling to attempt to reduce their anxiety. The tasks associated with this goal for the next 6 months might include: the social worker will arrange counselling, the foster parent will take the child to their appointments, and the teacher will monitor the child's ability to engage with their classmates during recess and group activities.
12. All members of the *In Care Planning Team* shall be given a copy of the agreed upon *Work Plan*.
13. The social worker, in consultation with the *In Care Planning Team*, shall monitor the *Work Plan* on an on-going basis and will determine whether the goals and tasks have been accomplished or need to be revised to best meet the needs of the child or youth. New and revised goals will be documented in the next *Work Plan* with new target dates so goals continue to be measurable and time limited.
14. The social worker shall review the completed *IPR* with a child who is 12 years of age and over, or a youth, where developmentally appropriate, and place the *IPR* in the child or youth's file. The child or youth may be given a copy of the *IPR*.
15. The social worker shall:
 - a) provide a copy of the completed *IPR* to the parent(s) and place a copy of the

- IPR* on the parent's file if the child or youth is in a protective care agreement, interim care, interim custody, or temporary custody;
- b) provide a copy of the *IPR* to the parent(s) when the child or youth is in continuous custody if the parent(s) is still actively involved; and
 - c) review the *IPR* when preparing the *Plan for the Child* for a subsequent court hearing so that any relevant information from the *IPR* is incorporated into the *Plan for the Child* being submitted to the court.

EXCEPTIONS TO POLICY:

1. An *IPR* will not be required if a child or youth is in care or custody for **less than six (6) months** from the time they initially enter care.
2. An *IPR* will not be required if a *Voluntary Custody Agreement* is signed and the child or youth is placed for adoption **within six (6) months**. If a child is not placed for adoption within 6 months, the social worker, in consultation with the supervisor, shall determine based on the adoption plan for the child, whether the *IPR* will be completed.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS:

- *In Care Progress Report Template*
- *Working Relationship Agreement*