FAMILY DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

PROGRAM MANUAL

FAMILY DEVELOPMENT & SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM (FaDSS)
IS A PROGRAM ADMINISTERED IN THE DIVISION OF FAMILY WELLBEING AND PROTECTION
WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

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SECTION
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Introduction

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) program was created during the 1988 General Assembly to assist families receiving Family Investment Program (FIP) cash benefits and experiencing significant barriers to reaching self-sufficiency. Over the years, the program has evolved and expanded to serve a wider population of eligible low income Iowa families in all 99 counties. The General Assembly also established a FaDSS Council to advise the administration of the program.

The program is funded with a combination of federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and state general fund appropriations. The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services contracts with fifteen agencies to provide FaDSS services statewide. Each FaDSS grantee has an identified FaDSS Coordinator and Specialists. Coordinators provide supervision and oversee their respective programs and provide support to Specialists who work directly with families enrolled in the program.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Shelley Horak, *Director, Early Intervention and Support*
Shelley.Horak@hhs.iowa.gov

Page Humphrey, *Community Services Bureau Chief*
Page.Humphrey@hhs.iowa.gov

Elizabeth Patten, *FaDSS Program Manager*
Elizabeth.Patten@hhs.iowa.gov

Liz Melcher, *FaDSS Program Manager*
Elizabeth.Melcher@hhs.iowa.gov

General Email
FaDSS@hhs.iowa.gov

Phone
515-343-6459

Address
Lucas State Office Building, 3rd Floor
321 E 12th St
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

CONTRACTOR RESOURCE WEBPAGE

FaDSS Grantee Program Administrator's Manual

SECTION
1

Introduction

MISSION STATEMENT

Improve the lives of families at risk of long-term welfare dependence or family instability by creating opportunities for self-sufficiency.

VISION STATEMENT

FaDSS engages families in dynamic partnerships to address their basic needs, improve child well-being, and develop career opportunities that, in turn, improve lives, families, and communities.

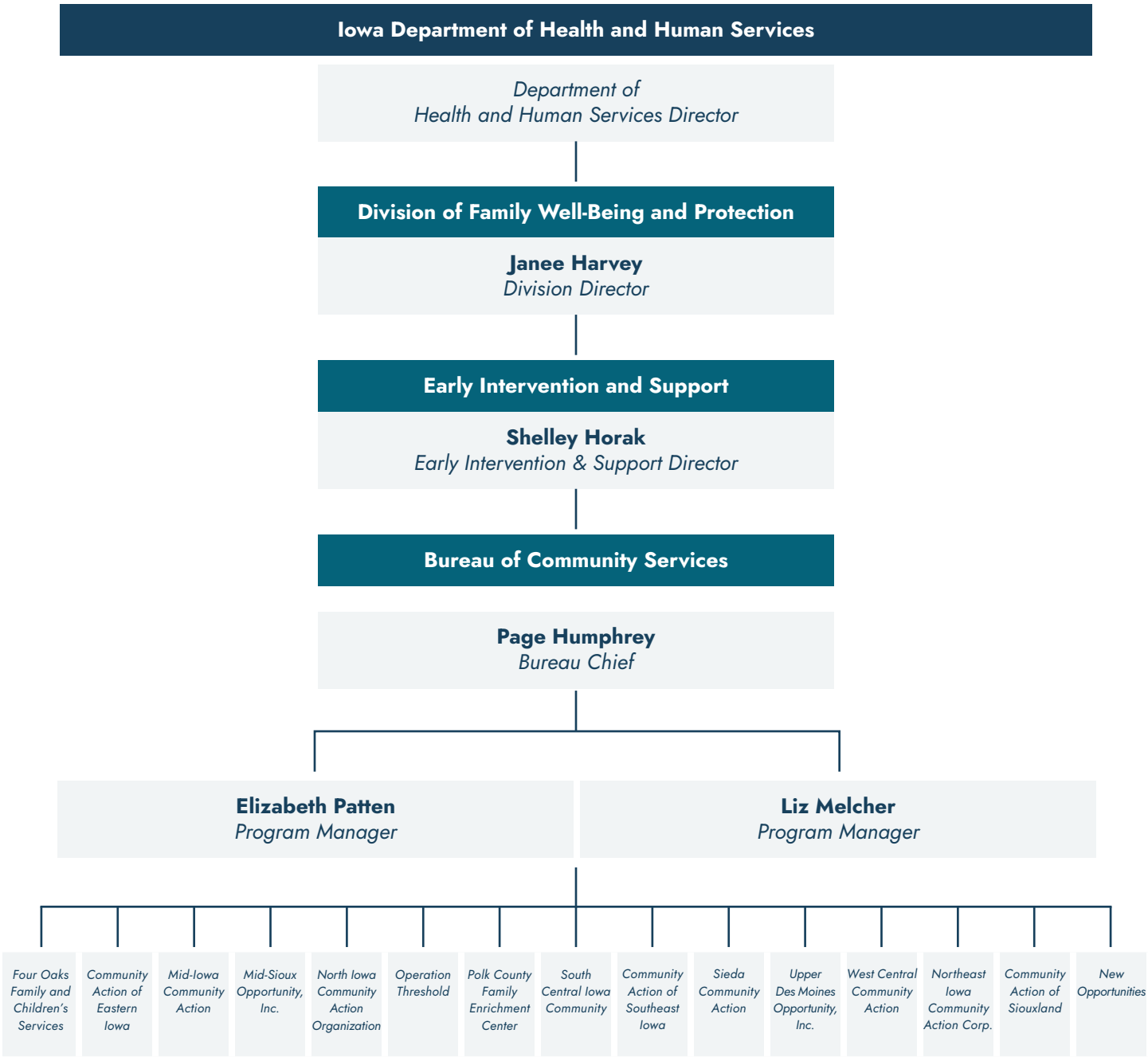
We do this by:

1. **Reducing sources of stress that destabilize families.** We address the basic needs and emotional well-being of families through support and connection to resources such as housing, food, safety, and physical and mental conditions, among others.
2. **Strengthening core skills that are essential for work, school, and life.** We build the capabilities of families by teaching them goal-directed behaviors that strengthen life skills and improve family functioning and by connecting them to education and training opportunities that build career-related skills and healthy work and school-based habits.
3. **Creating responsive relationships that are safe and supportive.** We cultivate partnerships with families by building trust; holding parents accountable; and practicing unconditional, nonjudgmental positive regard. We collaborate with community partners to address the needs and interests of families. We support healthy parent-child relationships that promote child wellness and development.

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Introduction

FaDSS PROGRAM TABLE OF ORGANIZATION

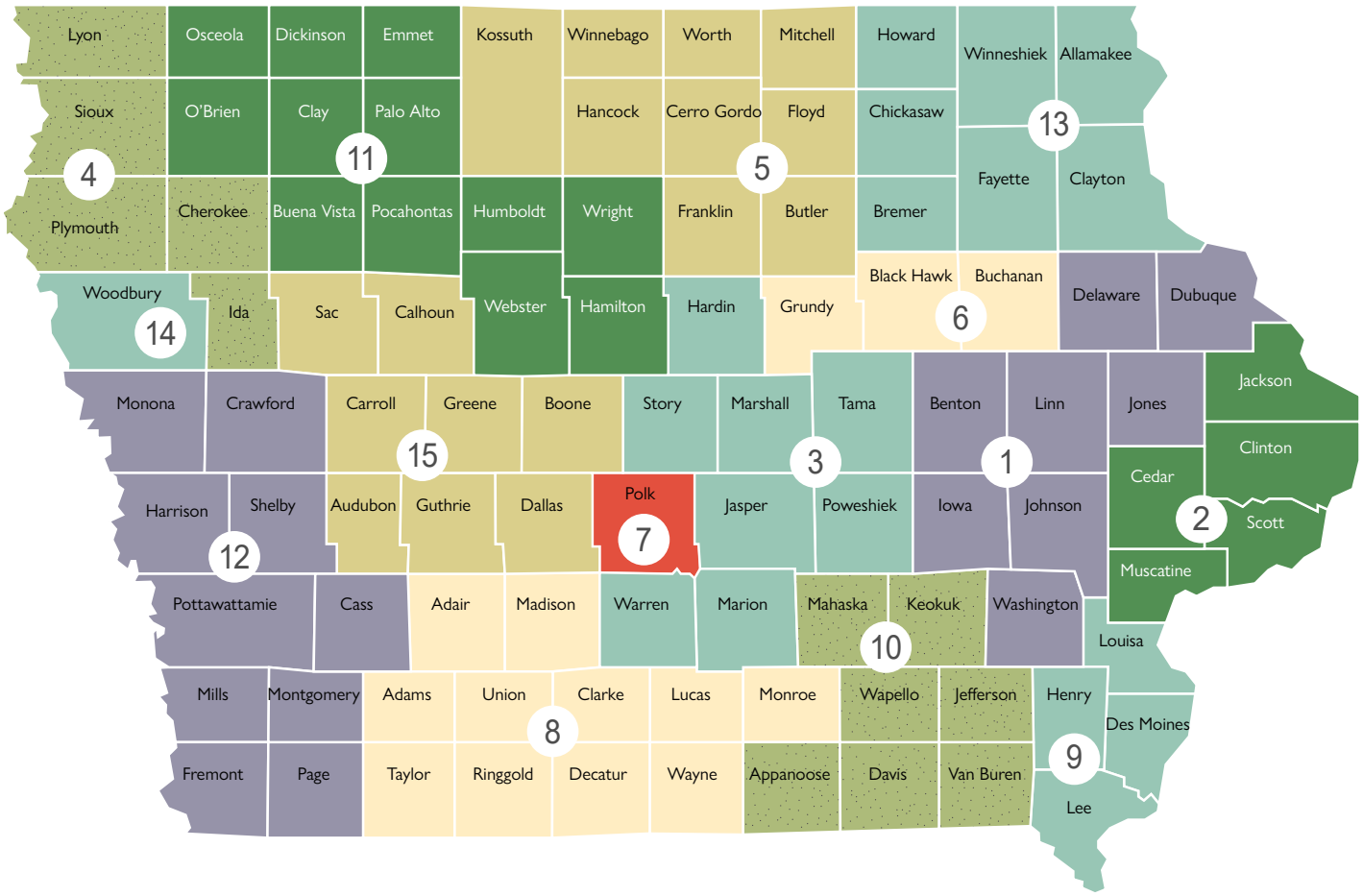


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1

Introduction

FaDSS GRANTEE SERVICE AREAS

1	Four Oaks Family and Children's Services
2	Community Action of Eastern Iowa
3	Mid-Iowa Community Action Agency
4	Mid-Sioux Opportunity, Inc.
5	North Iowa Community Action Organization
6	Operation Threshold
7	Polk County Family Enrichment Center
8	South Central Iowa Community Action Program
9	Community Action of Southeast Iowa
10	Sieda Community Action
11	Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc.
12	West Central Community Action
13	Northeast Iowa Community Action Corp.
14	Community Action of Siouxland
15	New Opportunities



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Introduction

FaDSS GRANTEE SERVICE AREAS

The most recent Coordinator Contact List can be found here.

THE COUNCIL ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The Council oversees the grant awards and allocation of grant funds.

CORE COMPONENTS OF THE FaDSS PROGRAM

- Structured home visits conducted by skilled Family Development Specialists
- Assessments and screenings that support healthy self-exploration
- Science-informed goal pursuit designed to build core skills
- A framework and process for skill development
- Connecting families to stabilizing supports and opportunities in their communities

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All grantees are required to comply with policies, procedures and guidance set forth by State Staff. Grantees may not require policies at the local level that differ from the statewide policies without prior approval from State Staff. Any changes to procedures i.e. not allowing Specialists to do unannounced in-person visits to engage a family, must be pre-approved by State Staff.

MARKETING & RECRUITMENT MATERIAL

All marketing and recruitment materials must follow the FaDSS Brand Guidelines and be pre-approved by FaDSS Program Managers prior to use. All grantees will use the designated printed FaDSS program brochure and the digital brochure which can be shared on agency websites. Please contact State Staff to request brochures as needed.

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Introduction

IOWA FaDSS

The FaDSS Program utilizes a web-based case management system called Iowa FaDSS. All communication with, and on behalf of, families is documented in Iowa FaDSS. The **Iowa FaDSS User Guide** provides instructions for creating a user account and using the case management system.

FADSS CODE OF ETHICS

All FaDSS personnel are required to complete training on the FaDSS Code of Ethics within 30 days of hire and conduct themselves in accordance with the code of ethics. Workers must demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fortitude in the FaDSS program in order to inspire confidence and trust within the community. Workers are models of ethical behavior to the families in the FaDSS program and this code outlines those expectations and guidelines. When a worker encounters these conflicts they should consult their supervisor. Please see the FaDSS Code of Ethics for more details.

CASELOAD SIZE POLICY (FaDSS POLICY 6.0)

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that caseloads for Family Development Specialists be set and maintained between 18 and 21 families for full-time Specialists. There may be circumstances when it is not in the interest of the program to have a full-time Family Development Specialist caseload between 18 and 21 families. This may be permitted when the grantee provides rationale for this decision with prior approval from State Staff. Rationale may be based on travel time, geographic area, difficulty of cases, etc. Changes to caseload size must be approved through a work plan amendment.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Transfers

There may be times when an agency receives a transferred family from another FaDSS grantee that requires a Specialist to be outside the 18-21 caseload range. **FaDSS Policy 5.0 — Transferring Enrolled Families** requires guarantees to accept transferred families regardless of capacity. This is allowable and should be for a short duration of time.

Staff Vacancies

There may be times when an agency has a Family Development Specialist that is out on a long-term leave or leaves the program. The agency must follow the vacancy plan approved in their grant application. A vacancy plan may require staff to carry additional families above the 18-21 range. This is allowable and should be for a short duration of time.

Introduction

SECTION 1

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Participation in FaDSS is voluntary. Families are eligible for FaDSS services when all of the following criteria are met:

- The family income is at or below 175% of the federal poverty level for the family size
- The family has a dependent child in the household
- The family resides in Iowa
- The required members of the family have a social security number or proof of application
- The required members of the family are U.S. citizens or legal immigrants
- The family meets one or more of the at-risk criteria established in Iowa Administrative Code 427-15.4(216A)

Families receiving FIP cash assistance, and families participating in the PROMISE JOBS program, are categorically eligible for FaDSS services.

Eligibility is reviewed every 6 months. Families can remain in the program until their income reaches 225% of the federal poverty level for the family size or they no longer meet the eligibility criteria.

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SECTION **1**

PROGRAM CAPACITY POLICY (FaDSS POLICY 9.0)

Each grantee is assigned an individual program capacity, which is part of the agency's FaDSS contract. FaDSS grantees are required to be at no less than 95% of their awarded capacity at any given time.

PROCESS

State Staff will monitor each grantee's capacity on a monthly basis. State Staff will request information from grantees who fall below the 95% threshold as to the specific reasons that the grantee did not meet 95% of the awarded capacity.

When a grantee has fallen below 95% of their awarded capacity for three consecutive months, State Staff will take appropriate action ranging from, but not limited to:

1. Continued monitoring and technical assistance.
2. Grantee will develop a plan to meet assigned capacity that outlines action steps and specifies a timeframe in which to meet the capacity policy requirements. State Staff will approve the plan or request modifications.
3. Reducing the grantee's capacity and funding.
4. Terminating the grantee's contract.

Introduction

FaDSS ROAD MAP FOR CHANGE

SECTION **1**

FAMILY NEEDS

- Skills to identify and prioritize their needs
- Resources to stabilize the family and address their basic needs (food, housing, transportation)
- Resources to address personal and family challenges (such as intimate partner violence, substance use, mental disorders, and involvement with the justice system)
- Help/advocacy navigating complex, rigid systems
- Healthy, supportive relationships
- Parenting skills
- An understanding of how to help children meet their developmental milestones
- Awareness of their career and life potential

CORE PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- Structured home visits
- Full family approach (2Gen model) (e.g., parenting skill development, setting goals with all family members)
- Assessments that support healthy self-exploration
- Sciened-informed goal pursuit
- Life, career, and self-advocacy skill building
- Connecting families to stabilizing supports in their communities

SHORT-TERM RESULTS

- Stable, quality child care
- Connection to basic supports (e.g., food, housing, etc.)
- Connection to specialized supports (e.g., mental health and substance use treatment)
- Goal progress
- Engaged in activities that improve career readiness
- Increase in social and career networks
- Address child development delays
- Parenting skills

LONGER-TERM OUTCOMES

Parent

- Obtain and retain a job
- Increased earnings and income
- Increased education level
- Improved self-sufficiency and reduced reliance on TANF and other public assistance
- Improved sense of health and well-being

Child

- Improved child health and well-being
- Improved child development

Family

- Improved family functioning

RESOURCES

- Funding
- Grantee agency leadership and support
- Qualified supervisors
- Skilled Specialists
- Transportation
- Technology

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

The FaDSS program utilizes a strengths-based approach to serving families that includes meeting families where they are both literally in their home as well as taking the lead of families and allowing them to identify and realize their own strengths and the areas of their life they want to focus on improving. Providing visits with the family in their own home helps develop a trusting relationship between the Specialist and the family and supports the holistic approach to serving the entire family embraced in the program.

While Specialists strive to provide visits to the family in their homes, sometimes visits are conducted in public places such as libraries, parks, or the Specialist's office. Visits can also be conducted virtually in some circumstances in accordance with **Policy 10.0 – Virtual Visits**. Between visits, Specialists provide support to families through contacts made in person, over the phone, via email, text message, etc. While Specialists tailor the number of contacts for each family based on their individual needs, they typically follow the number of contacts assigned to the family referred to as the Service Intensity.

Service Intensity pertains to the frequency and type of contact the Specialist has with the family each month. Each of the first three months of enrollment, all families receive at least two home visits and one significant contact. This is to help build rapport and address any gaps in basic needs to work towards stabilizing the family. If the family enrolls after the 10th of the month, the family receives at least one home visit and two significant contacts for the first month of enrollment. After the first three months, the Specialist and Supervisor will review and make adjustments to Service Intensity based on the family's current situation, goals and the family's preference. Service intensity will include no less than three contacts per month, one of which must be a home visit (quality visits may be allowable based on the circumstances). Service Intensity could be 1 Home or Quality Visit and 2 Significant Contacts, 2 Home or Quality Visits and 1 Significant Contact, 3 Home or Quality Visits and no Significant Contacts or 4 Home Visits or more. Service intensity establishes the minimum number of contacts required each month, however, Specialists often provide additional contacts as determined by the needs of the family.

The Specialist should document all contact attempts and reasons service intensity was not met in contact narratives. It is the responsibility of the Specialist to actively outreach families who are not engaged. Specialists are recommended to use at least three contact attempts using a variety of modes.

The family's current Service Intensity is documented in Iowa FaDSS. Within the Supervision Tab, the supervisor should include details surrounding the decision making process for changing the Service Intensity in the Supervision Record. Specialists should document input from the family in the **Contact Narrative**.

QUALITY VISITS

Quality visits can be a valuable tool in the provision of FaDSS services; however, they are not without limitation. Quality visits may only be utilized in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the program manual. Grantees may not implement their own quality visit policies.

Quality visits are contacts with a family that occur somewhere other than the family's home environment or with technology as a Virtual Visit. Quality Visits vary in length but generally last an hour. These visits should mirror a home visit and must include goal setting or reviewing and may include some combination of assessment, screening and strategizing to build on strengths and address barriers. Assessments and screenings must

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

be completed in person and should not be conducted during virtual visits. Quality Visits should be clearly distinguished from in-person contacts or check-ins with the family.

Quality Visits may occur in libraries, parks, grantee offices, or other locations as requested by the family member. Virtual Visits are considered Quality Visits and must follow the criteria outlined in FaDSS Policy 10.0 Virtual Visits. When holding visits in public locations, it is important to ensure privacy and confidentiality. See FaDSS Policy 3.0 and the FaDSS Code of Ethics. Visits taking place in communal spaces of a family's residence, such as the outdoor area of an apartment complex, are considered quality visits. If a family is living in a long-term residential program such a treatment facility, visits onsite should be considered home visits.

The decision to use a Quality Visit rather than a home visit is made collaboratively between the Specialist, the family, and the FaDSS Coordinator. If a family prefers to meet in the home, a quality visit may not be provided. If a Quality Visit is conducted, the Specialist should offer and allow time within the month to also have a Home Visit with the family. It is important that Specialists communicate with families that home visits are a core component of the program and that quality visits may only be utilized in specific circumstances.

QUALITY VISITS ARE APPROPRIATE IN THE FOLLOWING INSTANCES:

When the Specialist and family are having a joint meeting with another provider. This may include meetings with PROMISE Jobs, schools, or other case managers. Goal setting or reviewing must be addressed unless the Quality Visit is FIA appointment.

Families may request a quality visit if they are unstably housed. They may be staying with friends or extended family, in a shelter, or are unhoused, and aren't comfortable meeting with their Specialist where they are currently staying. If quality visits are requested for more than two months, an exception to policy must be requested.

When meeting in an office setting or another location is appropriate for completing an application or skill building activities that cannot easily be completed in the family's home.

Instances outlined in Virtual Visit Policy 10.0 including family illness, inclement weather, transition period and FIA appointments.

Pests such as mice, rats, bugs, fleas, bedbugs, lice and mites are not considered a direct threat to Specialists. While Specialists may use precautionary measures to mitigate the transport of pests, they should not be factors in consistently limiting in-person visits. However, Specialists may request temporary exceptions to policy.

Threats to safety such as active domestic violence will be staffed with the FaDSS Coordinator and brought to the attention of State Staff to determine if Quality Visits should be conducted on a case-by-case basis. When a visit must be conducted outside the home, the Specialist will work with the family to address the issue(s) that prevent visits from being conducted in the home. The Specialist will make referrals as needed.

Families that need recurring Quality Visits (quality visits for more than two months) must be staffed with the FaDSS Coordinator and approved for an exception to policy by State Staff.

Serving Families

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FORM LETTERS

FaDSS grantees are required to utilize provided form letters to communicate specific information to families throughout their engagement with FaDSS. All Form Letters must be provided to the family in color, on the template provided, and in accordance with the FaDSS Form Letter guidance. Form Letters must be documented in Iowa FaDSS through Contacts and the letter uploaded to the Documents tab.

Form Letter 1: Notification of Waiting List Placement
HHS Form Letter #: 470-0140

This letter ***must*** be sent to families when they are placed on the waiting list for services. Along with the letter, a list of local community resources must be provided to the family.

Example: family is referred, family is placed on a waiting list, form letter 1 gets sent to the family to notify them of their placement on the waiting list. *Note: the referral source must also be notified.*

Form Letter 2: Recruitment After Waiting List
HHS Form Letter #: 470-0141

This letter ***must*** be sent to families who are being recruited after being placed on the waiting list when a Specialist is not successful at contacting them to schedule an enrollment visit or the family hasn't followed through with an enrollment visit. Families may not be determined non-enrolled due to no contact or no enrollment visit unless this letter has been sent to the family. The date by which the family must contact FaDSS or complete the enrollment visit must be dated at least 10 days from the date the letter was mailed

Example: family was on the waiting list, family's name came off the waiting list for recruitment, the family could not be reached after multiple attempts or the family failed to meet for an enrollment visit, form letter 2 gets sent to the family to provide a date by which the family needs to contact FaDSS or complete an enrollment visit. Note: this letter may need to be sent twice for families who initially are out of contact during recruitment and again if the family is not meeting for the enrollment visit.

Form Letter 3: Closed After Waiting List
HHS Form Letter #: 470-0142

This letter ***must*** be sent to families who were not successfully recruited after being placed on a waiting list due to no contact or no enrollment visit within the timeframe identified in form letter 2. This letter must also be sent to families who decline services.

Example: family was on the waiting list, family's name came off the waiting list for recruitment, the family could not be reached or did not complete an enrollment visit after multiple attempts, form letter 2 was sent to the family, multiple attempts to enroll the family were made, the date provided in form letter 2 passed, the family was removed from the waiting list and entered in Iowa FaDSS as "non-enrolled" and this letter was sent to the family. Note: the referral source should also be notified.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

Form Letter 4: Recruitment After Referral- No Waiting List
HHS Form Letter #: 470-0143

This letter ***must*** be sent to families who are being recruited after referral when a Specialist is not successful at contacting them or the family has missed multiple scheduled enrollment visits. Families may not be determined non-enrolled unless this letter has been sent to the family. The date by which the family must contact FaDSS or complete the enrollment visit must be dated at least 10 days from the date the letter was mailed.

Example: family was referred, the family could not be reached after multiple attempts or the family failed to meet for an enrollment visit, form letter 4 gets sent to the family to provide a date by which the family needs to contact FaDSS.

Form Letter 5: Closed after Referral
HHS Form Letter #: 470-0144

This letter ***must*** be sent to families who were not successfully recruited after being referred due no contact or no enrollment visit within the timeframe identified in form letter 4. This letter must also be sent to families who decline services.

Example: family was referred, the family could not be reached or did not complete an enrollment visit after multiple attempts, form letter 4 was sent to the family, multiple attempts to reach the family were made, the date provided in form letter 4 passed, the family was entered in Iowa FaDSS as "non-enrolled" and this letter was sent to the family. Note: the referral source should also be notified.

Form Letter 6: Determination of Ineligibility After Referral
HHS Form Letter #: 470-0145

This letter ***must*** be sent to families who are determined to not meet initial program eligibility criteria after referral to the program. This includes self-referrals.

Example: family is referred, family is determined to not meet one or more eligibility criteria, form letter 6 is sent to the family, the family is entered in Iowa FaDSS as "non-enrolled". Note: the referral source should also be notified.

Form Letter 7: Determination of Ineligibility at Eligibility Review
HHS Form Letter #: 470-0146

This letter ***must*** be sent to families who are determined during an eligibility review to no longer meet one or more eligibility criteria. This includes families who fail to provide necessary information during the eligibility review.

Example: this includes families who do not provide all required information during review and families who do not meet all eligibility criteria at review (including **Assessment of Program Continuation**). Form letter 7 must be sent to the family and the family is exited from the program after the three-month transition period.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

Form Letter 8: Currently Enrolled — Written Attempt to Contact
HHS Form Letter #: 470-0147

This letter is optional and may be sent to families when Specialists are trying to engage them at any point throughout service delivery.

Example: family missed their home visit and are not returning calls/texts, form letter 8 may be sent to the family.

Form Letter 9: Currently Enrolled — Re-engagement
HHS Form Letter #: 470-0148

This letter ***must*** be sent to families who are currently enrolled but the Specialist has not had contact with the family for 30 or more days or the family has gone two consecutive months without a home visit, to provide a date by which the family must respond in order to remain in services. If the letter is for no contact, the date by which the family must contact FaDSS or complete a visit must be the 45th day of no contact. If the letter is for no home visits for two consecutive months, Form Letter 9 will be sent at the end of the second month. The date given to the family should be dated the 15th of the following month.

Example: family has missed visit(s) and/or is not responding to calls, texts, drop-by attempts, form letter 9 gets sent to the family to provide a date by which the family needs to contact FaDSS or the date the family needs to complete a visit.

Form Letter 10- Notice of Exit
HHS Form Letter #: 470-0149

This letter ***must*** be sent to families who are exited from the program. Note: families exited due to no contact or no home visit must receive form letter 9 prior to exit.

Example: family was enrolled, family is not communicating with Specialist or is not meeting for a visit, form letter 9 is sent to provide a date by which the family must respond or complete a visit in order to remain in services, the date in form letter 9 passes and there is no contact/visit with the family, form letter 10 gets sent and the family is exited.

Optional Form Letter A
HHS Form Letter #: 470-0150

This letter may be used during recruitment to provide basic information about the FaDSS program to a family.

Optional Form Letter B
HHS Form Letter #: 470-0151

This letter may be used during recruitment to notify a family that you will be stopping by to see them.

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FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

It is important that Specialists make every effort possible to engage families in services. Even with many attempts, sometimes families are not engaged. If a family does not participate in a home or quality visit for two consecutive months (with various attempts made by the Specialist), the Specialist must take specific action and then the family will exit the program. The Specialist will staff the family with their supervisor to ensure appropriate efforts have been made. After appropriate attempts have been made to engage the family, the Specialist must provide the family with Form Letter 9. This letter provides a date by which the family must participate in a home or quality visit in order to remain in services. If the date in the form letter passes and the family has not participated in a home or quality visit, the Specialist must send Form Letter 10 to the family notifying the family of their exit from the program. Justification for the exit will be documented in Iowa FaDSS. The transition period does not apply to families exited due to lack of engagement.

If a family does not have contact with the Specialist for 30 days, despite multiple attempts made by the Specialist, the Specialist will send Form Letter 9. This form letter provides a date by which the family must respond in order to remain in services. This date should be the 45th day from when there was last contact. If the date in the form letter passes, the family must be exited for no contact. The Specialist must send Form Letter 10 to the family notifying the family of their exit from the program. Justification for the exit will be documented in Iowa FaDSS. The transition period does not apply to families exited due to no contact.

CONTACT TYPE DESCRIPTIONS AND DOCUMENTATION

All contact with the family or on behalf of the family will be accurately and thoroughly documented in Iowa FaDSS within 7 business days in accordance with the **Iowa FaDSS Document Management Guide**. Contact notes are expected to be specific, factual and relevant. The following chart provides a definition of each contact type and general documentation guidance.

SECTION **2**

Serving Families

Contact Type Descriptions		
Contact Type	**Definition**	**Documentation Guidance**
Home Visits	Home visits are contacts with a family that occur in the family's home environment. These visits usually include goal setting (or reviewing) and may include some combination of assessment, screening and general strategizing to identify strengths and address barriers. Home visits may vary in length, but generally last an hour.	Within 7 business days after a home visit, the Specialist will need to complete a contact note in Iowa FaDSS. On the initial **Contact Info tab** of the **Contact Detail**, the Specialist will fill in required fields and answer the following questions: Was goal setting was addressed, Family Functioning assessment completed, Domestic violence screening conducted, or child development screen conducted. In the **Family Members tab**, Specialists will indicate who was present at the home visit and if they were engaged. Details of the other household member engagement should be included in the **General Observations section** of the **Contact Narrative**.
Quality Visits	Quality visits are contacts with a family that occur somewhere other than the family's home environment or via a virtual visit. These visits usually include goal setting (or reviewing) and may include some combination of assessment, screening and general strategizing to identify strengths and address barriers. Quality visits may vary in length, but generally last an hour. Quality visits may occur in locations such as a library, park, office (such as the grantee's office) or other location requested by the family or via virtual visit. Contact notes must document the rationale for conducting a visit outside of the family's home environment. **Family Investment Agreement (FIA)** appointments are considered quality visits.	Contact notes should be completed in Iowa FaDSS within 7 business days of conducting the quality visit. Quality Visits have the same documentation criteria as Home Visits including Narratives on General Observations, Screening and Assessment, Goal Setting, Referrals, Timeline/Aftercare, Next Steps as well indicating all activities completed during the visit.
Significant Contact	Any contact with a family (other than home or quality visits) that involves information-sharing or follow-up that is specific to the family, including progress towards accomplishment of goals or other items of importance to the family that are not necessarily identified through goal-setting. The contact must include two-way communication for any method used unless the Specialist is following up as a result of a prior conversation or request from the family. Contacts that exclusively address scheduling/verifying a visit or leaving a message asking a family to return the call are not considered significant. · Substantive communication i.e. resource sharing or support · Not a QV or HV · May or may not include discussion of goals If a home or quality visit is canceled by either the Specialist or the family prior to the visit, the Specialist must determine if the contact was significant or other. If during the contact with the family other information-sharing occurs besides canceling or rescheduling a visit, the contact should be documented as a significant contact.	Contact notes should be completed in Iowa FaDSS within 7 business days of the significant contact. On the initial **Contact Info tab** of the **Contact Detail**, the Specialist will fill in the start and end times for HV and QV as well. Options for contact mode include phone, text, email, face to face, mail or other. Specialists will answer the following questions: Was goal setting addressed, Family Functioning assessment completed, Domestic violence screening conducted, or child development screen conducted. In the **Family Members tab**, the Specialist will indicate who was present at the home visit and if they were engaged. In the **Notes section**, write brief details of the engagement or why they were not engaged. The **General Contact Narrative** should include the details of the contact such as information provided and family's progress.

SECTION **2**

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Contact Type Descriptions

Contact Type	Definition	Documentation Guidance
Other Contact	Other Contacts are not significant contacts. Contacts made with or to a family in which one or two-way communication is successful and are not significant contact should be documented as Other Contact. If a Specialist calls a family and leaves a voice message to try to schedule a visit, it should be documented as Other Contact. If a Specialist sends a text message, even if no response from the family is received, it should be documented as Other Contact. If a family contacts a Specialist and connects or leaves a voice message, it should be documented as Other Contact. Contacts made to schedule or attempt to schedule visits with a family should be documented as Other Contact. · Not Significant Contact · May be one-way or two-way communication · Includes sending a text, email, leaving a message, etc. If a home or quality visit is canceled by either the Specialist or the family prior to the visit, the Specialist must determine if the contact was significant or other. If the contact only involved the cancellation or rescheduling of a visit the contact should be documented as other contact. Unscheduled drop-bys may be classified as Other, with the mode being face to face, if contact materials have been left for the family.	Within 7 business days after the Other contact, the Specialist will need to complete a contact note in Iowa FaDSS. On the initial **Contact Info tab** of the **Contact Detail**, the Specialist will fill in the date of the contact and select the contact mode from phone, text, email, face to face, mail or other. In the **Family Members tab**, the Specialist will indicate who was present at the home visit and if they were engaged. In the **Notes section**, write brief details of the engagement or why they were not engaged. The **General Contact Narrative** should include the details of the contact.
Attempted Contact	Attempted contact occurs when a Specialist attempts to contact a family through any mode of communication and the attempt results in an error due to device malfunction or no-show. Attempted contacts may occur in any mode of communication (face-to-face, mail, phone, etc.). If a Specialist arrives at a family's home for a scheduled home visit and there is no answer, this should be documented as an Attempted Contact (with the mode being Home Visit). If a Specialist attempts to call a family for a scheduled Quality Visit and the family does not answer at the scheduled time, the Specialist should document it as an Attempted Contact (with the mode being Quality Visit). If a Specialist does an unscheduled drop-by and the family is not present, the Specialist can document this as an Attempted, Face to Face contact. If a Specialist sends information via mail and the mail is returned due to incorrect address or other reason, it should be documented as Attempted Contact (with the mode being mail). If a Specialist calls a family on the phone and the phone number is no longer in service, it should be documented as Attempted Contact (with the mode being phone). If a Specialist calls the family on the phone and the family's voicemail box is full so the Specialist is unable to leave a message it should be documented as Attempted Contact. · Not Significant Contact · No-call/no-show for visit · Mail returned, phone number disconnected, etc.	Within 7 business days after the Attempted contact, the Specialist will need to complete a contact note in Iowa FaDSS. On the initial **Contact Info tab** of the Contact Detail, the Specialist will fill in the date of the attempted contact and select the contact mode from phone, text, email, face to face, mail, home visit, quality visit or other. The **General Contact Narrative** should include the details of the attempted contact.
Collaboration Contact	Communication with professionals or other individuals supporting the family on behalf of the family. Example: contacting PROMISE JOBS to request the family's FIA.	Within 7 business days after the Collaboration contact, the Specialist will need to complete a contact note in Iowa FaDSS. On the initial **Contact Info tab** of the **Contact Detail**, the Specialist will fill in the date of the attempted contact and select the contact mode from phone, text, email, face to face, mail, or other. In the **Third Party section**, the Specialist will indicate the person or agency that the collaboration is with. The **General Contact Narrative** should include the details of the collaboration contact, this could be a copied email or overall description of the contact.

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MULTIPLE CONTACTS GUIDANCE:

Often, Specialists engage in back and forth communication via text, email, etc. with families or other professionals assisting a family. When back and forth communication with a family or professional spans a period longer than 24 hours, it should be documented as separate contacts.

Back and forth communication through the same mode of contact over multiple contacts occurring within a 24 hour period can be documented as a single contact. ***Example:*** Multiple text messages back and forth within 24 hours are documented in one contact note. A phone call and a follow up email within 24 hours would be separate contacts with different modes of communication.

The Specialist must determine the type of contact depending on the content of the communication. ***Example:*** A Specialist contacts a family to ask how they are doing. Two days later the family responds and expresses a need for diapers and food; the Specialist responds with resources. The first contact the Specialist made asking how the family is doing should be documented as Other Contact. The second contact with the family should be documented as Significant Contact.

Mode Of Contact	
Mode	**Definition**
Face to Face	Face to Face contacts include efforts to engage a family that occur in person. Examples include dropping off information to the family at their home (and seeing the family), dropping by the family's home to schedule an appointment, and interacting with a family at a community event.
Phone	Communication with a family via phone (does not include text messaging). This includes the use of phone apps such as Google Duo, FaceTime, etc.
Text	Communication with or to a family via text message.
Email	Communication with or to a family via email.
Mail	Communication with or to a family via mail.
Other	If the Specialist is communicating with or to a family via a mode not captured above, the "other" option should be selected.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

VIRTUAL VISIT POLICY (FaDSS POLICY 10.0)

Virtual visits are a valuable tool in the provision of FaDSS services; however, they are not without limitation. Virtual visits may only be utilized in accordance with the guidelines set forth in this policy.

VIRTUAL VISITS

Virtual visits are considered quality visits and must include goal setting (or reviewing) and general strategizing to identify strengths and address barriers. All virtual visits must include video conferencing such as Zoom, Facetime, Teams or Google Duo. Phone calls and texting are not considered modes for the provision of virtual visits. The reason the visit was conducted virtually and the mode that was used must be included in the **Contact Narrative**.

As of the effective date of this policy, virtual visits may only be utilized in the following instances:

1. During illness, if the family agrees, a virtual visit may be conducted in lieu of an in-person visit. This includes the following situations:
    a. When one or more of the family members is ill or contagious and the family does not want the Specialist in the home but would still like to meet with the Specialist. Examples could include: Strep throat, Influenza, COVID-19, Norovirus (stomach flu), Hand Foot and Mouth Disease, and or Fever. If unsure what constitutes illness or contagion, the Specialist will consult with the FaDSS Coordinator.
    b. When the Specialist is ill or contagious, home visits should be rescheduled. Coordinators may request an Exception to Policy from State staff for virtual visits due to a Specialist illness or condition.
2. During inclement weather, if the family agrees, a virtual visit may be conducted in lieu of an in-person visit. Inclement weather decisions will be made with support from the FaDSS Coordinator. Resources to help determine if a virtual visit is needed due to weather include local school delays and cancellations and Iowa 511 for road conditions.
3. Beginning in the 4th month of enrollment, if service intensity for a family is set at 2 home visits and 1 significant contact, one of the home visits may be conducted as a virtual visit, unless the family prefers in-home visits.
4. When a family is in their transition period, beginning the month following the eligibility review, the family may receive virtual visits during the three-month transition period if the family prefers.
5. FIA appointments may be documented as Quality Visits if the Specialist attends virtually or in-person. State Staff encourages Specialists to attend FIA appointments in-person, whenever possible.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

Exceptions to the use of virtual visits:

- If the family prefers to meet in-person, virtual visits may not be provided.
- No enrollment visits may be conducted virtually.
- No state required assessments may be conducted virtually. (GFF, DV, Child Development)
- Stepping Stones to Family Success may not be conducted virtually
- Except for families in Transition, no more than two consecutive virtual visits may be conducted with a family

Exceptional situations may arise, please reach out to State Staff if you have questions or need to request an exception to the virtual visit policy.

Any changes to this policy at the local level require prior approval from State Staff.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY (FaDSS POLICY 7.0)

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that technology be used within the guidelines of this policy and the FaDSS Code of Ethics and in accordance with all applicable laws. This policy is intended to establish minimum standards for the use of technology within the FaDSS program. Grantee agencies may establish stricter policies.

This policy applies to all FaDSS grantees, their immediate FaDSS workers, and anyone with access to family records including agency volunteers and interns.

Technology expands the ability of grantees to assist families by providing services using online platforms, telephone, videoconferencing, electronic social networks, automated tutorials, e-mail, text messages and a host of other services. Additionally, FaDSS uses technology to access, gather, and otherwise manage information about families. This policy addresses three critical areas:

1. Providing information to the public
2. Using technology in the provision of FaDSS services
3. Gathering, managing, storing, and accessing family information

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

1. PROVIDING INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC

Grantees who use technology to provide information to the public about FaDSS services must take reasonable steps to:

- Ensure that the information is appropriate, consistent, respectful, and accessible.
- Ensure that information disseminated is accurate and valid, which includes periodic review.
- Ensure that all confidential information is protected.

Grantees must ensure that minimum Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (**WCAG 2.0**) are met.

All information shared from a third party must be vetted by grantees to ensure it is accurate and from a trusted source.

2. USING TECHNOLOGY IN THE PROVISION OF FADSS SERVICES

For the provision of FaDSS services, grantees must only use technology on work-issued devices and should not access family information nor communicate with families on personal devices. For example, calls to families should not be made on personal cell phones. Electronic devices and technology should only be used for work purposes and not personal use.

Grantees must ensure all of the following are maintained when using technology in the provision of FaDSS services:

Informed Consent

- FaDSS services must be provided in the format preferred by the family, in accordance with program standards. Grantees must inform families of the risks and benefits to using technology in the provision of FaDSS services. Risks and benefits should be reviewed with every family enrolled in the program.

Assessing Family Relationship with Technology

- This includes individuals' familiarity and comfort with technology, access to the internet, language access, and the use of technology to meet the needs of diverse populations, including individuals with disabilities.

Competence, Knowledge and Skills of Staff

- Grantees must ensure that staff are competent in the use of technology and maintain competency through relevant training, consultation and supervision. This includes ensuring competence of staff regarding families' cultural community and linguistic, social, and economic environment to attend to families' unique needs and challenges.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

Confidentiality

- Grantees who provide electronic services should develop agency protocols and policies to protect family confidentiality. Grantees are required to use encryption software for all emails containing personally identifiable information. Grantees should use firewalls and periodically assess confidentiality policies and procedures to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and program ethical standards. Grantees must not have any identifiable family information saved on their hard drives.

Maintaining Professional Boundaries

- Grantees must ensure clear distinction between professional and personal communications and must take reasonable steps to prevent family access to staff members' personal social networking sites in order to avoid boundary confusion and inappropriate dual relationships.
- Workers have a right to have a personal online presence; however, they should be aware of how their personal communications could affect their professional relationships.
- Grantees must be aware and cautious of shared "friends", interest groups or connections on web platforms. Such indirect and unintended overlap may create boundary confusion and inappropriate dual relationships.

Unplanned Interruption of Electronic Services

- Electronic services can be interrupted unexpectedly in a variety of ways. Grantees must develop policies on how to manage technology failures and discuss them with families at the beginning of their relationship.

Social Media

- Grantees may create agency-managed social media accounts to communicate general information to the public about the FaDSS program and related events.
- Social media accounts may not be used for direct communication between grantees and current or former families unless pre-approval is obtained from State Staff. If approval is granted, all communication with families through the use of social media becomes part of the families' record and must be maintained and documented in accordance with program policies and procedures.

3. GATHERING, MANAGING, STORING, AND ACCESSING FAMILY INFORMATION

Grantees must ensure that all family information, including documentation of services and contacts with Families both virtually and in-person is maintained securely and confidentially. Grantees are responsible for developing agency policies regarding gathering, maintaining and accessing family information in accordance with the following:

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

Informed Consent

- Grantees should explain to families whether and how they intend to use electronic devices or communication technologies to gather, manage and store family information.

Electronic Searches

- Except for compelling reasons, Grantees should not utilize search engines to gather information about a family without the family's consent.
- Exceptions to seeking family consent to gather information online may arise in emergency situations, for example, when a family member poses a serious, imminent risk to self or others and the only way to identify where the family is would be to search for information online.

Documentation

- Grantees must ensure responsible documentation of all contacts and records of services provided to FaDSS families including appropriate training and supervision.

Electronic Records Retention

- In accordance with FaDSS contract terms, grantees must maintain family records for 7 years after the date of exit from the program. This includes paper and electronic records and files.
- Grantees should develop policies for managing phased out and outdated devices and accounts from the program in accordance with confidentiality and records retention requirements.

Family Access to Records

- Grantees must ensure that families access to electronic records is provided in a manner that takes family confidentiality, privacy and the family's best interests into account.
- Families have the right to access their records and may request to review them in the agency office under the supervision of the Grantee.

Protecting Family Records

- Grantees must ensure that family records are kept secure and confidential. If family records are compromised, grantee agencies must develop protocol for notifying families. This includes protocol for contacting families no longer enrolled in the program.
- Any record that is compromised must be reported to State Staff. This includes information that is hacked, cloud storage breaches, and other data security failures.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES

Electronic signatures should be obtained on forms, whenever possible. To ensure informed consent, Specialist should review each document to be signed with the family prior to electronically sending documents. An explanation of this discussion should be summarized in the contact narrative of the home visit or significant contact in which it occurred. Electronically signed documentation should be saved in PDF format and maintained in Iowa FaDSS. FaDSS grantees are responsible for procuring their own electronic signature software from a reputable source. Electronic signature software must be fully accessible for families including device access, language access and web content accessibility guidelines.

LANGUAGE ACCESS

It is important for all families to have equitable access to FaDSS services regardless of the language they speak. Grantees are responsible for providing qualified interpreters to all families who need a language interpreter. Interpreters may be over the phone or in person.

Grantee agencies may contract with language interpreter service providers. Contracts must include language ensuring confidentiality. Releases of information are not needed for language interpreter service providers the agency contracts with.

At times, a family might bring a friend or a family member to interpret for them. Interpreters must not be a child. Using a family's friend or a family member for interpretation may only be used for unplanned communication and should not be used in place of a qualified interpreter for scheduled visits or contacts. Releases of information are required when conducting visits with friends or family members providing interpreter services.

If grantees would like to have another staff member within their agency provide language services, this staff member must go through the FaDSS specific onboarding before providing services or the family must sign a release of information each time the interpreter is used.

FaDSS personnel should not be acting as interpreters for families in FIA appointments or other PROMISE JOBS required activities or with other service providers who are working with the family. However, it is allowable for FaDSS personnel to interpret for families/staff in brief, unscheduled calls or meetings with PROMISE JOBS or other partners.

ENGAGING OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

FaDSS takes a whole family approach and uses dynamic partnerships with family members to best address their basic needs, improve child well-being, and develop career opportunities that, in turn, improves lives, families, and communities.

As this is a program focused on the entire family, at least one other family member besides the head of household is meaningfully engaged in services in at least 25% of home/quality visits. Meaningful engagement is unique to the individual and will be dependent on the developmental and social stages, interest and needs of the family member(s). What qualifies as meaningful engagement should continue to grow as the trusting relationship develops.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

DOCUMENTATION OF ENGAGING OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS:

Family member engagement will be recorded in every contact detail. Specialists will mark Yes or No if the family member was present and engaged during the contact in the Family Members tab. If Yes to engaged during the visit, the Specialist will include details of the engagement in the **Contact Narrative**.

CONFIDENTIALITY (FaDSS POLICY 3.0)

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that the right to privacy and client confidentiality is held in the highest regards. State statutes recognize the privacy rights of individuals who receive services and assistance. The FaDSS program must comply with Iowa Code section 217.30 (FaDSS Contract Article 24.0).

GENERAL INFORMATION

The following information is intended to highlight key confidentiality considerations. Please reference the FaDSS contract, FaDSS standards and State-provided confidentiality training for further information.

Family Participation Agreement

Each family enrolled in the FaDSS program is informed and provided with a copy of the Family Participation Agreement, which addresses a family's rights and how information and privacy will be safeguarded. This will be reviewed and signed annually with the family.

Sources of Confidential Family Information

The FaDSS program obtains information about families from the families themselves and from collateral sources, such as PROMISE JOBS, Income Maintenance, community providers, and others. All information received by the FaDSS program concerning a specific family is subject to confidentiality safeguards. Information that is received from collateral sources shall not be disseminated to other sources regardless of whether the family has provided consent to do so.

Information to be Safeguarded

"Family specific" information is confidential and not subject to the open records law. "Family specific" information is that which specifically identifies a family by name, address, or social security number. Often a document will be subject to the open records law, but will have both "family-specific"/identifying information as well as information of a non-identifying nature. In such a case, the identifying information must be redacted (blacked out) before releasing the documents.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

When Confidentiality Safeguards are Effective

Confidentiality safeguards go into effect from the initial contact between the family and the FaDSS program. The safeguards apply to any "family specific" information, whether written or oral, and whether or not the information is incorporated into the family record. Safeguards continue to be in effect indefinitely. They do not end when the family exits the program.

Releasing Confidential Information

Legal reference: 441 IAC 9.7(17A, 22, 228)

Releases of Information authorize one person to exchange information with one other person about one person (1:1:1) No confidential information about a family in the FaDSS program shall be released without consent, except in special circumstances outlined below. The release of information includes:

- The signature of the person whose information will be released, or the parent, or legal guardian of the person who is unable to provide authorization;
- The specific information to be released;
- The purpose for which the information is to be used, except how disclosure is mandated by the law or the person is receiving services under court supervision or directive;
- The date the release takes effect;
- The date the release expires, not to exceed 90 days from when authorization is given for a one-time release of information, and not to exceed one year, or as the law requires when a contracted or cooperating service provider requires the release of information for ongoing service provision;
- The full name of the person within the organization who is providing the confidential information and/or their title ; and
- A statement that the person may withdraw their authorization at any time.

When the FaDSS program is provided with a release of information the program must verify the identity of the person requesting the information if the person is not known to the program. Information may not be disclosed unless it is certain the information will be relayed only to the authorized person.

Technical Errors and Breaches

Technical errors occur when a release of information is incorrectly or incompletely filled out. Failure to meet any of the seven criteria is considered a technical error related to confidentiality.

Breaches of Confidentiality include incidents of unauthorized access or disclosure of confidential information. Breaches of confidentiality violate FaDSS program policy and Iowa Code. All breaches of confidentiality must be reported to State Staff as outlined in the FaDSS contract.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

Informed Consent

"Informed consent" means that the request for release of information has been explained to or for the benefit of the signer and the consent is given freely and voluntarily without fear of retribution or withdrawal of services. FaDSS personnel must ensure that the person understands all elements of the release of information. FaDSS personnel must never provide information to another party that goes beyond the defined purpose stated in the release of information.

Sending Electronic Communication

Grantees must use encryption for any email that contains any email that contains identifying information including, but not limited to: names, addresses, Social Security numbers, State ID numbers, and case numbers, regardless of the recipient.

In addition, the subject line should not contain identifying information. Email should not be used to transmit confidential information if there is any reason to believe that confidentiality could be breached.

Conducting Home Visits with Non-Family Unit Members

If a person beyond the family unit is invited by the family to participate in FaDSS services, or is present during a visit with the family, the family must sign a release of information allowing the person to be a part of FaDSS services. Adult children who do not meet the definition of a dependent also require a release in order to share information.

Other Adults in the household do not require a release of information for internal family communication. The "Other Adult" family member is typically a cohabitating significant other of the head of household joined by marriage and/or children and/or relationship with the head of household.

Leave-Behinds

Any leave behinds, such as door hangers, should not include any identifiable information connecting the family to FaDSS services. Leave behinds may include the Specialist's name and phone number.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

Participating in Multi-Disciplinary Meetings

If the FaDSS program is invited by the family or another entity to participate in a multi-disciplinary meeting such as a family team meeting or an Individualized Education Program, the family must sign a release of information allowing the FaDSS program to participate. The purpose of this release is to allow the FaDSS worker to attend and participate in the meeting.

The FaDSS worker must obtain a separate release of information to communicate with participants that are involved in the meeting outside of the meeting.

Reporting of Unauthorized Disclosure

The FaDSS program must report to State Staff any unauthorized disclosure of confidential information. (Reference: FaDSS Contract General Terms 2.8.5 Contractor Breach Notification Obligations).

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

No confidential information about a family in the FaDSS program shall be released without consent, except in special circumstances outlined below.

INCOME MAINTENANCE/PROMISE JOBS/FADSS

Because of agreements between these programs and agencies, staff that work with FIP recipients, including PROMISE JOBS participants within these agencies/programs, their subcontractors or grantees may confidently share information about a PROMISE JOBS participant or applicant. All information shared between agencies shall be used only for purposes of administration of programs, services or assistance when a family is participating in both programs. In the event a family is no longer participating in both programs, and is no longer receiving FIP, a release of information must be obtained before FaDSS can release or obtain information to PROMISE JOBS agencies.

All agencies involved in the provision of PROMISE JOBS services shall safeguard participant information in conformance with Iowa Code Section 217.30 and are subject to the same laws and rules with regard to confidentiality.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

MANDATORY REPORTING

Personnel in the FaDSS program are mandatory reporters and must make a report within twenty-four hours. FaDSS programs do not have to inform the family of the report. The family must be informed at program enrollment that FaDSS program personnel are mandatory reporters. The FaDSS grantee must not apply a policy, work rule, or other requirement that interferes with the person making a report. Specialists should consult the FaDSS Coordinator for guidance and are encouraged to reach out to State Staff, if needed.

Legal Reference Iowa Code 232.69. FaDSS policy 4.0

CHILD ABUSE INVESTIGATIONS

The FaDSS program must cooperate and release information to the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services and law enforcement when those entities are conducting a family assessment and/or child abuse assessment in accordance with 232.71B.

MINOR PARENTS

Minor parents may sign all FaDSS forms and may give consent on a release of information form. All other minors must have their parent or guardian provide consent to release information, except for disclosure of substance abuse information. Please refer to Iowa Code 441IAC 41.22(16), 41.22 (17) for good cause and 441 IAC 9.15(3) "c" for substance abuse references.

SUBPOENAS

The FaDSS program may be served with a subpoena or other legal processes regarding FaDSS families. The FaDSS program must promptly notify State Staff and cooperate in any lawful effort to protect the confidential information. A court subpoena does not allow the release of confidential information without signed consent from the FaDSS family. Confidential information may only be released by a court order. Specialists should consult the FaDSS Coordinator for guidance and are encouraged to reach out to State Staff, if needed.

Legal Reference FaDSS Contract General Terms

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

FRAUD

The FaDSS program must release information to the Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing (DIAL) when that entity is prosecuting or defending a civil or criminal proceeding in connection with administration of the FaDSS program. The information released must be directly connected with the administration of the FaDSS program. Providing access to FaDSS records for local or other law enforcement agencies seeking information without a release from DIAL is strictly prohibited. DIAL uses form 470-1363. Specialists should consult the FaDSS Coordinator for guidance and are encouraged to reach out to State Staff if needed.

Legal Reference 441 IAC 9.10(6); 45 CFR 164.502 (a) (l)(i), 164.506 and 164.512(f)(l)

RELEASE OF FAMILY ADDRESS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

FaDSS may release the address of a family that is a current FIP recipient to a federal, state or local law enforcement officer if the officer fulfills the following requirements:

- The officer provides the name of the participant
- The location or apprehension of the participant is within the officer's official duties
- The officer states that at least one of the following circumstances applies:
- The participant is fleeing prosecution, custody, or confinement after conviction under state or federal law; or
- The participant is a probation or parole violator under state of federal law; or
- The participant has information that is necessary for the officer to conduct official duties.

Refer all requests of this nature to State Staff.

Legal Reference: 18 USC 1073; 441 IAC 9.10(16)
See Iowa Department of Health and Human Services Employees' Manual I-C

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

IMMINENT HARM

The FaDSS program may release information to prevent imminent harm to a person. Definition: "Any conditions or practices which are such that a danger exists which could reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical harm." Immediate threat: means conditions that, if no response were made, would be more likely than not to result in sexual abuse, injury or death to a child.

When it is believed a family participant intends to harm someone, the intended victim, the policy, or both may be warned. Disclose only the name, identification, and location of the person and the details of the person's plan of harm. FaDSS personnel should consult the FaDSS Coordinator for further information.

Legal Reference (441 IAC 175.21)

PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

The FaDSS program may release information to the officials who perform auditing or a similar activity, e.g., review of expenditure reports or financial review, or family file review conducted in connection with administration of the program by State staff. These officials may request and receive confidential information for the FaDSS grantee as necessary in the performance of the duties assigned to their position. If any other governmental agency seeks information for auditing purposes, please contact State Staff.

Legal Reference (441 IAC 175.21)

SHARING WITHIN A FADSS GRANTEE ORGANIZATION

1. FaDSS grantees may share information within their FaDSS program without a release of information from the family. The sharing of this information may only be for purposes of effectively providing FaDSS services.
2. FaDSS grantees may share information within their FaDSS organization without a release of information from the family for program administration purposes. FaDSS grantees may share information among programs within their FaDSS organization with a release of information from the family.
3. FaDSS grantees may share information within the FaDSS program between FaDSS grantee agencies for purposes of transferring families, collaborating to provide services, etc.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

RELEASES OF INFORMATION

FaDSS Specialists must always adhere to strict confidentiality protocol to protect the sensitive information of families served in the program. FaDSS Supervisors are responsible for providing adequate training on confidentiality and should ensure that all FaDSS personnel are knowledgeable about confidentiality requirements outlined in **Policy 3.0 — Confidentiality.**

FaDSS Specialists often collaborate with and refer families to other service providers. A family record must contain a valid release of information when legally required. To be considered valid, the release must provide written authorization for one party to exchange information with a second party. Written authorization must be obtained on an individual basis using the HHS template provided.

Releases will be completed accurately and completely with all fields completed as required.
A copy of the signed release will be provided to the family and uploaded to Iowa FaDSS.

COORDINATED INTAKE AND COLLABORATIVE SERVICE PROVISION

FaDSS programs participating in a coordinated intake or collaborative service provision process must have prior approval from HHS. Once approved, the FaDSS program will have a formal agreement. The agreement will include detailed information about release of information forms. Programs participating may have prospective participants sign a single release of information form that identifies all participating programs.

Release for coordinated intake will not be valid for more than 90 days. This type of release of information will be for the limited purpose of placement and enrollment in a program/service via a coordinated intake process. Release of information for collaborative service provision is more ongoing in nature and the agreement will specify the length the release is valid; however, the release will not be valid for more than one year. All other elements of the release that are stated in this standard must be followed. The participant must be informed they are signing a release with all participating entities.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

TRANSFERRING FAMILIES (FaDSS POLICY 5.0)

GENERAL INFORMATION

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that enrolled families are offered and provided transfer services from one grantee to another. Transfers can occur during pre-enrollment or enrollment. The new grantee must accept the transfer regardless of capacity.

Families who are in "recruitment status" or on the waiting list and move to another grantee service area should be transferred in the same status to the receiving agency. If a family is on a waiting list and moves, the receiving agency will add them to their waiting list according to the date they were originally referred to the FaDSS program. If a family is actively being recruited and moves to another service area, it is expected that the receiving agency will resume recruitment regardless of a waiting list.

Transfers from one grantee to another are not considered exits. Every effort should be made to ensure a seamless transfer between grantee agencies. Communication between the family and both Specialists (new and past) and the Coordinators of each FaDSS program is critical to ensuring continuity of services throughout the transfer. Communication between the FaDSS Specialists (new and past) and PROMISE JOBS workers (new and past) for families that are PROMISE JOBS participants is also critical throughout the transfer. There may be circumstances in which it is feasible for a family to retain the same Specialist with the same grantee.

Example: A family moves from one service area to another but the distance is not deemed significant. In this case, it may be appropriate for the current Specialist to continue to work with the family. The receiving grantee agency's FaDSS Coordinator will make the final decision, keeping the best interest of the family in mind. Coordinators should consult State Staff for guidance, as needed.

INITIATING A TRANSFER OF ENROLLED FAMILY

The current grantee serving the family initiates the transfer protocol by completing the following steps:

1. Confirm that the enrolled family is moving from the current grantee's service area to another grantee's service area and wishes to continue receiving FaDSS services.
2. The FaDSS Coordinator at the transferring grantee agency will contact the receiving grantee agency's FaDSS Coordinator to initiate the transfer and exchange contact information for the transferring Specialist and receiving Specialist.
3. State Staff will reassign the family to the receiving grantee agency in Iowa FaDSS.

Serving Families

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4. The transferring Specialist will communicate with the new Specialist to:
   a. Coordinate a joint visit with the enrolled family and the new Specialist. If a joint visit is not feasible, a joint phone call is allowable to ensure a warm hand-off; and
   b. Provide the new Specialist with relevant information to ensure continuity of services to the family until the transfer is complete.
5. The transferring Specialist will ensure that all data entry requirements are up to date prior to initiating the transfer. The transferring Specialist will not complete Family Exit Information because the family is not exiting the program.
6. If a paper file exists, the file must be sent to the new grantee. The current grantee may copy the family file for their records if desired (not required). Please note that paper files will be very rare as all documentation has been stored electronically since 2020.

FINALIZING A TRANSFER OF ENROLLED FAMILY

The receiving grantee finalizes the transfer protocol by completing the following steps:

1. If the transfer occurs during the month of eligibility review, ensure that the transferred family meets all FaDSS eligibility requirements (see **FaDSS Policy 2.0 - Eligibility**).
2. The FaDSS Coordinator at the receiving grantee agency must contact State Staff to inform them of the pending transfer. Include the family name, county of residence and assigned Specialist.
3. If the family is a PROMISE JOBS participant, the receiving Specialist must inform PROMISE JOBS of the transfer to the new grantee via email and communicate with PROMISE JOBS to ensure that FaDSS remains on the FIA.

RECRUITING TRANSFERRED FAMILIES (ENROLLED)

Beginning the date the family record is transferred in Iowa FaDSS, the following procedures must be followed and documented in Iowa FaDSS:

1. Multiple attempts to meet with the family, using a variety of communication modes, are made. This may include Optional Form Letters 8 and/or B.
2. If, after one month of recruitment, the receiving Specialist is unable to complete a home visit with the family, Form Letter 9 must be sent issuing a date by which the family must complete a home visit. The date of the letter must be at least 10 days from the date the letter is mailed.

Serving Families

SECTION **2**

3. When the date issued on Form Letter 9 passes, the FaDSS Coordinator should notify State Staff and the FaDSS Coordinator of the originating grantee agency. State Staff will transfer the record back to the original grantee agency.
4. The original grantee agency will send Form Letter 10 notifying the family of their exit from the FaDSS program and will complete the exit information in Iowa FaDSS.

SERVICE PROVISION FOR TRANSFERRED FAMILIES

When initiating services with a transferred family, the receiving grantee agency must:

1. Review the family record thoroughly
2. Ensure that the service intensity established by the grantee that transferred the family remains in place until such time as the new grantee can complete at least one home visit and has staffed the family to determine the appropriate level of service intensity going forward with input from the family. The staffing will also include discussions related to initial family engagement activities such as screening and assessment.

PROCESS FOR TRANSFER OF PRE-ENROLLED FAMILIES

When transferring a pre-enrolled family, the current grantee must:

1. Confirm that the pre-enrolled family is moving from the transferring grantee's service area to another grantee's service area and wishes to proceed with services. Specify with the family whether they will remain in or be placed in recruitment or remain on a waiting list for services.
2. The FaDSS Coordinator at the current grantee will contact the new grantee's FaDSS Coordinator to initiate the transfer and exchange contact information for the family.
3. The current Specialist will ensure that all data entry requirements are up to date by the effective date of the transfer. The transferring Specialist will not change the family to non-enrolled.
4. The FaDSS Coordinator at the new grantee must contact State staff to inform them of the pending transfer. Include the family name, county of residence, assigned specialist and effective date of the transfer.
5. State Staff will reassign the pre-enrolled family to the new grantee in Iowa FaDSS.
6. If the family is a PROMISE JOBS participant, the new Specialist must inform PROMISE JOBS of the transfer to the new grantee via email and communicate with PROMISE JOBS.
7. If the family is in recruitment, eligibility must be determined within 30 days, however, up to 60 days may be granted if the family needs additional time to provide documentation.

Serving Families

HOME VISITOR SAFETY

SECTION **2**

Safety is an ongoing priority in any situation that FaDSS Specialists may encounter. Specialists are responsible for their own safety and should be aware of their needs and react accordingly. Specialists should communicate the expectations for creating a safe environment with the family during the enrollment visit as part of reviewing the **FaDSS Family Handout**.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Prior to conducting a home visit, ensure that someone knows where you are going by keeping a log, using a sign-in board, or adding the visit to a shared calendar.
- Bring a charged cell phone with you to the visit.
- Do not enter the home until an adult answers the door and lets you in. Specialists should never be alone with a child(ren) in the home.
- Upon entering the home, take mental note of the exits, other people in the home, any other safety hazards, etc.
- Act as a guest in the home, take the family's lead, and ask the family if you have questions about their home or specific preferences (shoes on off, do they have pets, where to conduct the visit, etc.)

Specialists are not expected to conduct home visits if:

- There is evidence of drug use, sales or manufacture
- There are weapons visible
- Any individual is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs to the extent that the home visitor feels unsafe
- Any individual is exhibiting signs of aggression
- Violence or a threat is directed toward the Specialist
- There is evidence of other illegal activity that makes the Specialist feel unsafe or uncomfortable

FIREARMS & WEAPONS

While it is legal to have a firearm or weapon in the home, its casual display during a home visit is inappropriate. Specialists should ask the family to conceal the firearm or weapon in a safe place, out of sight, for the duration of the visit. If the family is not agreeable, the Specialist should leave the home immediately. Before scheduling another visit, ask the family to put the firearm or weapon in another room during your visit. If the family is not agreeable, visits may be scheduled in the Specialists' office or another public place where firearms and weapons are not allowed. If the family is not agreeable to this, after discussion with the Supervisor, the family should be exited from the program. Form Letter 10 must be provided to the family.

Serving Families
HOME VISITOR SAFETY

SECTION **2**

INTOXICATED FAMILY MEMBERS

If a family member is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs to the degree that the Specialist feels unsafe, the Specialist should end the visit and leave the home. Before scheduling another visit, discuss the issue with the family, offer resources, and review the expectations outlined in the **FaDSS Family Handout**. If the family is not agreeable to the expectations, after discussion with the Supervisor, the family should be exited from the program. Form Letter 10, must be provided to the family.

PETS

If a family has a pet that is exhibiting aggressive behavior to the extent that the Specialist feels unsafe, the Specialist should ask the family to contain the animal in a separate area for the duration of the visit. If the family is not agreeable, the Specialist should leave the visit. Prior to scheduling another visit, the Specialist should request that the animal be contained during the visit or the visit should be conducted in the Specialist's office or another public place.

Pests such as mice, rats, bugs, fleas, bedbugs, lice and mites are not considered a direct threat to Specialists. While Specialists may use precautionary measures to mitigate the transport of pests, they should not be factors in consistently limiting in-person visits. However, Specialists may request temporary exceptions to **Policy 10.0 – Virtual Visits** with support of their Supervisor from State Staff.

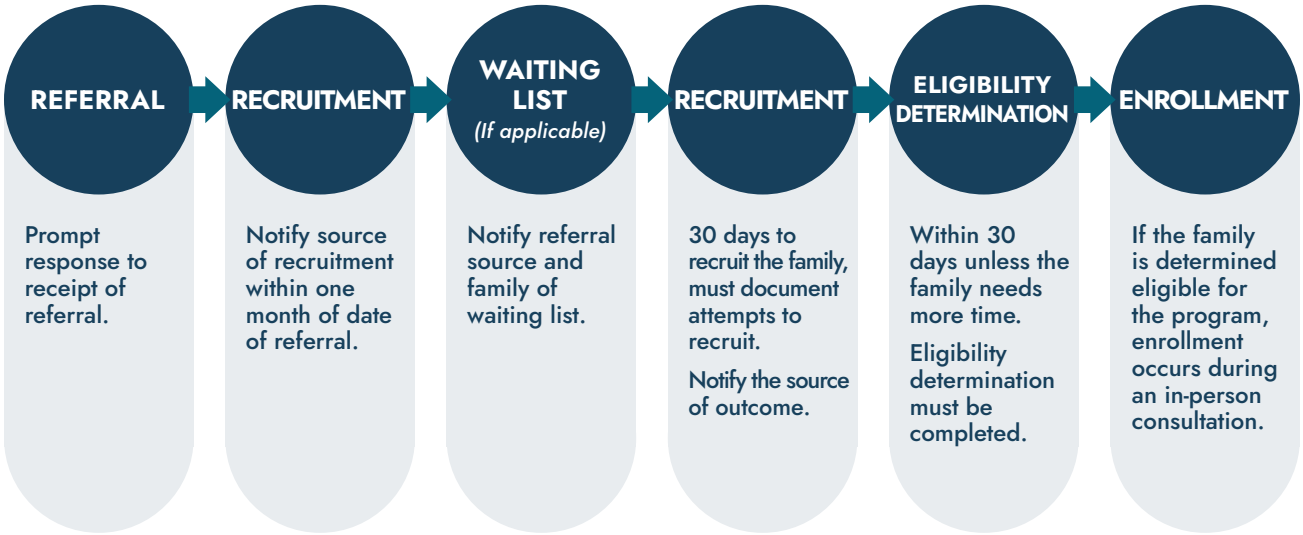
ILLNESS

The best way to prevent the transmission of disease is to ensure that staff are fully vaccinated. If family members report being diagnosed with TB, measles, mumps or rubella, please contact State Staff who will verify restrictions for that family with public health.

Other issues may arise that should be addressed with the Supervisor in consultation with State Staff.

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION **3**



REFERRALS TO THE FaDSS PROGRAM (FaDSS POLICY 1.0)

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that all referrals be accepted by the grantee, added to the waiting list (if applicable), reviewed for eligibility according to **FaDSS Policy 2.0 – Eligibility**, and recruited for enrollment into the FaDSS program.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Referrals to the FaDSS program must be addressed in a prompt and responsive manner. Generally, the referral process should last no more than one month from the date the referral is received by the FaDSS program. Communication with the referral source is essential and should occur regularly during the referral process. Specialists are responsible for notifying the referral source of the outcome of the referral (family enrolled, family was placed on a waiting list, family declined services, etc.) within one month of the receipt of the referral.

If recruitment efforts extend beyond one month, Specialists must notify the referral source and provide documentation of the need to extend recruitment efforts in Iowa FaDSS.

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION **3**

PROMISE JOBS REFERRALS

PROMISE JOBS referrals should follow the referral process outlined in the document below (PROMISE JOBS REFERRAL TO FaDSS). Upon receiving a referral, FaDSS personnel should communicate with PROMISE JOBS and provide regular updates throughout the referral and recruitment process. The FaDSS personnel should acknowledge the receipt of the referral within 5 business days. If a family is referred from a source other than PROMISE JOBS and the family is participating in PROMISE JOBS, the FaDSS personnel should communicate the information to PROMISE JOBS within seven days of the receipt of the referral. If the family is placed on a waiting list for services, FaDSS personnel should notify PROMISE JOBS within 7 business days from the date the referral is received.

FaDSS personnel will follow the Expectations for Collaboration with PROMISE JOBS as outlined in **Section 11** of this manual. FaDSS personnel should follow the document below (PROMISE JOBS REFERRAL TO FaDSS) for communicating information to PROMISE JOBS, including the outcome of the referral. The communication should occur through email. Documentation of all communication related to the referral, including the date of the referral, source of the referral, and referral outcome must be documented in Iowa FaDSS.

NON-PROMISE JOBS REFERRALS

FaDSS personnel should communicate with non-PROMISE JOBS referral sources via email within the same time frames described above. Documentation of all communication related to the referral, including the date of the referral, source of the referral, and referral outcome must be documented in Iowa FaDSS.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Transmitting referral information through email requires the use of encryption.

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION **3**

1. PROMISE JOBS will email the following information to FaDSS.
PROMISE JOBS will attach the FIA to the referral email.
PROMISE JOBS will case note the referral.

Referral Date:	
Parent 1 Name:	**Parent 2 Name:**
Parent 1 SID#:	**Parent 2 SID#:**
Case#:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Additional FIA Responsible Family Members:	**Name:**
	SID#:
Immediate Needs/Concerns/Comments:	

2. FaDSS will complete enrollment within 30 days of the referral and will email PROMISE JOBS 1 of the following:

- <Client> was enrolled into FaDSS on <date.> FaDSS worker is <_____.>
- <Client> declined FaDSS on <date.>
- <Client> was not recruited into FaDSS due to <number> unsuccessful contact attempts.
- <Client> was placed on the FaDSS waiting list on <date.>
- FaDSS will notify PROMISE JOBS when family is enrolled or otherwise removed from the waiting list
- FaDSS will continue to recruit past 30 days to enroll <client> due to <reason.>
  (FaDSS will notify PROMISE JOBS when family is enrolled or when recruitment stops)

3. PROMISE JOBS will case note the approval/denial.

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION **3**

1. FaDSS will email PROMISE JOBS within 7 days of the referral to inform of the referral and verify SID #, case #, FIP status, and FIA responsible family members.
2. FaDSS will complete enrollment within 30 days of the referral and will email PROMISE JOBS 1 of the following:
   - <Client> was enrolled into FaDSS on <date.> FaDSS worker is <_____.>
   - <Client> declined FaDSS on <date.>
   - <Client> was not recruited into FaDSS due to <number> unsuccessful contact attempts.
   - <Client> was placed on the FaDSS waiting list on <date.>
     (FaDSS will notify PROMISE JOBS when family is enrolled or otherwise removed from the waiting list)
   - FaDSS will continue to recruit past 30 days to enroll <client> due to <reason.>
     (FaDSS will notify PROMISE JOBS when family is enrolled or when recruitment stops)
3. PROMISE JOBS will case note the referral and the approval/denial.

WAITING LIST FOR SERVICES (FaDSS POLICY 1.1)

When a FaDSS grantee does not have capacity to serve all families referred for services, the agency may need to operate on a waiting list.

A waiting list may only be implemented when a grantee is at or above 95% of their program capacity, as determined by the number of families served in the month prior, unless the following conditions are met:

- The grantee agency has a staff vacancy or is onboarding a new specialist (within 3 months of hire) who is not yet able to serve a full caseload, or
- Prior approval from State Staff is granted based on other circumstances

PROCESS

Grantees operating a waiting list must ensure that families are served in the most equitable manner. Grantees may not impose different waiting list policies and practices at the local level.

Grantees may only operate a waiting list within their service area if the service area as a whole is at or above 95% of the assigned program capacity. Grantees may not operate a waiting list for specific counties within their service area if they are not at 95% of their assigned program capacity for the service area as

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION **3**

a whole. If not at capacity, Grantees must assign families to the next available Specialist regardless of the family's county of residence.

Families placed on a county waiting list within the grantee's assigned service area must be served in the order of the date of referral regardless of the level of need of the family, language spoken, or other factors.

Upon receiving a referral, if the family is placed on a waiting list, the family and the referral source must be notified. Families must be provided with Form Letter 1 and provided with other community resources when placed on a waiting list.

When a family comes off the waiting list, the agency has 30 days to recruit the family. If the family is not responsive or cannot be reached within 30 days, the family must be sent Form Letter 2 before being removed from the waiting list due to no contact. If the family was not successfully recruited after being placed on the waiting list, Form Letter 3 must be sent to the family.

Specialists have 30 days from the date of contact with families who come off the waiting list to determine eligibility. If the family needs additional time to provide necessary eligibility documentation, an additional 30 days should be granted. If eligibility cannot be determined within 60 days of contacting the family when they come off the waiting list, the family will be removed from the waiting list. Form Letter 6 must be sent to the family.

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INITIAL PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY (FaDSS POLICY 2.0)

It is the policy of the FaDSS Program that a family is eligible for FaDSS services when all of the following conditions are met:

1. The Family has a gross income at or below 175% of the federal poverty level based on family size at the time of enrollment into the program
2. The family has a dependent child in the household
3. The family resides in Iowa
4. The required members of the family have a social security number or proof of application
5. The required members of the family are United States (U.S.) citizens or legal immigrants
6. The family meets one or more of the at-risk criteria established in Iowa Administrative Code 427-15.4(216A).

Eligibility should be determined at the time the family is eligible to receive services. If the grantee is operating on a waiting list for services, eligibility will be determined at the time the family comes off the waiting list.

A family is considered to be in recruitment status while the FaDSS program is verifying the above criteria. FaDSS Specialists have 30 days to determine eligibility. If a FaDSS Specialist is recruiting a referred family but is unable to contact them to schedule an enrollment home visit, the family must be sent Form Letter 2 if the family had previously been on the waiting list or Form Letter 4 if they had not previously been on a waiting list. The Form Letter provides a date by which the family needs to contact FaDSS in order to move forward with the eligibility determination process. If there continues to be no contact, families previously on the waiting list must be sent Form Letter 3; families not previously on the waiting list must be sent Form Letter 5. Families may not be identified as non-enrolled unless the appropriate Form Letter has been sent to the family. If the family needs more than 30 days to provide eligibility documentation, the family should be given additional time not to exceed 60 days.

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION **3**

FaDSS Specialists must complete the **Initial Eligibility Determination form** when determining family eligibility. The form must be documented in Iowa FaDSS upon completion of the eligibility determination. If a Specialist determines that the family does not meet all required eligibility criteria, the supervisor must review the information prior to notifying the family of the outcome. Families must be promptly notified of their eligibility determination. In addition to discussing the determination with the family, any family determined to be ineligible must be sent Form Letter 6 within 10 days of determination.

CATEGORICAL VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

If the family is receiving FIP cash assistance during the month of eligibility determination, the family is categorically eligible for the FaDSS program. If any required family members in the household are receiving FIP during the month of eligibility determination, all program eligibility criteria are met.

The Specialist is responsible for verifying FIP status and documenting the information on the **Initial Eligibility Determination form**.

Acceptable forms of FIP verification include:

- The monthly FIP list
- Confirmation from State Staff
- FIP Notice of Decision from HHS
- Confirmation from Eligibility Benefits Specialist (email or verbal)
- Confirmation from PROMISE JOBS (email or verbal)

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION 3

REQUIRED MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY

Certain members of the family are considered when determining specific eligibility criteria. **Table 1** outlines which family members must meet each eligibility criteria.

Table 1

Eligibility Criteria	Family Members Required to Meet Criteria
Income at or below 175% FPL	Both of the following: · Head of Household · HoH's spouse or 2nd parent of a 2-parent household (if applicable)
Dependent Child in the home	Head of Household must have at least one dependent child in the home
Resides in Iowa	Both of the following: · Head of Household · At least one dependent child
Social Security Number/ Citizenship	· Head of Household · At least one dependent child
At-risk criteria	One of the following: · Head of Household · HoH's spouse or 2nd parent of a 2-parent household (if applicable) · Dependent child

DEFINITIONS

Head of Household: Means the primary parent/caretaker/guardian of at least one dependent child in the home.

Dependent Child: Means a child related to the head of household by blood, marriage, guardianship or adoption.

The 2nd Parent of a 2-Parent Household: This is the other parent of any of the identified dependent children (they share a child with the Head of Household and are cohabitating). A 2-Parent Household is defined as both parents cohabiting.

The Cohabiting Spouse of the Head of Household: Is legally married to the Head of Household.

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Note: *FaDSS still considers Other Adults for purposes of providing FaDSS services, however, an Other Adult is not considered for purposes of determining Initial Program Eligibility unless it meets the definition of 2-Parent Household or cohabitating spouse.*

VERIFYING DEPENDENT CHILD IN THE HOME

Specialists will verify that the Head of Household has at least one dependent child using the approved document list below. A family may declare a dependent child if they reside in the home some of the time. Residing in the home means that the dependent stays overnight at the same home as the Head of the Household at least some of the time. The Head of Household having supervised visits with the dependent does not meet the criteria for having a dependent child. A child is considered a dependent child until the age of 18. An 18-year-old is considered a dependent child if they are a full-time student in a secondary school (or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training) and reasonably expected to complete the program within the current school year. Students with disabilities may be enrolled in secondary school through graduation or age 21, whichever comes first and are considered dependent children while they are enrolled in secondary school.

Approved Documentation for Verifying Dependent Child

- SNAP list showing dependent child on the case
- Confirmation from Eligibility Benefits Specialist (email or verbal)
- SNAP Notice of Decision from HHS showing child on the case
- Child's birth certificate (parent must be listed)
- Immigration paperwork for legal immigrants may serve to replace birth certificate. A certificate of foreign birth or non-U.S. birth certificate may be used for verifying dependent child if parent is listed.
- School Records
- A letter from the child's doctor or school, if it includes: the child's name, child's date of birth, the name of the child's custodial parent
- Last year's Tax Return if children were claimed
- Medicaid documents for the year in question
- Current Case Plan from Iowa HHS
- Government Records
- Shelter placement notices including the parent and child's names
- A statement from a homeless shelter, signed by a caseworker, if it includes: the child's name, the child's date of birth, the time period the child lived in the shelter, the name of the child's custodial parent.
- Court documents
- Child Support documents

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION **3**

VERIFYING SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS & CITIZENSHIP

FaDSS Specialists must see approved documentation of having a social security number for all required family members on at least one of the approved verification documents listed below. The requirement for a social security number is waived for a child 120 calendar days old, or younger, if the family has applied to obtain a social security card and is able to show documentation of the application.

If there is more than one dependent child in the family, only one must show proof of social security number.

The FaDSS Specialist will document the date of verification and the name of the document(s) verified on the FaDSS Initial Eligibility Determination form.

- Social Security Card
  - Option 1: no restrictions (name and SSN).
  - Option 2: "Valid for Work Only with DHS/INS Authorization" and Option 3: "Not Valid for Employment". If the Required family members have a card with one of these qualifiers, additional documentation of current legal status is needed. Specialist will verify from Approved Documentation for Legal Immigrant Status Verification list below.
- A valid, current Driver's License or State-issued Photo Identification Card (ID)
- A valid, current U.S. Passport
- Birth Certificate
  - Only U.S issued birth certificates are considered acceptable documentation.
  - Birth Certificates presented as Social Security Number documentation must match the individual's last name or have identifying documentation when different, such as a marriage certificate.
- Payroll stub or W-2 showing the SSN
- Military ID card showing the SSN
- Any official document or form issued by the Social Security Administration that contains the social security number.
- Signed Federal Tax Return Form 1040 and related forms that have been submitted to the IRS
  - 1099a & W-4s are acceptable if the number does not begin with a "9", as that would be an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number reserved for certain nonresidents, their spouses and dependents who cannot get an SSN. Any number not starting with a "9" is a valid SSN.
- Signed State of Iowa 1040 tax return and related forms that have been submitted to the State of Iowa Department of Revenue.

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- Veterans Universal Access Identification
- Bank statement with Supplemental Security Income Automated Clearing House (SSI ACH) deposit which includes the last four digits of the Social Security Number.
- Iowa Department of Health and Human Services Direct Payment Register
- A printout from the IRS (Internal Revenue Service), showing the Social Security Number or in-person visual confirmation of the person's **IRS account**
- Selective Service Registration Acknowledgement
  - Can verify by SSN at **https://www.sss.gov/verify/**
- Military discharge papers, provided it includes the needed social security number
- Form N-550 or N-570, Certificate of Naturalization
- Form N-560 of N-561, Certificate of Citizenship

VERIFYING U.S. CITIZENSHIP OR LEGAL IMMIGRANT STATUS

Verification of social security number also meets the verification of U.S. Citizenship/Legal Immigrant Status. The FaDSS Specialist will document the date of verification on the **Initial Eligibility Determination form**.

When a required family member is a foreign national not authorized for employment, they must present an approved form of documentation listed below. If the family cannot provide documentation to verify their Legal Immigrant Status, they do not meet eligibility criteria. For examples and additional information about each type of document, visit the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) **Commonly Used Immigration Documents** webpage.

Approved Documentation for Legal Immigrant Status Verification:

- Form I-94, Arrival/Departure Record
  - Must be unexpired
- Form I-551, Permanent Resident Card (PRC) or Temporary I-551, Permanent Resident Stamp
  - PRC remains valid until the expiration date shown on the card unless otherwise noted through an automatic extension of the validity period of the PRC as indicated on a Form I-797, Notice of Action, or in a Federal Register notice.
- Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (EAD)
  - Cards remain valid until the expiration date shown on the card unless otherwise noted through an extension of the validity period of the EAD indicated on a Form I-797, Notice of Action, or in a Federal Register notice, or in an individual notice sent to a beneficiary.

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION **3**

- Form I-571, Refugee Travel Document
  - Must be unexpired
- Form I-327, Permit to Re-Enter
  - Must be unexpired

Note: *The FaDSS program does NOT report undocumented households to any entity. A household's status is held confidential and not shared with other parties without family consent.*

VERIFYING IOWA RESIDENCY

FaDSS Specialists should consider the family a resident of Iowa if the family provides an address in Iowa or they self-declare that they are living in Iowa voluntarily and intend to make a home in the state. The FaDSS Specialist will document the date of declaration on the FaDSS **Initial Eligibility Determination form**.

VERIFYING AT-RISK CRITERIA

At least one of the at- risk criteria below, established in Iowa Administrative Code 427-15.4(216A), will be documented on the FaDSS **Initial Eligibility Determination form**. The family may self-declare the at-risk criteria that pertain to their family.

- Less than a high school education
- Lacks basic literacy skills
- Never been employed
- Multiple episodes of employment lasting less than one year
- Currently unemployed
- Members are homeless or nearly homeless
- Members outside the nuclear family are in residence
- One or more children in the household were born while the parent was on public assistance
- One or more children in the household are identified as having special needs
- Household includes an alcoholic or substance abuser
- Household includes a member with a record of incarceration
- Head of Household was a teenager at birth of first child
- Head of Household has a disability or chronic illness (mental or physical)

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

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- Head of Household is a part of current victim of child abuse or domestic violence
- Head of Household grew up in a household with alcohol or substance abuse
- Head of Household grew up in a household that received public assistance
- Household has experienced multiple episodes of receipt of public assistance
- Household has been on public assistance for three or more years
- Geographic location (rural area)
- Lack of employment opportunity
- Lack of available services
- Lack of transportation

VERIFYING FAMILY INCOME AT INITIAL ELIGIBILITY

SNAP Benefits

If any required family members in the household received SNAP benefits in the current month or the month prior to eligibility determination, the family meets income eligibility for FaDSS services. Acceptable forms of verification include:

- Confirmation from State Staff
- SNAP Notice of Decision from HHS

If the household is not receiving SNAP food assistance, the FaDSS Specialist must determine whether the last 30 days of income of the required family members is at or below 175% federal poverty level based on family size. The income of dependent children is not counted. While families must provide verification of only one dependent child's social security number, all members of the family residing in the home are counted when determining the federal poverty level based on family size.

If, after completing the 30-day lookback, the family does not meet income eligibility, a three-month lookback should be conducted, as appropriate, based on information provided by the family.

Table 2 outlines the countable sources of gross income (before taxes) considered when determining income eligibility. Families must declare all sources of income for consideration. Families must provide verification of all countable income.

Types of verification include:

- Employer's Statement of Earnings (Form 470-2844)
- Pay stubs
- Award letters

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION **3**

- Self-employment form (Form 470-5418)
- Legal documents
- Bank statements
- Family's records of tip income

Table 2

Countable Income Source	Description/Details
Adoption Subsidy	Payments made to adoptive parents. Count in the month received.
Alimony Payments	Payments made to a spouse or former spouse following a separation or divorce. Count in the month received.
Annuities	An insurance contract designed to provide income at retirement. These should be averaged over the period of time they are intended to cover. Count in the month received.
Blood Plasma Sale	Count as earned income, the blood plasma center is considered the employer.
Boarding Home Income	Income from a boarding house is considered self-employment. Count in the month received.
Bonus	Only consider bonuses from employment if the person is employed at the time they receive it and there is a way to predict the month it will be received. Count in the month received.
Bottle and Can Refund	Money obtained from collecting and refunding or selling bottles or cans is counted. Exclude money obtained from returning bottles or cans purchased by the household. Count in the month received.
Child Support Income (including back pay)	Count voluntary and court-ordered child support payments. Only include back pay if it was received for more than one month.
Disability Insurance Payments (private)	Payments from a private company available to an employee that incurs a disability. Count short and long-term disability benefits. Count in the month received.
Income from Employment	Includes paid internships, self-employment, military pay, seasonal employment and work study. Count in the month received.

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION 3

Table 2	
Countable Income Source	**Description/Details**
Pensions, Retirement Income, Railroad Retirement	Count payments received with the exclusion of early withdrawals, which are considered non-recurring lump sums. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Rental Income	Income from rental properties is considered self-employment. Count in the month received.
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	Count monthly SSI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)	Count SSDI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Strike Benefits	Payments to workers on strike.
Trust Payment	Count in the month received.
Unemployment Insurance Benefits	Count in the month received.
Veterans Payments **VA Service-Connected Disability Pension** **VA Non-Service-Connected Disability Pension**	Count in the month received. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Workers' Compensation	Count in the month received.

No Income

If the family reports none of the types of income outlined in Table 2, the FaDSS Specialist must have the required family members complete the **Certification of Zero Income form** and document this on the **Initial Eligibility Form**. Specialist will upload the completed certification form in Iowa FaDSS in the Intake & Eligibility Document section.

Documentation

Specialists should upload the completed **Initial Eligibility Determination form** into the Documents section in Iowa FaDSS. Do not upload documentation used to determine eligibility such as pay stubs, SSN cards, etc.

Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION **3**

DETERMINATION OF INELIGIBILITY

If a family is determined to be ineligible for the program, the Supervisor must review the determination for accuracy prior to notifying the family. If, after review, the determination of ineligibility stands, the family must be promptly notified of the decision by the Specialist. In addition to discussing the determination with the family, any family determined to be ineligible must be sent Form Letter 6.

EXCEPTIONS TO POLICY

Unique situations may present themselves when determining eligibility for the program. Specialists are encouraged to seek guidance from supervisors and State Staff. In some situations, exceptions to policy may be granted at the discretion of State Staff.

Enrollment

SECTION **4**

Enrollment visits must be conducted in-person through a home visit, or in some instances a quality visit occurring at the office or public space. Enrollment visits may not be conducted virtually. Enrollment visits should be focused on building rapport with the family and going over necessary notices and paperwork.

Specialists will communicate program expectations, rights, and responsibilities to families at the enrollment visit. Specialists will go over the Family Participation Agreement and provide the **FaDSS Family Handout** to every family. A general timeline for completion of the program should be determined with the family and documented in the **Contact Narrative** in Iowa FaDSS.

DOCUMENTATION

During or following the enrollment visit, Specialists should enter thorough and accurate documentation into the following tabs in Iowa FaDSS:

- Family Information at Enrollment
- Contact Information
- Family Members

The enrollment visit Contact Narrative should include an explanation of the following:

- A summary of the program including core components was provided to the family
- The eligibility criteria, eligibility review time frames, and family participation agreement were explained to the family
- Confidentiality requirements of the program including the agreement with PROMISE JOBS and Income Maintenance
- Mandatory reporter requirements were explained to the family, including times when confidentiality may be waived
- Anticipated timeline for program completion

Electronic signatures should be obtained on forms, whenever possible. Documents completed during the enrollment visit should be uploaded into the Documents tab in Iowa FaDSS under the appropriate folder.

The Intake & Eligibility folder should include the **Initial Eligibility Determination form**, Intake Form (if utilized) and Specialist Checklist (optional). Family Consent should include any agency specific releases, the Participation Agreement and other Releases of Information.

SECTION
5

Assessment & Screening

A core component of the FaDSS program model is the use of assessment and screening tools. Identified tools are utilized with families to provide intentional self-reflection and to inform goal-setting and service delivery.

At minimum, families are assessed for general family functioning, domestic violence and child development for children ages 0-5.

In some instances, a family may decline a required screening or assessment or it may not be relevant or appropriate to screen the family. Specialists are responsible for documenting this, as well as the outcome of any completed screening or assessment tool, in the contact note in Iowa FaDSS.

During the grant application process, all FaDSS grantees identify the assessment and screening tools they will utilize as chosen from the Selected Assessment and Screening Tools for Use in the Family Development and Self-Sufficiency program (Menu).

Specialists should tailor their approaches to screening and assessment of adult education and employment, basic needs and services, and health, mental health and substance abuse issues according to the needs of participating families. Formal and informal assessments may be used depending on the specific criteria outlined in the grantee application or the families' unique situation.

The timeframe and process for administering the assessment tools are below. These are minimum criteria and assessments may be done more frequently as appropriate for the family. Child Development Screenings should be completed as directed in the tool's instructions depending on the child's age. EcoMaps should be reviewed annually with the family to assess changes in the family's support network and environment. Domestic Violence Screen may be offered to the family again when they begin a new relationship throughout enrollment. See the following table for more information.

See the following table for more information.

Assessment & Screening

SECTION **5**

Timeframes	Screening or Assessments	Process	Documentation Guidance
Within 60 days of enrollment	Entry Self-Sufficiency Matrix	SSM: Specialist will assess the family in the 15 domains through answering a series of Yes or No questions. This will provide a numeric indicator for each domain. This will illustrate potential areas for focus and assist in evaluating progress.	In the Self Sufficiency Matrix tab, the Specialist will complete the assessment by answering each question. The numeric indicators are defined as 1- in crisis, 2- vulnerable, 3- safe, 4- building capacity, and 5- empowerment. This matrix will lock on the 60th day after enrollment.
	General Family Functioning	Specialists will introduce the process or tool designed to assess the family holistically. This may include evaluating systems and relationships that impact the family. **Approved Tools:** · Eco Map · Timeline · Genogram	A copy of the completed tool will be uploaded into the Assessment folder within the **Documents tab**. In each **Contact Detail**, the Specialist will mark either Yes or No if a General Family Function assessment was completed. In the **Narratives section** of the **Contact Detail**, Specialists will write a narrative description of the assessment process including which tool(s) were introduced/completed and results; how the results inform goal setting, referrals and advocacy; or if applicable, a rationale for not completing or delaying completion of a tool.

Assessment & Screening

SECTION **5**

Timeframes	Screening or Assessments	Process	Documentation Guidance
Within 90 days of enrollment	Domestic Violence Screening	Within 90 days of enrollment, Specialists will ask the family to complete a Domestic Violence self assessment as appropriate. DV screening is not necessary if the head of household has already self-disclosed or has not been in a relationship for the past 6 months. After screening, provide the family with information on the results and offer referrals as needed. **Approved Tool** · The Relationship Assessment Tool	A copy of the tool will be uploaded into the Assessment subfolder within the Documents Tab on Iowa FaDSS. In the Contact Details, the Specialist will select Yes, No, Self-Reported, No - Not Applicable or No - Declined in regards to completion of the Domestic Violence Screen. In the **Narratives section** of the Contact Detail, Specialists will write a narrative description of the assessment process including which tool(s) were introduced/completed and results; how the results inform goal setting, referrals and advocacy; or if applicable, a rationale for not completing or delaying completion of a tool.
Within 120 days of enrollment	Child Development Screening	Within 120 days, the Specialist will support the family in using a Child Development Screening for their children that are 5 ½ or younger. Introduce the tool and ask the family to complete the assessment(s). After assessment, provide family information on the results and offer referrals as needed. If the family is engaged with another service provider who has completed screening, the Specialist may obtain a copy with a proper release of information. **Approved Tool:** · ASQ	A copy of the score sheet will be uploaded into the Assessment subfolder within the **Documents tab** on Iowa FaDSS. In the Contact Details, the Specialist will select Yes, No, No - Declined, No - Not Applicable (and the reason for marking N/A) or Obtained. In the **Narratives section** of the Contact Detail, Specialists will write a narrative description of the assessment process including which tool(s) were introduced/completed and results; how the results inform goal setting, referrals and advocacy; if applicable, a rationale for not completing or delaying completion of a tool. If the tool was obtained by another service provider, indicate this in the narrative field.

Assessment & Screening

SECTION **5**

Timeframes	Screening or Assessments	Process	Documentation Guidance
Every 6 months after enrollment	Interim Self-Sufficiency Matrix	The Specialist will reassess the family through answering the same series of yes or no questions within the 15 domains on the Interim SSM. This will provide a numeric indicator for each domain. This will illustrate potential areas for focus and assist in evaluating progress.	In the **Self Sufficiency Matrix tab**, assess the family in the 15 domains within the Interim SSM. The numeric indicators are defined as 1- in crisis, 2- vulnerable, 3- safe, 4- building capacity, and 5- empowerment.
Within 30 days of Exit	Self-Sufficiency Matrix	Within 30 days of Exit, the Specialist will reassess the family through answering the series of Yes or No questions within the 15 domains on the Exit SSM.	In the **Self Sufficiency Matrix tab**, assess the family in the 15 domains within the Exit SSM. This matrix will be locked 30 days following exit. The numeric indicators are defined as 1- in crisis, 2- vulnerable, 3- safe, 4- building capacity, and 5- empowerment.

PREPARING FOR A VISIT

Specialists and Coordinators will have various ways of staying organized before and after visits depending on personal preferences. State Staff have a provided an optional **Home Visit Guide** that can be used to prepare before a visit to identify assessments that are due, planned activities or other follow up from the previous visits. During the meeting, the same tool would be used to keep notes during the meeting such as updates from the family, goal setting and activities completed. After the visit, the Specialist can document the next steps and follow-up items. These notes will assist when documenting the visit in Iowa FaDSS.

SECTION
6

Goal Setting

A core component of the FaDSS program is the use of science-informed goal pursuit. The goal setting model emphasizes the importance of helping the family identify their motivation, build their capabilities and skills, and create opportunities for change.

FaDSS Specialists work with each family to identify and prioritize their goals. Tapping into the family's "why" and identifying the reason the goal is important to them helps identify their motivation for change. Planning ahead for internal and external barriers will aid the family in their successful completion of their action steps and goals.

Specialists use a non-directive, family-led approach to goal setting using the FaDSS-specific goal-setting tools which include:

- **Stepping Stones to Family Success**
- **My Pathway**
- **My Goal Plan**
- **Potholes & Detours**

Goal setting tools have been translated into Spanish and are available on the **FaDSS Contractor Resource Page**. All family goal-setting tools must be printed in color.

The FaDSS model of goal pursuit includes four steps:

1. **Goal —** identify what is important to the family and help them visualize how their life might be different if they accomplished the goal
2. **Plan —** develop a detailed plan including timeframes and achievable action steps for achieving the goal
3. **Do —** use reminders and personal supports for accountability
4. **Review and Revise —** review goals with the family to celebrate successes and modify goals as needed

FaDSS Specialists introduce the goal-setting framework to families in the first few home visits to help familiarize families with the process. Goals should be set, reviewed, or revised at nearly every home visit. See the table below for guidance on the timeframes for using the various goal-setting tools.

Goal Setting

SECTION **6**

DESCRIPTION OF GOAL-SETTING TOOLS

Stepping Stones to Family Success

This is a self-assessment tool that helps the family identify areas in which they are thriving, have a need, or are in crisis. Families complete this tool to help explore potential goals within the 15 domains of self-sufficiency. For tips to use the **Stepping Stones to Family Success**, see the **Goal Setting Tips** handout on the **FaDSS Contractor Resources Page**.

My Pathway

This tool is used to map out longer term goals and to identify the steps needed to achieve them. This tool can also help a family break down a broad goal into smaller goals with defined action steps.

My Goal Plan

This tool is used to assist the family in visualizing how their life would be different if they met their goal, which helps to tap into their underlying motivation for change. This tool identifies the goal and what specific steps they can take to reach that goal. Specialists use this tool initially and on an ongoing basis to engage the family in meaningful goal pursuit.

Potholes & Detours

This tool is used to help the family identify what might get in the way of success, or what has gotten in the way in the past, and possible actions the family can take to prevent or address these issues. This tool can be used right away when goals are set to proactively plan for potholes and possible detours to keep the family on track. This tool could also be used with families who are stuck to help identify solutions for reaching their goals.

Goal Setting

SECTION **6**

Timeframes	Process with Families	Documentation Guidance
First 1 – 3 Visits	Specialists introduce the goal-setting process and tools to the family. Begin teaching the family the framework and skills needed for goal-setting. **Tools:** • **FaDSS Goal 4 It! Framework** • **4 Steps of Goal 4 It!**	In the goal-setting tab of the **Contact Narrative**, describe the introduction to goal-setting that was provided to the family and any tools you reviewed. Forms stay with the family.
By 4th Visit	Guide the family through the FaDSS Stepping Stones to Family Success and instruct the family to mark where they currently are in each area. Prepare the family for goal-setting by asking them to identify areas where they want to set a goal(s). **Tools:** • **FaDSS Stepping Stones to Family Success** • **My Pathway** (if appropriate) • **My Goal Plan** (if family is ready to proceed)	In the goal-setting tab of the **Contact Narrative**, describe the goal-setting tool(s) used during the visit and a summary of the process used with the family as well as any contextual details related to why the family chose the goal(s). During the visit, take notes so you can accurately document the details of the process of goal setting and the goals following the visit. Some Specialists choose to take a picture of the tools used to capture the goal, action steps and timeframes for the goal(s) the family set. If any goals are set, complete the Goals tab in Iowa FaDSS including the goal, actions steps, timeframes, person(s) responsible, etc. Forms stay with the family. Specialists should upload a picture of the initial Stepping Stones tool to Iowa FaDSS.
By 5th Visit	Review the FaDSS Stepping Stones to Family Success and guide the family through the goal-setting process. **Tools:** • **My Goal Plan** • **My Pathway** (if appropriate) • **Potholes & Detours** (if appropriate)	In the goal-setting tab of the **Contact Narrative**, describe the goal-setting tool(s) used during the visit and a summary of the process used with the family as well as any contextual details related to why the family chose the goal(s). During the visit, take notes so you can accurately document the details of the process of goal setting and the goals following the visit. Some Specialists choose to take a picture of the tools used to capture the goal, action steps and timeframes for the goal(s) the family set. If any goals are set, complete the Goals tab in Iowa FaDSS including the goal, actions steps, timeframes, person(s) responsible, etc. Forms stay with the family. Specialists should upload a picture of the initial Stepping Stones tool to the Documents tab of Iowa FaDSS.

Goal Setting

SECTION **6**

Timeframes	Process with Families	Documentation Guidance
As Needed	Check in on goal progress at each visit. If the family seems stuck or you detect ambivalence about change, use the Potholes & Detours document to revisit the goal and determine if the goal(s) still apply or if they need to be modified or discontinued. If needed, guide the family through goal revision using the My Goal Plan document. Revisit the Family Stepping Stones tool as often as needed as family needs change or to help the family identify areas of focus for goal setting. **Tools:** • **Potholes & Detours** (if appropriate) • **My Goal Plan** (if appropriate) • **FaDSS Stepping Stones to Family Success** (if appropriate)	In the goal-setting tab of the **Contact Narrative**, describe the goal-setting tool(s) used during the visit and a summary of the process used with the family as well as any contextual details related to why the family chose the goal(s). During the visit, take notes so you can accurately document the details of the process of goal setting and the goals following the visit, including any changes to the existing goal(s). Some Specialists choose to take a picture of the tools used to capture the goal, action steps and timeframes for the goal(s) the family set. Document goal reviews or modifications in the Goals tab in Iowa FaDSS. Forms stay with the family.
Every 6 Months	Review FaDSS Stepping Stones to Family Success at least every six months during the eligibility review process. This should be done during an in-person home visit with the family (not a virtual visit). **Tools:** • **FaDSS Stepping Stones to Family Success**	In the goal-setting tab in the **Contact Narrative**, describe the goal-setting tool(s) used during the visit and a summary of the process used with the family. Upload a picture or copy of the FaDSS Stepping Stones to Family Success in the Documents tab of Iowa FaDSS. Forms stay with the family.

Activities and Skill Building

SECTION **7**

One of the ways FaDSS helps families is by strengthening core skills that are essential for work, school, and life. FaDSS Specialists utilize assessment and screening tools to help inform goal-setting. They also employ various tools that support goal attainment and skill development.

Specific skill building activities used in the FaDSS program support:

- Family Stability and Support
- Education and Training
- Career Development
- Financial Literacy
- Parenting and Child Development
- Self-Regulation Skills
- Life Skills
- Relationship Building

FaDSS provides various resources for Specialists to use with families. FaDSS provides various resources for Specialist to use with families including the **FaDSS Forward Staff Modules**. The tools and frameworks should be chosen that best fit the family's needs and their identified goals.

Activities may include the use of a set tool, a resource provided, a referral to an outside service provider or intentional conversation to increase awareness or education.

REFERRALS AND COLLABORATION

Referrals and Collaboration will assist families in connecting to the services needed to improve outcomes. It is important that Specialists remain knowledgeable about community resources and how to connect families to resources. Specialists should regularly collaborate and coordinate services with outside partners on behalf of families while fostering self-efficacy for families to advocate for and access the services they need. Collaboration contacts will be covered by appropriate Releases of Information as outlined in **Policy 3.0 Confidentiality**.

An initial contact is made with other programs/providers that the family is involved with, including referrals initiated by FaDSS, to share case planning strategies.

If a partnership is established, communication with other programs is ongoing, including notification of when a family exits the FaDSS program.

As needed, case planning addresses roles and responsibilities of each party to eliminate the potential for duplication of services and is clearly documented in the Iowa FaDSS contact record.

If a family is dual-enrolled in two home visitation programs, Specialists will collaborate with the other provider to clearly establish roles and responsibilities for each party to eliminate the potential for duplication of services.

Activities and Skill Building

SECTION **7**

Collaboration is defined as two or more service providers working together toward positive outcomes for the family. Roles and responsibilities should be complementary and avoid duplication. Contact between programs is regular, ongoing, and addresses family progress, barriers and strategies to improve family outcomes.

DOCUMENTING ACTIVITIES

Activities conducted with a family should be documented in the Narrative and Activities tabs within each Home Visit, Quality Visit, or Significant Contact note. Specialists should describe the activity completed with the family in the **Contact Narrative**. This description should include briefly how the Specialist facilitated the activity, how it was received and any next steps identified. Specialist will then check the appropriate box in the Activities section. Activities marked in the Activity tab must be included in the contact note narrative.

Categories of activities listed in Iowa FaDSS include:

- Financial Literacy
- Life Skills
- Parenting Skills
- Referrals
- Work Preparedness

Each of these categories are further broken down into specific activities. The Specialist should mark "yes" next to any activity conducted with a family during that contact with each identified family member.

Activity Outcomes

Some activities are tracked in Iowa FaDSS in the Activity Outcomes tab. Specialists should document these activities and related details as they occur in their work with the family. Specialists should not wait until the family is exiting the program to document activities in this tab. Narrative descriptions of these activities will be documented in the contact notes.

EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

Every month, Specialists should complete the Employment and Income tab in Iowa FaDSS to record the self-reported income for the family that month. Information will be collected for the Head of Household and Other Adult (if applicable). Income includes monthly wages, child support, FIP, General Assistance, and SSI/SSDI for adult household members. SSI/SSDI for children is not included in the monthly Income tab and is only documented in the Family Information at Enrollment and Exit. The Specialist will also indicate weekly hours and hourly wage if the family is employed.

Activities and Skill Building

SECTION **7**

Scheduled FIP Amount

If the family has received FIP, the amount they were originally receiving will be put in the Scheduled FIP amount monthly. The Actual FIP Received will be the amount the family received. If a family receives FIP at any point during enrollment, the Specialist will record the actual and scheduled amount through the remainder of their enrollment, both the scheduled and actual FIP throughout the family's enrollment.

Example: If a family enrolled in August without FIP but then receives a $361 FIP benefit in September, the Specialist would begin documenting the scheduled and actual FIP amount received throughout enrollment, even if the family goes off FIP before program exit. If this family were to go off FIP in February, the Specialist would document $361 for Scheduled FIP and $0 for actual FIP received each month. See figure below.

Employment & Income Status

Record Date	Employed? Head of Household	Employed? Other Adult	Total Income	Scheduled FIP Amount	Actual FIP Received	
Aug 2025						Actions
Jul 2025	Yes		$1,750.00	$361.00	$0.00	Actions
Jun 2025	Yes		$1,750.00	$361.00	$0.00	Actions
May 2025	Yes		$1,750.00	$361.00	$0.00	Actions
Apr 2025	Yes		$1,653.00	$361.00	$0.00	Actions
Mar 2025	Yes		$1,653.00	$361.00	$0.00	Actions
Feb 2025	Yes		$758.00	$361.00	$0.00	Actions
Jan 2025	No		$361.00	$361.00	$361.00	Actions
Dec 2024	No		$361.00	$361.00	$361.00	Actions
Nov 2024	No		$361.00	$361.00	$361.00	Actions
Oct 2024	No		$361.00	$361.00	$361.00	Actions
Sep 2024	No		$361.00	$361.00	$361.00	Actions
Aug 2024	No		$181.00			Actions

Documenting the original amount of FIP along with the actual amount received provides data utilized to measure the program's return on investment.

AFTERCARE PLANNING

Specialists will work with each family to identify their goals for self-sufficiency and a general timeline of completion through the process of aftercare planning. An aftercare plan will be developed with the family throughout enrollment, but with particular focus once an exit date is known.

Activities and Skill Building

SECTION **7**

The Specialist will discuss with the family their goals and work with the family to estimate how long they will be in the program. Aftercare planning will also include a plan for informal and formal supports that the family or program will put in place to ensure success after the family exits the program If appropriate, the Specialist will assist in explore suitable resources, contact service providers or complete other follow-up regarding the aftercare plan when possible, with proper releases.

Aftercare planning will be documented in the Timeline/Aftercare Planning section of the **Contact Narrative** for Home Visits and Quality Visits. Specialists will provide a brief description of the timeline along with the anticipated date of completion.

Below are some examples of documentation for the Timeline/Aftercare Planning narratives.

Example 1: Family Entering Program

Tiffany tentatively plans to exit the program in 12 months plus a three-month transition putting her exiting in May 2027. In that timeframe, Tiffany would like to obtain a part time job to bring in extra income to pay down debts. The family has past medical bills, credit card debt, and a car payment that they would like to have paid off before exiting. This will also help to eliminate the financial stress they are feeling with money being tight. While in the program, Tiffany will learn about community resources and assistance programs they might qualify for. Tiffany's eligibility review will be completed in September 2026.

Example 2: 6th Month Review

Tiffany's review has been completed and her family continues to be eligible for FaDSS. Tiffany would like to continue in the program while she works to increase the family's financial stability. Tiffany continues to make progress on paying off previous debt and is working part time. The family is receiving food assistance to help with the cost of food. Tiffany expects to exit May 2027.

Example 3: 6th Month Review, Over Income

Tiffany's review was completed and her family is no longer income eligible for FaDSS. They will move into a three-month transition starting next month with an exit date of May 2027. Tiffany is no longer eligible for food assistance but we have identified local pantries she is eligible for and knows how to reach out for assistance. She has the support of her husband to stay on track financially.

Example 4: Transition

This was month one of transition for Tiffany, we discussed her exit in May 2027. She states she is feeling confident with her financials and current support system. FDS will mail her some goal sheets that she can have to use to track her own goals in the future. Tiffany's last two visits will be conducted virtually.

Example 5: Final Month of Transition

This was the third and final month of transition for the family. We completed our last visit and they are ready for exit. Reminded the family they could still reach out anytime if they needed to. Tiffany knows if their family income changed in the future they could sign back up for the program if they needed. Family is feeling confident with their support network and feel positive about their future.

Activities and Skill Building

SECTION **7**

THIRD PARTY FUNDS (FaDSS POLICY 8.0)

Third party funds may be utilized in accordance with all FaDSS fiscal and program policies and requirements. Grantees must submit a third party funds proposal request to State Staff prior to implementing activities or utilizing funds.

Third party funds are funds expended by grantees to provide activities that promote self-sufficiency and goal attainment for groups of families enrolled in the FaDSS program. Grantees are not required to allocate third party funds from their FaDSS grant. However, if grantees designate third party funds, the monies must be utilized within the fiscal and program requirements of the FaDSS program. Grantees must submit plans 30 days in advance for prior approval. Grantees may not allocate more than 5% of their FaDSS budget to third-party funds.

Any funds deemed to have been spent inappropriately, illegally or in violation of fiscal and program requirements must be repaid by the grantee. Documentation, including attendance numbers, receipts and justification of payments, must be available in grantee records.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Funds may be spent on activities benefiting groups of families. Activities provided with funds must include justification as to how they will improve family outcomes in the domains of self-sufficiency. Payments directly to families are not allowable. Payments for goods provided to families are not allowable. Individuals participating in any activities supported by third party funds must be part of a currently enrolled FaDSS family at the time of the activity.

Examples of allowable group activities include:

- Family Night Activities
- Group Classes
  - Parenting
  - Financial Literacy
  - Healthy Relationships
  - Digital Literacy
  - Career Development
- Peer Support Groups
  - Teens
  - Fathers
  - Parenting
- Youth Groups
- Group Activities that Promote Healthy Parent-Child Interactions

Examples of allowable expenses include:

- Rental space for the event
- Instructor fees
- Class materials
- Supplies for activities
- A meal/snack for families attending

Eligibility Reviews

SECTION
8

ELIGIBILITY REVIEW (FaDSS POLICY 2.1)

It is the policy of the FaDSS Program that a family is eligible to continue receiving FaDSS services after a review of eligibility when all of the following conditions are met:

1. The Family has a gross income at or below 225% of the federal poverty level based on family size at the time of review
2. The family has a dependent child in the household
3. The family resides in Iowa
4. The required family members have U.S. Citizenship or legal status

Eligibility for the FaDSS program is reviewed every six months in accordance with **Table 1**. FaDSS Specialists must complete their review by the end of the month the review is due. If the family is unable to provide eligibility documentation within that period, the family will begin a three-month transition period beginning the first day of the month following the scheduled review. If a family's situation changes during the transition period, another eligibility review may be conducted, and the subsequent months of eligibility review will be adjusted to occur every six months thereafter.

FaDSS Specialists must complete the Eligibility Review fields in Iowa FaDSS. If a Specialist determines that the family does not meet all required eligibility criteria, the supervisor must review the information prior to notifying the family of the outcome. Families must be promptly notified of their eligibility determination by the Specialist. In addition to discussing the determination with the family, any family determined to be ineligible must be sent Form Letter 7.

Eligibility Reviews

SECTION 8

Table 1: Eligibility Review Months		
Month of Enrollment	**First Review**	**Second Review**
January	July	January
February	August	February
March	September	March
April	October	April
May	November	May
June	December	June
July	January	July
August	February	August
September	March	September
October	April	October
November	May	November
December	June	December

CATEGORICAL VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

If the family is receiving FIP cash assistance during the month of eligibility review, the family is categorically eligible for the FaDSS program. The Specialist is responsible for verifying FIP eligibility and documenting the information in Iowa FaDSS. Families receiving FIP and/or participating in the PROMISE JOBS program meet all program eligibility criteria.

Eligibility Reviews

SECTION 8

REQUIRED MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY

Certain members of the family are considered when determining specific eligibility criteria. **Table 2** outlines which family members must meet each eligibility criteria.

Table 2

Eligibility Criteria	Family Members Required to Meet Criteria
Income at or below 225% FPL	Both of the following: · Head of Household · HoH's spouse or 2nd parent of a 2-parent household (if applicable)
Dependent Child in the home	Head of Household must have at least one dependent child in the home
Resides in Iowa	Both of the following: · Head of Household · At least one dependent child
Legal Status	Both of the following: · Head of Household · At least one dependent child
Assessment of Program Continuation	Head of Household

DEFINITIONS

Head of Household: Means the primary parent/caretaker/guardian of at least one dependent child in the home.

Dependent Child: Means a child related to the head of household by blood, marriage, guardianship or adoption.

The **2nd Parent of a 2-Parent Household:** This is the other parent of any of the identified dependent children (they share a child with the Head of Household and are cohabitating). A 2-Parent Household is defined as both parents of a dependent child cohabiting.

The **Cohabiting Spouse of the Head of Household:** Is legally married to the Head of Household.

Note: *Though documentation is only needed for one child, all children are counted towards family size. FaDSS still considers Other Adults for purposes of providing FaDSS services, however, an Other Adult is not considered for purposes of determining Program Eligibility unless it meets the definition of 2-Parent Household or cohabitating spouse.*

Eligibility Reviews

SECTION **8**

VERIFYING DEPENDENT CHILD

The Head of the Household will self-declare at least one dependent child in the home. A family may declare a dependent child if the child resides in the home at least some of the time. The Head of Household having supervised visits with the dependent does not meet the criteria for having a dependent child. If a child is not in the home due to HHS involvement, the family will be given a set amount of time to reunify. See details below under Special Circumstances.

A child is considered a dependent child until the age of 18. An 18-year-old is considered a dependent child if they are a full-time student in a secondary school (or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training) and reasonably expected to complete the program within the current school year. Students with disabilities may be enrolled in secondary school through graduation or age 21, whichever comes first and are considered dependent children while they are enrolled in secondary training.

Special Circumstances

If, at review, the family does not have a child in the home due to HHS involvement, the family will be given six months (until the next eligibility review) to reunify. If the dependent child has not been reunified at that time, the family would begin a 3-month transition the month following review. If the circumstances change during the transition period and the child returns to the home, the Specialist will redetermine eligibility.

VERIFYING IOWA RESIDENCY

FaDSS Specialists should consider the family a resident of Iowa if the family provides an address in Iowa or they self-declare that they are living in Iowa and intend to make a home in the state.

VERIFYING U.S. CITIZENSHIP OR LEGAL IMMIGRANT STATUS

If a family shows verification of U.S. Citizenship or permanent residency at initial eligibility, continued verification at review is not needed. When a required family member is a foreign national not authorized for employment, they must present an approved form of documentation listed below. If the family cannot provide documentation to verify their Legal Immigrant Status, they do not meet eligibility criteria. For examples and additional information about each type of document, visit the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) **Commonly Used Immigration Documents** webpage.

Approved Documentation for Legal Immigrant Status Verification:

- Form I-94, Arrival/Departure Record
  - Must be unexpired

Eligibility Reviews

SECTION **8**

- Form I-551, Permanent Resident Card (PRC) or Temporary I-551, Permanent Resident Stamp
  - PRC remains valid until the expiration date shown on the card unless otherwise noted through an automatic extension of the validity period of the PRC as indicated on a Form I-797, Notice of Action, or in a Federal Register notice.
- Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (EAD)
  - Cards remain valid until the expiration date shown on the card unless otherwise noted through an automatic extension of the validity period of the EAD indicated on a Form I-797, Notice of Action, or in a Federal Register notice, or in an individual notice sent to a beneficiary.
- Form I-571, Refugee Travel Document
  - Must be unexpired
- Form I-327, Permit to Re-Enter
  - Must be unexpired

Families without legal immigrant status at the time of review are not eligible for three-month transition and will be exited at the end of the review month.

VERIFYING FAMILY INCOME AT REVIEW

FIP Cash Assistance

If any required family members in the household are receiving FIP or participating in PROMISE JOBS (FIA before FIP or curing a subsequent Limited Benefit Plan) during the month of eligibility review, the family is categorically eligible for FaDSS services. Acceptable forms of FIP verification include:

- The monthly FIP list
- Confirmation from State Staff after reviewing PJ Case
- FIP Notice of Decision from HHS
- Confirmation from Income Maintenance (email or verbal)
- Confirmation from PROMISE JOBS (email or verbal)

SNAP Benefits

If any required family members in the household received SNAP benefits the month prior to eligibility review or the month of review, the family meets categorical income eligibility for FaDSS services. Acceptable forms of verification include:

Eligibility Reviews

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- Confirmation from State Staff
- SNAP Notice of Decision from HHS

30-Day Lookback

If the household is not receiving FIP or participating in PROMISE JOBS or receiving SNAP food assistance benefits, the FaDSS Specialist must determine whether the last 30 days of income of the required family members is at or below 225% federal poverty level. The income of dependent children is not counted.

If, after completing the 30-day lookback, the family does not meet income eligibility, a three-month lookback should be conducted as appropriate based on information provided by the family. If, after completing a three-month lookback, the family does not meet income eligibility, the family will be determined ineligible for FaDSS services.

Table 3 outlines the countable sources of gross income considered when determining income eligibility. Families must declare all sources of income for consideration. Families must provide verification of all gross countable income.

Types of verification include:

- Employer's Statement of Earnings (Form 470-2844)
- Wage stubs
- Statements from the employer
- Award letters
- Self-employment records
- Legal documents
- Bank statements to verify fixed income
- Family's records of tip income

Eligibility Reviews

SECTION 8

Table 3	
Countable Income Source	**Description/Details**
Adoption Subsidy	Payments made to adoptive parents. Count in the month received.
Alimony Payments	Payments made to a spouse or former spouse following a separation or divorce. Count in the month received.
Annuities	An insurance contract designed to provide income at retirement. These should be averaged over the period of time they are intended to cover. Count in the month received.
Blood Plasma Sale	Count as earned income, the blood plasma center is considered the employer.
Boarding Home Income	Income from a boarding house is considered self-employment. Count in the month received.
Bonus	Only consider bonuses from employment if the person is employed at the time they receive it and there is a way to predict the month it will be received. Count in the month received.
Bottle and Can Refund	Money obtained from collecting and refunding or selling bottles or cans is counted. Exclude money obtained from returning bottles or cans purchased by the household. Count in the month received.
Child Support Income (including back pay)	Count voluntary and court-ordered child support payments. Only include back pay if it was received for more than one month.
Disability Insurance Payments (private)	Payments from a private company available to an employee that incurs a disability. Count short and long-term disability benefits. Count in the month received.
Income from Employment	Includes paid internships, self-employment, military pay, seasonal employment and work study. Count in the month received.

Eligibility Reviews

SECTION 8

Table 3	
Countable Income Source	**Description/Details**
Pensions, Retirement Income, Railroad Retirement	Count payments received with the exclusion of early withdrawals, which are considered non-recurring lump sums. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Rental Income	Income from rental properties is considered self-employment. Count in the month received.
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	Count monthly SSI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)	Count SSDI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Strike Benefits	Payments to workers on strike.
Trust Payment	Count in the month received.
Unemployment Insurance Benefits	Count in the month received.
Veterans Payments **VA Service-Connected Disability Pension** **VA Service-Connected Disability Pension** **VA Non-Service-Connected Disability Pension**	Count in the month received. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Workers' Compensation	Count in the month received.

Note: *The percent of poverty level is based on family size. While families must provide verification of only one dependent child's social security number, all dependent children in the home are counted when determining the federal poverty level based on family size.*

No Income

If the family reports none of the types of income outlined in **Table 3**, the FaDSS Specialist must have the required family members complete the **Certification of Zero Income form**. Specialist will upload the completed certification form in Iowa FaDSS in the Intake & Eligibility Document section.

Eligibility Reviews

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ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM CONTINUATION

When a family's eligibility review is conducted during a six-month review, and a family is determined to be eligible, Specialists and Supervisors should assess the family's progress and determine if the FaDSS program is still appropriate for the family using the **Assessment of Program Continuation**. To assist in informing the Assessment of Program Continuation, Specialist should review progress, program timeline and preferences with the family prior to a decision being made.

Completion of the Assessment of Program Continuation must be documented in the Supervision tab in Iowa FaDSS. If an exit is determined to be appropriate, State Staff must be consulted prior to exiting the family. The existence of a waiting list for services may not have any impact on the assessment of program continuation. Please see **Assessment of Program Continuation** for more information.

DETERMINATION OF INELIGIBILITY

If a family is determined to be ineligible for the program, the Supervisor must review the determination for accuracy prior to notifying the family. If, after review, the determination of ineligibility stands, the family must be promptly notified of the decision by the Specialist. In addition to discussing the determination with the family, any family determined to be ineligible must be sent Form Letter 7. The family will begin a three-month transition period beginning the first day of the month following the determination. The family must exit by the last day of the third month of transition.

Any family who is unable to verify legal status during the month of eligibility review must exit without transition. Form Letter 10 must be provided when exited.

EXCEPTIONS TO POLICY

Unique situations may present themselves when determining eligibility for the program. Specialists are encouraged to seek guidance from supervisors and State Staff. In some situations, exceptions to policy may be granted at the discretion of State Staff.

SECTION
9

Transition

Transition refers to the three-month period prior to program exit. Families may begin transition after a review of eligibility in which the family is found to not meet all of the eligibility criteria. Or, a family may begin transition prior to a planned voluntary exit. Families must exit the program by the end of the third month of transition.

If a family's situation changes during the transition period, and the family wishes to remain in the program, the Specialist should conduct an eligibility review to determine if the family meets the eligibility criteria. If it is determined that the family meets all of the eligibility criteria, the family can remain in services. The next eligibility review should be conducted in 6 months.

Aftercare planning is especially important during the transition period to ensure that families know how to access needed resources without the assistance of the FaDSS Specialist. Specialists should work with the family to identify needed supports and goals during and after the transition period. A Specialist may contact service providers on behalf of the family or complete other follow-up regarding the aftercare plan when possible, with proper releases. Specialists should document progress on stability during the program and the plan for maintaining stability in the **Contact Narrative**.

During transition, virtual visits may be provided in accordance with **Policy 10.0 – Virtual Visits**. It will be up to the family to decide whether they prefer virtual or in-person visits throughout transition.

Program Exit

SECTION **10**

The FaDSS program aims to help families move forward towards stability and then mobility. In general, families should not be enrolled in FaDSS longer than three years as the program is meant to help families become independent. Exceptions may be made collaboratively by the Coordinator, Specialist and State Staff.

Families are exited from the program through planned and unplanned exits depending on the circumstances. If the exit is planned, families have the option to participate in a three-month transition period.

Form letters will be provided to all families exiting as outlined in the **as outlined in Section 2**. In addition to providing these form letters, Specialists should communicate directly with the family about the exit to prepare them and answer any questions.

PLANNED EXITS

Planned exits occur when a family no longer wishes to participate in the program, no longer meets the eligibility criteria as determined through the completion of an eligibility review, or when it is determined through the **Assessment of Program Continuation** that the family is no longer benefiting from services. Planned exits include a voluntary three-month transition period beginning the month following the review.

Planned Exit Types

1. Voluntary withdrawal
    - **a.** Timing: Can occur at any point during services. The exit is initiated by the family.
    - **b.** Transition: Three-month transition period is offered to the family.
    - **c.** Must provide Form Letter 10 and upload to the Documents tab in Iowa FaDSS
2. No longer meets eligibility criteria
    - **a.** Timing: Can only be determined during the month of eligibility review. Circumstances impacting eligibility, such as dependents leaving the home, may happen in between eligibility review periods; however, this is only considered during the month of eligibility review. A family would not be exited outside of a review period for no longer meeting eligibility criteria.
    - **b.** Transition: Three-month transition period will be offered to the family.
    - **c.** Must provide Form Letter 7 and upload to the Documents tab in Iowa FaDSS
3. No longer benefits from the program, including families enrolled over three years.
    - **a.** Timing: Can only be determined during the month of eligibility review
    - **b.** Transition: Three-month transition period will be offered to the family.
    - **c.** Must include documentation of the **Assessment of Program Continuation**. Supervisors should upload the form into the Iowa FaDSS record.
    - **d.** All exits for this reason must include prior approval from State Staff.
    - **e.** Must provide Form Letter 10 and upload to the Documents tab in Iowa FaDSS

Program Exit

SECTION **10**

UNPLANNED EXITS

Unplanned exits occur when the family has not responded to communication for 45 days (with various attempts documented by the Specialist), a home visit has not been completed for two consecutive months (with various attempts to conduct a visit documented by the Specialist), or due to safety concerns. Justification for the exit will be documented in Iowa FaDSS. The transition period does not apply to unplanned exits.

Unplanned Exit Types

1. No contact for 45 days
    - **a.** Timing: Occurs when there is no contact for 45 days after multiple (at least 3) attempts using a variety of modes of contact such as phone calls, texts, email or mail.
    - **b.** The Specialists must provide Form Letter 9 which provides a date for the family to respond by in order to remain in the program. The date must be at least 10 days from the date the letter was mailed to allow the family adequate time to receive and respond to the letter.
    - **c.** If the family has not responded to Form Letter 9 by the specified date, Form letter 10 must be provided to the family notifying the family of exit and the appeal process.
2. No visits (home or quality) for two consecutive months
    - **a.** Timing: Occurs after two consecutive months of no visits with multiple attempts by the Specialist to schedule a visit documented in the record.
    - **b.** Missed visits may not be due to the Specialist's circumstances.
    - **c.** The Specialists must provide Form Letter 9 which provides a date for the family to respond by in order to remain in the program. The date must be at least 10 days from the date the letter was mailed to allow the family adequate time to receive and respond to the letter.
    - **d.** If the family has not responded to Form Letter 9 by the specified date, Form Letter 10, notifying family of the exit and the appeal process must be provided.
3. Safety concerns warranting an exit
    - **a.** Timing: Exits for safety concerns will be determined promptly.
    - **b.** Any safety concerns escalating to potential exit must include prior approval from State Staff.
    - **c.** The three-month transition period is not applicable.
    - **d.** Form Letter 10, notifying the family of the exit and the appeal process must be provided.

Program Exit

SECTION **10**

AFTER EXITING

At the time of exit, the Specialist will complete the Family Exit Information tab within Iowa FaDSS and the Exit Self-Sufficiency Matrix.

Exit file reviews must be documented by the supervisor in the family file no later than the end of the month following the exit.

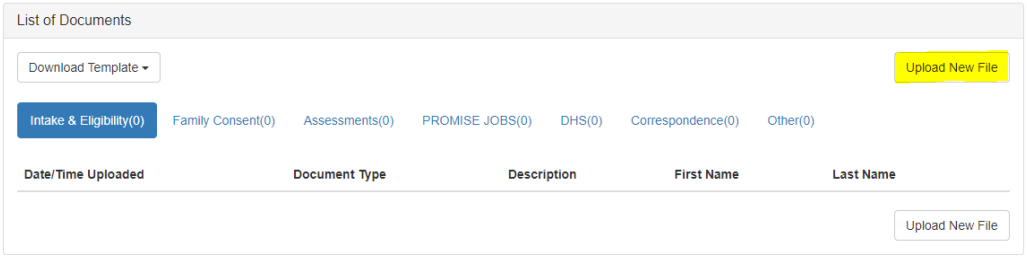
Grantees may not impose practices at the local level that differ from the information outlined in this section without prior approval from State Staff.

DOCUMENTATION

To document the sending of all form letters to families, the Specialist will create a contact in the Contact Tab to briefly state which letter was sent. The Specialist will also upload the letter in the Documents Tab under the Correspondence subtab. The Specialist will include the form letter number for the Description of the uploaded document.

Uploading Documents

Within each family record in Iowa FaDSS, there is a Documents tab. Users will navigate to this tab to upload documentation from their device into Iowa FaDSS using the Upload New File button.



Upload documents from a device by following these steps;

1. Select Upload New File
2. Select Browse and navigate to the document to be uploaded from your device then select Open
3. Select the Document Type from the dropdown menu
4. Select the Family Member for whom the document is related from the drop down menu (optional)
5. Enter a brief description of the document (optional)
6. Select Save Changes

The document will appear in the sub tab according to the category associated with the Document Type. Next to each subtab or category is a number in parenthesis indicating the total number of documents uploaded in that category or subtab. Documents are time stamped and listed in chronological order in each subtab or category. For further instructions on uploading documents into Iowa FaDSS, please refer to the **Document Management Guide**.

Serving PROMISE JOBS Families

SECTION **11**

The Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) and PROMISE JOBS (PJ) programs have a long history of collaboration and partnership. Both programs provide valuable services and support to vulnerable families statewide. For families participating in both programs, communication and collaboration among staff are essential for providing effective, coordinated services.

Eligibility Benefits Specialists at the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) determine initial and ongoing eligibility for the Family Investment Program (FIP). Many families receiving FIP cash assistance are required to participate in the PROMISE JOBS program administered by Iowa Workforce Development through a contract with the Iowa HHS. Many, though not all, families enrolled in the FaDSS program receive Family Investment Program (FIP) cash assistance.

Because a data sharing agreement is in place, a release of information is not required for communication between the Eligibility Benefits Specialist, PJ Case Manager and FaDSS Specialist. All information shared must be used only for the purpose of administration of programs, services, or assistance to families.

FaDSS EXPECTATIONS FOR COLLABORATION WITH PROMISE JOBS

As with other partner programs, FaDSS Specialists should collaborate with PJ staff to support and coordinate services for families participating in both programs.

When working with families who are also participating in PJ, Specialists must ensure specific actions are completed at the time of referral, enrollment, throughout service delivery and when exiting a family from the program.

REFERRAL AND RECRUITMENT

Throughout the referral and recruitment process when the agency is not operating a waiting list for services, FaDSS personnel should:

- Respond to the referral source with the name and email address of the Specialist who will be recruiting the family within 7 business days
- Within a month of receiving the referral, notify PJ of the outcome of the recruitment process, including:
  - The family enrolled in FaDSS
  - The family declined services
  - The Specialist was unable to reach the family
  - The Specialist needs more time to recruit the family beyond one month including the rationale for extended recruitment
- For enrolled families, ensure that the family record includes a current **Family Investment Agreement (FIA)** listing FaDSS as an activity

Serving PROMISE JOBS Families

SECTION **11**

When the agency is operating a waiting list for services, FaDSS personnel should:

- Acknowledge the receipt of the referral within 5 business days
- Inform PJ that the family is placed on a waiting list for services within 7 business days from the date the referral is received
- By the 10th of each month, the FaDSS Coordinator will send PJ a list of all families referred by PROMISE JOBS who are on the FaDSS waiting list
- When the family comes off the waiting list, notify PJ within 3 business days
  - Include the name and email address of the assigned Specialist who will be recruiting the family
- Within a month of the family coming off the waiting list, notify PJ of the outcome of the recruitment process, including:
  - The family enrolled in FaDSS
  - The family declined services
  - The Specialist was unable to reach the family
  - The Specialist needs more time to recruit the family beyond one month including the rationale for extended recruitment
- For enrolled families, ensure that the family record includes a current **Family Investment Agreement (FIA)** listing FaDSS as an activity

SERVICE DELIVERY

While a family is enrolled in FaDSS and participating in PROMISE JOBS, FaDSS personnel should collaborate with PJ staff as appropriate to benefit the family. Changes in address, contact information, assigned worker and other important updates should be shared with PJ staff. FaDSS personnel should:

- Make reasonable efforts to attend FIA appointments when invited by the PJ worker and/or the family. If unable to attend, the Specialist should document the reason in the family record. If not present at the meeting, the Specialist should follow up with the family and the PJ worker after the appointment.
- Communicate in a timely manner any important information that may benefit the family or have an impact on the family's FIA, including but not limited to:
  - Changes in family contact information (phone number, email, etc.)
  - Changes in family employment status
  - Barriers impacting the family's ability to participate or fulfill the requirements of their FIA
  - Changes in FaDSS eligibility status, including the start of the transition period
- Communicate any changes in FaDSS personnel such as:
  - If a family changes Specialists
  - If the family transfers to another FaDSS grantee

Serving PROMISE JOBS Families

SECTION **11**

PROGRAM EXIT

When a family has a planned or unplanned exit from FaDSS, FaDSS personnel should:

- Notify PJ of the anticipated exit date as early as possible
- Notify PJ of the family's exit from the program within 3 business days
- Communicate any aftercare plans that may be relevant to the success of the family

If a family stops receiving FIP or participating in PROMISE JOBS while enrolled in FaDSS, the notice of exit from FaDSS is not required.

PROMISE JOBS EXPECTATIONS FOR COLLABORATION WITH FADSS

Participation in FaDSS is voluntary. When families participating in PJ are referred to or enrolled in FaDSS, PJ should collaborate with the FaDSS Specialist to support the family.

Referral

PROMISE JOBS may refer a family to FaDSS at any time, regardless of if the agency has a waiting list or not. PJ will email the referral to the appropriate agency's FaDSS Coordinator, (who will assign a specialist once recruitment begins) and include the following information:

- Referral date
- Family name(s)
- Case number
- State ID number(s)
- Address
- Phone number
- Email address
- Immediate needs or concerns, as appropriate
- The current FIA; if the FIA does not include FaDSS and the family enrolls in FaDSS, renegotiate the FIA to include FaDSS and send FaDSS a copy of the updated FIA.

Serving PROMISE JOBS Families

SECTION **11**

Service Delivery

While a family is participating in PJ and enrolled in FaDSS, PJ Case Managers should:

- Invite FaDSS Specialists to attend FIA appointments by emailing a copy of the Notice of Appointment (NOA) or Clear Written Reminder (CWR), if applicable, to the FaDSS Specialist informing them of the appointment to meet with the customer.
- Communicate in a timely manner any important information that may benefit the family or have an impact on the family's FIA, including but not limited to:
  - Changes in family contact information (phone number, address, email)
  - Changes in family employment status
  - Barriers impacting the family's ability to fulfill the requirements of their FIA
  - Changes in FIP eligibility status, including Limited Benefit Plan
  - Notice of Decision for Family Self-Sufficiency Grant (FSSG)
- Communicate changes in PJ personnel such as a change in PJ Case Manager.

Program Exit

When a family's FIP cancels, resulting in cancellation of PJ services, the PJ Case Manager should notify FaDSS upon discovery of the FIP cancellation and provide the FIP cancellation reason, if known, as well as the FIP negative date. When a family's FIP is reinstated or reopened, and PJ participation resumes, the PJ Case Manager should notify FaDSS upon discovery.

COMMUNICATION BEST PRACTICES

Information about a family should always be communicated in a nonjudgmental, factual and strength- based manner with a clear purpose of how the information being shared will benefit the family and impact their participation in the PJ or FaDSS programs. When possible, it is best practice to notify the family of the information being shared prior to sharing it. Encouraging families to communicate directly with their PJ Case Manager and FaDSS Specialist is important and may include joint communication to support the family in doing so. It is important to ensure that families are aware of how sharing information between the two programs will help support their success and impact their participation in PROMISE JOBS.

There may be circumstances in which a family requests that staff in one program not share information with another program. Except for notifications of program exit, the family's request must be honored.

Serving PROMISE JOBS Families

SECTION **11**

JOINT STAFF MEETINGS

The FaDSS and PJ supervisors will collaborate to jointly facilitate quarterly team meetings. At their discretion, meetings may be conducted in-person or virtually. Both programs are responsible for contributing to the agenda topics and meeting logistics such as date and time, location, calendar invitations, etc.

Meetings may be conducted across multiple teams for more efficient collaboration. It is the responsibility of supervisors at the local level to determine which regions/service areas/program staff will meet with whom.

Joint Family Staffing Sessions

Conducting a joint family staffing session can be a good opportunity to strategize, identify resources and solutions, and align efforts to meet the needs of families participating in both the FaDSS and PJ programs. Joint family staffing sessions are not required but are encouraged to be utilized when doing so would benefit families served in both programs. If a joint family staffing session is conducted, it must be done so in accordance with the guidance set forth below.

Joint Staffing Session Logistics

Staff in either program may request a joint staffing session for a mutually served family. Requests should be made via email and include the FaDSS Specialist, FaDSS Supervisor, PJ Case Manager and PJ Supervisor. Program staff should collaborate at the local level to coordinate their schedules when a joint family staffing session is requested. Typically, joint family staffing sessions last about 30 minutes and occur virtually, however, they may be conducted in person at the discretion of local staff.

Joint Staffing Session Participants

If a joint family staffing session occurs, the following staff in each program must participate:

- FaDSS Specialist serving the family
- PJ Case Manager serving the family
- FaDSS Supervisor
- PJ Supervisor

Additional partners and the family may be invited to participate, as appropriate. Staff are responsible for obtaining releases of information in accordance with confidentiality policies.

Serving PROMISE JOBS Families

SECTION **11**

Conducting Joint Staffing Sessions

Supervisors will ensure that the following framework is utilized to provide structure to the sessions:

1. Overview of the session structure, reminders
    a. Strength-based, solution-focused, relevant, aimed solely at helping the family reach their goals
2. Recap family strengths and progress made
3. Overview of the family's goals
    a. How are both programs supporting the family's goals?
    b. What activities can be implemented to support skill development and goal attainment?
    c. What resources have been or could be provided to support the family?
4. Overview of the challenges the family is experiencing that may hinder progress towards their goals
5. Identify what each program needs from the other(s)
6. Other relevant information
7. Next steps

Information may only be shared in the sessions if it is relevant and will be used for the benefit of the family. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that gossiping, triangulation and confronting families does not occur as a result of the staffing session. At times, information may be shared during a staffing session that the family has not disclosed to one of the parties. It is important to remember that the family has the right to share personal information if and when they choose to do so. The information exchange must always occur with the sole intention of benefitting the family. Information may not be shared outside of the session without signed consent from the family.

Personnel Requirements

SECTION **12**

PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

All FaDSS staff providing direct family development services, staff who supervise them, and those responsible for the management of the FaDSS program must meet the requirements outlined below.

FaDDS Training, Onboarding, and Tracking Requirements		
Requirement	**Timeframe**	**Details/Minimum Expectations**
Background Check	Prior to Hire	All personnel must follow Iowa Code Section 217.30
Mandatory Reporter Notice	Within one month of hire	All personnel must follow Iowa Code Section 217.30 **Policy 4.0 – Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting**
Confidentiality Training	Within one month of hire	All personnel must follow Iowa Code Section 217.30 **Policy 3.0 – Confidentiality** **Confidentiality Training and Knowledge Check**
Background Check	Every 2 years	All personnel must follow Iowa Code Section 217.30
Orientation	Within first 3 months of hire	New FaDSS personnel are oriented to: · The organization's mission, philosophy, goals, and services · The cultural and socioeconomic characteristics of the service population · The organization's place within the community · The organization's personnel manual · Lines of accountability and authority within the organization
Code of Ethics Training (online)	Within one month of hire	**Code of Ethics** **Code of Ethics Training** **Quiz**
Initial Mandatory Reporter Training	Within 6 months of hire	**Training**
Subsequent Mandatory Reporter Training	Every 3 years	**Training**

SECTION
12

Personnel Requirements

FaDDS Training, Onboarding, and Tracking Requirements		
Requirement	**Timeframe**	**Details/Minimum Expectations**
Iowa FaDSS Training	Within 3 months of hire	· Proper documentation techniques and maintenance and security of case records · How to write case notes · How to document all required information in Iowa FaDSS **Resources:** Recorded Iowa FaDSS Training **Iowa FaDSS Document Management**
FaDSS Program Training	Within 3 months of hire	· FaDSS 101 · Training on assessment tools outlined in the grant application · Training on goal setting framework and documentation · The **Family Handout** · Training on program eligibility determination and eligibility reviews · Training on resources, materials, or curricula to support activities and skill building with families
Self-Sufficiency Matrix Training	Within 3 months of hire	Recorded Self-Sufficiency Matrix Training
Specialist Certification	Within 1 year of hire	**Option 1** **Option 2**
FaDSS New Worker Training	Within 1 year of hire	Provided by State Staff
Ongoing Annual Training	10 hours/fiscal year	10 hours total

Supervision Requirements

SECTION **13**

SUPERVISOR REQUIREMENTS

Individuals that supervise staff that provide direct family development services are qualified by:

- An advanced degree
- A bachelor's degree and two years of experience working in the health, human services, or education field
- An associate's degree and four years of experience working in the health human services, or education field
- Other combination of education and experience AND a waiver granted by State Staff
- Family Development Supervisor Training Certificate obtained within 2 years from the date of hire for individuals with fewer than 2 years supervisory experience

If a Supervisor does not have a degree, the grantee will complete the **FaDSS Waiver Evaluation form** to outline the combination of education and experience for review by the State Staff. This waiver will be kept in the employee's personnel file.

In some instances, the individuals performing the supervision requirements outlined in this section may not be the direct supervisor of the Specialist(s). If they are not, the program supervisor is responsible for ensuring the quality, consistency and all required elements of the work performed.

FADSS SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS

It is the responsibility of the FaDSS Coordinator to ensure the quality of services provided to families and to utilize data to improve service delivery. The FaDSS Coordinator must complete the following activities, or review and sign off on the activities if conducted by another staff member such as a Lead Specialist.

Monthly Supervision Activities

- Review monthly dashboard reports
- Review of Pre-Enrollment Records
- Review of Exited Family Records
- Review of Non-Enrolled Family Records
- File reviews* & Staffing of families in their month of eligibility review
- Staffing to determine service intensity of families in their third month of enrollment
- File reviews* of families that exited the month prior
- Specialist supervision sessions
- Staff meeting (includes staffing a family, professional development, review of data)

Supervision Requirements

SECTION **13**

Quarterly Supervision Activities

- QA Calls to review contract measures, goals, etc.
- Review Family Feedback Surveys
- Development Sessions- space for reflection and growth using FaDSS-specific tools and opportunities for peer-to-peer exchange.

Optional Supervision Activities

- Monthly Reflective Supervision Community of Practice- virtual session to consult with an M.I. expert.
- Joint Family Staffing Sessions with PROMISE JOBS and/or other partners, as appropriate

**File reviews must be conducted using the State-approved file review checklist.*

PARTICIPATION IN FaDSS PROGRAM REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

It is the expectation that Coordinators will participate in the four FaDSS Coordinator meetings scheduled throughout the year. These meetings are important times to get updates and training from State Staff that will then be shared with Specialists and other agency personnel. If meetings are missed, Coordinators are responsible for following up with their State Staff for information that was missed. Coordinators will also attend the regional and statewide IFDA training and encourage as many Specialists to attend as possible.

State Staff will reach out to Coordinators to schedule the Quarterly Calls set for July, October, January and April. Prior to the meeting, Coordinators will provide their State Staff with their Quarterly data report. This will assist State Staff in preparing for the call so time can be spent during the meeting on grantees' current goals and priorities.

SECTION
13

Supervision Requirements

Supervision Requirement	Frequency	Documentation
Family Record Reviews (file reviews)	· During the 6th month of enrollment · Every 6 months thereafter · More frequently as determined through Intensive TA plan	Iowa FaDSS Supervision Tab *(note in file review section)*
Family Staffing	· 3rd month of enrollment · 6th month of enrollment · Every 6 months thereafter · Anytime service intensity is reviewed	Iowa FaDSS Supervision Tab *(note in supervision section)*
Eligibility Reviews	· Initial eligibility determination is reviewed during the 6th month family record review · Family eligibility reviews are reviewed during family record reviews every 6 months (or anytime a review is completed) and discussed during family staffing	Iowa FaDSS Supervision Tab *(note in file review section)*
FaDSS Coaching Supervision Framework	· Monthly meetings with each Specialist to set, review, or revise Specialist goals using the FaDSS Supervision Coaching tools · Completion of the Coordinator Competency tool and quarterly review of goals with State Staff · Support of ongoing professional development	Maintain documentation for review upon request.
Home Visit Observations	· 2 per year conducted with each Specialist · More frequently as determined through Intensive TA plan	Maintain documentation for review upon request.

Supervision Requirements

SECTION **13**

Supervision Requirement	Frequency	Documentation

Oversight of Required Personnel Activities	· Mandatory reporter notice
	· Background check, prior to hire
	  · Repeated every 2 years
	· Specialist onboarding
	· Required Training within 3 months of hire
	  · Confidentiality
	  · Self-Sufficiency Matrix
	  · Iowa FaDSS
	  · Code of Ethics
	  · FaDSS 101 (an online training module)
	· Mandatory Reporter Training (initial)
	  · Repeated every 3 years
	· Family Support Professional Certification or Family Development Specialist Certification within 1 year of hire
	· Attend FaDSS New Worker Training in person within 1 year of hire
	· 10 additional hours of training
		Complete the FaDSS Training & Onboarding Tracking Form and maintain records for review upon request.

Participation in FaDSS Program Required Activities	· Quarterly Quality Assurance meetings with State Staff · FaDSS Coordinator Meetings · FaDSS Annual Retreat	

SECTION
13

Supervision Requirements

Supervision Requirement	Frequency	Documentation

Oversight of Required Personnel Activities	· Mandatory reporter notice
	· Background check, prior to hire
	  · Repeated every 2 years
	· Specialist onboarding
	· Required Training within 3 months of hire
	  · Confidentiality
	  · Self-Sufficiency Matrix
	  · Iowa FaDSS
	  · Code of Ethics
	  · FaDSS 101 (an online training module)
	· Mandatory Reporter Training (initial)
	  · Repeated every 3 years
	· Family Support Professional Certification or Family Development Specialist Certification within 1 year of hire
	· Attend FaDSS New Worker Training in person within 1 year of hire
	· 10 additional hours of training
	· 2 hours of training on justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI)
		Complete the FaDSS Training & Onboarding Tracking Form and maintain records for review upon request.

Participation in FaDSS Program Required Activities	· Quarterly Quality Assurance meetings with State Staff · FaDSS Coordinator Meetings · FaDSS Annual Retreat	

Appendix

Referrals to the FaDSS Program

POLICY **1.0**

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that all referrals be accepted by the grantee, added to the waiting list (if applicable), reviewed for eligibility according to **FaDSS Policy 2.0 – Eligibility**, and recruited for enrollment into the FaDSS program.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Referrals to the FaDSS program must be addressed in a prompt and responsive manner. Generally, the referral process should last no more than one month from the date the referral is received by the FaDSS program. Communication with the referral source is essential and should occur regularly during the referral process. Specialists are responsible for notifying the referral source of the outcome of the referral (family enrolled, family was placed on a waiting list, family declined services, etc.) within one month of the receipt of the referral.

If recruitment efforts extend beyond one month, Specialists must notify the referral source and provide documentation of the need to extend recruitment efforts in Iowa FaDSS.

PROMISE JOBS Referrals

PROMISE JOBS referrals should follow the referral process outlined in the document below (**PROMISE JOBS REFERRAL TO FaDSS**). Upon receiving a referral, FaDSS personnel should communicate with PROMISE JOBS and provide regular updates throughout the referral and recruitment process. The FaDSS personnel should acknowledge the receipt of the referral within 5 business days. If a family is referred from a source other than PROMISE JOBS and the family is participating in PROMISE JOBS, the FaDSS personnel should communicate the information to PROMISE JOBS within seven days of the receipt of the referral. If the family is placed on a waiting list for services, FaDSS personnel should notify PROMISE JOBS within 7 business days from the date the referral is received.

FaDSS personnel will follow the Expectations for Collaboration with PROMISE JOBS as outlined in **Section 11** of this manual. FaDSS personnel should follow the document below (**PROMISE JOBS REFERRAL TO FaDSS**) for communicating information to PROMISE JOBS, including the outcome of the referral. The communication should occur through email. Documentation of all communication related to the referral, including the date of the referral, source of the referral, and referral outcome must be documented in Iowa FaDSS.

Non-PROMISE JOBS Referrals

FaDSS personnel should communicate with non-PROMISE JOBS referral sources via email within the same time frames described above. Documentation of all communication related to the referral, including the date of the referral, source of the referral, and referral outcome must be documented in Iowa FaDSS.

Referrals to the FaDSS Program

POLICY **1.0**

Confidentiality
Transmitting referral information through email requires the use of encryption.

PROMISE JOBS REFERRAL TO FADSS

1. PROMISE JOBS will email the following information to FaDSS.
   PROMISE JOBS will attach the FIA to the referral email.
   PROMISE JOBS will case note the referral.

Referral Date:	
Parent 1 Name:	**Parent 2 Name:**
Parent 1 SID#:	**Parent 2 SID#:**
Case #:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Additional FIA Responsible Family Members:	**Name:**
	SID#:
Immediate Needs/Concerns/Comments:	

Referrals to the FaDSS Program

POLICY **1.0**

2. FaDSS will complete enrollment within 30 days of the referral and will email PROMISE JOBS 1 of the following:

- <Client> was enrolled into FaDSS on <date.> FaDSS worker is <_____.>
- <Client> declined FaDSS on <date.>
- <Client> was not recruited into FaDSS due to <number> unsuccessful contact attempts.

<Client> was placed on the FaDSS waiting list on <date.>
(FaDSS will notify PROMISE JOBS when family is enrolled or otherwise removed from the waiting list)

FaDSS will continue to recruit past 30 days to enroll <client> due to <reason.>
(FaDSS will notify PROMISE JOBS when family is enrolled or when recruitment stops)

3. PROMISE JOBS will case note the approval/denial.

IF REFERRED TO FaDSS BY A SOURCE OTHER THAN PROMISE JOBS

1. FaDSS will email PROMISE JOBS within 7 days of the referral to inform of the referral and verify SID #, case #, FIP status, and FIA responsible family members.

2. FaDSS will complete enrollment within 30 days of the referral and will email PROMISE JOBS 1 of the following:

- <Client> was enrolled into FaDSS on <date.> FaDSS worker is <_____.>
- <Client> declined FaDSS on <date.>
- <Client> was not recruited into FaDSS due to <number> unsuccessful contact attempts.
- <Client> was placed on the FaDSS waiting list on <date.>
  (FaDSS will notify PROMISE JOBS when family is enrolled or otherwise removed from the waiting list)
- FaDSS will continue to recruit past 30 days to enroll <client> due to <reason.>
  (FaDSS will notify PROMISE JOBS when family is enrolled or when recruitment stops)

3. PROMISE JOBS will case note the referral and the approval/denial.

Effective: 07/01/2016
Revised: 07/01/2026

Waiting List for Services

POLICY
1.1

POLICY STATEMENT

When a FaDSS grantee does not have capacity to serve all families referred for services, the agency may need to operate on a waiting list.

A waiting list may only be implemented when a grantee is at or above 95% of their program capacity, as determined by the number of families served in the month prior, unless the following conditions are met:

- The grantee agency has a staff vacancy or is onboarding a new specialist (within 3 months of hire) who is not yet able to serve a full caseload, or
- Prior approval from State Staff is granted based on other circumstances

PROCESS

Grantees operating a waiting list must ensure that families are served in the most equitable manner. Grantees may not impose different waiting list policies and practices at the local level.

Grantees may only operate a waiting list within their service area if the service area as a whole is at or above 95% of the assigned program capacity. Grantees may not operate a waiting list for specific counties within their service area if they are not at 95% of their assigned program capacity for the service area as a whole. If not at capacity, Grantees must assign families to the next available Specialist regardless of the family's county of residence.

Families placed on a county waiting list within the grantee's assigned service area must be served in the order of the date of referral regardless of the level of need of the family, language spoken, or other factors.

Upon receiving a referral, if the family is placed on a waiting list, the family and the referral source must be notified. Families must be provided with Form Letter 1 and provided with other community resources when placed on a waiting list.

When a family comes off the waiting list, the agency has 30 days to recruit the family. If the family is not responsive or cannot be reached within 30 days, the family must be sent Form Letter 2 before being removed from the waiting list due to no contact. If the family was not successfully recruited after being placed on the waiting list due to no contact, Form Letter 3 must be sent to the family.

Specialists have 30 days from the date of contact with families who come off the waiting list to determine eligibility. If the family needs additional time to provide necessary eligibility documentation, an additional 30 days should be granted. If eligibility cannot be determined within 60 days of contacting the family when they come off the waiting list, the family will be removed from the waiting list. Form Letter 6 must be sent to the family.

Effective: July 1, 2024
Updated: July 1, 2026

Initial Program Eligibility

POLICY
2.0

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the FaDSS Program that a family is eligible for FaDSS services when all of the following conditions are met:

1. The Family has a gross income at or below 175% of the federal poverty level based on family size at the time of enrollment into the program
2. The family has a dependent child in the household
3. The family resides in Iowa
4. The required members of the family have a social security number or proof of application
5. The required members of the family are United States (U.S.) citizens or legal immigrants
6. The family meets one or more of the at-risk criteria established in Iowa Administrative Code 427-15.4(216A).

Eligibility should be determined at the time the family is eligible to receive services. If the grantee is operating on a waiting list for services, eligibility will be determined at the time the family comes off the waiting list.

A family is considered to be in recruitment status while the FaDSS program is verifying the above criteria. FaDSS Specialists have 30 days to determine eligibility. If a FaDSS Specialist is recruiting a referred family but is unable to contact them to schedule an enrollment home visit, the family must be sent Form Letter 2 if the family had previously been on the waiting list or Form Letter 4 if they had not previously been on a waiting list. The Form Letter provides a date by which the family needs to contact FaDSS in order to move forward with the eligibility determination process. If there continues to be no contact, families previously on the waiting list must be sent Form Letter 3; families not previously on the waiting list must be sent Form Letter 5. Families may not be identified as non-enrolled unless the appropriate Form Letter has been sent to the family. If the family needs more than 30 days to provide eligibility documentation, the family should be given additional time not to exceed 60 days.

FaDSS Specialists must complete the **Initial Eligibility Determination form** when determining family eligibility. The form must be documented in Iowa FaDSS upon completion of the eligibility determination. If a Specialist determines that the family does not meet all required eligibility criteria, the supervisor must review the information prior to notifying the family of the outcome. Families must be promptly notified of their eligibility determination. In addition to discussing the determination with the family, any family determined to be ineligible must be sent Form Letter 6 within 10 days of determination.

CATEGORICAL VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

If the family is receiving FIP cash assistance during the month of eligibility determination, the family is categorically eligible for the FaDSS program. If any required family members in the household are receiving FIP during the month of eligibility determination, all program eligibility criteria are met.

Initial Program Eligibility

POLICY **2.0**

The Specialist is responsible for verifying FIP status and documenting the information on the **Initial Eligibility Determination form**.

Acceptable forms of FIP verification include:

- The monthly FIP list
- Confirmation from State Staff
- FIP Notice of Decision from HHS
- Confirmation from Eligibility Benefits Specialist (email or verbal)
- Confirmation from PROMISE JOBS (email or verbal)

REQUIRED MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY

Certain members of the family are considered when determining specific eligibility criteria. **Table 1** outlines which family members must meet each eligibility criteria.

Table 1

Eligibility Criteria	Family Members Required to Meet Criteria
Income at or below 175% FPL	Both of the following: · Head of Household · HoH's spouse or 2nd parent of a 2-parent household (if applicable)
Dependent Child in the home	Head of Household must have at least one dependent child in the home
Resides in Iowa	Both of the following: · Head of Household · At least one dependent child
Social Security Number/ Citizenship	· Head of Household · At least one dependent child
At-risk criteria	One of the following: · Head of Household · HoH's spouse or 2nd parent of a 2-parent household (if applicable) · Dependent child

Initial Program Eligibility

POLICY **2.0**

DEFINITIONS

Head of Household: Means the primary parent/caretaker/guardian of at least one dependent child in the home.

Dependent Child: Means a child related to the head of household by blood, marriage, guardianship or adoption.

The 2nd Parent of a 2-Parent Household: This is the other parent of any of the identified dependent children (they share a child with the Head of Household and are cohabitating). A 2-Parent Household is defined as both parents cohabiting.

The Cohabiting Spouse of the Head of Household: Is legally married to the Head of Household.

Note: *FaDSS still considers Other Adults for purposes of providing FaDSS services, however, an Other Adult is not considered for purposes of determining Initial Program Eligibility unless it meets the definition of 2-Parent Household or cohabitating spouse.*

VERIFYING DEPENDENT CHILD IN THE HOME

Specialists will verify that the Head of Household has at least one dependent child using the approved document list below. A family may declare a dependent child if they reside in the home some of the time. Residing in the home means that the dependent stays overnight at the same home as the Head of the Household at least some of the time. The Head of Household having supervised visits with the dependent does not meet the criteria for having a dependent child. A child is considered a dependent child until the age of 18. An 18-year-old is considered a dependent child if they are a full-time student in a secondary school (or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training) and reasonably expected to complete the program within the current school year. Students with disabilities may be enrolled in secondary school through graduation or age 21, whichever comes first and are considered dependent children while they are enrolled in secondary school.

Approved Documentation for Verifying Dependent Child

- SNAP list showing dependent child on the case
- Confirmation from Eligibility Benefits Specialist (email or verbal)
- SNAP Notice of Decision from HHS showing child on the case
- Child's birth certificate (parent must be listed)
- Immigration paperwork for legal immigrants may serve to replace birth certificate. A certificate of foreign birth or non-U.S. birth certificate may be used for verifying dependent child if parent is listed.
- School Records
- A letter from the child's doctor or school, if it includes: the child's name, child's date of birth, the name of the child's custodial parent
- Last year's Tax Return if children were claimed

Initial Program Eligibility

POLICY **2.0**

- Medicaid documents for the year in question
- Current Case Plan from Iowa HHS
- Government Records
- Shelter placement notices including the parent and child's names
- A statement from a homeless shelter, signed by a caseworker, if it includes: the child's name, the child's date of birth, the time period the child lived in the shelter, the name of the child's custodial parent.
- Court documents
- Child Support documents

VERIFYING SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS & CITIZENSHIP

FaDSS Specialists must see approved documentation of having a social security number for all required family members on at least one of the approved verification documents listed below. The requirement for a social security number is waived for a child 120 calendar days old, or younger, if the family has applied to obtain a social security card and is able to show documentation of the application.

If there is more than one dependent child in the family, only one must show proof of social security number.

The FaDSS Specialist will document the date of verification and the name of the document(s) verified on the FaDSS **Initial Eligibility Determination form**.

Approved Documentation of Social Security Number & Citizenship

- Social Security Card
  - Option 1: no restrictions (name and SSN).
  - Option 2: "Valid for Work Only with DHS/INS Authorization" and Option 3: "Not Valid for Employment". If the Required family members have a card with one of these qualifiers, additional documentation of current legal status is needed. Specialist will verify from Approved Documentation for Legal Immigrant Status Verification list below.
- A valid, current Driver's License or State-issued Photo Identification Card (ID)
- A valid, current U.S. Passport
- Birth Certificate
  - Only U.S issued birth certificates are considered acceptable documentation.
  - Birth Certificates presented as Social Security Number documentation must match the individual's last name or have identifying documentation when different, such as a marriage certificate.
- Payroll stub or W-2 showing the SSN
- Military ID card showing the SSN

Initial Program Eligibility

POLICY **2.0**

- Any official document or form issued by the Social Security Administration that contains the social security number.
- Signed Federal Tax Return Form 1040 and related forms that have been submitted to the IRS
  - 1099a & W-4s are acceptable if the number does not begin with a "9", as that would be an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number reserved for certain nonresidents, their spouses and dependents who cannot get an SSN. Any number not starting with a "9" is a valid SSN.
- Signed State of Iowa 1040 tax return and related forms that have been submitted to the State of Iowa Department of Revenue.
- Veterans Universal Access Identification
- Bank statement with Supplemental Security Income Automated Clearing House (SSI ACH) deposit which includes the last four digits of the Social Security Number.
- Iowa Department of Health and Human Services Direct Payment Register
- A printout from the IRS (Internal Revenue Service), showing the Social Security Number or in-person visual confirmation of the person's **IRS account**
- Selective Service Registration Acknowledgement
  - Can verify by SSN at **https://www.sss.gov/verify/**
- Military discharge papers, provided it includes the needed social security number
- Form N-550 or N-570, Certificate of Naturalization
- Form N-560 of N-561, Certificate of Citizenship

VERIFYING U.S. CITIZENSHIP OR LEGAL IMMIGRANT STATUS

Verification of social security number also meets the verification of U.S. Citizenship/Legal Immigrant Status. The FaDSS Specialist will document the date of verification on the **Initial Eligibility Determination form**.

When a required family member is a foreign national not authorized for employment, they must present an approved form of documentation listed below. If the family cannot provide documentation to verify their Legal Immigrant Status, they do not meet eligibility criteria. For examples and additional information about each type of document, visit the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) **Commonly Used Immigration Documents** webpage.

Initial Program Eligibility

POLICY **2.0**

Approved Documentation for Legal Immigrant Status Verification:

- Form I-94, Arrival/Departure Record
  - Must be unexpired
- Form I-551, Permanent Resident Card (PRC) or Temporary I-551, Permanent Resident Stamp
  - PRC remains valid until the expiration date shown on the card unless otherwise noted through an automatic extension of the validity period of the PRC as indicated on a Form I-797, Notice of Action, or in a Federal Register notice.
- Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (EAD)
  - Cards remain valid until the expiration date shown on the card unless otherwise noted through an extension of the validity period of the EAD indicated on a Form I-797, Notice of Action, or in a Federal Register notice, or in an individual notice sent to a beneficiary.
- Form I-571, Refugee Travel Document
  - Must be unexpired
- Form I-327, Permit to Re-Enter
  - Must be unexpired

Note: *The FaDSS program does NOT report undocumented households to any entity. A household's status is held confidential and not shared with other parties without family consent.*

VERIFYING IOWA RESIDENCY

FaDSS Specialists should consider the family a resident of Iowa if the family provides an address in Iowa or they self-declare that they are living in Iowa voluntarily and intend to make a home in the state. The FaDSS Specialist will document the date of declaration on the FaDSS **Initial Eligibility Determination form**.

VERIFYING AT-RISK CRITERIA

At least one of the at- risk criteria below, established in Iowa Administrative Code 427-15.4(216A), will be documented on the FaDSS **Initial Eligibility Determination form**. The family may self-declare the at-risk criteria that pertain to their family.

- Less than a high school education
- Lacks basic literacy skills
- Never been employed
- Multiple episodes of employment lasting less than one year

Initial Program Eligibility

POLICY **2.0**

- Currently unemployed
- Members are homeless or nearly homeless
- Members outside the nuclear family are in residence
- One or more children in the household were born while the parent was on public assistance
- One or more children in the household are identified as having special needs
- Household includes an alcoholic or substance abuser
- Household includes a member with a record of incarceration
- Head of Household was a teenager at birth of first child
- Head of Household has a disability or chronic illness (mental or physical)
- Head of Household is a part of current victim of child abuse or domestic violence
- Head of Household grew up in a household with alcohol or substance abuse
- Head of Household grew up in a household that received public assistance
- Household has experienced multiple episodes of receipt of public assistance
- Household has been on public assistance for three or more years
- Geographic location (rural area)
- Lack of employment opportunity
- Lack of available services
- Lack of transportation

VERIFYING FAMILY INCOME AT INITIAL ELIGIBILITY

SNAP Benefits

If any required family members in the household received SNAP benefits in the current month or the month prior to eligibility determination, the family meets income eligibility for FaDSS services. Acceptable forms of verification include:

- Confirmation from State Staff
- SNAP Notice of Decision from HHS

If the household is not receiving SNAP food assistance, the FaDSS Specialist must determine whether the last 30 days of income of the required family members is at or below 175% federal poverty level based on family size. The income of dependent children is not counted. While families must provide verification of only one dependent child's social security number, all members of the family residing in the home are counted when determining the federal poverty level based on family size.

If, after completing the 30-day lookback, the family does not meet income eligibility, a three-month lookback should be conducted, as appropriate, based on information provided by the family.

Initial Program Eligibility

POLICY
2.0

Table 2 outlines the countable sources of gross income (before taxes) considered when determining income eligibility. Families must declare all sources of income for consideration. Families must provide verification of all countable income.

Types of verification include:

- Employer's Statement of Earnings (Form 470-2844)
- Pay stubs
- Award letters
- Self-employment form (Form 470-5418)
- Legal documents
- Bank statements
- Family's records of tip income

Table 2

Countable Income Source	Description/Details
Adoption Subsidy	Payments made to adoptive parents. Count in the month received.
Alimony Payments	Payments made to a spouse or former spouse following a separation or divorce. Count in the month received.
Annuities	An insurance contract designed to provide income at retirement. These should be averaged over the period of time they are intended to cover. Count in the month received.
Blood Plasma Sale	Count as earned income, the blood plasma center is considered the employer.
Boarding Home Income	Income from a boarding house is considered self-employment. Count in the month received.
Bonus	Only consider bonuses from employment if the person is employed at the time they receive it and there is a way to predict the month it will be received. Count in the month received.
Bottle and Can Refund	Money obtained from collecting and refunding or selling bottles or cans is counted. Exclude money obtained from returning bottles or cans purchased by the household. Count in the month received.
Child Support Income (including back pay)	Count voluntary and court-ordered child support payments. Only include back pay if it was received for more than one month.

Initial Program Eligibility

POLICY **2.0**

Table 2	
Countable Income Source	**Description/Details**
Disability Insurance Payments (private)	Payments from a private company available to an employee that incurs a disability. Count short and long-term disability benefits. Count in the month received.
Income from Employment	Includes paid internships, self-employment, military pay, seasonal employment and work study. Count in the month received.
Pensions, Retirement Income, Railroad Retirement	Count payments received with the exclusion of early withdrawals, which are considered non-recurring lump sums. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Rental Income	Income from rental properties is considered self-employment. Count in the month received.
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	Count monthly SSI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)	Count SSDI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Strike Benefits	Payments to workers on strike.
Trust Payment	Count in the month received.
Unemployment Insurance Benefits	Count in the month received.
Veterans Payments **VA Service-Connected Disability Pension** **VA Non-Service-Connected Disability Pension**	Count in the month received. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Workers' Compensation	Count in the month received.

No Income

If the family reports none of the types of income outlined in Table 2, the FaDSS Specialist must have the required family members complete the **Certification of Zero Income form** and document this on the **Initial Eligibility Form**. Specialist will upload the completed certification form in Iowa FaDSS in the Intake & Eligibility Document section.

Initial Program Eligibility

POLICY
2.0

Documentation

Specialists should upload the completed **Initial Eligibility Determination form** into the Documents section in Iowa FaDSS. Do not upload documentation used to determine eligibility such as pay stubs, SSN cards, etc.

DETERMINATION OF INELIGIBILITY

If a family is determined to be ineligible for the program, the Supervisor must review the determination for accuracy prior to notifying the family. If, after review, the determination of ineligibility stands, the family must be promptly notified of the decision by the Specialist. In addition to discussing the determination with the family, any family determined to be ineligible must be sent Form Letter 6.

EXCEPTIONS TO POLICY

Unique situations may present themselves when determining eligibility for the program. Specialists are encouraged to seek guidance from supervisors and State Staff. In some situations, exceptions to policy may be granted at the discretion of State Staff.

Eligibility Review

POLICY
2.1

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the FaDSS Program that a family is eligible to continue receiving FaDSS services after a review of eligibility when all of the following conditions are met:

1. The Family has a gross income at or below 225% of the federal poverty level based on family size at the time of review
2. The family has a dependent child in the household
3. The family resides in Iowa
4. The required family members have U.S. Citizenship or legal status

Eligibility for the FaDSS program is reviewed every six months in accordance with **Table 1**. FaDSS Specialists must complete their review by the end of the month the review is due. If the family is unable to provide eligibility documentation within that period, the family will begin a three-month transition period beginning the first day of the month following the scheduled review. If a family's situation changes during the transition period, another eligibility review may be conducted, and the subsequent months of eligibility review will be adjusted to occur every six months thereafter.

FaDSS Specialists must complete the Eligibility Review fields in Iowa FaDSS. If a Specialist determines that the family does not meet all required eligibility criteria, the supervisor must review the information prior to notifying the family of the outcome. Families must be promptly notified of their eligibility determination by the Specialist. In addition to discussing the determination with the family, any family determined to be ineligible must be sent Form Letter 7.

Eligibility Review

POLICY
2.1

Table 1: Eligibility Review Months		
Month of Enrollment	**First Review**	**Second Review**
January	July	January
February	August	February
March	September	March
April	October	April
May	November	May
June	December	June
July	January	July
August	February	August
September	March	September
October	April	October
November	May	November
December	June	December

CATEGORICAL VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

If the family is receiving FIP cash assistance during the month of eligibility review, the family is categorically eligible for the FaDSS program. The Specialist is responsible for verifying FIP eligibility and documenting the information in Iowa FaDSS. Families receiving FIP and/or participating in the PROMISE JOBS program meet all program eligibility criteria.

Eligibility Review

POLICY **2.1**

REQUIRED MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY

Certain members of the family are considered when determining specific eligibility criteria. **Table 2** outlines which family members must meet each eligibility criteria.

Table 2

Eligibility Criteria	Family Members Required to Meet Criteria
Income at or below 225% FPL	Both of the following: · Head of Household · HoH's spouse or 2nd parent of a 2-parent household (if applicable)
Dependent Child in the home	Head of Household must have at least one dependent child in the home
Resides in Iowa	Both of the following: · Head of Household · At least one dependent child
Legal Status	Both of the following: · Head of Household · At least one dependent child
Assessment of Program Continuation	Head of Household

DEFINITIONS

Head of Household: Means the primary parent/caretaker/guardian of at least one dependent child in the home.

Dependent Child: Means a child related to the head of household by blood, marriage, guardianship or adoption.

The **2nd Parent of a 2-Parent Household:** This is the other parent of any of the identified dependent children (they share a child with the Head of Household and are cohabitating). A 2-Parent Household is defined as both parents of a dependent child cohabiting.

The **Cohabiting Spouse of the Head of Household:** Is legally married to the Head of Household.

Note: *Though documentation is only needed for one child, all children are counted towards family size. FaDSS still considers Other Adults for purposes of providing FaDSS services, however, an Other Adult is not considered for purposes of determining Program Eligibility unless it meets the definition of 2-Parent Household or cohabitating spouse.*

Eligibility Review

POLICY
2.1

VERIFYING DEPENDENT CHILD

The Head of the Household will self-declare at least one dependent child in the home. A family may declare a dependent child if the child resides in the home at least some of the time. The Head of Household having supervised visits with the dependent does not meet the criteria for having a dependent child. If a child is not in the home due to HHS involvement, the family will be given a set amount of time to reunify. See details below under Special Circumstances.

A child is considered a dependent child until the age of 18. An 18-year-old is considered a dependent child if they are a full-time student in a secondary school (or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training) and reasonably expected to complete the program within the current school year. Students with disabilities may be enrolled in secondary school through graduation or age 21, whichever comes first and are considered dependent children while they are enrolled in secondary training.

Special Circumstances

If, at review, the family does not have a child in the home due to HHS involvement, the family will be given six months (until the next eligibility review) to reunify. If the dependent child has not been reunified at that time, the family would begin a 3-month transition the month following review. If the circumstances change during the transition period and the child returns to the home, the Specialist will redetermine eligibility.

VERIFYING IOWA RESIDENCY

FaDSS Specialists should consider the family a resident of Iowa if the family provides an address in Iowa or they self-declare that they are living in Iowa and intend to make a home in the state.

VERIFYING U.S. CITIZENSHIP OR LEGAL IMMIGRANT STATUS

If a family shows verification of U.S. Citizenship or permanent residency at initial eligibility, continued verification at review is not needed. When a required family member is a foreign national not authorized for employment, they must present an approved form of documentation listed below. If the family cannot provide documentation to verify their Legal Immigrant Status, they do not meet eligibility criteria. For examples and additional information about each type of document, visit the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) **Commonly Used Immigration Documents** webpage.

Eligibility Review

POLICY
2.1

Approved Documentation for Legal Immigrant Status Verification:

- Form I-94, Arrival/Departure Record
  - Must be unexpired
- Form I-551, Permanent Resident Card (PRC) or Temporary I-551, Permanent Resident Stamp
  - PRC remains valid until the expiration date shown on the card unless otherwise noted through an automatic extension of the validity period of the PRC as indicated on a Form I-797, Notice of Action, or in a Federal Register notice.
- Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (EAD)
  - Cards remain valid until the expiration date shown on the card unless otherwise noted through an automatic extension of the validity period of the EAD indicated on a Form I-797, Notice of Action, or in a Federal Register notice, or in an individual notice sent to a beneficiary.
- Form I-571, Refugee Travel Document
  - Must be unexpired
- Form I-327, Permit to Re-Enter
  - Must be unexpired

Families without legal immigrant status at the time of review are not eligible for three-month transition and will be exited at the end of the review month.

VERIFYING FAMILY INCOME AT REVIEW

FIP Cash Assistance

If any required family members in the household are receiving FIP or participating in PROMISE JOBS (FIA before FIP or curing a subsequent Limited Benefit Plan) during the month of eligibility review, the family is categorically eligible for FaDSS services. Acceptable forms of FIP verification include:

- The monthly FIP list
- Confirmation from State Staff after reviewing PJ Case
- FIP Notice of Decision from HHS
- Confirmation from Income Maintenance (email or verbal)
- Confirmation from PROMISE JOBS (email or verbal)

Eligibility Review

POLICY
2.1

SNAP Benefits

If any required family members in the household received SNAP benefits the month prior to eligibility review or the month of review, the family meets categorical income eligibility for FaDSS services. Acceptable forms of verification include:

- Confirmation from State Staff
- SNAP Notice of Decision from HHS
- Confirmation from Income Maintenance (email or verbal)

30-Day Lookback

If the household is not receiving FIP or participating in PROMISE JOBS or receiving SNAP food assistance benefits, the FaDSS Specialist must determine whether the last 30 days of income of the required family members is at or below 225% federal poverty level. The income of dependent children is not counted.

If, after completing the 30-day lookback, the family does not meet income eligibility, a three-month lookback should be conducted as appropriate based on information provided by the family. If, after completing a three-month lookback, the family does not meet income eligibility, the family will be determined ineligible for FaDSS services.

Table 3 outlines the countable sources of gross income considered when determining income eligibility. Families must declare all sources of income for consideration. Families must provide verification of all gross countable income.

Types of verification include:

- Employer's Statement of Earnings (Form 470-2844)
- Wage stubs
- Statements from the employer
- Award letters
- Self-employment records
- Legal documents
- Bank statements to verify fixed income
- Family's records of tip income

Eligibility Review

POLICY
2.1

Table 3	
Countable Income Source	**Description/Details**
Adoption Subsidy	Payments made to adoptive parents. Count in the month received.
Alimony Payments	Payments made to a spouse or former spouse following a separation or divorce. Count in the month received.
Annuities	An insurance contract designed to provide income at retirement. These should be averaged over the period of time they are intended to cover. Count in the month received.
Blood Plasma Sale	Count as earned income, the blood plasma center is considered the employer.
Boarding Home Income	Income from a boarding house is considered self-employment. Count in the month received.
Bonus	Only consider bonuses from employment if the person is employed at the time they receive it and there is a way to predict the month it will be received. Count in the month received.
Bottle and Can Refund	Money obtained from collecting and refunding or selling bottles or cans is counted. Exclude money obtained from returning bottles or cans purchased by the household. Count in the month received.
Child Support Income (including back pay)	Count voluntary and court-ordered child support payments. Only include back pay if it was received for more than one month.
Disability Insurance Payments (private)	Payments from a private company available to an employee that incurs a disability. Count short and long-term disability benefits. Count in the month received.
Income from Employment	Includes paid internships, self-employment, military pay, seasonal employment and work study. Count in the month received.
Pensions, Retirement Income, Railroad Retirement	Count payments received with the exclusion of early withdrawals, which are considered non-recurring lump sums. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Rental Income	Income from rental properties is considered self-employment. Count in the month received.
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	Count monthly SSI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)	Count SSDI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Strike Benefits	Payments to workers on strike.

Eligibility Review

POLICY **2.1**

Table 3	
Countable Income Source	**Description/Details**
Trust Payment	Count in the month received.
Unemployment Insurance Benefits	Count in the month received.
Veterans Payments **VA Service-Connected Disability Pension** **VA Service-Connected Disability Pension** **VA Non-Service-Connected Disability Pension**	Count in the month received. Exclude non-recurring lump sum payments.
Workers' Compensation	Count in the month received.

Note: *The percent of poverty level is based on family size. While families must provide verification of only one dependent child's social security number, all dependent children in the home are counted when determining the federal poverty level based on family size.*

No Income

If the family reports none of the types of income outlined in **Table 3**, the FaDSS Specialist must have the required family members complete the **Certification of Zero Income form**. Specialist will upload the completed certification form in Iowa FaDSS in the Intake & Eligibility Document section.

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM CONTINUATION

When a family's eligibility review is conducted during a six-month review, and a family is determined to be eligible, Specialists and Supervisors should assess the family's progress and determine if the FaDSS program is still appropriate for the family using the **Assessment of Program Continuation**. To assist in informing the Assessment of Program Continuation, Specialist should review progress, program timeline and preferences with the family prior to a decision being made.

Completion of the Assessment of Program Continuation must be documented in the Supervision tab in Iowa FaDSS. If an exit is determined to be appropriate, State Staff must be consulted prior to exiting the family. The existence of a waiting list for services may not have any impact on the assessment of program continuation. Please see **Assessment of Program Continuation** for more information.

Eligibility Review

POLICY
2.1

DETERMINATION OF INELIGIBILITY

If a family is determined to be ineligible for the program, the Supervisor must review the determination for accuracy prior to notifying the family. If, after review, the determination of ineligibility stands, the family must be promptly notified of the decision by the Specialist. In addition to discussing the determination with the family, any family determined to be ineligible must be sent Form Letter 7. The family will begin a three-month transition period beginning the first day of the month following the determination. The family must exit by the last day of the third month of transition.

Any family who is unable to verify legal status during the month of eligibility review must exit without transition. Form Letter 10 must be provided when exited.

EXCEPTIONS TO POLICY

Unique situations may present themselves when determining eligibility for the program. Specialists are encouraged to seek guidance from supervisors and State Staff. In some situations, exceptions to policy may be granted at the discretion of State Staff.

Effective: July 1, 2022
Revised: May 5, 2026

Confidentiality

POLICY
3.0

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that the right to privacy and client confidentiality is held in the highest regards. State statutes recognize the privacy rights of individuals who receive services and assistance. The FaDSS program must comply with Iowa Code section 217.30 (FaDSS Contract Article 24.0).

GENERAL INFORMATION

The following information is intended to highlight key confidentiality considerations. Please reference the FaDSS contract, FaDSS standards and State-provided confidentiality training for further information.

Family Participation Agreement

Each family enrolled in the FaDSS program is informed and provided with a copy of the Family Participation Agreement, which addresses a family's rights and how information and privacy will be safeguarded.

Sources of Confidential Family Information

The FaDSS program obtains information about families from the families themselves and from collateral sources, such as PROMISE JOBS, Income Maintenance, community providers, and others. All information received by the FaDSS program concerning a specific family is subject to confidentiality safeguards. Information that is received from collateral sources shall not be disseminated to other sources regardless of whether the family has provided consent to do so.

Information to be Safeguarded

"Family specific" information is confidential and not subject to the open records law. "Family specific" information is that which specifically identifies a family by name, address, or social security number. Often a document will be subject to the open records law, but will have both "family-specific"/identifying information as well as information of a non-identifying nature. In such a case, the identifying information must be redacted (blacked out) before releasing the documents.

When Confidentiality Safeguards are Effective

Confidentiality safeguards go into effect from the initial contact between the family and the FaDSS program for which safeguarded information is received. The safeguards apply to any "family specific" information, whether written or oral, and whether or not the information is incorporated into the family record. Safeguards continue to be in effect indefinitely. They are not terminated by exiting the FaDSS program.

Confidentiality

POLICY
3.0

Releasing Confidential Information
Legal reference: 441 IAC 9.7(17A, 22, 228)

No confidential information about a family in the FaDSS program shall be released without consent, except in special circumstances outlined below. The release of information includes:

- The signature of the person whose information will be released, or the parent, or legal guardian of the person who is unable to provide authorization;
- The specific information to be released;
- The purpose for which the information is to be used, except how disclosure is mandated by the law or the person is receiving services under court supervision or directive;
- The date the release takes effect;
- The date the release expires, not to exceed 90 days from when authorization is given for a one-time release of information, and not to exceed one year, or as the law requires when a contracted or cooperating service provider requires the release of information for ongoing service provision;
- The name of the person within the organization who is providing the confidential information; and
- A statement that the person may withdraw their authorization at any time.

When the FaDSS program is provided with a release of information the program must verify the identity of the person requesting the information if the person is not known to the program. Information may not be disclosed unless it is certain the information will be relayed only to the authorized person.

Informed Consent

"Informed consent" means that the request for release of information has been explained to or for the benefit of the signer and the consent is given freely and voluntarily without fear of retribution or withdrawal of services. FaDSS personnel must ensure that the person understands all elements of the release of information. FaDSS personnel must never provide information to another party that goes beyond the defined purpose stated in the release of information.

Sending Electronic Communication

Grantees must use encryption on any email that contains identifying information including, any email that contains identifying information including, but not limited to: names, addresses, Social Security numbers, State ID numbers, and case numbers, regardless of the recipient.

In addition, the subject line should not contain identifying information. Email should not be used to transmit confidential information if there is any reason to believe that confidentiality could be breached.

Confidentiality

POLICY
3.0

Conducting Home Visits with Non-Family Unit Members

If a person beyond the family unit is invited by the family to participate in FaDSS services, or is present during a visit with the family, the family must sign a release of information allowing the person to be a part of FaDSS services.

Participating in Multi-Disciplinary Meetings

If the FaDSS program is invited by the family or another entity to participate in a multi-disciplinary meeting such as a family team meeting or an Individualized Education Program, the family must sign a release of information allowing the FaDSS program to participate. The purpose of this release is to allow the FaDSS worker to attend and participate in the meeting.

The FaDSS worker must obtain a separate release of information to communicate with participants that are involved in the meeting outside of the meeting.

Reporting of Unauthorized Disclosure

The FaDSS program must report to the FaDSS Program Manager any unauthorized disclosure of confidential information. (Reference: FaDSS Contract General Terms E4).

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

No confidential information about a family in the FaDSS program shall be released without consent, except in special circumstances outlined below.

INCOME MAINTENANCE/PROMISE JOBS/FADSS

Because of agreements between these programs and agencies, staff that work with PROMISE JOBS participants within these agencies/programs, their subcontractors or grantees may confidently share information about a PROMISE JOBS participant or applicant. All information shared between agencies shall be used only for purposes of administration of programs, services or assistance when a family is participating in both programs. In the event a family is no longer participating in both programs, and is no longer receiving FIP, a release of information must be obtained before FaDSS can release or obtain information to PROMISE JOBS agencies.

All agencies involved in the provision of PROMISE JOBS services shall safeguard participant information in conformance with Iowa Code Section 217.30 and are subject to the same laws and rules with regard to confidentiality.

Confidentiality

POLICY
3.0

MANDATORY REPORTING

Personnel in the FaDSS program are mandatory reporters and must make a report within twenty-four hours. FaDSS programs do not have to inform the family of the report. The family must be informed at program enrollment that FaDSS program personnel are mandatory reporters. The FaDSS grantee must not apply a policy, work rule, or other requirement that interferes with the person making a report. Specialists should consult the FaDSS Coordinator for guidance and are encouraged to reach out to the FaDSS Program Manager, if needed.

Legal Reference Iowa Code 232.69. FaDSS policy 4.0

CHILD ABUSE INVESTIGATIONS

The FaDSS program must cooperate and release information to the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services and law enforcement when those entities are conducting a family assessment and/or child abuse assessment in accordance with 232.71B.

MINOR PARENTS

Minor parents may sign all FaDSS forms and may give consent on a release of information form. All other minors must have their parent or guardian provide consent to release information, except for disclosure of substance abuse information. Please refer to Iowa Code 441IAC 41.22(16), 41.22 (17) for good cause and 441 IAC 9.15(3) "c" for substance abuse references.

SUBPOENAS

The FaDSS program may be served with a subpoena or other legal processes regarding FaDSS families. The FaDSS program must promptly notify the FaDSS Program Manager and cooperate in any lawful effort to protect the confidential information. A court subpoena does not allow the release of confidential information without signed consent from the FaDSS family. Confidential information may only be released by a court order. Specialists should consult the FaDSS Coordinator for guidance and are encouraged to reach out to the FaDSS Program Manager, if needed.

Legal Reference FaDSS Contract General Terms E3

Confidentiality

POLICY
3.0

FRAUD

The FaDSS program must release information to the Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing (DIAL) when that entity is prosecuting or defending a civil or criminal proceeding in connection with administration of the FaDSS program. The information released must be directly connected with the administration of the FaDSS program. Providing access to FaDSS records for local or other law enforcement agencies seeking information without a release from DIAL is strictly prohibited. DIAL uses form 470-1363. Specialists should consult the FaDSS Coordinator for guidance and are encouraged to reach out to the FaDSS Program Manager, if needed.

Legal Reference 441 IAC 9.10(6); 45 CFR 164.502 (a) (l)(i), 164.506 and 164.512(f)(l)

RELEASE OF FAMILY ADDRESS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

FaDSS may release the address of a family that is a current FIP recipient to a federal, state or local law enforcement officer if the officer fulfills the following requirements:

- The officer provides the name of the participant
- The location or apprehension of the participant is within the officer's official duties
- The officer states that at least one of the following circumstances applies:
- The participant is fleeing prosecution, custody, or confinement after conviction under state or federal law; or
- The participant is a probation or parole violator under state of federal law; or
- The participant has information that is necessary for the officer to conduct official duties.

Refer all requests of this nature to the FaDSS Program Manager.

Legal Reference: 18 USC 1073; 441 IAC 9.10(16) See Iowa Department of Health and Human Services Employees' Manual I-C

IMMINENT HARM

The FaDSS program may release information to prevent imminent harm to a person. Definition: "Any conditions or practices which are such that a danger exists which could reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical harm." Immediate threat: means conditions that, if no response were made, would be more likely than not to result in sexual abuse, injury or death to a child.

When it is believed a family participant intends to harm someone, the intended victim, the policy, or both may be warned. Disclose only the name, identification, and location of the person and the details of the person's plan of harm. FaDSS personnel should consult the FaDSS Coordinator for further information.

Legal Reference (441 IAC 175.21)

Confidentiality

POLICY
3.0

PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

The FaDSS program may release information to the officials who perform auditing or a similar activity, e.g., review of expenditure reports or financial review, or family file review conducted in connection with administration of the program by State Staff. These officials may request and receive confidential information for the FaDSS grantee as necessary in the performance of the duties assigned to their position. If any other governmental agency seeks information for auditing purposes, please contact the FaDSS Program Manager.

Legal Reference (441 IAC 175.21)

SHARING WITHIN A FADSS GRANTEE ORGANIZATION

1. FaDSS grantees may share information within their FaDSS program without a release of information from the family. The sharing of this information may only be for purposes of effectively providing FaDSS services.
2. FaDSS grantees may share information within their FaDSS organization without a release of information from the family for program administration purposes.
3. FaDSS grantees may share information among programs within their FaDSS organization without a release of information from the family when the following policies and practices are in place:
    - **a.** The organization has policies and procedures that outline the safeguarding of information and practices that meet all legal requirements to disseminate information.
    - **b.** Each employee within the organization must be made aware of the confidentiality policies and practices of the organization.
    - **c.** The organization must inform the family that information may be shared among programs within the agency for the purposes of providing effective services while the family is enrolled in FaDSS. The family must sign a document confirming they are aware and consent to this practice.
    - **d.** Information may only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

Revised: 07/01/2023
Effective: 04/01/2017

Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting

POLICY **4.0**

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the FaDSS programs that all FaDSS staff comply with mandatory child abuse reporting requirements as outlined in Iowa Code § 232.69. Requirements under this section of the Iowa Code include but are not limited to the following:

1. An employee or operator of a family development and self-sufficiency grant program is required to make a report of child abuse if in the scope of professional practice or in their employment responsibilities examines, attends, counsels, or treats a child and reasonably believes a child has suffered abuse.
2. Within one month of initial employment the person shall obtain a statement of the abuse reporting requirements from the person's employer.
3. A person required to make a report shall complete an approved training relating to the identification and reporting of child abuse within six months of initial employment. The person shall complete an approved child abuse identification and reporting training every three years thereafter.
4. The employer or supervisor of a person who is a mandatory or permissive reporter shall not apply a policy, work rule, or other requirement that interferes with the person making a report of child abuse.

Note: Legal Reference Iowa Code 232.69 and FaDSS Policy 3.0 – Confidentiality
Legal Reference Iowa Code 232.70 – Reporting Procedure

Revised: 07/01/2019
Effective: 10/01/2000

Transferring Families

POLICY **5.0**

GENERAL INFORMATION

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that enrolled families are offered and provided transfer services from one grantee to another. Transfers can occur during pre-enrollment or enrollment. The new grantee must accept the transfer regardless of capacity.

Families who are in "recruitment status" or on the waiting list and move to another grantee service area should be transferred in the same status to the receiving agency. If a family is on a waiting list and moves, the receiving agency will add them to their waiting list according to the date they were originally referred to the FaDSS program. If a family is actively being recruited and moves to another service area, it is expected that the receiving agency will resume recruitment regardless of a waiting list.

Transfers from one grantee to another are not considered exits. Every effort should be made to ensure a seamless transfer between grantee agencies. Communication between the family and both Specialists (new and past) and the Coordinators of each FaDSS program is critical to ensuring continuity of services throughout the transfer. Communication between the FaDSS Specialists (new and past) and PROMISE JOBS workers (new and past) for families that are PROMISE JOBS participants is also critical throughout the transfer. There may be circumstances in which it is feasible for a family to retain the same Specialist with the same grantee.

Example: A family moves from one service area to another but the distance is not deemed significant. In this case, it may be appropriate for the current Specialist to continue to work with the family. The receiving grantee agency's FaDSS Coordinator will make the final decision, keeping the best interest of the family in mind. Coordinators should consult State Staff for guidance, as needed.

INITIATING A TRANSFER OF ENROLLED FAMILY

The current grantee serving the family initiates the transfer protocol by completing the following steps:

1. Confirm that the enrolled family is moving from the current grantee's service area to another grantee's service area and wishes to continue receiving FaDSS services.
2. The FaDSS Coordinator at the transferring grantee agency will contact the receiving grantee agency's FaDSS Coordinator to initiate the transfer and exchange contact information for the transferring Specialist and receiving Specialist.
3. State Staff will reassign the family to the receiving grantee agency in Iowa FaDSS.
4. The transferring Specialist will communicate with the new Specialist to:
    a. Coordinate a joint visit with the enrolled family and the new Specialist. If a joint visit is not feasible, a joint phone call is allowable to ensure a warm hand-off; and
    b. Provide the new Specialist with relevant information to ensure continuity of services to the family until the transfer is complete.

Transferring Families

POLICY **5.0**

5. The transferring Specialist will ensure that all data entry requirements are up to date prior to initiating the transfer. The transferring Specialist will not complete Family Exit Information because the family is not exiting the program.
6. If a paper file exists, the file must be sent to the new grantee. The current grantee may copy the family file for their records if desired (not required). Please note that paper files will be very rare as all documentation has been stored electronically since 2020.

FINALIZING A TRANSFER OF ENROLLED FAMILY

The receiving grantee finalizes the transfer protocol by completing the following steps:

1. If the transfer occurs during the month of eligibility review, ensure that the transferred family meets all FaDSS eligibility requirements (see **FaDSS Policy 2.0 - Eligibility**).
2. The FaDSS Coordinator at the receiving grantee agency must contact State Staff to inform them of the pending transfer. Include the family name, county of residence and assigned Specialist.
3. If the family is a PROMISE JOBS participant, the receiving Specialist must inform PROMISE JOBS of the transfer to the new grantee via email and communicate with PROMISE JOBS to ensure that FaDSS remains on the FIA.

RECRUITING TRANSFERRED FAMILIES (ENROLLED)

Beginning the date the family record is transferred in Iowa FaDSS, the following procedures must be followed and documented in Iowa FaDSS:

1. Multiple attempts to meet with the family, using a variety of communication modes, are made. This may include Optional Form Letters 8 and/or B.
2. If, after one month of recruitment, the receiving Specialist is unable to complete a home visit with the family, Form Letter 9 must be sent issuing a date by which the family must complete a home visit. The date of the letter must be at least 10 days from the date the letter is mailed.
3. When the date issued on Form Letter 9 passes, the FaDSS Coordinator should notify State Staff and the FaDSS Coordinator of the originating grantee agency. State Staff will transfer the record back to the original grantee agency.
4. The original grantee agency will send Form Letter 10 notifying the family of their exit from the FaDSS program and will complete the exit information in Iowa FaDSS.

Transferring Families

POLICY
5.0

SERVICE PROVISION FOR TRANSFERRED FAMILIES

When initiating services with a transferred family, the receiving grantee agency must:

1. Review the family record thoroughly
2. Ensure that the service intensity established by the grantee that transferred the family remains in place until such time as the new grantee can complete at least one home visit and has staffed the family to determine the appropriate level of service intensity going forward with input from the family. The staffing will also include discussions related to initial family engagement activities such as screening and assessment.

PROCESS FOR TRANSFER OF PRE-ENROLLED FAMILIES

When transferring a pre-enrolled family, the current grantee must:

1. Confirm that the pre-enrolled family is moving from the transferring grantee's service area to another grantee's service area and wishes to proceed with services. Specify with the family whether they will remain in or be placed in recruitment or remain on a waiting list for services.
2. The FaDSS Coordinator at the current grantee will contact the new grantee's FaDSS Coordinator to initiate the transfer and exchange contact information for the family.
3. The current Specialist will ensure that all data entry requirements are up to date by the effective date of the transfer. The transferring Specialist will not change the family to non-enrolled.
4. The FaDSS Coordinator at the new grantee must contact State staff to inform them of the pending transfer. Include the family name, county of residence, assigned specialist and effective date of the transfer.
5. State Staff will reassign the pre-enrolled family to the new grantee in Iowa FaDSS.
6. If the family is a PROMISE JOBS participant, the new Specialist must inform PROMISE JOBS of the transfer to the new grantee via email and communicate with PROMISE JOBS.
7. If the family is in recruitment, eligibility must be determined within 30 days, however, up to 60 days may be granted if the family needs additional time to provide documentation.

Updated March 12, 2026

Caseload Size

POLICY
6.0

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that caseloads for Family Development Specialists be set and maintained between 18 and 21 families for full-time Specialists. There may be circumstances when it is not in the interest of the program to have a full-time Family Development Specialist caseload between 18 and 21 families. This may be permitted when the grantee provides rationale for this decision with prior approval from State Staff. Rationale may be based on travel time, geographic area, difficulty of cases, etc. Changes to caseload size must be approved through a work plan amendment.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Transfers

There may be times when an agency receives a transferred family from another FaDSS grantee that requires a Specialist to be outside the 18-21 caseload range. **FaDSS Policy 5.0 — Transferring Enrolled Families** requires guarantees to accept transferred families regardless of capacity. This is allowable and should be for a short duration of time.

Staff Vacancies

There may be times when an agency has a Family Development Specialist that is out on a long-term leave or leaves the program. The agency must follow the vacancy plan approved in their grant application. A vacancy plan may require staff to carry additional families above the 18-21 range. This is allowable and should be for a short duration of time.

Revised: July 1, 2024

Technology

POLICY
7.0

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that technology be used within the guidelines of this policy and the FaDSS Code of Ethics and in accordance with all applicable laws. This policy is intended to establish minimum standards for the use of technology within the FaDSS program. Grantee agencies may establish stricter policies.

This policy applies to all FaDSS grantees their immediate FaDSS workers, and anyone with access to family records including agency volunteers and interns.

Technology expands the ability of grantees to assist families by providing services using online platforms, telephone, videoconferencing, electronic social networks, automated tutorials, e-mail, text messages and a host of other services. Additionally, FaDSS uses technology to access, gather, and otherwise manage information about families. This policy addresses three critical areas:

1. Providing information to the public
2. Using technology in the provision of FaDSS services
3. Gathering, managing, storing, and accessing family information

1. PROVIDING INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC

Grantees who use technology to provide information to the public about FaDSS services must take reasonable steps to:

- Ensure that the information is appropriate, consistent, respectful, and accessible.
- Ensure that information disseminated is accurate and valid, which includes periodic review.
- Ensure that all confidential information is protected.

Grantees must ensure that minimum Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) are met.

All information shared from a third party must be vetted by grantees to ensure it is accurate and from a trusted source.

Technology

POLICY
7.0

2. USING TECHNOLOGY IN THE PROVISION OF FADSS SERVICES

For the provision of FaDSS services, grantees must only use technology on work-issued devices and should not access family information nor communicate with families on personal devices. For example, calls to families should not be made on personal cell phones. Electronic devices and technology should only be used for work purposes and not personal use.

Grantees must ensure all of the following are maintained when using technology in the provision of FaDSS services:

Informed Consent.

- FaDSS services must be provided in the format preferred by the family, in accordance with program standards. Grantees must inform families of the risks and benefits to using technology in the provision of FaDSS services. Risks and benefits should be reviewed with every family enrolled in the program.

Assessing Family Relationship with Technology.

- This includes individuals' familiarity and comfort with technology, access to the internet, language access, and the use of technology to meet the needs of diverse populations, including individuals with disabilities.

Competence, Knowledge and Skills of Staff.

- Grantees must ensure that staff are competent in the use of technology and maintain competency through relevant training, consultation and supervision. This includes ensuring competence of staff regarding families' cultural community and linguistic, social, and economic environment to attend to families' unique needs and challenges.

Confidentiality.

- Grantees who provide electronic services should develop agency protocols and policies to protect family confidentiality. Grantees are required to use encryption software for all emails containing personally identifiable information. Grantees should use firewalls and periodically assess confidentiality policies and procedures to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and program ethical standards. Grantees must not have any identifiable family information saved on their hard drives.

Maintaining Professional Boundaries.

- Grantees must ensure clear distinction between professional and personal communications and must take reasonable steps to prevent family access to staff members' personal social networking sites in order to avoid boundary confusion and inappropriate dual relationships.
- Workers have a right to have a personal online presence; however, they should be aware of how their personal communications could affect their professional relationships.
- Grantees must be aware and cautious of shared "friends", interest groups or connections on web platforms. Such indirect and unintended overlap may create boundary confusion and inappropriate dual relationships.

Technology

POLICY
7.0

Unplanned Interruption of Electronic Services.

- Electronic services can be interrupted unexpectedly in a variety of ways. Grantees must develop policies on how to manage technology failures and discuss them with families at the beginning of their relationship.

Social Media

- Grantees may create agency-managed social media accounts to communicate general information to the public about the FaDSS program and related events.
- Social media accounts may not be used for direct communication between grantees and current or former families unless pre-approval is obtained from State Staff. If approval is granted, all communication with families through the use of social media becomes part of the families' record and must be maintained and documented in accordance with program policies and procedures.

3. GATHERING, MANAGING, STORING, AND ACCESSING FAMILY INFORMATION.

Grantees must ensure that all family information, including documentation of services and contacts with Families both virtually and in-person is maintained securely and confidentially. Grantees are responsible for developing agency policies regarding gathering, maintaining and accessing family information in accordance with the following:

Informed Consent.

- Grantees should explain to families whether and how they intend to use electronic devices or communication technologies to gather, manage and store family information.

Electronic Searches.

- Except for compelling reasons, Grantees should not utilize search engines to gather information about a family without the family's consent.
- Exceptions to seeking family consent to gather information online may arise in emergency situations, for example, when a family member poses a serious, imminent risk to self or others and the only way to identify where the family is would be to search for information online.

Documentation.

- Grantees must ensure responsible documentation of all contacts and records of services provided to FaDSS families including appropriate training and supervision.

Electronic Records Retention.

- In accordance with FaDSS contract terms, grantees must maintain family records for 7 years after the date of exit from the program. This includes paper and electronic records and files.
- Grantees should develop policies for managing phased out and outdated devices and accounts from the program in accordance with confidentiality and records retention requirements.

Technology

POLICY
7.0

Family Access to Records.

- Grantees must ensure that families access to electronic records is provided in a manner that takes family confidentiality, privacy and the family's best interests into account.
- Families have the right to access their records and may request to review them in the agency office under the supervision of the Grantee.

Protecting Family Records.

- Grantees must ensure that family records are kept secure and confidential. If family records are compromised, grantee agencies must develop protocol for notifying families. This includes protocol for contacting families no longer enrolled in the program.
- Any record that is compromised must be reported to State Staff. This includes information that is hacked, cloud storage breaches, and other data security failures.

Third Party Funds

POLICY
8.0

POLICY STATEMENT

Third party funds may be utilized in accordance with all FaDSS fiscal and program policies and requirements. Grantees must submit a third party funds proposal request to State Staff prior to implementing activities or utilizing funds.

Third party funds are funds expended by grantees to provide activities that promote self-sufficiency and goal attainment for groups of families enrolled in the FaDSS program. Grantees are not required to allocate third party funds from their FaDSS grant. However, if grantees designate third party funds, the monies must be utilized within the fiscal and program requirements of the FaDSS program. Grantees must submit plans 30 days in advance for prior approval. Grantees may not allocate more than 5% of their FaDSS budget to third-party funds.

Any funds deemed to have been spent inappropriately, illegally or in violation of fiscal and program requirements must be repaid by the grantee. Documentation, including attendance numbers, receipts and justification of payments, must be available in grantee records.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Funds may be spent on activities benefiting groups of families. Activities provided with funds must include justification as to how they will improve family outcomes in the domains of self-sufficiency. Payments directly to families are not allowable. Payments for goods provided to families are not allowable. Individuals participating in any activities supported by third party funds must be part of a currently enrolled FaDSS family at the time of the activity.

Examples of allowable group activities include:

- Family Night Activities
- Group Classes
  - Parenting
  - Financial Literacy
  - Healthy Relationships
  - Digital Literacy
  - Career Development
- Peer Support Groups
  - Teens
  - Fathers
  - Parenting
- Youth Groups
- Group Activities that Promote Healthy Parent-Child Interactions

Third Party Funds

POLICY
8.0

Examples of **allowable** expenses include:

- Rental space for the event
- Instructor fees
- Class materials
- Supplies for activities
- A meal/snack for families attending

Updated: May, 2024
Effective: July 1, 2024

Program Capacity

POLICY
9.0

POLICY STATEMENT

FaDSS grantees are required to be at no less than 95% of their awarded capacity at any given time.

PROCESS

State Staff will monitor each grantee's capacity on a monthly basis. State Staff will request information from grantees who fall below the 95% threshold as to the specific reasons that the grantee did not meet 95% of the awarded capacity.

When a grantee has fallen below 95% of their awarded capacity for three consecutive months, State Staff will take appropriate action ranging from, but not limited to:

1. Continued monitoring and technical assistance.
2. Grantee will develop a plan to meet assigned capacity that outlines action steps and specifies a timeframe in which to meet the capacity policy requirements. State Staff will approve the plan or request modifications.
3. Reducing the grantee's capacity and funding.
4. Terminating the grantee's contract.

Effective: July 1, 2022
Updated: July 1, 2024

Virtual Visits

POLICY
10.0

POLICY STATEMENT

Virtual visits are a valuable tool in the provision of FaDSS services; however, they are not without limitation. Virtual visits may only be utilized in accordance with the guidelines set forth in this policy.

VIRTUAL VISITS

Virtual visits are considered quality visits and must include goal setting (or reviewing) and general strategizing to identify strengths and address barriers. All virtual visits must include video conferencing such as Zoom, Facetime, Teams or Google Duo. Phone calls and texting are not considered modes for the provision of virtual visits. The reason the visit was conducted virtually and the mode that was used must be included in the **Contact Narrative**.

As of the effective date of this policy, virtual visits may only be utilized in the following instances:

1. During illness, if the family agrees, a virtual visit may be conducted in lieu of an in-person visit. This includes the following situations:
    a. When one or more of the family members is ill or contagious and the family does not want the Specialist in the home but would still like to meet with the Specialist. Examples could include: Strep throat, Influenza, COVID-19, Norovirus (stomach flu), Hand Foot and Mouth Disease, and or Fever. If unsure what constitutes illness or contagion, the Specialist will consult with the FaDSS Coordinator.
    b. When the Specialist is ill or contagious, it is best practice to reschedule a home visit. A virtual visit may be used if the Specialist feels well but is potentially contagious or the doctor has advised them to avoid contact with others.
2. During inclement weather, if the family agrees, a virtual visit may be conducted in lieu of an in-person visit. Inclement weather decisions will be made with support from the FaDSS Coordinator. Resources to help determine if a virtual visit is needed due to weather include local school delays and cancellations and Iowa 511 for road conditions.
3. Beginning in the 4th month of enrollment, if service intensity for a family is set at 2 home visits and 1 significant contact, one of the home visits may be conducted as a virtual visit, unless the family prefers in-home visits.
4. When a family is in their transition period, beginning the month following the eligibility review, the family may receive virtual visits during the three-month transition period if the family prefers.
5. FIA appointments may be documented as Quality Visits if the Specialist attends virtually or in-person. State Staff encourages Specialists to attend FIA appointments in-person, whenever possible.

Virtual Visits

POLICY
10.0

Exceptions to the use of virtual visits:

- If the family prefers to meet in-person, virtual visits may not be provided.
- No eligibility reviews may be conducted virtually.
- No state required assessments may be conducted virtually. (GFF, DV, Child Development)
- Stepping Stones to Family Success may not be conducted virtually.
- Except for families in Transition, no more than two consecutive virtual visits may be conducted with a family

Exceptional situations may arise, please reach out to State Staff if you have questions or need to request an exception to the virtual visit policy.

Any changes to this policy at the local level require prior approval from State Staff.

Effective: July 1, 2024

Specialist Non-Direct Work Time

POLICY **11.0**

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that agencies may provide Specialists up to one week of non-direct work time per fiscal year. Non-direct work time is defined as having no contact with families to allow the completion of other work tasks as assigned by the Coordinator. The purpose of this is to allow Specialists dedicated time to complete professional development activities and other agency requirements.

GENERAL INFORMATION

FaDSS Coordinators, in collaboration with State Staff, will identify one week per fiscal year to designate as non-direct work time. A 40-hour a week full-time Specialist be provided a 40 hour week of non-direct work. If a staff member works less than 40 hours, they would be provided the hours they regularly work in FaDSS. The month in which the agency takes their week will not be required to meet service intensity for families.

Program Coordinators will consult with and obtain approval from State Staff when designating the week for Specialists to take non-direct time. During this week, the Specialist will not be conducting visits with families or responding to calls or messages. Specialists will notify all of the families on their caseloads in advance and will direct families with crisis situations to contact the Coordinator.

Coordinators will submit a proposal for Specialists Non-Direct Work Time to State Staff for consideration at least 2 months prior to the proposed week. This proposal will include:

- The identified dates of non-direct work time
- The names of staff participating
- An Outline of the activities staff will complete during the week
- A description of how the proposal will benefit their program
- A plan for responding to families in need during the identified week

State Staff will work with the Program Coordinator to approve or modify the proposal.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

There may be circumstances when it is not in the interest of the agency to allow Specialists to have a week of non-direct work. This designated time is optional for agencies. Agencies may rescind the opportunity at their discretion.