



## Service Coordination Mechanism

2024 - 2025

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## I. Service Coordination History & Overview

The Highland County Family and Children First Council is committed to providing coordinated services to all families with children birth through age 21. **Intersystem Collaborative for Youth Team (ICYT)** serves as the program for Family and Children First Council to ensure children and families receive adequate and appropriate services. We are committed to providing strengths-based, family-centered services that recognize the family as the child's first and most influential teacher. By partnering with parents to develop the most useful and efficient service coordination plan, it is the hope of the Council that the needs of families and children will be met. In Highland County, the purpose of service coordination is to provide a means for families to adequately address their needs which may not have been met in traditional agency systems.

Highland County's Service Coordination Mechanism is a document that will serve as the foundation for planning, coordinating, and implementing services to families seeking assistance and families involved in multiple agencies. This mechanism is not intended to overrule or supersede individual systems, but to develop an accessible way for families and children to receive services across multiple systems. Council members assist with updating and approving the Service Coordination Mechanism. The Council is comprised of representatives of Job and Family Services, School Districts, Board of Developmental Disabilities, County Commissioners, City of Hillsboro, Department of Youth Services, Educational Service Center, Early Head Start, Mental Health and Recovery Services, and other mandated/non-mandated members which include: Family and Recovery Services Transportation, Health Department, City of Hillsboro, Probation Department, Alternatives to Violence, Big Brothers Big Sisters, COAD, MRSS, PATH, ISBH/Ohio RISE, NAMI, and Reach for Tomorrow.

It is the primary goal of this mechanism to ensure that services to Highland County families and children include the following components:

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

## II. Service Coordination Target Population

The purpose of service coordination is to provide a least restrictive plan of success for youth with complex needs. This planning process should be broad-based, neutrally positioned, and family driven. ICYT serves multi-need children through age 21 years.

Criteria for service coordination includes but are not limited to the following:

1. Family is requesting help for a child/youth.
2. A child/youth/family is involved in multiple systems and service plans are not meeting the needs of the parties involved.
3. A family needs additional resources that are not covered in current service plan.
4. An agency on behalf of a family is having difficulty accessing a service need.
5. A child/youth has been identified as unruly/delinquent and is at risk of placement.
6. A child/youth is at risk of a non-emergency out-of-home placement.
7. A child/youth is placed in an out-of-home placement for emergency purposes.
8. Child-protective services-youth in custody.
9. Youth in juvenile justice system.
10. Help Me Grow early intervention service coordination.
11. Adjudicated youth.

## III. Procedure for Referring a Child/Family

Referrals can be initiated by an agency or any family voluntarily seeking services. All referrals will be directed to the Highland County FCFC Coordinator. The service coordinator will contact the family within 5 business days.

- a. Parent/Guardian Referral: A parent/guardian may access service coordination for their child through any Family and Children First member agency or by calling the Council Coordinator. The Council Coordinator and/or ICYT Service Coordinator will initially meet with the family to complete basic information in the identified intake system. At this point, if a need is identified, every parent is offered the services of a Parent Peer Supporter or Family Support Specialist.  
No family will be denied the opportunity to refer themselves for consideration for service coordination. Highland County FCFC will work to identify groups or types of children and families not being served or whose needs are inadequately addressed to improve the local system of care.
- b. Agency Referral: A formal referral for Service Coordination is made through the Council Coordinator. An agency member will complete the referral form with the information provided by the agency. The Council Coordinator and/or ICYT Service Coordinator will initially meet with the family to complete basic information in the identified intake system. At this point, if a need is identified, every parent is offered the services of a Parent Peer Supporter.

Referral Forms are available and include:

- 1) The date of the receipt of the referral;
- 2) Contact information for the person being referred;
- 3) Age of the person being referred at time of referral;
- 4) A brief description of the problems being experienced;
- 5) Systems/agencies that have been involved with the person to date;
- 6) Contact information for the person referring;
- 7) Identification of Medicaid Managed Care Plan or private insurance;
- 8) Council response to the referral or the outcome of the referral.

There are several ways for families and professionals to request or obtain a referral packet, this includes:

Online: [Family & Children First Council > Highland County Job & Family Services \(highlandjfs.org\)](http://highlandjfs.org)

Email: [JFS-Highland-FCFC@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:JFS-Highland-FCFC@jfs.ohio.gov)

Phone: 937-393-3458, ext. 5043

Mail: Highland County Family and Children First Council  
FCFC Coordinator  
1575 North High Street, Suite 100  
Hillsboro, OH 45133

If at any time during the initial stage of contact or when service coordination has become stagnant, families may seek case closure. After three or more unsuccessful attempts at contact, a “pending closure” letter is mailed with reason for closure and opportunity to keep case open. If the family does not respond by the end of the ten days as specified in the letter, the case is closed.

#### IV. Levels of Coordination Available

*Information and Referral* - This part of the process allows a family to gather information about the available resources and services in the county. Families can access information from the Highland County FCFC Coordinator or any FCFC Council Member. Upon request, families will be provided with a directory of services that details available services and provides the contact information for those services.

*Service Coordination*- Service coordination is designed to respond to the needs of a family in the least intrusive manner. This includes using a strengths-based approach to service planning as well as utilizing natural, community-based supports and services. The Highland County Service Coordination Plan incorporated the following underlying values of Ohio Family and Children First:

- Children have the right to live with their own family.
- Children have the right to be nurtured and protected in a stable family environment.
- When children are at risk of harm, the community has the responsibility to intervene.

- Families are our community's most important resources and must be respected, valued, and encouraged to build upon their strengths.
- The racial, cultural, and ethnic heritage of children and the neighborhoods where they live are respected and supported as strengths. Ethnic and racial child-rearing practices are valued.
- Families have the right and responsibility to participate in identifying their concerns, priorities, and needed resources.
- Families have a right to understand service provision that addresses the multiple needs of their children.

All children and families in Service Coordination receive services through the same procedures. The difference lies in the intensity of service requirements, frequency of case monitoring, and services that require special funding arrangements. Once a case has been referred for consideration, the procedure is as follows:

- a. The Council Coordinator/Service Coordinator will contact the family to discuss the Service Coordination process.
- b. The Council Coordinator/Service Coordinator will contact the family to determine a meeting time and location. The Council Coordinator/Service Coordinator can coordinate the scheduling of all meetings and team members as determined by the family.
- c. At the first family team meeting, members will evaluate family strengths, identify needs, and develop a Plan of Care. A Child and Adolescent Needs Assessment (CANS) will also be completed. At this first meeting, it will also be determined whether the family is interested in a Parent Mentor/Family Support Specialist for additional support services.
- d. Service Coordination/Wraparound Facilitation will be provided to families based on their individual needs and the following level of service will be used:
  - *Information and Referral* - Resource and referral information is provided to the family struggling with one basic need, experiencing a short-term crisis. Follow up is provided to ensure needs are met. The length of service is typically 90 days.
  - *Basic Service Coordination* - This is defined as a broad-based, youth and family-driven, cross-system (team) planning process by which previously identified and existing resources and supports are coordinated to determine the least restrictive plan of success for the youth and family. Basic service coordination is provided for youth and families with less intensive multiple needs across multiple systems. The family has utilized resources and still needs some additional support from the formation of a team. Basic service coordination is designed to be short term and assist the family in meeting their needs and ensure services are better coordinated. Child and family teams, including formal and informal supports relevant to the life of the child and family develop an individualized strength-based plan, monitor the plan and measure success over time. Team meetings are generally less frequent, and the length of service is typically between 3-12 months.
  - *Intensive High-Fidelity Wraparound* - This is defined as a specific evidence-based intensive planning and facilitation process, utilizing a comprehensive team to develop

- a uniquely designed helping plan based on the youth and family's unmet needs, and is inclusive of uniquely designed resources linked to youth and family strengths. High-Fidelity Wraparound is provided for youth and families with complex intensive multiple needs across multiple systems including those who may be at risk of out-of-home placement. Child and family teams, including formal and informal supports relevant to the life of the child and family develop an individualized strength-based plan, monitor the plan and measure success over time. Team meetings are generally more frequent, and the length of service is typically between 12-18 months.
- e. Between scheduled meetings, parents and service providers may contact the Council Coordinator or the Service Coordinator for assistance in accessing funding, referrals, or specialized services. Discretionary funding, up to the amount of \$5,000, may be utilized without council approval. Any requests greater than the threshold must be brought to council for approval/disapproval.
  - f. Outcomes set forth in the plan will have specific timelines to be monitored for appropriate progress. Progress will be noted in the ICYT meeting intake tool.
  - g. A Crisis/Safety Plan will be developed during a meeting.
  - h. Families may initiate a meeting to revise or review their plan by notifying the Council Coordinator/Service Coordinator at any time.
  - i. The Service Coordinator will notify families and agency representatives, including school districts, of meetings through the use of advanced written notice.
  - j. The ICYT will regularly meet to review cases and progress.
  - k. At any time, a family may request a team meeting of members of their choice to develop or review the plan of care.

## V. Plan of Care

A plan of care is developed and maintained as part of the Service Coordination process. The plan will identify and organize providers, services, and responsibilities. Services may be provided by public and private agencies and informal supports. Families have an active role in writing the individual plan of care and share a responsibility for carrying out the plan. The plan of care must include the following:

- Ensure assistance and services provided are responsive to the strengths and needs of the child and family, as well as the family's culture, race, and ethnic group, by allowing the family to offer information and suggestions and participate in decisions.
- A guarantee that services will be delivered in the least restrictive environment (the most helpful setting while being with other children).
- A timeline for the goals outlined on the plan.
- Consent to participate from agencies, family, and informal supports.
- A Crisis Plan for detailed arrangement regarding the process for dealing with an emergency situation or a short-term crisis situation.
- The Safety Plan will be developed into the plan of care for each individual.

Each individual family service coordination plan is different because each child and family is different.

Should a family have an existing Plan of Care in place or currently be involved with Part C Early Intervention, then the existing plan will be the lead plan for the service coordination mechanism.

## **VI. Out-of-home Placement/Unruly/Delinquent Children**

Youth who need intensive intervention to prevent out-of-home placement or court involvement are high priority cases for Service Intervention. Close monitoring and service coordination by the Coordinator and ICYT are a primary focus.

- If out-of-home placement becomes necessary at any time during service coordination, a Family Team meeting will occur prior to such placement. This meeting will include discussion regarding treatment recommendations beyond the capability of parents and their available funding sources. In the event of an emergency, and an out-of-home placement becomes necessary, a Family Team meeting will take place within 10 days after placement is made.
- In this meeting, members can assess whether all other alternatives have been exhausted as reasonable and appropriate responses to the situation. Decisions will be made regarding funding or placement with an emphasis on the responsibilities of the family, which may include responsibility to help pay for services. A transition plan must be initiated at the time of any placement for the child's anticipated return within ninety days to the community. The transition plan identifies the services and support the family will be offered from agencies. Special funding considerations will be referred to the FCFC. Participation in ICYT by an agency or family does not guarantee funding for services or placement beyond the funding responsibilities already required by law of each individual agency. (Decisions of the ICYT or Council shall not be interpreted as overriding or affecting decisions of a juvenile court regarding an out-of-home placement.)
- The primary goal of Service Coordination is to work with families to prevent out-of-home placements. If a placement does occur, the agencies involved with the family will discuss the fiscal implications and alternative resources. Family and Children First Council funding sources will focus on the transition back to home and community.
- Highland County does not have divergent court.

## **VII. Out-of-Home Placement Monitoring**

FCFC Coordinator will attempt to retrieve out-of-home placement numbers to report to full Council during scheduled meetings. FCFC will monitor and track this information to assure continuity of care.



## VIII. Procedure for Protecting Confidentiality of Families

Information contained in a Comprehensive Plan of Care, as well as any personal family information disclosed during service coordination meetings shall be respected with the highest confidentiality. Each agency's staff will follow, first and foremost, the confidentiality standards set forth by their employing agency.

Families participating in service coordination will sign the Release of Information form indicating parameters for information that can be shared between identified agencies. All forms, paperwork, and identifying information shall be kept in a secure location managed by the Council Coordinator.

## IX. Assessing Strengths and Needs

All families entering ICYT will be assessed utilizing the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool. Assessment will take place at intake, quarterly, and at graduation. The assessment will include the following elements for evaluation:

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

## XI. Dispute Resolution

**Category A: Dispute between Child's Parents/Custodians and the County Council or Parents/Custodians and Local Agencies**

**Purpose:** The local dispute process shall be used to resolve disputes between a child's parents or custodians and the county council regarding service coordination. A parent or custodian who disagrees with a decision rendered by a county council regarding services for a child may initiate the dispute resolution process established in the county Service Coordination Mechanism.

*Parents or custodians shall use existing local agency grievance procedures to address disputes not involving service coordination. The dispute resolution process is in addition to and does not replace other right(s) or procedure that parents or custodians may have under other sections of the Ohio Revised Code.*

The following steps outline this component of the dispute resolution process:

1. The Coordinator is designated as the liaison for the receipt of complaints regarding service coordination.

Highland County Family and Children First Council

Attn: FCFC Coordinator

1575 North High Street, Suite 100

Hillsboro, OH 45133

Phone: 937-393-3458, ext. 5043

Fax: 937-393-4461

Email: [JFS-Highland-FCFC@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:JFS-Highland-FCFC@jfs.ohio.gov)

Parents or custodians shall be informed of their right to use the dispute resolution process.

- a) Those parents or custodians who are denied access to the service coordination process at the point of referral will be informed of their right to use the dispute resolution process and will be provided a written copy of the Council's dispute resolution process.
  - b) During intake, parents or custodians will be informed of their right to use the dispute resolution process and will be provided a written copy of the Council's dispute resolution process.
  - c) Any member of the service coordination team or any member of council who receives a complaint from a parent or custodian regarding service coordination will inform the complainant of their right to use the Council's dispute resolution process and provide the complainant with the contact information for filing a complaint.
  - d) The Coordinator will provide a copy of the dispute resolution process to the parent or custodian filing a complaint.
2. The Coordinator will notify the council chair and administrative agent of the complaint within seven (7) calendar days.
  3. Each agency represented on a county council that is providing services or funding for services that are the subject of the dispute resolution process initiated by a parent or custodian must continue to provide those services and the funding for those services during the dispute resolution process.
  4. The Council will investigate the complaint. The assigned individuals will not have a direct interest in the matter. In the event that a member of the Council has a direct interest in the

matter, the Council Chairperson will appoint another member of the Council to serve in that person's place.

5. The investigation of the complaint will include at least the following:
  - a) Conducting an on-site investigation as deemed necessary;
  - b) Interviewing the parent or custodian and giving the parent or custodian the opportunity to submit additional information, in writing;
  - c) Interviewing relevant providers and giving providers an opportunity to submit additional information, in writing;
  - d) Reviewing all relevant information and making a decision.
6. The Council will issue a written decision to the parent or custodian within sixty (60) calendar days from receipt of the complaint. Situations determined to be an emergency by the Council will be addressed within thirty (30) calendar days. The written decision will address each allegation and include finding of facts and conclusions and the reasons for the Council's decisions.
7. When the provision of service or funding cannot be resolved through the designated dispute resolution process, the final arbitrator will be the presiding juvenile court judge. The Coordinator will assist the parent or custodian in filing the case with the juvenile court within seven (7) days of the failed dispute resolution process. The Coordinator will assist the family in providing assessment and treatment information for the court.

#### **Category B: Dispute Resolution Related to Part C Early Intervention Services**

**Purpose:** Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), as the lead agency, shall establish procedural safeguards that are consistent with Part C regulations. DODD, in partnership with the state and county family and children first councils, is responsible for assuring effective implementation of these procedural safeguards by each state or local agency or a private agency in the state that is involved in the provision of Part C services. Each county shall develop and maintain a resolution process for complaints, which shall be consistent with Part C.

For families receiving HMG/EI services – Refer to HMG/EI Policies and Procedural Safeguards and HMG/EI Dispute Resolution Addendum.

#### **Category C: Dispute Between Agencies**

**Purpose:** An agency represented on the county council that disagrees with the council's decision concerning the services or funding for services a child is to receive from agencies represented on

the council may initiate the local dispute resolution process established in the county service coordination mechanism applicable to the council. The following steps outline this component of the dispute resolution process:

1. The Coordinator is designated as the liaison for the receipt of complaints:

Highland County Family and Children First Council

Attn: FCFC Coordinator

1575 North High Street, Suite 100

Hillsboro, OH 45133

Phone: 937-393-3458, ext. 5043

Fax: 937-393-4461

Email: [JFS-Highland-FCFC@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:JFS-Highland-FCFC@jfs.ohio.gov)

2. The Coordinator will notify the council chair and administrative agent of the complaint within seven (7) calendar days.
3. The Council will investigate the complaint. The assigned individuals will not have a direct interest in the matter. In the event that a member of the Council has a direct interest in the matter, the Council Chairperson will appoint another member to the Council to serve in that person's place.
4. The investigation of the complaint will include at least the following:
  - Conducting an on-site investigation as determined necessary;
  - Interviewing relevant providers and giving providers an opportunity to submit additional information in writing; and
  - Reviewing all relevant information and making a decision.
5. The Council shall issue a written decision to the complainant within (60) calendar days from receipt of the complaint. Situations determined to be an emergency by the Council will be addressed within thirty (30) calendar days. The written decision will address each allegation and include findings of facts and conclusions and the reason for Council's decision.
6. On completion of the process, the Executive Committee shall issue a written determination that directs one or more agencies represented on the council to provide services or funding for services to the child.
7. The determination shall include a plan of care governing the manner in which the services or funding are to be provided. The decision maker shall base the plan of care on the family service coordination plan developed as part of the county's service coordination mechanism and on evidence presented during the local dispute resolution process. The Council may

require an agency to provide services or funding only if the child's condition or needs qualify the child for services under the laws governing the agency.

8. An agency subject to a determination pursuant to a local dispute resolution process shall immediately comply with the determination, unless the agency objects to the determination by doing one of the following, not later than seven (7) days after the written determination is issued:
  - a) If the child has been alleged or adjudicated to be an abused, neglected, dependent, unruly, or delinquent child or a juvenile traffic offender, filing in the juvenile court of the county having jurisdiction over the child's case a motion requesting that the court hold a hearing to determine which agencies are to provide services or funding for services to the child.
  - b) If the child is not a child described about, filing in the juvenile court of the county served by the county council a complaint objecting to the determination.
9. Per Ohio Revised Code #121.37, unresolved issues shall be referred to the Juvenile Court having jurisdiction of the child for resolution. The court shall hold a hearing as soon as possible, but not later than ninety (90) days after the motion or complaint is filed. At least five (5) days before the date on which the court hearing is to held, the court shall send each agency subject to the determination written notice by first class mail of the date, time, place, and purpose of the court hearing. In the case of a motion filed under division (B)(1) of this section (4a noted above) the court may conduct the hearing as part of the adjudicatory or dispositional hearing concerning the child, if appropriate, and shall provide notice as required for those hearings.
10. Except in cases in which the hearing is conducted as part of the adjudicatory or dispositional hearing, a hearing held pursuant to this division shall be limited to a determination of which agencies are to provide services or funding for services to the child. At the conclusion of the hearing, the court shall issue and order directing one or more agencies represented on the county council to provide services or funding for service to the child. The order shall include a plan of care governing the manner in which the services or funding are to be provided. The court shall base the plan of care on the family service coordination plan developed as part of the county's service coordination mechanism and on evidence presented during the hearing. An agency required by the order to provide services or funding shall be a party to any juvenile court proceeding concerning the child. The court may require an agency to provide services or funding for a child only if the child's condition or needs qualify the child for services under the laws governing the agency.
11. While the local dispute resolution process or court proceedings pursuant to this section are pending, each agency shall provide services and funding as required by the decision made by the county council before dispute resolution was initiated. If an agency that provides services or funds during the local dispute resolution process or court proceedings is determined

through the process or proceedings not to be responsible for providing them, it shall be reimbursed for the costs of providing the services or funding by the agencies determined to be responsible for providing them.

## **XII. Funding/Fiscal Issues**

Due to lack of local flexible funds, Highland County has no pooled funding for service coordination. When part of a child's plan requires special monetary consideration, the specific need will be referred to the Coordinator for convening a meeting with the FCFC. Funding discussions and decisions are not a part of the Family meetings in terms of financial responsibilities. Family meetings are for developing coordinated service plans. The administrator of each agency represented on the FCFC will have final say as to what their agency can contribute (financial or service). As a matter of course, financial participation from the family will be required.

The Highland County Family and Children First Council and its member agencies strive to be as creative and flexible as possible to maximize the use of all funds available and to provide the best possible service without duplication efforts or spending resources needlessly. Financial resources that may be available for use and/or reallocation include Family Centered Services and Supports (FCSS) and various Multi-System Youth (MSY) funds. Funding decisions will be shared with Council Members and with Ohio Family and Children First state partners.

Participation in ICYT by an agency or family does not guarantee funding for services or placement beyond the funding responsibilities already required by law of each individual agency.

## **XIII. Public Awareness/Marketing**

Council member agencies will be trained on the meaning, purpose, and use of this document. This training will be provided by the Council Coordinator every 2 years. The Council Coordinator will also inform direct service agencies of the FCFC Service Coordination Mechanism and process. Informal training can be provided to new service providers throughout the year.

## **XIV. Quality Assurance**

- a. For individual family service plans: Progress toward goals will be monitored by the ICYT members. CANS will be administered every 90 days.
- b. For system/service monitoring: The ICYT will track the number of cases, progress toward goals, census tracking, service coordination activities, and outcomes with data provided by

the Council Coordinator. This committee will also be responsible for reviewing the Service Coordination Mechanism every 2 years to determine if revisions are needed.

- c. For Council reporting: The Council Coordinator will provide data such as number of cases, common problems, trends, and treatment needs to be considered for Council strategic planning. A report will be shared with Council at scheduled meetings.