

Complex Case Manager

Roles and Responsibilities

Purpose

Children in Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) receive daily care, guidance, and modeling from specialized, highly trained foster parents. TFC families receive ongoing support and supervision from private foster care agencies to stabilize the child's mental and behavioral health, ensure successful transitions into permanent placements (e.g., reunification, adoption, independent living), and achieve individualized goals based on a comprehensive, multifocal care plan.

The Complex Case Manager (CCM) is a trained social worker who, rather than managing a caseload of child protection cases, focuses on supporting HHS child protective processes and assisting Social Work Case Managers (SWCM) in understanding procedures and overcoming obstacles for children and families with complex needs. The CCM will use existing data sources to identify TFC eligible youth and youth who may benefit, but have not been referred, to the program. The CCM may need to review challenging or stalled cases to identify barriers, generate new strategies, and, when necessary, encourage SWCMs and Supervisors to consider alternative approaches.

Primary Role

To support the unique challenges presented in TFC, Iowa's program will incorporate a CCM to coordinate services, manage complex cases, and facilitate appropriate referrals. The CCM will:

- Be available to support SWCMs and supervisors in determining the appropriateness of a referral for TFC.
- Train SWCMs about the appropriate use of TFC to achieve family and organizational goals.
- Use data to recommend referrals, identifying youth who general foster care has not been able to successfully serve and youth who have needs beyond what the general foster family can manage.
- Receive pre-screen and foster care referrals from SWCM and ensure they are accurately documented.
- Submit pre-screen referrals to the Social Work Administrator (SWA) for approval and track the approval process.
- Forward approved pre-screening referrals and foster care referrals to the Recruitment, Retention Training and Support (RTTS) contractor for further action.
- Participate in initial placement meetings to provide guidance on complex cases.
- Attend 45-day review meetings to offer expertise and respond to questions about complicated issues in the care process.
- Possess in-depth knowledge of therapeutic foster care practices, ensuring informed decision-making and effective problem-solving.
- Maintain an organized tracking system (e.g., an Excel sheet) to monitor TFC placements and case progress.

Strategies and Approaches

- Source and review data to identify potentially eligible youth.
- Participate in discussions with internal and external partners to identify services for youth experiencing complex needs.

Resources

- Training and leadership opportunities should be made available for CCMs, to continue to build their knowledge and skills.
- HHS Supervisors may need to provide additional support to CCMs in instances where staff encounter challenges in adhering to policies, ensuring that progress for a youth in the TFC program remains on track.