



**State of Tennessee  
Department of Children's Services**

**Protocol: Child Protective Services Case Closure**

**Supplemental to DCS Policies:**

**14.5 Child Protective Services Planning, Initiation and Assessment of Safety and Protection**

**14.7 Classification of a Child Protective Services Case**

**14.8 Child Protective Services Case Transition or Closure**

**14.26 Multiple Response Assessment Track**

**Prior to Case Closing:**

1. Planning for the termination of services is an integral part of all service planning. At the first contact with a child and family DCS will begin planning for permanency and case closure.
2. Case Closure is considered when the level of risk for the child/youth is significantly reduced from the time of initial assessment. This will be based on the outcomes of appropriate assessment tools. The factors causing maltreatment, abuse or neglect or delinquency are resolved to the point that the parent or guardian can protect and meet the needs of the children.
3. The Family Service Worker (FSW) and/or the CPS worker will interview and observe the child/youth and family in preparation for case closure. If a family member is not available then DCS will make a "good faith effort" to find and inform the family member of the need for case closure.
4. The Family Service Worker and/or CPS will discuss the case with the team leader regarding their agreement with case closure and complete documentation of this process within the system.
5. This previously mentioned case review may take place prior to the Discharge CFTM. Discharge plans will be developed with the child/youth and family at the Discharge CFTM. The discharge plan will be recorded on form [CS-0747 Child and Family Team Meeting Summary](#), for custodial cases and in the Case Summary recording for non-custodial cases.
6. Following case closure, aftercare services, community services and linkages to all necessary supports are documented and arranged by the Family Service Worker or CPS worker. The family/guardian/youth must have contact information available so that they can re-establish a connection with DCS as needed for services, questions or concerns. For custody cases, documentation of the services and contact information can be provided to the family on form [CS-0747 Child and Family Team Meeting Summary](#).
7. Family Service Worker and/or CPS requests legal involvement in petitioning the court for child permanency with the intention of case closure. The legal involvement would be dependent upon if the case is custodial or if the non-custodial case was recommended to receive services via the court system. Family Service workers for **delinquent** youth will request the court's permission to close the case as applicable to Policy [13.31, Discharge of Delinquent Youth from Probation/After Care](#).
8. Family Service Worker and/or CPS worker will complete Case Summary notes in the *current child welfare information system* for closure.

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9. For custody cases, after permission for case closure is provided by the court, the FSW will send Notification of Change of Circumstance to the Child Welfare Benefits worker, and other necessary units as appropriate. The Exit Survey is completed and the custodial case is closed.
10. The Family Service Worker or CPS worker provides the documents listed below to the child/youth and family prior to case closure. Any child/youth in DCS custody or non-custody on-going services, who exits to permanency by guardianship, custody or reunification, will receive the following documents/information as applicable prior to exiting. If there is a need for continued use of specific documents during the closure process the worker will make arrangements to send the documents to the family's home via mail or by delivery:

### **Case Closing Essential Documents List:**

- ◆ List of emergency contacts, including Team Leader and Team Coordinator
- ◆ Driver's license ( If Applicable)
- ◆ Social Security Card (original, Copy for DCS file)
- ◆ Resume (If Applicable)
- ◆ Updated & Recent Medical Records (include immunization records)
- ◆ TennCare Card: refer to [Protocol for Continuation of TENN CARE Eligibility for Children Exiting Custody](#)
- ◆ Birth Certificate (original, Copy for DCS file)
- ◆ Religious Documents and Information (If Applicable)
- ◆ Documentation of Immigration, Naturalization (If Applicable)
- ◆ Death Certificate ( of parents, if deceased)
- ◆ Life Book/ pictures/ personal items
- ◆ List of Adult Relatives, and other supportive adults (contained in Genogram documents)
- ◆ Previous placement information ( printed placement page from current *child welfare information system*)
- ◆ Educational records ( not to include psychological, only list of schools attended and grades)
- ◆ Copy of Discharge CFTM, that outlines the aftercare plan
- ◆ Court order indicating family/guardian has custody of the child/youth.
- ◆ State ID, dependent upon youth's age.

11. The CPS Family Service Worker completes the case file as per DCS policy [14.16 Child Protective Services Case File Organization](#) and sends the case to closed files.