



**Department of
Children & Youth**

Ohio Family and Children First

Ohio Family and Children First

Service Coordination Mechanism Guidance

OFCF Service Coordination Mechanism Guidance Outline

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	Page 3
II. Purpose	Page 4
III. Service Coordination Mechanism (SCM) Requirements	
A. Coordination Overview	Page 5-8
B. Procedure for referring a child and family	Pages 8-9
C. A notification procedure for all individual family service coordination plan meeting	Pages 9-10
D. A procedure for a family to initiate a meeting and invite support persons	Page 10
E. A procedure ensuring an individual family service coordination plan meeting occurs before an out of home placement is made, or within ten days after placement in the case of an emergency.....	Page 11
F. A procedure for monitoring progress and tracking outcomes	Pages 12-13
G. A procedure for protecting family confidentiality	Page 13
H. A procedure for assessing the strengths, needs and cultural discovery of the family.....	Pages 13-15
I. A procedure for developing a family service coordination plan/plan of care	Pages 16-18
J. A description of how alleged unruly children will be dealt with using service coordination, including a method for diverting them from the juvenile court system	Pages 18-20
K. A dispute resolution process, including the judicial review process	Pages 20-21
L. A description of the fiscal strategies for supporting FCFC service coordination	Page 22
M. Quality Assurance	Page 23
N. County Service Coordination Mechanism Due Date, Documentation and Review Process	Pages 23-24
IV. Attachments	
A. SCM Cover Sheet	Page 25
B. Table of Contents for SCM	Pages 26-27

I. Introduction

As an integral component of a local system of care, service coordination is a process of service planning and system collaboration that provides individualized services and supports to families who have needs across multiple systems. It is child-centered and family-focused, with the strengths and needs of the child and family guiding the types and mix of services to be provided. It is critical that services and supports are responsive to the cultural, racial, and ethnic characteristics of the community population.

As outlined in Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 121.37(C), each Family and Children First Council (FCFC) “shall develop a county service coordination mechanism. The county service coordination mechanism shall serve as the guiding document for coordination of services in the county. All family service coordination plans shall be developed in accordance with the county service coordination mechanism. The mechanism shall be developed and approved with the participation of the county entities representing child welfare; developmental disabilities; alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services; health; juvenile judges; education; the county family and children first council; and the county early intervention collaborative established pursuant to the federal early intervention program operated under the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004."

Each county Family and Children First Council (FCFC) that receives a Family-Centered Services and Supports (FCSS) allocation, for the purpose of supporting certain costs associated with the FCFC Service Coordination process, has been required to sign a statement assuring that required components of service coordination have been in place. Since the last revision of this guidance document in 2018, the topics of consistency, accountability, and outcome measurement within the FCFC Service Coordination Process as well as High-Fidelity Wraparound have been elevated statewide. For these reasons, Ohio Family and Children First (OFCF) is requesting each Family and Children First Council (FCFC) submit their updated Service Coordination Mechanism (SCM) that defines the level of intervention and coordination available in each county and ensures their SCM meets the minimum components of FCFC Service Coordination outlined in this guidance document by December 31, 2024. This guidance document is to be used as a resource to provide direction for review and revision of the county FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism as required in Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 121.37 and 121.38.

II. Purpose

The purpose of Service Coordination and High-Fidelity Wraparound through the county FCFC is to provide a neutral venue for families requiring services where their needs may not have been adequately addressed in traditional agency systems. These processes serve as a safety net for children needing a more intensive collaboration of multi-system providers. Each system has areas of responsibility, and the Service Coordination Mechanism is not intended to override current agency systems, but to supplement and enhance supports that currently exist or identify additional supports that are needed but are not currently utilized.

III. Service Coordination Mechanism Required Components

The following pages describe the service coordination requirements of O.R.C. 121.37(C) which are each illustrated in a gray box. Further explanation, directions, and important comments to aid in developing the service coordination mechanism follow each statute (gray box) section. The county SCM shall serve as the guiding document for coordination of services in the county when a child is referred to the FCFC for assistance and define the various levels of coordination that exist under the mechanism. To ensure consistency in the county service coordination approach, and to assure that the process meets the requirements established in the law, all persons or entities providing service coordination on behalf of the FCFC, whether county FCFC employees or contracted providers, must follow the processes, policies, practices, and procedures as they are outlined and described in the county FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism.

The County FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism should include all the following:

A. Service Coordination Overview

O.R.C. 121.37(C): Each county shall develop a county service coordination mechanism. The county service coordination mechanism shall serve as the guiding document for coordination of services in the county. For children who also receive services under Ohio's Early Intervention program, the service coordination mechanism shall be consistent with rules adopted by the Department of Children and Youth under section 5123.02 of the Revised Code. All family service coordination plans shall be developed in accordance with the county service coordination mechanism. The mechanism shall be developed and approved with the participation of the county entities representing child welfare; developmental disabilities; alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services; health; juvenile judges; education; the county family and children first council; and the county early intervention collaborative established pursuant to the federal early intervention program operated under the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004," 20 U.S.C.A. 1400.

The county shall establish an implementation schedule for the mechanism. The cabinet council may monitor the implementation and administration of each county's service coordination mechanism.

1. An overview or description of the purpose of service coordination in your county that includes what entities/agencies/persons were involved in the review and revisions of the mechanism, the structural components (or levels/intensity of coordination) of service coordination in your county, a description of the criteria established, including age range, for children accepted for service coordination, and a description of how families and agency personnel and community members will become aware of and trained in the service coordination mechanism process in your county.
2. Each county FCFC should clearly identify the criteria for children and families who would typically be accepted into the Service Coordination Process. However, no family should be refused the opportunity to refer oneself for consideration for service coordination. The age group for youth being served through FCFC Service Coordination is 0 through 21 for those county FCFCs using Family-Centered Services and Supports (FCSS) funding. This age group should be clearly addressed in the Service Coordination Mechanism. Beyond this general population, additional target population criteria might include any

child, youth, or young adult with multi-systemic needs whose service and support needs are not being adequately met while seeking assistance outside of the Service Coordination Mechanism. Additional target criteria might also encourage the early identification of cross-system needs whenever possible. Any target population criteria should never limit FCFC Service Coordination to only a select group of children whose needs must fall within a limited set of predetermined needs or whose number of “multiple” or “systemic” needs must reach a certain number. The criteria should ensure that if the need for other interventions can be identified prior to court involvement, services are put in place to meet those needs. In addition, families may need higher levels of coordinated cross-systems assistance which any criteria should also recognize.

3. It is important that FCFCs clearly identify, for themselves and for this mechanism, the groups or types of children and families that are not being served, or whose needs are being inadequately addressed. Through monitoring and tracking the service coordination process, FCFCs will learn where service gaps exist, what services are working, where cross-system coordination works well and where it needs improvement, as reported in the county FCFC shared plan. This information should inform the county FCFC’s decision-making process on how to improve the local system of care.

As stated above, each FCFC should clearly identify the criteria for children and families who would typically be accepted into the Service Coordination Process. However, there are specific targeted populations that should also be considered eligible to be served by the FCFC Service Coordination Process:

Child Protective Services – Youth in Custody

Regardless of youth/family involvement with county child protective services, FCFC Service Coordination can still be accessed for any youth with needs across multiple systems. Due to the restrictions of FCSS funding, county FCFCs are not permitted to utilize FCSS funding for service coordination activities for youth in custody, but that does not mean that FCFC Service Coordination cannot be accessed for youth who are in custody of child protective services. Child protective services have a variety of tools available to assist with at-risk youth and families including Differential/Alternative Response and Family- Group Conferencing, but those are short-term processes, and the youth and family could be referred to FCFC Service Coordination for longer-term planning and coordination. Child protective services also has a variety of tools available for youth who are in custody, but these youth can also be referred to FCFC Service Coordination at any time if a youth has needs in multiple systems. Child protective services play an integral

role in protecting the safety and well-being of youth in the community, and this relationship should be fostered to maintain support for those youth and families who are at-risk for further system involvement.

Youth in Juvenile Justice System

As outlined in O.R.C. 121.37(E), the FCFC Service Coordination Process and the FCFC Service Coordination Plan (IFSP) must account for youth alleged unruly and identify methods to divert a youth from the juvenile court system. This revised guidance requires that FCFC Service Coordination also be available for youth that are adjudicated unruly or delinquent.

Early Intervention Service Coordination

All children who receive services under Ohio's Early Intervention program, and who are also being served under the county Service Coordination Mechanism, must be assured that the services received under Early Intervention (EI) Service Coordination are consistent with the laws and rules of Early Intervention per federal regulations and DCY policy and procedures. If a child is being served by FCFC Service Coordination and a referral is made to EI Service Coordination, upon the determination of eligibility, the lead provider of service coordination should be the EI Service Coordination provider to assure compliance with O.R.C. 5123.02. The identified county FCFC Service Coordinator and/or FCFC Service Coordination Team should support and assist with the family's IFSP/Early Intervention Plan as needed. If a child/family enrolled in EI Service Coordination is in need of supports across multiple systems, the county FCFC Service Coordinator and/or FCFC Service Coordination team should be available to support and assist as needed. As a required component of the county SCM, there should be a distinct effort to align the efforts of FCFC Service Coordination and Early Intervention Service Coordination under the umbrella of county Family and Children First Councils to provide a seamless continuum of care developed for the 0-21 population.

OhioRISE Care Coordination

On July 1, 2022, as a part of Ohio Medicaid's effort to launch the next generation of Medicaid, ODM launched OhioRISE (Resilience through Integrated Systems and Excellence), a specialized managed care program for youth with complex behavioral health and multisystem needs. A Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment is required to determine a child or youth's eligibility for OhioRISE. The 88 FCFCs across the state work diligently with their respective case management entity(ies) (CME) and/or Aetna to ensure youth/family are referred/connected.

Regardless of youth/family enrollment with OhioRISE, FCFC Service Coordination can still be accessed for any youth with needs across multiple systems. Due to the restrictions of FCSS funding, county FCFCs are not permitted to utilize FCSS funding for service coordination activities for youth enrolled in OhioRISE that are receiving Care Coordination through a CME – Care Management Entity. If an FCFC provides Care Coordination for a youth enrolled in OhioRISE, the care coordinator must coordinate benefits with Aetna Care Coordination directly. Youth may also be referred to FCFC Service Coordination at any time at the request of the family.

4. There is an underlying assumption that families will be knowledgeable and aware of the county Service Coordination Mechanism (SCM). The county SCM should describe how families and service providers will be educated about and trained on the mechanism. Efforts to inform families of the availability and purpose of service coordination should be coordinated with other community educational or social marketing efforts for programs including, but not limited to, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Head Start/Early Head Start and Children with Medical Handicaps (CMH).

B) A procedure for referring a child and family.

O.R.C. 121.37(C)(1): A procedure for an agency, including a juvenile court, or a family voluntarily seeking service coordination, to refer the child and family to the county council for service coordination in accordance with the county service coordination mechanism.

A referral process is required to be used by an agency or family to refer a family to the Service Coordination. This county-wide referral procedure must explain how the county SCM is accessed and identify the steps in the referral process. It is required that there is documentation of the following:

- 1) The date of the receipt of the referral;
- 2) Contact information for the person being referred;
- 3) Age of the person being referred at time of referral;
- 4) A brief description of the problems being experienced;

- 5) Systems/agencies that have been involved with the person to date;
- 6) Contact information for the person referring;
- 7) Identification of Medicaid Managed Care Plan or private insurance;
- 8) Council response to the referral or the outcome of the referral.

The identification of a potential FCFC Service Coordination youth/family for referral should happen as early as possible. As part of the referral procedure, a county FCFC should establish timelines within which a family will be contacted after a referral is made (no more than 10 days), within which the initial family meeting is scheduled, and a procedure of how a referral will be closed due to no contact or transfer to the CME of OhioRISE.

Not all families who are referred or who refer themselves to FCFC Service Coordination require the same level of assistance. Each level of coordination should describe the general criteria for being appropriate for each level. For example, a family may be referred whose only need is to be connected to another community resource (Information and Referral). Less intensive or intrusive options may be available and more appropriate, and these community options or supports should be pursued before more intensive FCFC Service Coordination is initiated. The county SCM should support the least intrusive response, while still adequately addressing a family's needs. Each county should describe the levels of coordination available through the Service Coordination Mechanism along a continuum for a family who is referred to the FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism. Each level of coordination should describe the general criteria for being appropriate for each level.

C) A notification procedure for all individual family service coordination plan meetings.

O.R.C. 121.37(C)(2): A procedure ensuring that a family and all appropriate staff from involved agencies, including a representative from the appropriate school district, are notified of and invited to participate in all family service coordination plan meetings.

A procedure is required to be documented in the county SCM describing how families and agencies will be notified of, and invited to, all family Service Coordination/High-Fidelity Wraparound plan meetings. Representatives from all appropriate agencies, including a representative from the child's school district and family support persons, both formal and informal, should be notified of and invited to all family service coordination plan meetings.

Family needs and limitations should be considered when establishing the time and location of meetings. Counties must establish a reasonable guideline for advance notice expected prior to a meeting. Advance written notice is required.

D) A procedure for a family to initiate a meeting and invite support persons.

O.R.C. 121.37(C)(3): A procedure that permits a family to initiate a meeting to develop or review the family's service coordination plan and allow the family to invite a family advocate, mentor, or support person of the family's choice to participate in any such meeting.

A procedure is required to be documented in the county SCM describing how families can initiate a meeting to develop or review the family's service coordination plan. The mechanism must also indicate that a family may invite a family advocate, mentor, or support person of the family's choice to participate in any such meeting.

E) A procedure ensuring an individual family service coordination plan meeting occurs before an out of home placement is made, or within ten days after placement in the case of an emergency.

O.R.C. 121.37(C)(4): A procedure for ensuring that a family service coordination plan meeting is conducted before a non-emergency out-of-home placement for all multi-need children, or within ten days of a placement for emergency placements of multi-need children. The family service coordination plan shall outline how the county council members will jointly pay for services, where applicable, and provide services in the least restrictive environment.

This requirement should give the community members a chance to ensure that all alternatives to out-of-home placement have been exhausted as reasonable and appropriate responses to the child and family situation. This process could serve as the entry point for out-of-home placement in a county and assure that all other less disruptive options have been exhausted. In addition, it gives the family team an opportunity to begin planning for community supports for the family during placement and to begin planning for the child's return to the community (re-entry). This requirement applies to all children who are involved in service coordination under the FCFC mechanism. The law provides that a family may refer itself to service coordination at any point in time, which includes any time prior to or immediately after an out-home-placement. Nothing in this division shall be interpreted as overriding or affecting decisions of a juvenile court or child protective services agency regarding an out-of-home placement.

County Family and Children First Councils (FCFCs) via a grant agreement with the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) may seek multi-system youth custody relinquishment funding. Funding must only be requested to support children and youth who are at risk for custody relinquishment or have already been relinquished and need services and/or supports to transition to community and/or non-custody settings. Applications for technical assistance or funding must be submitted by the county Family and Children First Council. These will be vetted by a multi-system team composed of child/youth serving state agencies, and funding will be authorized (or not authorized) by ODM. Authorized funding will be subject to the terms of ODM's executed grant agreement with each County FCFC. The county SCM should describe when/if MSY applications will be applied for, as well as the oversight provided by FCFC for financial tracking and submission of required updates.

F) A procedure for monitoring progress and tracking outcomes.

O.R.C. 121.37(C)(5): A procedure for monitoring the progress and tracking the outcomes of each service coordination plan requested in the county, including monitoring and tracking children in out-of-home placements to assure continued progress, appropriateness of placement, and continuity of care after discharge from placement with appropriate arrangements for housing, treatment, and education.

O.R.C. 121.376 (A) The Ohio family and children first cabinet council state office shall establish and maintain the Ohio Automated Service Coordination Information System (OASCIS). The information system shall contain county family and children first council records detailing funding sources and information regarding families seeking services from a county council including: (1) Demographics including: (a) number and relationship of family members; (b) genders of youth; (c) ages of youth; (d) races of youth; (e) education of youth; (2) Youth financial resource eligibility information; (3) History and desired outcomes; (4) Youth's physical and behavioral health histories, when available; (5) Names of youth's insurers and physicians, when available; (6) Individualized plans including: (a) referrals made to services; (b) services and supports received; (c) crisis plans; (d) safety plans; (7) All Relevant case file documents; (8) Any other information related to families served, services provided, or the financial resources used to provide the services.

O.R.C. 121.376 (B) Each county family and children first council shall enter and update all information in the Ohio Automated Service Coordination Information System as information becomes available or within five business days of acquiring new information. Access to and use of data in the Ohio Automated Service Coordination Information System shall be limited to the extent necessary to carry out the duties of the family and children first cabinet council and the county family and children first councils established in section 121.37 of the Revised Code.

The results of this monitoring and tracking should be reported to the county FCFC on a regular basis. Data and information collected through the monitoring and tracking system should be used to inform the decision-making process of the county FCFC as required under ORC 121.37(B)(2)(b). The county SCM should describe if they are utilizing OASCIS or another Ohio and Family Children First (OFCF) pre-approved database system. In addition, the mechanism should describe how the county will report this information to the FCFC and how the information will be used to inform the decision-making process of the FCFC as it fulfills its responsibilities to annually evaluate and prioritize services, fill service gaps and invent new approaches to achieve better results for families and children [as found in 121.37(B)(2)(b)].

The county SCM should describe each county's monitoring and tracking process for children in out-of-home placements. The process should include periodical reporting on the progress of youth in out-of-home placements, and the development of a re-entry plan to establish continuity of care after discharge which should include planning for housing, ongoing treatment, and education.

G) A procedure for protecting family confidentiality.

O.R.C. 121.37(C)(6): A procedure for protecting the confidentiality of all personal family information disclosed during service coordination meetings or contained in the comprehensive family service coordination plan.

A procedure must be described in the county SCM that protects the confidentiality of all personal family information disclosed during Service Coordination/High-Fidelity Wraparound plan meetings or contained in the comprehensive family service coordination plan/plan of care. A release of information should be signed by the parent/guardian of all children involved in FCFC Service Coordination/High-Fidelity Wraparound concerning the disclosure of information during the process. This release should contain all potential community partners including all applicable local school districts and applicable community schools as needed.

Additional documentation explaining the confidentiality expectations of information disclosed during Service Coordination/High-Fidelity Wraparound committee meetings or specific family team meetings and the planning process should be signed by all family team members participating.

H) A procedure for assessing the strengths, needs and cultural discovery of the family.

O.R.C. 121.37(C)(7): A procedure for assessing the needs and strengths of any child or family that has been referred to the council for service coordination, including a child whose parent or custodian is voluntarily seeking services, and for ensuring that parents and custodians are afforded the opportunity to participate.

The county SCM must describe a procedure to be followed by all persons or entities providing Service Coordination/High- Fidelity Wraparound on behalf of the FCFC to assure a consistent approach is applied to the assessment of the strengths, needs and cultural discovery of the child and family. If choosing to utilize a self-developed, non-evidence-based tool for the initial screening for needs and/or strengths, the assessment tool must contain at a minimum the following elements for evaluation:

- Strengths
- Life Functioning
- Behavioral/Emotional Needs
- Risk Behaviors
- Cultural Factors
- Potentially Traumatic/Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Early Childhood,
- Transition Age
- Caregiver Resources & Needs

It is requirement that each youth/family referred to FCFC Service Coordination be assessed prior to the start of the development of the formal plan to determine the level of need/care. The assessment should be conducted every 90 days or more often as needed. If a youth/family has been recently assessed within the last 30 days with a formal assessment tool, those results can be obtained for assistance in determining a youth/family's level of need/care.

Assistance with determining the proper level of coordination can be obtained by conducting an assessment that will provide some insight on the family's presenting level of need. Two of the most commonly used examples of such an assessment include the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessment (CANS) (<https://cansohio.org/>), and the Child and Adolescent Service Intensity Instrument (CASII) (http://www.aacap.org/aacap/Member_Resources/Practice_Information/CASII.aspx). Each tool can be used to categorize a youth/family's level of need based on measuring a variety of life domains. Additionally, the tools can be used to identify

priority planning areas of need that can be used in the development of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) also known as or the Plan of Care (POC).

While this guidance does not call for the use of a specific assessment tool, the Ohio Children's Initiative CANS is highly recommended as it is widely used across the state of Ohio. Any formal researched assessment tool may be utilized to meet this requirement. If a county chooses to conduct a self-developed assessment, that assessment must measure an identical set of life domains present in the formal researched tools mentioned above.

Note: As used in this guidance, the term "assessment" means an initial screening for strengths and needs for intake services. An assessment tool can also be used to identify potential needs across various life domains to be included in the development of the IFSCP/plan of care. It is recognized that within many professional categories the term "assessment" implies the application of a well-developed technology by persons with highly practiced skills qualified within their respective disciplines. Such assessments are important and should be provided when appropriate; however, it is not the expectation that every child and family covered by an IFSCP/plan of care will need or should receive highly technical, specific assessments. It is expected that every child and family covered by an IFSCP/plan of care will have access to an assessment process which identifies their strengths and needs and ensures access to services or supports to address those needs.

For those youth/families with higher intensity needs across the continuum, The Ohio Children's Initiative CANS assessment tool is required to determine eligibility of Ohio RISE and/or apply for MSY funds for out of home treatment and entered to the Ohio Children's Initiative CANS Information Technology (IT) System.

I) A procedure for developing an individual family service coordination plan (plan of care).

O.R.C. 121.37(C)(8): A procedure for development of an individual family service coordination plan described in division (D) of this section.

O.R.C. 121.37(D)(1): Designates service responsibilities among the various state and local agencies that provide services to children and their families, including children who are abused, neglected, dependent, unruly, or delinquent children and under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court and children whose parents or custodians are voluntarily seeking services.

O.R.C. 121.37(D)(2): Designates an individual, approved by the family, to track the progress of the family service coordination plan, schedule reviews as necessary, and facilitate the family service coordination plan meeting process.

O.R.C. 121.37 (D)(3): Ensures that assistance and services to be provided are responsive to the strengths and needs of the family, as well as the family's culture, race, and ethnic group, by allowing the family to offer information and suggestions and participate in decisions. Identified assistance and services shall be provided in the least restrictive environment possible.

O.R.C. 121.37(D)(5): Includes timelines for completion of goals specified in the plan with regular reviews scheduled to monitor progress toward those goals.

O.R.C. 121.37(D)(6): Includes a plan for dealing with short-term crisis situations and safety concerns.

Several public systems already require the preparation of a comprehensive service or treatment plan, often because of federal mandates. The individual family service coordination plan should be designed to fulfill such requirements as simply as possible, with minimal overlap and duplication. If multiple mandates inescapably require multiple plans, such plans should be linked together and

coordinated to eliminate duplication and conflicting expectations of the family. The Individualized Service Plan (Plan of Care) should be documented, reviewed, and updated on an ongoing basis.

The Plan of Care should describe the mechanisms and methods by which the responsibilities of all involved parties will be clearly identified. If, for any reason, needed services or supports are not available, the plan should show how priorities are chosen and what efforts will be undertaken to address such gaps (to include aggregate gaps shared with the FCFC). In this manner, service accountability is provided. The procedure for designating responsibilities should include the following elements:

- a) A method for synthesizing strengths and needs identified through an assessment into a unified family service coordination plan, which is inclusive of all appropriate services and supports. Recommended standardized assessment tools will be identified.
- b) Coordinated assignment of responsibilities. Authority and funding, among all responsible agencies and organizations, for coordinated assessment, service plan development, service plan implementation, transitional services, service activity tracking, and service satisfaction.

To coordinate plan management across systems, a designated individual shall track the progress of the family service plan, schedule needed reviews of the plan and facilitate the family service plan meeting process.

Family involvement in choosing appropriate services and providers in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of services on behalf of the family must be respected. It is critical to the outcome of service coordination planning that special attention is given to issues related to racial/ethnic/cultural identity and to gender. System development should also promote early intervention, preventing unnecessary out-of-home placements and keeping children and communities safe while supporting families whenever possible. Services and supports should meet the needs of children and their families in the least restrictive environment possible and as close to their own home environment as possible. The use of research and evidence-based/informed supports and services are strongly encouraged. Culturally and linguistically appropriate services ultimately help reduce health disparities and achieve health equity. CLAS is about respect to the whole individual and responsive to the individual's health needs and preferences.

For additional guidance on cultural competency, please reference the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) at <https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas>.

Timelines for goal completion allow the family and team to monitor progress and acknowledge successes. Expectations of the team in scheduling review meetings should be established at each meeting. The family/youth should be provided the opportunity to schedule a meeting at any time and during a time convenient to the family with the assistance of the designated team leader.

Planning for a short-term crisis or a safety concern establishes the understanding among team members that family crises and safety issues are a possibility and will not be considered a plan/child/family/team failure if they should occur. A crisis response plan, detailing options for preventing a known crisis and responses by those supporting the youth and family through such an event, should be developed based on family need and preference. Any safety concerns or safety programming should be addressed as needed.

These plans will position the team to be prepared and to respond appropriately and immediately in the event there is a crisis or safety concern. It allows the team to plan its response during a time when everyone is positive and calm, helping to assure that members will not overreact if the need arises to implement the individual plans. Efforts should target strategies that provide support to the child and family during these times, keeping everyone safe, while keeping the child and the family together when possible.

J) A description of how alleged unruly children will be dealt with using service coordination, including a method for diverting them from the juvenile court system.

O.R.C. 121.37(D)(4): Includes a process for dealing with a child who is alleged to be an unruly child. The process shall include methods to divert the child from the juvenile court system.

O.R.C. 121.37(E): Includes items that may be included in the individual family service coordination plan of an alleged unruly child. Items to highlight include:

(E)(1) The process provided for under division (D)(4) of this section may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- (a) Designation of the person or agency to conduct the assessment of the child and the child's family as described in Division (C)(7) of this section and designation of the instrument or instruments to be used to conduct the assessment.
- (b) An emphasis on the personal responsibilities of the child and the parental responsibilities of the parents, guardian, or custodian of the child.
- (c) Involvement of local law enforcement agencies and officials.

(E)(2) The method to divert a child from the juvenile court system that must be included in the service coordination process may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- (a) Preparation of a complaint under section 2151.27 of the Revised Code...notifying the child and the parents, guardian, or custodian that the complaint has been prepared to encourage the child and the parents, guardian, or custodian to comply with other methods to divert the child from the juvenile court system.
- (b) Conducting a meeting with the child and parents...and other interested parties to determine the appropriate methods to divert the child from the juvenile court system.
- (c) A method to provide the child and the child's family a short-term respite...
- (d) A program to provide a mentor to the child...
- (e) A program to provide parenting education...
- (f) An alternative school program...

Early identification/intervention is a critical factor in preventing a child from becoming further involved in the juvenile court system. A process should be developed to identify and intervene with these children as soon as a problem is identified. Division (E) of 121.37 includes some recommended responses to addressing the needs of alleged unruly children.

In addition to the items listed above in (E)(1), it is recommended that FCFCs include a process not only for dealing with a child who is alleged to be but is also adjudicated to be an unruly or delinquent child.

In addition to the methods listed above in (E)(2), it is recommended that there could also be a preparation of a diversion contract between the child, the child's family, and the juvenile court.

K) A dispute resolution process, including the judicial review process.

O.R.C. 121.37(C)(9): A local dispute resolution process to serve as the process that must be used first to resolve disputes among the agencies represented on the county council concerning the provision of services to children, including children who are abused, neglected, dependent, unruly, alleged unruly, or delinquent children and under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court and children whose parents or custodians are voluntarily seeking services. The local dispute resolution process shall comply with section 121.38 of the Revised Code.

The local dispute resolution process shall be used to resolve disputes between a child's parents or custodians and the county council regarding service coordination. The county council shall inform the parents or custodians of their right to use the dispute resolution process. Parents or custodians shall use existing local agency grievance procedures to address disputes not involving service coordination. The dispute resolution process is in addition to and does not replace other rights or procedures that parents or custodians may have under other sections of the Revised Code.

O.R.C. 121.381, 121.382: Families must have access to the dispute resolution process.

Not later than sixty days after the parent or custodian initiates the dispute process, the council shall make findings regarding the dispute and issue a written determination of its findings.

Each agency represented on a county family and children first council that is providing services or funding for services that are the subject of the dispute initiated by a parent shall continue to provide those services and the funding for those services during the dispute process.

Nothing in division (C) (4) of this section shall be interpreted as overriding or affecting decisions of a juvenile court regarding an out-of-home placement, long-term placement, or emergency out-of-home placement.

The Service Coordination Mechanism must describe a process to be used to resolve disputes between agencies or between parents and agencies. The county FCFC must inform parents of their right to use the dispute resolution process. Parents should be included in all aspects of the dispute process if they choose. The process must assure that children and their families will receive necessary services while any disputes are being resolved. The process must distinguish between and define differences in emergency and non-emergency situations, with appropriate timeframes for each. Each stage of the process must include timelines, promoting swift and timely resolutions. There must also be an overall time limitation for the entire dispute resolution process for individual cases. The process should recognize and make use of entities and relationships within the community which reflect that community's unique culture and characteristics.

When a dispute between agencies cannot be resolved through the designated dispute resolution process, the final arbitrator of individual case resolution will be the presiding juvenile court judge. The procedure identified in the Service Coordination Mechanism should include:

- a) Following a failed dispute resolution process between agencies a procedure for filing with the Juvenile Court within seven days; and,
- b) Preparation of inter-agency assessment and treatment information for the court.

When a dispute that originates with the child's parents or custodians cannot be resolved through the designated dispute resolution process, the county family and children first council can make contact OFCF regarding next steps to resolve the dispute. The county family and children first council may also seek mediation services that may be available in their county.

L) A description of the fiscal strategies for supporting FCFC service coordination including:

- How funding decisions are made for services identified in the youth service coordination plan.
- How flexible resources are maximized.
- How funds are blended or coordinated to support service coordination.
- How resources are reallocated from institutional services to community-based, preventive, and family-centered services.
- How decisions will be made regarding the use of the Family Centered Services and Supports funds for children and their families in service coordination.
- How decisions will be made to access Multi-System Youth/ODM funds, monitor, and report progress to the MSY State Review Team.
- How decisions will be made to access Multi-System Youth/PCSA funds for children and their families in service coordination.

As previously mentioned under Section II of this guidance, the Family Centered Services and Support (FCSS) funds are for those children (ages 0 through 21) with multi-systemic needs, who are receiving service coordination through the local FCFC. FCSS funds are designed to meet the unique non-clinical needs of children and families identified on the individualized family service coordination plan developed through the service coordination process and/or to support the FCFC service coordination process, as described in the service coordination mechanism. Refer to the FCSS Guidance document for more information about the FCSS funds and view the System of Care.

Additional Fiscal Strategies

- Blended or Local pooled funding [i.e., funding which pools dollars from multiple sources and makes them indistinguishable funds.
- State Flexible Pooled funding
- Multi-System Youth - ODM
- MSY- PCSA funds

M) Quality Assurance.

It is important for quality assurance purposes that FCFCs periodically monitor their county service coordination mechanism. Consistency in the implementation and use of the mechanism as a county-wide model will yield better outcomes for families and children. To assure that the county SCM is kept up to date, is effective and reflects the process that is practiced by the county, each FCFC should describe how it will monitor and review the service coordination process as it is practiced. The mechanism should include information about who will monitor and review the mechanism and how often this will happen. It is the expectation OFCF, that counties will assure that the mechanism on file with OFCF reflects current practice. Each county FCFC is required to place the current version of their SCM on an accessible website. The SCM Cover Sheet (Attachment A) should include a link to the location on an accessible website to allow for the newest version of the SCM to be accessed at any time. Describe how the service coordination mechanism process will be monitored and reviewed. Please include who will monitor and review the mechanism and how often this will happen.

N) County Service Coordination Mechanism Due Date, Documentation and Review Process.

All completed documents must be submitted to Ohio Family and Children First by December 31, 2024. County FCFCs will not be able to access SFY2026 FCSS funding or OCBF funding until these documents are submitted and approved.

The following documents should be submitted electronically, unless noted below, to OFCF: OFCF@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov

1. The 2024 county FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism
2. Attachment A - The Service Coordination Mechanism Cover Sheet
3. Attachment B - Table of Organization of SCM
4. Minutes from a full FCFC meeting where the 2024 County FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism was approved. The minutes must reflect such approval.

Documents in addition to those listed above should not be submitted to OFCF but are required to be maintained by the county FCFC, and available upon request. (Ex. Forms, tools)

The county FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism will be reviewed by the OFCF Regional Coordinator to ensure compliance with O.R.C. 121.37 and 121.38. Each county FCFC will receive feedback if any areas need improvement. If components are out of compliance with the ORC, the county will be informed and will be unable to access SFY2026 FCSS or OCBF funding until such components are addressed.

If technical assistance is needed either in updating the FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism or correcting after feedback is received, please contact your OFCF Regional Coordinator. A technical assistance meeting will be scheduled for your county.

IV. Attachments

The following pages (25-27) contain two attachments that must be submitted with the FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism. Attachment A on page 25 is the FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism Cover Sheet. Attachment B on pages 26-27 is the Table of Contents for the FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism. Completion of Attachment B will help the FCFC ensure that their Service Coordination Mechanism includes all requirements. The assigned OFCF Regional Coordinator will also utilize Attachment B when reviewing the submitted Service Coordination Mechanism.

Attachment A

FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism Cover Sheet

County :	
FCFC Director/Coordinator Name:	
Phone #:	
Address:	
Email:	
Online link address to access County Service Coordination Mechanism:	
Date of Submission:	

Attachment B

Table of Contents for FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism

Please indicate the designated pages to reflect completion of each required components of The County FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism to indicate it has been included.

	Requirement	Page(s)
A.	An overview or description of the purpose of service coordination in your county that includes what entities/agencies/persons were involved in the review and revisions of the mechanism, the structural components (or levels/intensity of coordination) of service coordination in your county, a description of the criteria established, including age range, for children accepted for service coordination, a description of youth not served in service coordination, and a description of how families and agency personnel and community members will become aware of and trained in the service coordination mechanism process in your county	
B.	A procedure for referring a child and family	
C.	A notification procedure for all individual family service coordination plan meetings.	
D.	A procedure for a family to initiate a meeting and invite support persons.	
E.	A procedure ensuring an individual family service coordination plan meeting occurs before an out of home placement is made, or within ten days after placement in the case of an emergency.	
F.	A procedure for monitoring progress and tracking outcomes.	
G.	A procedure for protecting family confidentiality.	
H.	A procedure for assessing the strengths, needs and cultural discovery of the family.	
I.	A procedure for developing a family service coordination plan to include:	
	- Description of the method for designating service/support responsibilities.	
	-Description of the method for designating service/support responsibilities.	

	- Description of how plans will ensure services are responsive to the strengths, needs, family culture, race, and ethnic group, and are provided in the least restrictive environment.	
	-Description of how timelines will be established for completing family team goals.	
	-Description of how crisis and safety plans will be included in the family service coordination plan.	
J.	Description of how alleged unruly children will be dealt with using service coordination, including a method for diverting them from the juvenile court system.	
K.	A dispute resolution process, including the judicial review process	
L.	A description of the fiscal strategies for supporting FCFC service coordination including:	
	-How funding decisions are made for services identified in the individual family service coordination plan.	
	-How flexible resources are maximized.	
	-How funds are blended or coordinated to support service coordination.	
	-How resources are reallocated from institutional services to community-based, preventive, and family-centered services.	
	-How decisions will be made regarding the use of the MSY/PCSA funds for children and their families in service coordination.	
	-How decisions will be made regarding the use of the Family Centered Services and Supports funds for children and their families in service coordination.	
	-How decisions will be made to access Multi-System Youth funds, monitor, and report progress to the MSY State Review Team.	
M.	Quality Assurance of Service Coordination Mechanism	
	- Description of how the service coordination mechanism process will be monitored and reviewed. Please include who will monitor and review the mechanism and how often this will happen.	