



SERVICE COORDINATION MECHANISM

Guernsey County Family & Children First Council

<https://www.guernseyfcfc.org/>

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OVERVIEW

The Guernsey County Family & Children Family Council (GCFCFC) was formed in August of 1994 and in November of 1995, a Family & Children First Coordinator was hired. In January of 1996, Rules of Operation were adopted establishing a multi-tiered Council structure. Members of the Creative Options Committee completed training and began implementation of the Creative Options wrap-around services process in May of 1996. The GCFCFC Board of Trustees continues to meet minimum of one time per month. Effective July 1, 2021, the Guernsey County Board of Developmental Disabilities started managing the GCFCFC Service Coordinator and Creative Options Case Manager. GCFCFC has representatives from the Council's mandated members and various community experts.

PURPOSE

The Guernsey County Family & Children First Council (GCFCFC) recognizes the need for family-focused and consumer driven services utilizing home and community supports. In developing the Guernsey County Service Coordination Mechanism, increased involvement from parents, relatives and other sources of family support in the identification and resolution of child and family needs is a primary goal of the GCFCFC. Collaboration and cooperation among all health, human and social service agencies is also necessary to serve the best interest of each child and family in need of services. In addition, early intervention is crucial if efforts to prevent children and families from progressing through the social services and juvenile justice systems are to be successful.

As stated in Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 121.37, *"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."* Service coordination is a process of service planning and system collaboration that provides individualized services and supports to families who have multiple needs, or are being served by multiple systems. It is child-centered and family-focused based on the strengths and needs of the child and family.

As required in ORC 121.37, the GCFCFC seeks to identify and address duplication of, and gaps in, services. In addition, the GCFCFC Service Coordination Mechanism supports Ohio's Commitments to Child Well-being, striving to ensure the following objectives are achieved in Guernsey County:

- Infants and toddlers thrive
- Children are ready for school
- Children and youth succeed in school
- Youth choose healthy behavior
- Youth successfully transition into adulthood

This will be accomplished through the development of a system of coordination among families, individuals and agencies. This will occur to facilitate access to, and delivery of, needed services and supports in the home and community for families. Services will be provided in the neutral setting that is agreed upon by the team.

All efforts will be taken to make the public aware of GCFCC and Creative Options services mission:

GCFCC is to serve as a facilitator to assist in providing the most vulnerable families in our community with access to effective services available to them.

In addition, Service Coordination brochures will be created and distributed in the community.

Target Population

GCFCC will address the issue of children and youth who are residents of Guernsey County ages 0-21 who are in need of a coordinated inter-disciplinary plan to address their unique needs. Referrals typically come through provider agencies, but families can self-refer.

Coordinating services among the social service agencies in Guernsey County will benefit all children and families. Every attempt will be made to ensure that children and families are served in the least restrictive environment. Youth will be diverted from Juvenile Court or out-of-home placements for as long as the situation warrants.

The following is a list of values that are integral to the service coordination process, resulting in a more effective service delivery system:

- Services are delivered using a family-centered approach
- Services are responsive to the cultural, racial and ethnic characteristics of the population being served
- Service outcomes are evaluated
- Available funding resources are fully utilized/integrated
- Home and community supports are utilized as needed
- Specialized treatment for difficult to serve population and evidence-based treatment services are encouraged
- Duplicative or competing efforts among agencies are reduced or eliminated
- Families and youth are fully involved in decision making and are provided with family advocacy and support options.

MECHANISM FUNCTIONS & STRUCTURES

The Service Mechanism is developed and reviewed by the Board annually. The GCFCFC will ensure that each member agency be informed of the mechanism, the service coordination process, and how and when the process should be utilized. Information can be found on the GCFCFC website at www.guernseyfcdc.org. Additionally other forms of publications will be shared with community members in order to educate them about the Council.

OPERATIONS & PROCEDURES

Referral to service coordination

Referral may be submitted by any member agency or a family voluntarily seeking services. The referral forms can be found at www.guernseyfcdc.org and will be submitted for approval to the Creative Options case manager. The request will be review at the monthly meeting of the Creative Options committee, which is comprised of representatives of the GCFCFC mandated members and local service providers. (Please see Appendix A for a complete list of mandated members.)

Assessment

At each initial referral/case introduction meeting, the level and intensity of service coordination will be determined (i.e. developed plan or information and referral) utilizing specialized, evidence-based treatment services as available (i.e. IFAST) and a CANS assessment may be completed. No specific case will be denied service, but type, intensity and length of service will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending upon need. At the initial meeting, a team leader will be identified at the approval of the family and a parent advocate will be offered. The initial Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is developed stating the goals for the family and team.

Plan Development

The IFSP will specifically identify family goals, plans of action, and services to be sought and provided. It will include who will be responsible for implementation, scheduling the dates and times, the activity to be completed, and by whom. The IFSP will be developed using person centered practices within 45 days of intake.

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 as well as 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 the amount of advance notice expected prior to a meeting. Advance written notice is required.

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. Potential advocates/supports can be obtained from a variety of sources including but not limited to:

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;

In order 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. It is important in order to encourage family confidence and genuine participation in the service coordination plan process that the family has a voice in choosing and approving the individual designated for this responsibility.

All funding provided to a family is driven by the outcomes in the IFSP and may not exceed \$750 unless additional approval is granted by the FCFC Board.

Early Intervention

Early Intervention (EI) is a statewide system that provides coordinated early intervention services to parents of eligible children under the age of three with developmental delays or disabilities. Guernsey County provides EI services to those participants birth to age 6. EI is grounded in the philosophy that young children learn best from familiar people in familiar settings. Every family served in EI will have a local EI team that consists of a service coordinator, service providers, and family members. The team works with participants in their home or other places they spend time to develop a coordinated plan called an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The team will work through the IFSP plan to provide supports and resources, and build upon them to learn, and to enhance your child's learning and development. All services that are provided to EI participants by Creative Options will be added to the IFSP.

Evaluation and Review

Each IFSP will be reviewed at least at every 90 days. All team members will be invited to participate in the ISFP review. The review, time, date and location will be determined in coordination with the availability of the family. No review will be conducted without the attendance of the family. A team member may request a review at any time. The team leader will be responsible for scheduling the review and inviting the team members. Each team member will be given a written notice of a scheduled review at least one week in advance if at all possible.

As a component of each review, the child and/or family will be given the opportunity to provide feedback concerning service provision. Monthly, this will be presented to the Creative Options Committee.

Confidentiality

Each member of the COC and FCFC Board will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement annually. Additionally, the CO Case manager will utilize a release of information that will require approval from the parent to release any information about the case to other agencies. All guidelines for HIPAA are followed and maintained by the GCFCFC.

Fiscal Needs and Service Duplication

The service coordination process is funded through the utilization of Family Centered Supports and Services (FCSS) funding, but case specific fiscal needs will be referred and decided upon collaboratively by the GCFCFC. Ultimate fiscal responsibility will be determined by the GCFCFC.

Family Centered Supports and Services funding is available for children and youth who have remained in the custody of their parents. Children and youth in crisis may utilize Multi System Youth (MSY) Funding for in-home or residential services.

Identified service duplication and gaps in services (i.e. community outreach) will be referred to the GCFCFC. As an ongoing agenda item in GCFCFC meetings, these overlaps and voids will be discussed and plan for resolution will be developed. If necessary, committees will be assigned to identify, evaluate and present plans for resolution of service gaps to the Council. Such committees will report to the Board of Trustees to identify progress towards resolution. In addition, information will be shared and updated in the Guernsey County Community Plan and PRC Plan.

Diverting Unruly from the Juvenile Court System

There are many community and agency programs in place to divert youth alleged to be unruly from entering in the Juvenile Court System with a formal filing:

1. Elementary Prevention Officer to address truancy issues
2. Parenting programs such as Thinking for a Change
3. Ability to refer to Creative Options with a Probation Officer on Creative Options teams.
4. Unruly complaints referred to diversion program from Prosecutor's Office to Probation Department who will make a referral to Creative Options.
5. School guidance counselors and social workers may make referrals to Creative Options.

Out-of-Home Placement and Crisis Contingencies

In the event of an imminent non-emergency out-of-home placement, the team leader will organize an immediate review for the purpose of exhausting all alternatives to an out-of-home placement. If placement is an emergency in nature, the review will convene within 10 days after placement is made. If placement does occur, the review will focus on a plan of action for the family during placement and to begin planning for the child's return to the home. While in placement, the youth will be tracked to assure continued progress, appropriateness of placement and continuity of care after discharge from placement with appropriate arrangement for housing, treatment, and education.

In the event of a short-term crisis or safety concern a review of the Crisis and Safety Plan will be completed with all team members. Review efforts will target strategies that provide safety and support to the child and family during the crisis. It will focus on keeping the child and the family together when possible.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

The purpose of Service Coordination is to provide a venue for families needing services where their needs may not have been adequately addressed in traditional agency systems. Each agency system has areas of responsibility, and the collaborative approach is not intended to replace or usurp the primary role of any one of these systems. Dispute resolution is an important component of any services delivery system. Although agencies and professionals are committed to meeting the needs of the child and/or family, there are times when one or more members of the team may question decisions or the process. In all instances, families are encouraged to ask questions and become informed as to what is available, what their child might need, and what rights and responsibilities they have as parents. Conflicts may arise in three distinct types of situations:

- One agency is in disagreement with other agencies about a Family Service Plan;
- The family is in disagreement with one agency; or

- The family is in disagreement with the service plan.

If the dispute does not pertain to service coordination, parents or custodians shall use existing local agency grievance procedures to address disputes. This process is in addition to and does not replace other rights or procedures that parents or custodians may have under other sections of the Ohio Revised Code. Each 10 agency represented on a county Family and Children First Council (FCFC) 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. These rights shall not 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 Family and Children First Council shall inform parents and/or custodians of their rights to use the dispute resolution process. Parents or custodians shall use existing local agency grievance procedures to address disputes not involving Service Coordination.

Disputes between Agencies

When agreement cannot be reached by the systems involved in a Wraparound Team regarding family assessment, service plan development, the assignment of responsibilities to implement the service plan, or difficulties in the implementation of the plan, either the parent(s) or the service provider(s) may:

- 1) Petition the FCFC Board of the Guernsey County Family and Children First Council to review their concerns. The Executive Committee will, in a timely manner, arrive at an agreed upon solution by all parties involved. Under the provisions of this plan, at no time during the dispute resolution process shall services to the youth/child, parent(s) and family be disrupted. Families, upon accessing services, will be advised of their legal rights beyond the dispute resolution process.
- 2) If the dispute cannot be resolved at the level of the Board, an outside mediator shall be secured to help resolve the conflict.
- 3) If the conflict cannot be resolved within 7 days with the help of the mediator, then the Juvenile Court Judge will render the final decision as to how the conflict will be resolved.

Disputes between Parent/ Guardian & FCFC

When a dispute is initiated by a parent or guardian, the following timeline will be utilized:

- 1) Within seven calendar days of the disagreement/dispute the family will submit a Dispute Resolution Request form to the Family and Children First Director/Coordinator communicating the desire to utilize the dispute resolution process. Supporting evidence or documentation

concerning the dispute should be submitted with this request. This request should be submitted to: ATTN: FCFC Coordinator Guernsey County Family and Children First 60770 Southgate Road Byesville, Ohio 43723

2) Upon receipt of the family request to utilize dispute resolution, a meeting with the Dispute Resolution Team will be convened within 15 calendar days. This meeting will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time for the majority members of the family and the Dispute Resolution Team. The family will prepare a presentation for the Dispute Resolution Team regarding the nature of the dispute and the specific issues that are requested to be resolved. This presentation can be made by the family, an advocate, or the child and family team lead case manager.

3) At the meeting with the Dispute Resolution Team, the family will present information regarding the nature of the dispute and identify specific issues that are requested to be resolved. All pertinent Wraparound Case information will be completed by the Family Team and the family to provide historical and current information relevant to the dispute and to specifically identify the issues sought to be resolved. The Dispute Resolution Team will meet in closed session after the family's presentation to draft written responses to the Family Team regarding the issues identified in the dispute.

4) A letter will be immediately issued to the family by mail and email detailing the response of the Dispute Resolution Team. The Family and Children First Coordinator will be used as a neutral facilitator in this process and will be responsible for the written responses to the family.

5) The youth's parents or custodians may file with the Chair of the Family and Children First Council a written objection to the decision of the Dispute Team within seven (7) days of the Team's decision. Within three (3) days of receipt of the parent/custodian's written objection, The Guernsey County Family and Children First Council will make a referral to the office of Ohio Family and Children First Council where an opinion will be provided to all parties in writing.

Dispute Resolution for Early Intervention Services

You have the right to file a written complaint. The quickest way to resolve a concern is to talk with your EI Service Coordinator or their supervisor. If that does not work, you can contact EI staff at the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities at (614) 466- 6879 or ei@dodd.ohio.gov. You can file a signed written complaint. Complaints should be mailed to:

Early Intervention Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
30 East Broad Street, 12th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

The complaint will be investigated and you will get a response within 60 calendar days. While the complaint is being investigated, your child can continue to receive EI services.

You have the right to mediation or a due process hearing. Another way to settle disagreements is to ask for mediation or a due process hearing. Mediation lets you and EI program staff talk about the details of your disagreement with a neutral, trained mediator. The mediator will work with you and your program to find a solution that works for both of you. The State will pay the cost of the mediator. A due process hearing is a more formal process conducted in front of an impartial hearing officer. Parents can hire an attorney to represent them at a due process hearing, but this is not required. The State will pay the cost of the hearing officer.

QUALITY ASSURANCE & EVALUATION

Quality Assurance and Data Collection

Perry & Associates will be utilized for the annual audit. Progress will be reported to the FCFC Board Members monthly.

Family Satisfaction Surveys will be given to families utilizing the Creative Options service coordination process two weeks after a case is opened and every 30 days thereafter ending with an exit survey when the case closes.

Data on the number and types of cases will be tracked by the FCFC Service Coordinator on a monthly basis. This data will be presented every month to the Board of Trustees and will be made available to the offices of Ohio Family and Children First as requested.

FUNDING

Funding for services is determined on a case by case basis at the Creative Options Committee level with approval from the corresponding members of the GCFCC. The work of the MSYC is funded in-part by the FCSS funding provided by the GCFCC through the State of Ohio.

Member agencies are asked to provide additional financial support or in-kind contributions in the form of materials, supplies, equipment, services, meeting space and personnel.

Appendix A Mandated Membership

Mandated Members	Name
Parent Rep	Debbie Robinson
Parent Rep	Ashley Daugherty
Parent Rep	Sarah Finnicum, Casey Jerles
ADAMHS Board	Rob Hollingsworth/ Roger Birch
Health Commissioner	Kylie Jones
Director of JFS	Kathy Jamiel
Director of CSB	Nicole Caldwell
Superintendent of Board of DD	Kellie Brown
Superintendent of CSS	Dan Coffman
Superintendent of RH	Devvon Dettra
Mayor of Cambridge	Tom Orr
Commissioner	Dave Wilson, Skip Garden, Jack Marlin
Youth Services	DYS
Early Intervention Director	Jessica Smith
Non-Profit Organization (United Way)	Marynell Townsend
Largest Municipal Court	Travis Stevens
Head Start Director	Bonnie Carpenter

Appendix B

Creative Options Referral Form

The referral form and release of information can be found at:
www.guernseyfcfc.org