



**Family Partnerships
of Central Florida**

BREVARD | ORANGE | OSCEOLA | SEMINOLE

Child and Family Handbook



Family Partnerships of Central Florida

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Locations

389 Commerce Parkway Suite 120
Rockledge, FL 32955
Phone: (321) 752-4650
Fax: (321) 752-4659

South Care Center
6100 Minton Rd NW, Suite 202
Palm Bay, FL 32907
Main: (321) 837-7500
Fax: (321) 837-7515

Central Care Center
4050 Riomar Drive, Suite 120
Rockledge, FL 32955
Main: (321) 634-6047
Fax: (321) 634-6527

901 North Lake Destiny Road,
Suite 400, Maitland, FL 32751
Phone: (321) 441-2060
Fax: (407) 681-0560

Orange County Service Center
4001 Pelee Street
Orlando, FL 32817
Phone: (321) 207-8200
Fax: (407) 681-2424

Osceola County Service Center
3600 Commerce Boulevard
Building B, Suite 101
Kissimmee, FL 34741
Phone: (321) 442-8487
Fax: (407) 343-4301

National Center for Innovation and Excellence
2575 N Courtenay Pkwy Suite 224,
Merritt Island, FL 32953
Phone: (321) 419-1082

All offices are open Monday thru Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., excluding holidays.

Welcome

Family Partnerships of Central Florida (FPOCF) is the lead agency that works with many local service providers to serve, support and strengthen families in need. FPOCF manages the local child-welfare system of care for Brevard, Seminole, Orange and Osceola County children and families. Our vision is to maintain and strengthen the ties between children, families, and the community, while ensuring the safety and well-being of those we serve. It is our goal to work alongside families to help them make desired and necessary changes in their lives. We look forward to working with you and your family.

This handbook provides information about Family Partnerships, the services we offer, and explains how we will work with you and your family. Your Care Manager will go over this handbook with you and will answer any additional questions you may have. They will ask you to sign a paper stating that you have received this handbook and understand your rights and responsibilities.

FPOCF has developed a seamless continuum of care for children and families that is committed to promoting prevention and providing the support you and your family require to live successfully after exiting the child welfare system. We provide support to each family to meet the unique needs of each child and family. We emphasize the importance of family relationships and family preservation and help to secure adequate resources to assist families in need. This helps to sustain the family in times of need and allows families to develop an extensive network of professional providers (when needed) and natural supports within their community.

Our Beliefs, Mission, Vision and Values

We believe that every child belongs in a home where they can grow up safe, healthy, and whole in families that love and nurture them. FPOCF believes in family-driven care, as such families are partners in the planning process. It is our goal to assist and strengthen families by creating access to community-based resources and natural supports that promote safety, build trust, and ensure permanency for children. We believe that mobilizing resources for children and families is the responsibility of the entire community and will help families access the necessary supports to meet their ongoing needs throughout the counties we serve.

Our Mission

It is our mission to protect children, strengthen families and change lives through the prevention of child abuse and the operation and management of a comprehensive, integrated, community-based system of care for abused, abandoned and neglected children and their families.

Our Values

Our system of care is family-centered, strength-based and community driven. We believe that all children have the inalienable right to grow up safe, healthy and fulfilled in families that love and nurture them.

Our Vision

It is the vision of Family Partnerships and its stakeholders to manage a system of care for children and families committed to the following:

- The safety of children will be the foremost concern, at all times;
- Services are customized to meet the unique needs of each child and family and are provided by a community-based network of providers who are dedicated to delivering a family-centered and responsive service delivery system;
- Resources will be efficiently and effectively managed to achieve better outcomes for children with the ultimate goal of child safety;
- Financial support will be available from diverse federal, state and local sources and flexibly managed at the local level to meet child and family needs in a timely and appropriate manner; and
- The system will be able to collect and use data to accurately forecast what services and supports are needed, at what level of intensity and duration, and at what cost to achieve desired outcomes for each child and family in need.

Our Principles of Practice

- **Family Voice and Choice**
- **Team-Based**
- **Natural Supports**
- **Collaboration**
- **Community-Based**
- **Culturally Competent**
- **Individualized**
- **Strengths-Based**
- **Persistent/Unconditional**
- **Outcome-Based**

Our History

Brevard Family Partnership was established in 2003 as a nonprofit organization in response to Florida’s legislative mandate to privatize foster care and related services (Section 409.986, Florida Statutes). The state’s community-based care philosophy was designed to empower and challenge neighborhoods and local communities to take ownership of meeting the needs of their children and families.

In 2005, the agency was awarded the contract by the Florida Department of Children and Families to serve as the community-based care lead agency managing Brevard County’s child welfare system. Twenty years later, in 2024, the agency expanded its footprint and became Family Partnerships of Central Florida, the child welfare lead agency for Brevard, Orange, Osceola and Seminole Counties.

Under this mandate, Family Partnerships of Central Florida provides child abuse prevention, foster care, adoption, independent living, and community outreach services to an average of 8,500 Central Florida children and youth each year and more than 2,800 young people on any given day.

Throughout its history, the agency has consistently ranked among the top-performing community-based care agencies in the state regarding visits to children and families, timely reunification, and exceeding federal measures for placement stability.

Partner Agencies

There are three agencies that we contract with to provide case management services. They are listed below by county. The agency you will be assigned is based on the county you live in at the time your case was opened by the Department of Children and Families Investigator. Our Brevard Case Management team is in house and is known as our Family Allies Division for Dependency.



Orange County



Osceola County



Seminole County



Brevard County



Using This Guide

This is understandably a difficult time for you. This handbook was created to guide a parent through the steps of the child-welfare process and let you know that you are not alone. There is more information in this handbook than you can process and remember at the beginning of your case, so please hang on to this guide and use it as a reference throughout your case. The guide covers everything you need to know from when your case opens to when it closes.

You will find helpful tips for success, an overview of the child welfare system, tips for communicating with your team, information on court hearings and meetings, court and meeting etiquette, case flow information, overview of case goals, the process for reunification, and case closure information in this guide. The guide begins with 10 tips for parents from parents and a resource to help you keep up with all of the contact information for the people that you will be working with. The guide ends with information about your rights as a parent and community resources that are available to you.

There is a lot in this guide that can help you to navigate the system and have a positive outcome for you and your child. This guide has information for parents whose children are living in their home and parents whose child does not live in their home. Some of the information included in this guide may not apply to your specific situation.



“We fall. We break. We fail, but then we rise, we heal, we overcome.” -Anonymous

What is the Child Protection System?

“The child protection system” is the phrase used to describe, Department of Children and Families (DCF), service agencies, law enforcement, and dependency courts that are designed to protect children from harm.

What is Dependency Court?

The dependency court is a division of the circuit court. Dependency courts make decisions concerning dependent children, including whether a child has been abused, neglected, or abandoned.

What is a Shelter?

The shelter hearing occurs within 24 hours of removal and addresses the question of whether or not legal grounds exist to remove a child from the home.

Who is a Guardian Ad Litem?

A guardian ad litem (GAL) is a responsible adult, who can be a volunteer, who is appointed by the court to represent the best interests of a child in any dependency case.

What is a Dependency Petition?

The dependency petition is a document that must state facts showing that the child was abused, neglected, or abandoned.

What is a Disposition Hearing?

The disposition hearing is when the Judge orders the appropriate protections, services, and placement of a child who has been found to have been abused, abandoned, or neglected.

Family Functioning Assessment/Progress Updates

The Family Functioning Assessment is a document prepared by the care manager that includes a summary of the maltreatment and danger threats, child functioning, adult functioning, parenting, and discipline. After the Family Functioning Assessment is completed, progress updates will be reviewed at each judicial review hearing.

What is a Case Plan?

The case plan states exactly what the parents must do to regain custody of the child as well as what services will be provided to the family and by whom.

What is a Case/Care Manager?

This is the person assigned to work with your family on creating the case plan and safety plan and monitoring progress to work toward the goal of reunification.

What is a Judicial Review Hearing?

A Judicial Review Report and hearing addresses family progress or lack of progress, being made toward fulfilling the case plan. The care manager should be visiting with the child regularly (at least once a month) and checking as to the child’s well-being as well as on any needed services.

What is a Termination of Parental Rights Hearing?

A hearing where the court decides whether or not a parent should have rights to his or her child.

What is Permanency Hearing?

At the permanency hearing, the court determines whether or not the permanency goal for the child is appropriate or should be changed.

How Do You Get Started?

It can all feel very overwhelming in the beginning and you are probably wondering where to start with all of these changes and services. Your case manager is your major point of contact. He or she is required to frequently meet with both you and your child, so please actively and openly communicate, ask questions, and express concerns to them. If your child is living with you, ask your case manager to help you prioritize the list of services you are required to do. They will help you understand how to reach your case goals.

If your child is not living with you, you should start by focusing on meeting the Conditions for Return. Focusing on these conditions will ensure your child comes home as soon as possible. Ask your case manager if there are any services in your case plan that will help you to meet your Conditions for Return and ask for a referral for that service first. Meet with your Case Manager and ask for help prioritizing the services that you are required to complete.

Services

As you begin working on making the short- and long-term changes for your child, you will need support or services that can be found in the community. Family Partnerships has a Preferred Provider Network that has been approved to deliver a variety of services needed to support the children and families involved in our system of care. Examples of services include individual counseling, parenting classes, substance abuse assessment and treatment, targeted case management, domestic violence counseling, batterer's intervention and family counseling.

Your case manager will use this network to select providers for the services and supports outlined in your case plan. If you have a specific provider you would like to work with, make sure you tell your case manager. The case manager will send a referral to the selected provider so that they can reach out to you and start delivering services. They will likely ask you to sign a release of information so that your progress can be shared with the case manager. If you do not sign the release of information, they cannot provide information to your case manager about your progress.

How do I know which services I need?

Your case plan that was created in partnership with you and your case team has a list of services that will help your family make the changes needed for your child to be safe in your home. Make sure you receive a copy of your case plan from your case manager. The case manager is responsible for writing and submitting referrals to the providers that will be delivering your services. Be sure to check your voicemail often and return calls promptly as service providers will reach out to you to schedule appointments with you. If your contact information changes, make sure you tell the case manager and any other providers you are already working with so that they can reach you.

How will I pay for services?

If you were previously receiving Medicaid, you will be automatically qualified for Parent Medicaid.

If you have private insurance, review your coverage under specialty or mental health services to see what might be covered and if there are any specific providers you need to use. Make sure you tell your case manager which providers are in your network.

Some services, such as Batterers Intervention, require the client to pay, but allow for sliding scales, reduced fees and payment plan options.

If there is a service not covered by your insurance, Medicaid or you are not eligible for Medicaid, your case management agency has other methods to help cover the costs of your services.

Problem-solving Courts

In addition to the Preferred Provider Network, Osceola and Orange Counties offer two problem-solving courts, Early Childhood Court (children in out of home care ages 0-3) and Drug Court. Speak with your case manager and attorney about these programs to see if they might be a good fit for your family. You can also read about these programs on the Family Partnerships of Central Florida website. Both of these programs have been proven to improve outcomes for both parents and children.

How long will this take?

If your child is living with you, cases typically last 3-6 months. The length of the case depends on how quickly you engage in services and make the necessary changes in your life so that your child is safe in your home without a safety plan. Once a safety plan is no longer needed, the case can be closed. If the court is not involved, the case management agency can make the decision to close the case. If the court is involved, you will need to wait for court approval to close the case.

If your child is not living with you, the length of the case can vary considerably based on your family's circumstances and progress. The removal of your child from your care should be as temporary and short-term as possible. If the goal of your case changes to permanent guardianship or adoption, the timeframe changes to 18 months and 24 months respectively. For more information about goal changes and timeframes, see the previous section titled timeframes.

Once your child is reunified, the agency and court are required to keep your case open until your child is determined to be safe in your home without a safety plan. The court is not allowed to close your case until your child has been at home for at least 6 months.

Visitation

If your child is not living with you, you will have scheduled visitation opportunities with your child. Some case management agencies may refer to this as family time. At different stages during your case, visitation with your child will change. Most cases begin with supervised visitation and as you progress through your services, the visitation will change to unsupervised.

Unsupervised Visitation means your interactions with your child are not required to be observed. These visits can occur in a public place or if approved by the court and your case manager could take place in your home. Usually, unsupervised visits will start in a public place and as your child is in the process of transitioning home, they will move to your home so that you and your child can start adjusting. If you feel like you are making significant progress in your services, ask your attorney and case manager about unsupervised visitation.

Visiting with Your Child

- Confirm all scheduled family visits: make sure you communicate via phone, text and/or email with the person scheduling the visit.
- Provide at least 24 hours notice if you are unable to attend visitation. All visitation is reported to the court. It's important to attend every visit.
- Prepare to be on time, arriving beyond 15 minutes late could result in the visit being cancelled.
- Bring things to do such as toys, games, books, and other activities to do as this helps keep your child engaged.
- Ask if your child will need to eat during the visitation. If so, bring healthy snacks, avoid bringing sweet treats too often.
- Bring a change of clothes for your child, younger children may need diapers during your visit.
- Coordinate with your case manager at least a few days prior if you would like to bring a friend or family member to the visitation with you.

During:

- Keep in mind, your visit will likely be supervised. This can be an uncomfortable feeling - focus on your child not on the supervising staff.
- When visiting with younger children, take time to practice new skills by crawling, walking, and dancing or singing with them.
- Use this time to bond with your child. Avoid spending time on your phone.
- Try to stay positive but it is important not to make promises about when they will be coming home. Instead, provide comfort by assuring them that you are working on what you need to.
- Don't discuss the case or speak negatively of the caregivers or staff. Your visitation could be ended as a result.
- Let your child express their feelings and try to contain your emotions until the visit has ended.
- Visitation may be uncomfortable at first so give your child the opportunity to adjust.

After:

- Take time for yourself after visitation as it can be very emotional.
- Do something positive for yourself such as going to a (recovery) meeting, getting coffee with a friend, enjoying ice cream, or writing in a journal.
- It's important to speak often with your case manager about how visitation is going. Getting feedback allows you to make the most of c can request more visitation.

Visitation in Special Circumstances

Face-to-face visits with your child may not be possible nor occur frequently if you live a long distance from your child or if you are incarcerated. In person visits are not typically approved while a parent is incarcerated. If you have access to a phone or video calling, talk to your case manager about connecting with your child using these options.

Letter writing is also a great way to stay connected with your child and offers a valuable form of communication – one that can be read and re-read by a child throughout their life. Speak to your case manager about writing letters to your child. It is important to remember that the letters will likely be read by the case manager or other approved third party prior to your child reading it. If you choose to write a letter, it is important to focus on the child and avoid asking questions that place the child in an awkward position.

Sibling Visits

If your children are not living together, sibling visitation will be arranged by the case manager, this should be occurring consistently unless the court ordered otherwise. If this is not happening consistently, speak with your case manager and attorney. Your children should be allowed to visit separately from visits with the parents.

How Do I Get Reunified?

The process to get reunified starts with addressing the conditions that need to change for your child to come home with an in-home safety plan. Those conditions are referred to as Conditions for Return.

Conditions For Return

During the investigation that opened your case, the child protective investigator determined that your child was unsafe in your care. Once the investigator makes that determination, they have to decide whether they can develop an in-home safety plan or if they need to remove your child from your home. The investigator used 5 questions (known as the safety analysis questions) to help them make this decision. If they were able to answer yes to all 5 of these questions, they worked with you to create an in-home safety plan. If they were not able to answer yes to all five questions, your child was removed, and they created a list of conditions that would have to change for your child to return home with you. This list is called Conditions for Return.

Conditions for Return are the specific conditions, circumstances, or behaviors that must exist within your home to have your children returned to your care as quickly and safely as possible. Each of the questions are detailed below and explained in-depth. The information is generic and not specific to your situation. If your child is not living with you, make sure you ask and understand your Conditions for Return.

Conditions for Return drives the reunification process. It involves engaging you in meaningful discussions to address the conditions that are not yet met and to help identify supports that can serve as safety managers in controlling safety issues that resulted in your child being unsafe in your home. When you meet these conditions, your child can return and remain in the home with an in-home safety plan while you continue to work towards reaching your case plan goal. This can occur at any time during a case.

10 Tips for Parents, from Parents

If you read nothing else in this guide, please read these 10 tips from parents who have been through this process before and successfully closed their cases. There is more information about these tips throughout the handbook.



It's Okay to Ask for Help

This is the time to ask for help. Don't be scared to ask questions. The child welfare system is hard to understand, and the case worker expects you to have questions. It is part of their job to help you understand what is happening and what is expected of you, so ask questions until you feel like you get it.



Be a Voice for Yourself and Your Child

You have the right to be involved in your child's life and included in decisions about their education, medical and mental health treatment. You know your child best - don't miss an opportunity to attend any appointment or meeting.



Build a Support System

It is important to surround yourself with supportive family and friends. Don't get distracted by people who aren't adding value to your life. Lean on self-help fellowships like NA/AA or sponsor, if applicable.



Time is Crucial

The clock starts at removal, so things in your life need to change for your child to be safe in your home without a safety plan. If you do not know what those changes are, ask your case worker to explain them to you. Make sure you understand what is expected of you.



Educate Yourself

Take advantage of parenting classes and other services available to you. Don't just attend but try to learn all you can. Share what you've learned along the way with your Case Manager.



Stay Focused

You will be invited to several meetings and court hearings throughout the case where they talk about your progress. Make sure you have a copy of all important documents you receive.



Talk to Your Team

Keep in touch with your case worker, attorney, and the Guardian ad Litem. Obtain proof that you are attending appointments with the providers and provide copies to the team. Make sure to brag about all the progress you are making!



Get Started Right Away

Things in your life need to change for your child to be safe in your home without a safety plan. If you do not know what those changes are, ask your case worker to explain it to you. There are providers that the case worker can refer you to that will help you make those changes. Get started with the providers ASAP. The sooner the changes are made, the sooner your case will close.



What About the Caregiver

If your child is not living with you, think about how the caregiver might fit into your family's life as a support now and when your child returns home. Caregivers can help your child transition smoothly back home and help you adjust to being a full-time parent again. Many caregivers are willing to babysit and offer other support to give you a break when you need it, but it's up to you to build that kind of relationship with them.



Don't Lose Hope

No matter how difficult the case may seem, no matter how stagnant you may feel, remember that you will get to the end of your case. When it's over you'll be with your kids, and it will all be worth it. You can do this!

My Case Information Sheet

This information sheet is here for you to keep track of the names and contact information for the people that you will be communicating with about your case. Complete this sheet as soon as the information is known to you.

Court Case Number: _____

Case Manager Name: _____

Case Manager Phone Number/Email: _____

Case Manager Supervisor Name: _____

Case Manager Supervisor Phone Number/Email: _____

My Attorney Name: _____

My Attorney Phone Number/Email: _____

Guardian ad Litem Name: _____

Guardian ad Litem Phone Number/Email: _____

Circle the courthouse in your county.



Orange County
Thomas S. Kirk Juvenile Justice
Center 2000 East Michigan St,
Orlando, FL 32806

Parking is available on the west side of the complex. Parking is free.



Osceola County
Jon B. Morgan Osceola County
Courthouse 2 Courthouse Sq,
Kissimmee, FL 34741

Parking is available to the East of the building. Street parking is free.



Seminole County
Juvenile Justice
Center
101 Eslinger Way, Sanford, FL 32773

Parking is available on either side of the courthouse. There is additional parking available in the parking garage. Parking is free.



Brevard County
Harry T. and Harriette V. Moore Justice
Center 2825 Judge Fran Jamieson Way,
Melbourne 32904

Parking is free and available in the courthouse parking lot.

Type of Cases

When the Child Protective Investigator (CPI) receives a report from the Florida Abuse Hotline, they are assigned to investigate within 24 hours. Not all investigations end with a case. Most investigations are closed with no safety concerns. If there are safety concerns, the investigators have two options:

1. Investigator can make an in-home safety plan so that the child can stay in the home with services and support.
OR
2. The investigator decides that an in-home safety plan is not an option and removes the child from the home.

Option 1: Your child is living with you with an in-home safety plan.

This situation is called an in-home case because your child is living in the home with you. This means that you and a team of supportive individuals are working together to keep your child safe (following the safety plan) while you make the necessary changes in your life.

After the investigator completes their investigation, your case will be transferred to a case manager that will check on your family at least weekly in the beginning and set you and your family up with the services you need to help you make changes.

In-home cases typically last approximately 6 months but can be longer or shorter depending on how quickly you work with service providers and make the necessary changes. If the court is involved in your case, the court will have to be asked to sign an order closing your case before it can be closed.

Option 2: Your child is not living with you with an out-of-home safety plan.

This situation is called an Out-of-Home case because your child cannot safely remain in the home with you right now. When this decision is made, the CPI is required to list the conditions that would have to change for your child to live with you again with a safety plan. This list of changes is called Conditions for Return. This guide goes into more depth about these conditions in a later section. The CPI will also create an out-of-home safety plan. The out-of-home safety plan dictates your contact with your child including where the child will live and the type of visitation you will have with them.

After the investigator completes their investigation, your case will be transferred to a case manager that will meet with you and your child and set up services needed to make changes so that your child can return home. Your case manager will be meeting with you and your child at least once a month while the case is open.

The timeframe for closing out of home cases varies greatly depending on your family situation. The goal is to have your case closed in less than 12 months from when your child was removed from your home. If the plan for your family changes from your child coming home to living permanently with a friend or relative, the case should close in 18 months or 24 months if the plan is for your child to be adopted. Case goals and timeframes will be talked about in-depth later in this guide.

Where will my child live?

If your child is not living with you, they will be placed with a caregiver. The child's caregiver might be referred to as the placement or out of home placement. There are different types of caregivers and placements.

Out-of-Home Placement Options:

The Other Parent

- Placing your child with one of their parents is always the first option.
- If the child's other parent is determined to be a safe caregiver or the CPI or case manager is able to place the child with the other parent with an in-home safety plan, the child will be placed in their care.

Relative or Non-Relative

- If an in-home safety plan cannot be created with either of the child's parents, the CPI and/or case manager will ask you about family members or friends (called a non-relative) that can care for your child temporarily.
- The relative or non-relative must pass a background check and complete training requirements to show they can provide a safe living environment for your child.
- They can live in state or out of state. Out of state will take time, so make sure to provide information as soon as it is known to you to avoid delays.

Licensed Foster Care

- If there are no parents, family members or family friends that are considered safe placements for your child, they will be placed in a licensed foster care placement.
- Foster parents have had extensive background screens and assessments completed to ensure that they are safe people for your child to be around. They have also completed trauma-focused trainings to help them understand how to care for your child.

Court Hearings and Meetings

If your case is open with the court, this section will help you understand the flow of the case and the purpose of the meetings and court hearings you will attend. Meetings are typically called staffings and the term meeting and staffing have been used interchangeably throughout this guide. Below you will find the order of events, starting with the shelter hearing. Keep in mind you may not have to attend all these hearings. Speak to your attorney to clarify.

Major	Event	What Happens?	Who will be there?
Shelter Hearing 	Within 24 hours of removal	<p>This is the first hearing in your case. The Judge will decide if there is sufficient evidence or “probable cause” to support the decision to remove your child.</p> <p>You will receive a copy of the document written by the Child Protective Investigator detailing the allegations of abuse or neglect and the reasons that your child was removed. This document is called a Shelter Petition.</p>	<p>-You -Judge -Child Protective Investigator (CPI) -Children’s Legal Services -Guardian ad Litem (GAL)</p> <p>-If you are unable to afford an attorney, the Judge may appoint you one. You likely will not have the opportunity to speak in detail with your attorney beforehand.</p>
Case Transfer Staffing (CTS)/ Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) 	Within 72 hours of removal	<p>The Child Protective Investigator (CPI) transfers the case to the Case Management Agency. Moving forward, the CPI is no longer part of the case and you will be assigned a case manager.</p> <p>At this meeting, you’ll have the opportunity to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What conditions need to change for your child to return home. • Your child’s educational, medical needs, and mental health needs. • Placement options that you feel are best for your child. • Visitation plans 	<p>- You -Your support team -Child Protective Investigator (CPI) -Child Protective Investigator Supervisor -MDT Facilitator (DCF) -Case Manager (CM) -Case Manager Supervisor -Guardian ad Litem (GAL) -Family Partnerships Information and Eligibility Specialist -Caregivers -Conditions For Return Specialist -Family Partnerships Operations Staff</p>

<p>Case Plan Conference/ Mediation</p> 	<p>Prior to the Disposition Hearing</p>	<p>A Case Plan will be developed at this meeting which outlines the services that the team agrees the family needs for your child to be safe in your home without a safety plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -You -Your attorney -Case Manager -Case Manager Supervisor -Children’s Legal Services -Guardian ad Litem (GAL) -Guardian ad Litem Attorney
<p>Arrestment Hearing</p> 	<p>Within 28 days from shelter</p>	<p>At the Arrestment Hearing, you will have the opportunity to admit, consent or deny the abuse or neglect allegations.</p> <p>If you deny, a trial date will be set. Speak with your attorney prior to entering any of these options.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -You -Judge -Your attorney -Case Manager -Children’s Legal Services -Guardian ad Litem (GAL) -Guardian ad Litem Attorney
<p>Family Service Team Meeting (FST)</p> 	<p>30 days after Shelter then every 90 days</p>	<p>The Family Service Team Meeting is an opportunity for the team to meet to talk about the case progress. This includes progress in meeting Conditions for Return, any services that are needed, barriers to achieving the goal and any issues or concerns that need to be addressed. These meetings occur on-going every 90 days so that the team has a chance to discuss the case before court hearings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -You -Family Partnerships Operations Manager -Case Manager -Guardian ad Litem (GAL) -Service Providers
<p>Adjudicatory Hearing</p> 	<p>Within 30 days after arrestment</p>	<p>The judge will determine if enough evidence exists to conclude your child has been abused or neglected. This is a trial.</p> <p>If the judge decides that your child was not abused or neglected, they will dismiss the case. This would be the end of your court case.</p> <p>If the judge decides that your child was abused or neglected, a disposition hearing will be set.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -You -Judge -Your attorney -Case Manager -Children’s Legal Services -Guardian ad Litem (GAL) -Guardian ad Litem Attorney

<p>Disposition Hearing</p> 	<p>15 days after Arraignment Hearing if “consent” or “admit” is entered</p> <p>Within 30 days after Adjudicatory Hearing, if “denial” is entered</p>	<p>At the disposition hearing, the judge will order the parent and agency to comply with the Case Plan that has been submitted by the case manager. The order usually addresses the services required in the case plan, the child’s placement and plan for visitation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Judge -You -Your attorney -Case Manager -Children’s Legal Services -Guardian ad Litem (GAL) -Guardian ad Litem Attorney
<p>Judicial Reviews (JR)</p> 	<p>At least every 6 months</p>	<p>Judicial Reviews (JR) allow the judge to review progress made towards resolving the issues that led to removal. The case manager submits a report 30 days before this hearing so the judge has an update on all of your progress. You should receive a copy of that report, if you don’t, ask your attorney for one.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Judge -You -Your attorney -Case Manager -Children’s Legal Services -Guardian ad Litem (GAL) -Guardian ad Litem Attorney -Service Providers -Caregivers -Your Child (unless excused)
<p>Permanency Hearings</p> 	<p>Within 12 months of removal</p>	<p>This is a special judicial review hearing where your team will need to present a permanency plan for the child. That means that after 12 months of your child not living with you, the court has to decide if they want to keep working toward the goal of your child living with you or if they need to make a plan for the child to live permanently outside of your home.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Judge -You -Your attorney -Case Manager -Children’s Legal Services -Guardian ad Litem (GAL) -Guardian ad Litem Attorney -Service Providers

Court Tips and Etiquette

Below is a list of tips and recommendations for success at court. These tips will help you be prepared and have your voice heard during your court hearings.

Before the Hearing

- Talk with your case manager, Guardian ad Litem (GAL), and attorney at least one week prior to court to see if there are any changes or anything that you need to be aware of beforehand.

- Decide what you will wear. You don't have to wear anything fancy, but you want to present as serious about getting your child back home. Wear business or business casual attire. Avoid wearing short shorts or skirts, low-cut tops, hats and tank tops. Sandals are fine but avoid beach flip flops.

- Bring a pen and paper to take notes.

- Security checkpoint: Only bring in the necessary items for court. You will have to pass through a metal detector and your bags and pockets will be searched. You may be asked to throw away or return certain items to your car. Here are a few items that are not allowed in the court building:
 - o Food or drink
 - o Spray bottles
 - o Weapons
 - o Items that can be used as a weapon (scissors, nail files, sharp objects)
 - o Devices that can be disruptive in court
 - o Photography, audio/video recorders

- Try to arrive at least 15 minutes early. This is important as getting through the security check point can take time. Be prepared to wait. Sometimes it may take hours before your case is called, so plan accordingly.

- Speak with your attorney prior to court. Ask any questions, address any concerns, or provide updates you have regarding your case. Make sure the attorney has the same documents you have given to the case manager.

- If you don't understand English well, let the judge know that you need an interpreter so you can talk with your attorney and understand everything that is happening.

- Pay attention once you arrive at the courthouse. You will hear someone in the hallway "calling the cases" and this is when you and the people who are a part of your case enter the courtroom.

During the Hearing

- Silence your cellphone and other devices during the hearing.
- Remain calm and brace yourself. You will hear details about your life and situation that may be upsetting. The case manager and other case members will talk about their concerns for the safety of your child.
- Your attorney is your voice in court. You may not be given the opportunity to speak in court. Your attorney will speak and present the facts on your behalf to the judge. Inform your attorney if something incorrect is being said.
- Only speak to the judge if they address you. Address the judge as “your honor,” speak clearly into the microphone and present facts, not opinions of what is being asked. Do not use profanity or chew gum.
- The caregivers and your child may be asked to attend certain court hearings. Specifically for judicial reviews, but possibly other hearings. The purpose of this is for the judge to see the children and receive updates from the caregiver directly.

After the Hearing

- Talk with your attorney right away, so you will know:
 - The next court date, location, and time.
 - What you need to do before the next court date.
 - What, if any, changes were made to your visitation.
- Get a copy of the order and keep it in a binder or safe place with all of your other paperwork.

Family Partnerships Programs

C.A.R.E.S. Prevention Program



C.A.R.E.S. (Coordination, Advocacy, Resources, Education and Support.) is Family Partnership's signature voluntary prevention program tailored to protect children, strengthen families and change lives. C.A.R.E.S. offers a full array of support services and Wraparound Family Team Conferencing to families experiencing stressors that often lead to abuse, abandonment, or neglect. The success of this program is due to the proactive participation of the families in need. These families openly engage in this strength-based program, building upon the successes and skills within their family unit. If you are experiencing a crisis or are in need of assistance, please call 1-888-CARES-09 (1-888-227-3709).

Foster Care, Adoption and Kinship Care Programs

Family Partnerships of Central Florida manages foster care and adoption services for youth who have been removed from their homes due to abuse, neglect and/or abandonment. Hundreds of children are removed from their homes each year due to abuse, abandonment or neglect. These children represent all races and ethnicities and range in age from birth to 17 years. While most of these children will return home to their parents, many still will become available for adoption. Family Partnerships provides support for relative and non-relative caregivers (Kinship Care) as well as foster and adoptive parents.

Foster Care Program

Foster care is a service provided through the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF), for children that the dependency court finds cannot return home and cannot be placed with relatives or other safe adults. Family Partnerships of Central Florida serves as the child placing agency for Brevard, Seminole, Osceola and Orange Counties, and manages the licensure and re-licensure of family foster homes. DCF or agencies with which they contract find families in the community to serve as foster parents. However, in some cases, the child or children will live in a group home setting. If you are interested in foster parenting, please contact (321) 752-4650 ext. 3055.

Adoption Program

If you are interested in providing a 'forever home' for a child in the foster care system, please contact our Adoption Recruiter at (321) 639-1224 ext. 103.

Kinship Care

Monthly financial support is available to relatives who meet eligibility requirements and have custody of a child under the age of 18 who has been adjudicated dependent by a Florida court and placed in their home by Family Partnerships or DCF. The monthly payment is more than the Temporary Cash Assistance for one child. Only the needs, income and assets of the child or children are considered when determining eligibility and payment amounts. Payments are based on the child's age and any countable income.

For more information on the Relative Caregiver program at Family Partnerships, please contact (321) 752-4650 ext. 3082, or visit <http://www.myflorida.com/accessflorida/>

Independent Living

Family Partnerships and our providers offer Independent Living services to youth and young adults in the foster-care system. These services prepare them for adulthood and life after foster care. It is a requirement that those young adults aging out of the system (turning 18 years without returning to the care of their parents or being adopted) have the basic life skills to function successfully on their own. Training and skills classes include: financial literacy, household management, and educational and career planning, to name a few.

Once a young adult ages out of the foster care system - and if certain requirements are met - there are several services that he/she can access. These include: transportation and housing assistance, emotional support, and financial assistance.

Rights and Responsibilities

Please ask your care manager (CM) to further explain these rights to you. It is important that you understand them and are satisfied with how your family is being treated.

You have the right to...

- Receive services regardless of your race, religion, ethnicity, cultural background and sexual orientation.
- Be treated with respect.
- Be assured that all records and information are secure and confidential (as per HIPAA standards).
- Receive a written copy of these rights.
- Have your rights explained to you in a manner which is clear.
- Understand the documents that you are asked to sign.
- Contact the Florida Abuse Hotline (1-800-96-ABUSE) and/or any other professional involved with you to report allegations of abuse or neglect.
- Refuse services unless the law states otherwise, and the right to be informed about the consequences of such a refusal, which can include discharge.
- Submit a complaint if you are unhappy with the services you are receiving and to receive a response within a reasonable amount of time.
- Services and supports that are individualized, built on strengths, resources, values and preferences and take your family's culture into consideration.
- Services and supports that meet the needs of you and your family, and reflect your priorities, goals and vision.
- Make decisions regarding the types of services that are provided and the person/agency who will provide the service.
- Participate as full and active partners in the process, and have voice and choice in decision making.
- Work together with a team to develop, implement, and evaluate your care plan.
- Invite others you view as supports to participate with you in your Family Team Conference.
- Have services and supports that are sustainable, flexible and unconditional, and that change as the needs of you and your family change.
- Receive copies of your Care Plan, court paperwork and any other relevant documents.
- Fair and equitable treatment.
- Receive services in a non-discriminatory manner; and the freedom to express and practice religious and spiritual beliefs.
- Request an in-house review of your care, treatment plan, and service plan.

You also have the right to:

- Receive fair and equitable treatment.
- Be heard.
- Have a say in what happens to you and your family.

Informed Choice

All direct-service staff are responsible for encouraging those served by Family Partnerships to take the most active role possible in choosing the direction of their services and case/treatment plan. Staff should always be working to assist consumers in the process of seeking their personal path of self-determination. This means using the tools provided to them to identify interests, strengths, and the direction for services. These services shall be individually tailored, incorporating goals and objectives based on the unique needs and preferences of individuals served. The services shall be coordinated and integrated in a manner that addresses personal growth and reflects the individual's informed choice.

Staff should seek ways to help those served to:

- Express who they are;
- Express their vision in terms of where they are now versus where they would like to be;
- Share how they plan to accomplish those dreams;
- Take responsibility for their choices, and understand the inherent risk in their choices in terms of health and safety; and
- Feel confident that they are taking control over their life choices.

In addition, through the use of the Strengths Discovery and Family Team Conferencing process, the person and their family are encouraged to actively participate in making decisions about services and supports, including:

- The expected results of services and supports;
- How the design of the services and supports meet needs;
- How services will be delivered;
- The expected length of services;
- Possible alternatives for services; and
- How services will be evaluated, along with any other information that is requested by the consumer or family.

During the Strengths Discovery and Family Team Conferencing process, any health or safety risk will also be identified. Suggestions on how to minimize those risks will be provided. It will be up to the individual and caregiver to share in the responsibility for their choices.

Furthermore, discussion will also include the qualities of staff that would best work with a particular individual. Input from the individual and their caregiver will be utilized in the selection of the direct services staff.

All consumers will have input in all phases of the service planning for that individual and/or family at the time of admission and also during subsequent reviews, such as but not limited to, during team meetings and at discharge, or when circumstances are requiring an informed choice or choices.

Informed Consent for Photos and Video/Voice Taping

To protect your privacy, if you are asked to be photographed, video/audio taped, or to be viewed through a one-way mirror, you must first be told of this and you must agree to it. If you do not agree, the activity cannot be done.

If you agree, you will:

- Receive a written description of the request and the reasons for it,
- Not be encouraged, given payment, or other incentives to agree to the request; and
- Be asked to sign a form giving your informed consent.

Grievance and Complaint Procedure

Family Partnership is dedicated to providing the highest quality service delivery system to children and families. Our system is designed to be family centered, strength-based, culturally sensitive and inclusive. To ensure our services meet your satisfaction, we have outlined avenues for you (and your family) to give feedback that will assist us in continuously improving our processes.

We hope to gain your feedback in many ways. We will conduct surveys to solicit your input and suggestions and at times may request to convene meetings with you to ensure you have access to the services and supports that will be most helpful to you and your family. Family Partnerships also wants to ensure that you and your family have voice and choice in the planning process as well as ownership of your plan.

The Complaint Procedure

The grievance procedure was developed to provide another method of addressing concerns or barriers that are unable to be resolved through the informal methods.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an informal verbal or written report of dissatisfaction with a program, service, decision or staff member of FPOCF or network provider agencies.

What is a grievance?

A grievance is a formal written or verbal report of dissatisfaction with the complaint process or its resulting findings, decisions or resolutions that has not been successfully resolved.

This procedure is applicable to:

All customers of the FPOCF and its programs and contracted providers who receive services (and/or their families), and other interested stakeholders.

Issues regarding authorizations for services should be addressed through the Clinical Services Coordinator case management. Staff will provide you with information about the appropriate grievance/appeal process that you should follow.

You have the right to file a complaint at any time, without interference or fear of retaliation. Family Partnerships will ensure that your services are continuous and consistent while a resolution regarding your complaint is formulated.

When Issues or Concerns Arise

When an issue arises regarding services provided through Family Partnerships, individuals who are dissatisfied with any decision regarding their services are encouraged to meet with the appropriate Family Partnerships staff and/or the community partner who provide the services in order to resolve these concerns. If an issue has risen to a level where it cannot be resolved through this process, then you may want to consider filing a formal complaint.

First Step

You may wish to put your concerns in writing by using the form included in the handbook. You may also call our Client Relations Specialist at (321) 752-4650 to voice your concerns. The Client Relations Specialist will help you complete the necessary paperwork over the phone. Once the form is completed, either through an interview over the phone or by receipt of this form completed by you, the Client Relations Specialist will review the grievance and determine the action to be taken in order to best address your concerns.

If the grievance being filed has to do with decisions made by Family Partnerships staff regarding eligibility and/or denial of services, appropriateness of services, timeliness of service decision or provision of services by Family Partnerships staff, or other issues regarding Family Partnerships or its staff, then the Client Relations Specialist may, based on the nature of the concern, assign the grievance to the appropriate Family Partnerships manager/director and/or officer as appropriate. This level of review will not involve the person about whom the complaint has been made or the person who reached the decision under review.

Complaint timelines are subject to modification which is determined by the critical nature of the grievance and whether a child or client's safety and well-being is a prevailing concern. It is the intent of Family Partnerships to address all complaints in a timely manner. All grievances will be closed no later than twenty (20) business days from the date received by the Client Relations Specialist.

What Happens if My Complaint Is Not Resolved to My Satisfaction?

The client's grievance appeal will be referred to the FPOCF Compliance Committee for review, assessment and resolution recommendations.

Grievance appeals are reviewed by the Compliance Committee of Family Partnerships by contacting the Client Relations Specialist within five (5) business days of the receipt of the initial response. The Compliance Committee will have fifteen (15) business days to respond to this grievance request. A copy of the final response to this grievance by the Compliance Committee will be mailed to you within this timeframe.

Procedures for Grievances Regarding One of Our Community Partners

Family Partnerships is responsible for creating and managing a comprehensive network of quality child-welfare services for Brevard, Seminole, Orange and Osceola Counties. As part of this responsibility, we require all of our providers to have a process to address complaints and/or grievances. When an issue arises with one of these community partners who directly provide a service, you are encouraged to meet them in order to resolve your concerns.

If issues cannot be resolved through this informal method, you should follow the specific agency's grievance procedure. If you do not have their grievance procedure, you may request this at any time, either directly from the agency or through your Care Manager/Care Coordinator, or by contacting Family Partnerships' Client Relations Specialist. Once the written response has been received from the respective community agency, you may contact Family Partnerships if you still feel the issue has still not been resolved. Brevard Family Partnership will follow our respective timelines for resolving this grievance as described above.

You may contact Family Partnerships' Client Relations Specialist at (321) 752-4650 any time to directly file your complaint or grievance. We strive to ensure customer satisfaction and seeks timely resolution of all concerns raised by consumers.

At any time during this process, you have the right to contact the Florida Department of Family and Children regarding this or any grievance and make a complaint through their website.

What's the Case Management Agency (CMA) role?

Family Partnerships contracts with a Case Management Agency (CMA) to provide the day-to-day oversight of child-welfare case management activities for families in the dependency system.

Service referrals and participation in the Family Team Conference process are two roles in which care managers (CM) fully participate. CM address case management activities such as monthly home visits, scheduling visitation, ensuring children's medical needs are met, completing required paperwork for court hearings, attending Permanency Staffings and reviewing weekly progress notes, to name a few. CM also complete referral paperwork for any service referral Family Partnerships is funding. If you have questions about your legal case your CM is the person to contact. If a service referral is not working for you because the provider is either not a good match for you or a family member, or the service is not what supports you in meeting your needs, you can call your CM.

Providers

Family Partnerships provides an array of services designed to assist in strengthening and supporting families and to alleviate family crises that may lead to removal of children from a home. These services are a resource for families to prevent the removal of their children or to support the smooth transition of family after reunification. The services within the system of care are family-centered and responsive to the unique needs of families as well as delivered as close to home and in the community as possible.

Once a referral has been sent to a provider, the provider has two (2) business days to call you to set up your first appointment. Providers will meet with you or your family member at your convenience. They will submit a weekly progress report to Family Partnerships and your care manager that lists actions taken to assist you or your family in meeting your goals. Providers may ask you to sign a voucher or form each time they work with you or your family to verify they met with you. Except for an evaluation or assessment, all providers will work with you each time they meet with you to increase your support system and connect you with community resources. This ensures that when you exit the child-welfare system, you will have the needed support resources; we call this long-term sustainability. If this does not occur, please immediately contact your CM.

Partners and Providers

Family Partnerships offers a large continuum of Flexible Support Services through a variety of providers. Often called "Flex Support," these providers are contracted with Family Partnerships to provide an array of services. The FPOCF provider network provides services to families, flexibly and individually tailored to meet the needs of the child or children and family. Services that are predetermined and prescribed in a "one-size-fits-all" approach are bundled. Bundled services are not flexible or responsive to the changing needs of the family. In the FPOCF model, services are unbundled and specific to the family being served.

This means that each service request is customized, based on the family need and centrally authorized by Clinical Services Coordinators who have "real time" access to services and community resources as alternatives to "paid" services. The frequency and duration of services are authorized by the team and reauthorized as needed during the ongoing Family Team Conferences/Utilization Reviews, which are scheduled according to acuity for close monitoring. This promotes efficient use and maximization of resources that tailor the level and type of support as progress or need indicates. Restructured payment methodologies and authorizations, and centralized flexible fund management will ensure all available alternative funding streams and community resources are accessed.

Family Partnerships has executed contracts and rate agreements with a variety of providers to offer the following services:

- Assessments and Evaluations
- Trauma Education and Training
- Behavior Management
- Parent Education Classes
- Parenting Groups
- Reunification Support
- Family Mentoring Services
- Parent Support and Advocacy
- Family Preservation
- Individual Therapy
- Functional Family Therapy
- Clinical Intervention Programs
- Social Skills Building Groups
- Anger Management
- Psychological Evaluations
- Psychiatric Evaluations
- Medication Management
- Certified Behavior Analyst
- Psychosexual Evaluations
- Sexual Abuse Counseling Services

No person shall, on the grounds of age, color, handicap, national origin, race religion or sex be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving or benefiting from federal assistance. Additionally, all clients and applicants for services who have impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills are entitled to equal opportunity to use and benefit from programs and services of Family Partnerships. Auxiliary aids will be provided free of charge to the client or applicant which may include brailled and taped materials, interpreters or other aids.

For more information about our Partners and Providers, please visit our website at www.fpocf.org or contact your Family Partnerships representative.

Management and Protection of Personal Health Information

FPOCF is required by law to maintain the privacy of Protected Health Information (PHI). This notice describes how medical information about you may be used and disclosed, and how you can get access to this information.

Please review the following, carefully.

Our Duties As They Relate to Your Protected Health Information (PHI)

Our records about clients contain health information that is very personal. The confidentiality of this personal information is protected by federal and state law. We have a duty to safeguard our client's PHI, which includes individually identifiable information about:

- A consumer's past, present, or future health or condition.
- Consumer's provision of health care to you.
- Consumer's payment for the health care considered PHI.

We are required to:

- Safeguard the privacy of a client's PHI;
- Give consumers this Notice, which describes our privacy practices; and
- Explain how, when, and why we may use or disclose your PHI.

Except in very specific circumstances, we must use or disclose only the minimum PHI that is necessary to accomplish the reason for the use or disclosure.

We must follow the privacy practices described in this Notice; however, we reserve the right to change the terms of this Notice at any time and to make the new Notice provisions effective for all PHI that we receive, disclose or maintain. Should our Notice change, we will post a new Notice at FPOCF. You may request a copy of the new notice from Family Partnerships.

Why We May Need to Use or Disclose Your PHI

We use or disclose PHI for a variety of reasons. For some of these uses or disclosures, we must have your written authorization. For some, the law permits us to make some uses or disclosures without your authorization.

Generally these uses or disclosures are related to treatment, payment, or health-care operations. Some examples of these uses or disclosures are:

- For Treatment: Your PHI will be shared among members of your treatment team.
- To Obtain Payment: We may release portions of your PHI to Medicaid to get paid for services that we have given or provided for you.

Uses and Disclosures for Which We Require Your Authorization (consent)

When the use or disclosure goes beyond treatment, payment, or health-care operations, we are required to have your written authorization. There are some exceptions to this rule and they are listed below.

Authorizations can be revoked by you at any time to stop future uses or disclosures, except where we have already used or disclosed your PHI in reliance upon your authorization.

Uses and Disclosures for Which We Do Not Require Your Authorization

The law permits us to use or disclose your PHI without written authorization in the following circumstances:

- When a law requires disclosure: We may disclose PHI when a law requires that we report information about suspected abuse, neglect or domestic violence, or in response to a court order, or to a law enforcement official. We must also disclose PHI to authorities who monitor our compliance with these privacy requirements.
- For public health activities: We may disclose PHI when we are required to collect information about diseases or injuries, or to report vital statistics to a public health authority.
- For health oversight activities: We may disclose PHI for health oversight activities such as audits, inspections, and civil or criminal investigations, or actions.
- Relating to decedents: We may disclose PHI relating to an individual's death to coroners, medical examiners or funeral directors.
- For organ, eye or tissue donation purposes: We may disclose PHI to organ procurement organizations relating to organ, eye, or tissue donations or transplants.
- For research purposes: In certain circumstances and under supervision of a privacy board or institutional review board, we may disclose PHI for research purposes.
- To avert a threat to health or safety: In order to avoid a serious threat to health or safety, we may disclose PHI as necessary to law enforcement or others persons who can reasonably prevent or lessen the threat of harm.
- For specialized government functions: We may disclose PHI of military personnel and veterans, in certain situations to: correctional facilities, government programs relating to eligibility and enrollment, and for national security reasons, such as protection of the President.
- For workers' compensation: We may disclose PHI to comply with workers' compensation law.

Uses or Disclosures for Which You Must Be Given an Opportunity to Object

Sometimes, we may disclose your PHI if we have told you that we are going to use or disclose your information and you did not object. Some examples are:

- Patient directories: Your name, location, general condition, and religious affiliation may be put into our patient directory for use by clergy and callers or visitors who ask for you by name.
- To family, friends, or others involved in your care: We may share information with these people directly related to your family's friends' or other persons' involvement in your care, or payment for your care. We may also share PHI with these people to notify them about your location, general condition, or death.
- If there is an emergency situation and we do not have time to allow you to object to the disclosure, we may still disclose your PHI if you have previously given your permission and disclosure is determined to be in your best interests. If we do this, you must be informed and given an opportunity to object to further disclosure as soon as you are able to do so.

Your Rights As They Relate to Your Protected Health Information (PHI)

You have the following rights relating to your PHI:

- Request restrictions on uses or disclosures: You have the right to ask that we limit how we use or disclose your PHI. We will consider your request but are not legally bound to agree to the restriction. To the extent that we do agree to any restrictions on our use or disclosure of your PHI, we will put the agreement in writing and abide by it, except in emergency situations. We cannot agree to limit uses or disclosures that are required by law.
- Choose how we contact you: You have the right to ask that we send you information at an alternate address or by an alternative means. We must agree to your request as long as it is reasonably easy for us to do so.
- Inspect and copy your PHI: Unless your access is restricted for clear and documented reasons, you have a right to see your protected health information if you put your request in writing. We will respond to your request within 30 days for PHI we keep on-site and within 60 days for PHI that is not kept on-site. If we deny your access, we will give you written reasons for the denial and explain any right to have the denial reviewed. If you want copies of your PHI, a charge for copying may be imposed.
- Request amendment of your PHI: If you believe that there is a mistake or missing information in our record of your PHI, you may request, in writing, that we correct or add to the record. We will respond within 60 days of receiving your request. We may deny the request if we determine that the PHI is:
 - Correct and complete;
 - Not created by us or not part of our records; or,
 - Not permitted to be disclosed.

A denial will state the reasons for denial. It will also explain your rights to have your request or denial, and any statement in response that you provide, added to your PHI.

If we approve the request for amendment, we will change the PHI and inform you, as well as others who need to know about the change in the PHI.

- Find out what disclosures have been made: You have a right to get a list of when, to whom, for what purpose, and what content of your PHI has been released, except for instances of disclosure that were made for treatment, for payment, for health care operations, to you, per a written authorization, for national security or intelligence purposes, to correctional institutions or law enforcement officials, or for the facility directory.

We will respond to your written request for such a list within 60 days of receiving it. Your request can relate to disclosures going as far back as six years. There will be no charge for up to one such list each year. There may be a charge for more frequent requests.

- Receive a copy of this Notice: You have a right to receive a paper copy of this Notice or an electronic copy by email, upon request.

How to Complain About Our Privacy Practices

If you think we may have violated your privacy rights or you disagree with a decision we made about access to your PHI, you may file a complaint with the person listed below. You also may file a written complaint with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at the following address:

United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Attention: Office for Civil Rights
Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center, Suite 3B70
61 Forsyth Street SW
Atlanta, Georgia 32303-8909

No retaliatory action will be taken against you if you make such complaints.

Contact Person for Additional Information, or to Submit a Complaint.

If you have questions about this Notice, need additional information or have any complaints about our privacy practices, please contact:

Christopher Goncalo
Director of Contracts and Compliance
Family Partnerships of Central Florida
389 Commerce Parkway, Suite 120
Rockledge, FL 32955

Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Family Partnerships of Central Florida complies with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, regarding Auxiliary Aids Plan for Persons with Disabilities or Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

To ensure compliance with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Statutory Citation: 42 U.S.C. Section 2000d et seq., and to appropriately serve our clients for service, Family Partnership has implemented this policy. While this ensures compliance with the “letter of the law,” it is Family Partnerships’ intent to also comply with the “spirit of the law” and to that end intends to ensure that clients have access to our services.

FPOCF and its contracted providers will make auxiliary aids available to persons with disabilities and interpreters for clients who are limited in their ability to speak, read, or understand English. Provision of these accommodations is mandated by Federal Civil Rights Laws to ensure that all clients, applicants, and employees have an equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from programs, services, and employment, regardless of disability or national origin.

Auxiliary Aids may include, but are not limited to: brailled and taped material, interpreters (sign and foreign language), readers, listening devices and systems, television decoders, visual fire alarms, captioned films and other assistive devices. This procedure applies to all Family Partnerships’ offices and programs. Clients include potential clients seeking services from Family Partnerships or its contract providers.

Requests for Auxiliary Aids:

1. All services available to clients are equally available to clients with disabilities. To ensure equal accessibility of programs and services to clients with disabilities, FPOCF and subcontracted staff assess client needs by consulting with the client. As applicable, staff will consult with counselors, parents, guardians, other family members, and/or other representatives who may be able to assist the client.
2. All FPOCF-related requests for auxiliary aids and reasonable accommodations are to be directed to the Senior Executive of Compliance. This contact shall be made directly by calling (321) 752-4650.
3. The communication options for hearing impaired persons may include but not be limited to TDDs (Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf), FAX (telephone facsimile transmittal), phone amplifiers, sign language interpreters, flash cards, lip-reading, written notes, supplementary hearing devices, charts, signs or a combination of these. TDDs will be available for use by clients and employees who are deaf or hearing impaired within two (2) business days of a request. This request is directed to the Family Partnerships Intake line at (321) 752-3226. Clients in need of TDD equipment may obtain this free of charge through Florida Telephone Relay.

The Regional Distribution Center for hearing impaired equipment is located at:

The Space Coast Center for Independent Living
803 N. Fiske Road
Cocoa, FL 32922
Voice: (321) 632-9141
TTY: (321) 632-9134

The Florida Telephone Relay service is also available. To call Florida Relay, dial 7-1-1, or use the toll free numbers:

1-800-955-8771 (TTY)

1-800-955-8770 (Voice)

1-800-955-1339 (ASCII)

1-877-955-8260 (VCO-Direct)

1-800-955-5334 (STS)

1-877-955-8773 (Spanish)

1-877-955-8707 (French Cr)

Grievance Request Form

Family Partnerships of
Central Florida
389 Commerce Parkway
Suite 120
Rockledge, FL 32955
Phone: 321-752-4650
Fax: 321-752-4659



Family Partnerships of Central Florida

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CLIENT INQUIRIES AND CONCERNS

Please provide your contact information and mail to: 389 Commerce Parkway Suite 120 Rockledge, FL 32955. You may fax the completed form to: 321-752-4659. Our Client Relations Specialist will contact you within five (5) business days of receipt of your request.

For immediate assistance you may contact our Client Relations Specialist at 321-752-4650.

Your Contact Information

Name: _____

Home Phone: () _____ - _____ Cell: () _____ - _____ Work: () _____ - _____ Ext.: _____

Email Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Name of Care Manager: _____

Select Family Partnerships Location: 389 Commerce Parkway
 Central Care Center South Care Center

Name of Child(ren), if applicable:

Your Relationship to Child(ren): Self Parent Foster Parent Guardian Other Family Non Relative Caregiver Relative Caregiver Service Provider State Agency Other

Please write your questions and/or concerns below. Please be as detailed as possible:

YOUR SIGNATURE:

DATE: _____

Questions or Concerns (Please be as detailed as possible):

Thank you for taking the time to provide constructive feedback. We appreciate your comments and look forward to speaking with you to address your concerns. This form will be processed in our administrative offices in Rockledge, Florida. Note that under Florida law email addresses are public records. If you do not want your email address released in response to a public-records request, do not provide or send electronic mail to this entity. Instead, contact this office by phone or in writing.



Family Partnerships of Central Florida

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**Family Partnerships of
Central Florida**
**389 Commerce Parkway
Suite 120**
Rockledge, FL 32955
Phone: 321-752-4650
Fax: 321-752-4659

HIPAA Acknowledgement Form

Family Partnerships' Policy complies with 45 C.F.R. Parts 160, 162, and 164, federal regulations promulgated pursuant to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and applicable Florida Statutes.

As defined by the Act, protected health information is information which can be used to identify an individual and which relates to the past, present or future physical or mental health or condition of an individual, provision of health care to an individual, or the past, present or future payment for health care provided to an individual.

As defined by the Act, disclosure means the release, transfer, provision of, access to, or divulging in any other manner of information outside the entity holding the information.

HIPAA Privacy Notice: The federal Health Insurance Portability Act and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 provides privacy protection of an individual's verbal, written and electronic health information. Family Partnerships will comply with all HIPAA requirements in order to protect your health information. By signing below, you are acknowledging receipt of the Federal HIPAA policy.

Client Name and Signature:

Name (printed): _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name (printed): _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

FPOCF Program Staff Signature:

Name (printed): _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____



Authorization for Release of Information

Authorization for Release of Information

I, _____,
(client name)

___/___/___ hereby authorize (Name of Agency) _____
(Date of Birth)

- OBTAIN and/or
- RELEASE the following confidential information to

(Name of Agency)

consisting of:

- My entire record

Or only the following information:

- Treatment Plan(s)
- Psychiatric Evaluation
- Alcohol and Drug Screening Results
- Medication Management
- Medication History
- Labs
- Inpatient/Detox Discharge Instructions/Summaries
- Assessments/Screenings
- Diagnosis
- Attendance
- Abstract of Record
- Other _____

For the purpose of:

- assisting with diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and/or delivery of other services to CBC of Brevard, Osceola, Orange or Seminole.
- continuity of care
- Determine need/eligibility for additional services
- Confirm my status in the program
- To bill/process any claims related to my care
- Other _____

Regarding (check one or both):

- myself
- the following minor children:

Minor Child _____
(Print child's name) (Date of birth)

Minor Child _____
(Print child's name) (Date of birth)

Minor Child _____
(Print child's name) (Date of birth)

Minor Child _____
(Print child's name) (Date of birth)

I am requesting a copy of these records:

- Yes
- No

I understand that this consent may be revoked at any time upon written notice to the agency, except to the extent that the program or agency has already taken action in reliance on this authorization. I also understand that this consent will last no longer than reasonably necessary to the purpose for which it is given.

If not previously revoked, this consent will terminate upon: (Expiration date or Event not to exceed 12 months) _____

The date of consent expires 90 days from when the consent is given, if no date is listed, or as law requires when a contractor or cooperating service provider requires a new release of information for ongoing service provision.

I understand that only specific information can be disclosed and only to the above mentioned agency. Psychiatric, Alcohol/Drug Abuse, or HIV/AIDS information disclosed from records whose confidentiality is protected by state and federal laws (Title 42, Code of Federal Regulations Part 2 and Public Law 91-646, Sec. 33, amended by Public Law 93-282, Sec. 333; 45 CFR, Parts 160 and 164; and Florida State Statutes Chapter 394, 397 & 381) may be subject to re-disclosure by the recipient and therefore no longer protected by federal law. A general authorization for releases of medical information or other information is not sufficient.

Signing this form is voluntary. Treatment, payment, enrollment, or eligibility is not contingent upon authorization.

I acknowledge that this Release of Information has been fully explained to me and this consent is given of my free will.

Acknowledgement of Receipt

This Acknowledgement of Receipt form will be filed in your record and indicates that you have read and understand the following information:

- Family Partnerships' Mission Statement
- Definitions
- Client Rights and Responsibilities
- How to file a Grievance
- Confidentiality and Release of Information
- Informed Consent

Note: The original, signed "Acknowledgement of Receipt" form is to be filed in the client's record to document receipt of the above information.

Client Name Date Signature

Client Name Date Signature

My signature above indicates that I have received the Family Partnerships Handbook. I was given time to ask questions and I understand the answers that were given to me.

My Care Manager is:

My Care Manager can be reached at:

Meeting Date / Time: Meeting Date / Time:

Other Team Members:



Family Partnerships of Central Florida

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Family Partnerships of Central Florida is a Council on Accreditation (COA) accredited agency.