



# Program Manual

UPDATED JUNE 2024

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.

# Contents

Section	Title	Page
<b>1</b>	Introduction	1
	Program Background	1
	Program Contacts	1
	Mission Statement	2
	Vision Statement	2
	FaDSS Program Table of Organization	3
	FaDSS Grantee Service Areas	4
	FaDSS Council	6
	Core Components of the FaDSS Program	6
	Policies & Procedures	6
	Marketing & Recruitment Material	6
	Iowa FaDSS	7
	FaDSS Code of Ethics	7
	Caseload Size Policy (FaDSS Policy 6.0)	7
	Program Eligibility	8
	Program Capacity Policy (FaDSS Policy 9.0)	9
	FaDSS Road Map for Change (Logic Model)	10
<b>2</b>	Serving Families	11
	Form Letters	12
	Family Engagement	15
	Contact Type Descriptions and Documentation	15
	Multiple Contacts Guidance	18
	Virtual Visit Policy (FaDSS Policy 10.0)	19
	Technology Policy (FaDSS Policy 7.0)	20
	Electronic Signatures	24
	Language Access	24
	Engaging Other Household Members	24
	Documentation of Engaging Other Household Members	25
	Confidentiality (FaDSS Policy 3.0)	25
	Releases of Information	32
	Coordinated Intake and Collaborative Service Provision	32
	Transferring Families (FaDSS Policy 5.0)	33
	Home Visitor Safety	36

# Contents

---

Section	Title	Page
<b>3</b>	Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination	38
	Referrals to the FaDSS Program (FaDSS Policy 1.0)	38
	Waiting List for Services (FaDSS Policy 1.1)	41
	Priority of Service (FaDSS Policy 2.2)	43
	Initial Program Eligibility (FaDSS Policy 2.0)	43
	Enrollment	52
	Documentation	52
<b>4</b>	Enrollment	53
	Documentation	53
<b>5</b>	Assessment & Screening	54
	Preparing for a Visit	57
<b>6</b>	Goal Setting	58
	Description of Goal-Setting Tools	59
<b>7</b>	Activities and Skill Building	62
	Referrals and Collaboration	62
	Documenting Activities	63
	Employment and Income	63
	Aftercare Planning	64
	Third Party Funds (FaDSS Policy 8.0)	66
<b>8</b>	Eligibility Reviews (FaDSS Policy 2.1)	67
<b>9</b>	Transition	75
<b>10</b>	Program Exit	76
	Planned Exits	76
	Unplanned Exits	77
	After Exiting	78
	Documentation	79
<b>11</b>	Serving PROMISE JOBS Families	80
<b>12</b>	Personnel Requirements	85
<b>13</b>	Supervision Requirements	87
	Supervisor Requirements	87
	Participation in FaDSS Program Required Activities	87

# Contents

Section	Title	Page
<b>14</b>	Comprehensive Quality Improvement Process	90
	Introduction	90
	Description of Activities	90
	DEI Assessment, Consultation & Plan Development	91
	Technical Assistance & Ongoing Monitoring	92
	Fiscal Monitoring	92
<b>APPENDIX A — Supporting Documents</b>		
	Eligibility Tools	94
	Initial Eligibility Determination Form	95
	Self-Employment Reporting Form	101
	Serving Families	102
	Home Visit Guide	103
	Stepping Stones to Family Success	104
	The FaDSS Goal4It! Framework	105
	The Steps for Goal4It!	106
	Family Stepping Stones Tips for Specialist	107
	My Goal Plan	109
	My Pathway	110
	Potholes and Detours	111
	Assessment of Program Continuation	112
	Family Participation Agreement	115
	Personnel Tools	117
	FaDSS Training and Onboarding Tracking Form	118
	Ongoing Annual Training Log	121
	Stepping Stones to Specialist Success	122
	Specialist Stepping Stones Appendix	123
	FaDSS Leadership Practice	133
	FaDSS Supervision Requirements Waiver Request Form	135
	Home Visit Observation Tool	136
	File Review Checklist	137
	Procedural Documentation Review	139
	Iowa FaDSS Document Management	144
	Manual Acknowledgment	150

# Contents

---

Section	Title	Page
<b>APPENDIX B —FaDSS Policies</b>		
<b>Policy 1.0</b>	Referral to the FaDSS Program	152
<b>Policy 1.1</b>	Waiting List for Services	155
<b>Policy 2.0</b>	Initial Program Eligibility	156
<b>Policy 2.1</b>	Eligibility Review	165
<b>Policy 2.2</b>	Priority of Services	172
<b>Policy 3.0</b>	Confidentiality	173
<b>Policy 4.0</b>	Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting	179
<b>Policy 5.0</b>	Transferring Families	180
<b>Policy 6.0</b>	Caseload Size	181
<b>Policy 7.0</b>	Technology	182
<b>Policy 8.0</b>	Third Party Funds	188
<b>Policy 9.0</b>	Program Capacity	190
<b>Policy 10.0</b>	Virtual Visits	191
<b>Policy 11.0</b>	Specialist Non-Direct Work Time	193

# Introduction

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## 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

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Des Moines, Iowa 50319

## CONTRACTOR RESOURCE WEBPAGE

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/fadss-contractor-resources>



# Introduction

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## 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.

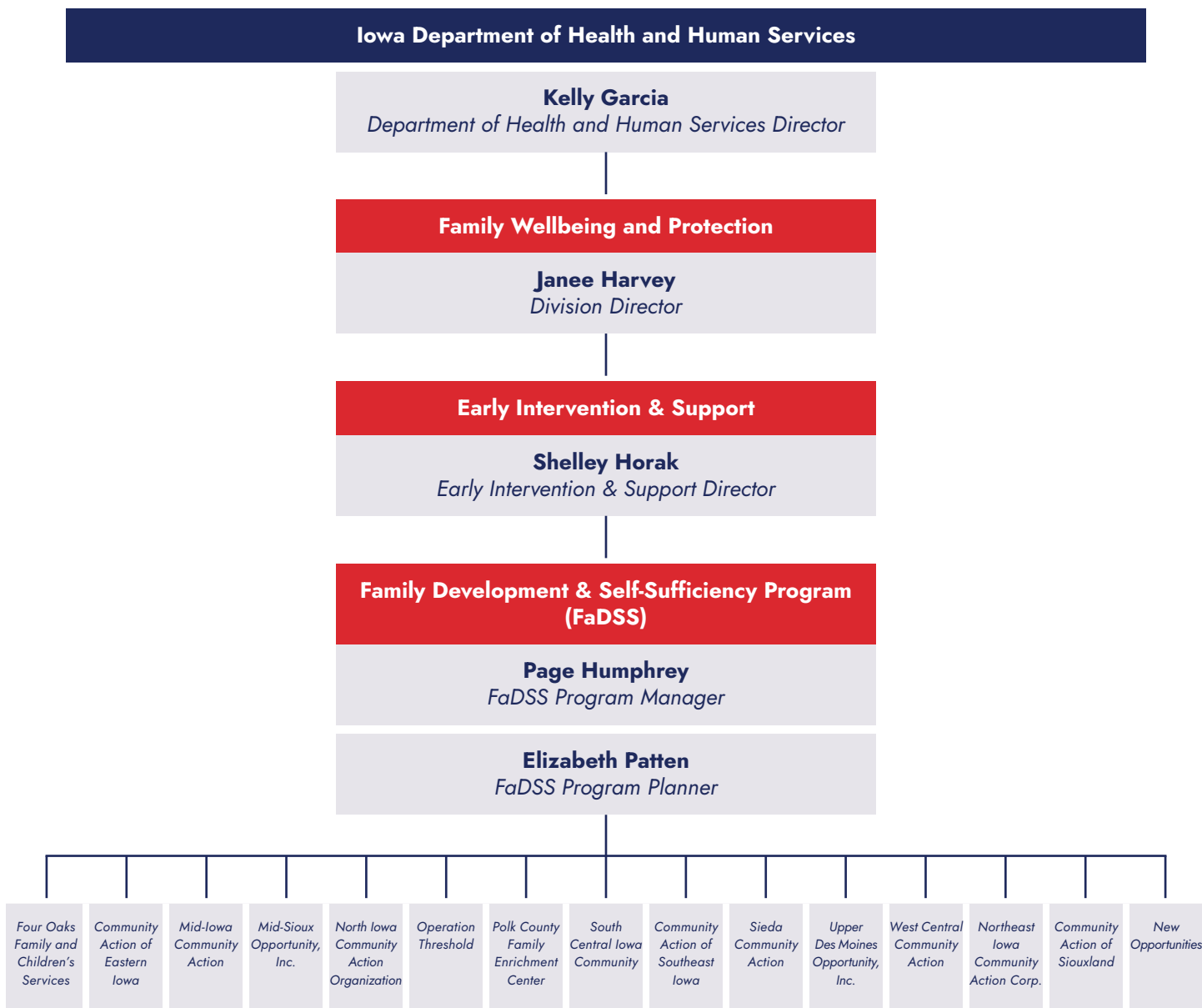
### **We do this by:**

- 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.



# Introduction

## FaDSS PROGRAM TABLE OF ORGANIZATION

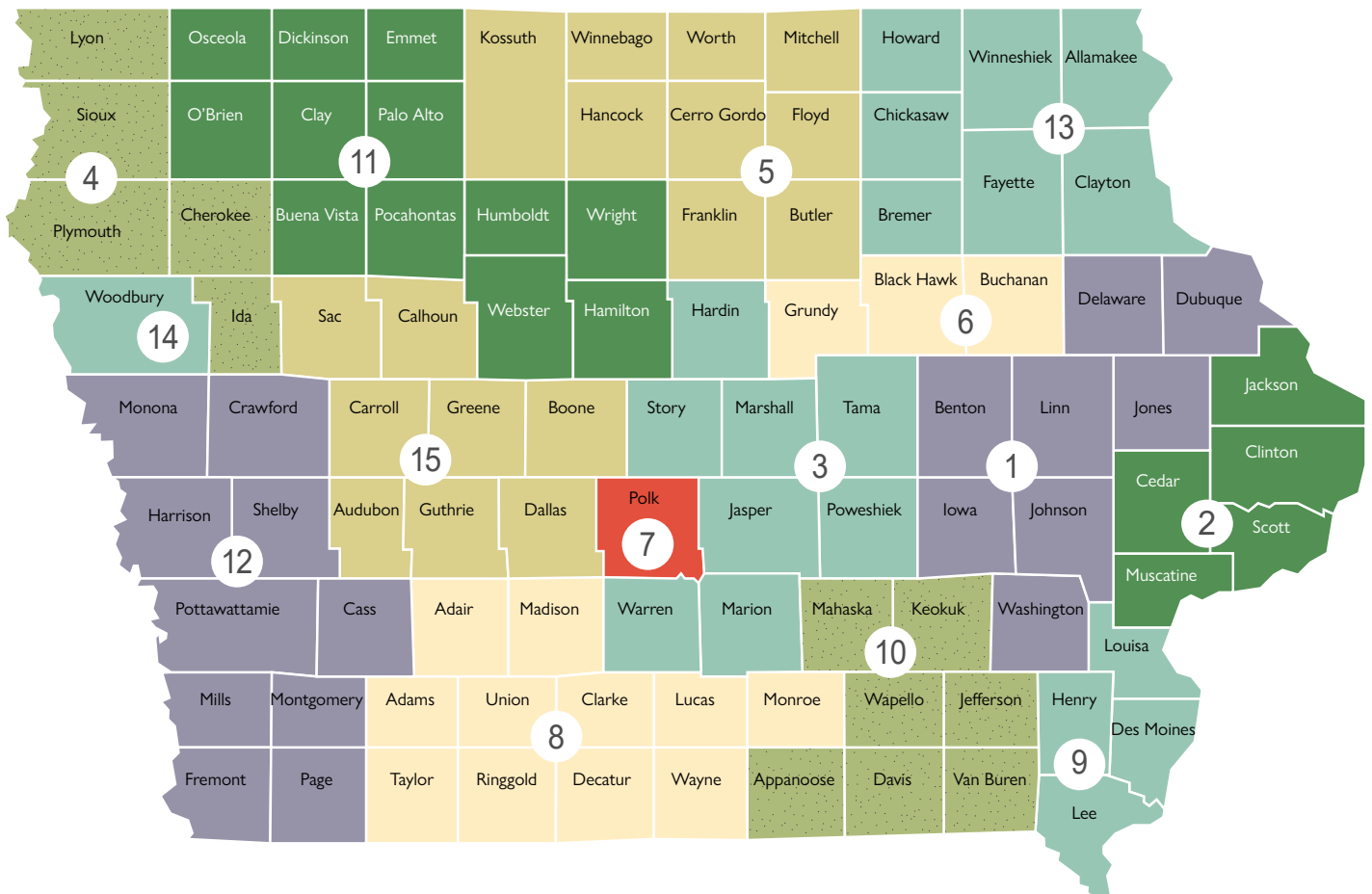




# Introduction

## FaDSS GRANTEE SERVICE AREAS

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



# Introduction

## FaDSS GRANTEE SERVICE AREAS

Service Area #	FaDSS Grantees	Service Area #	FaDSS Grantees
1	Four Oaks Family and Children's Services <i>Amber Mercil</i> <a href="mailto:amercil@fouroaks.org">amercil@fouroaks.org</a> <i>Julie Weber-Davis</i> <a href="mailto:julieweber@fouroaks.org">julieweber@fouroaks.org</a>	9	Community Action of Southeast Iowa <i>Joy Szewczyk</i> <a href="mailto:joy.szewczyk@caofseia.org">joy.szewczyk@caofseia.org</a>
2	Community Action of Eastern Iowa <i>Angela Mendoza</i> <a href="mailto:amendoza@caeiowa.org">amendoza@caeiowa.org</a>	10	Sieda Community Action <i>Ranae Banicky</i> <a href="mailto:rbanicky@sieda.org">rbanicky@sieda.org</a>
3	Mid-Iowa Community Action <i>Mindy Clayton</i> <a href="mailto:Mindy.Clayton@micaonline.org">Mindy.Clayton@micaonline.org</a>	11	Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc. <i>Alisa Schlief</i> <a href="mailto:aschlief@udmo.com">aschlief@udmo.com</a>
4	Mid-Sioux Opportunity, Inc. <i>Katie Vis</i> <a href="mailto:kvis@midsioux.org">kvis@midsioux.org</a>	12	West Central Community Action <i>Mindy Williamson</i> <a href="mailto:mwilliamson@westcca.org">mwilliamson@westcca.org</a>
5	North Iowa Community Action Organization <i>Lori Brandt</i> <a href="mailto:lbrandt@nicao-online.org">lbrandt@nicao-online.org</a>	13	Northeast Iowa Community Action Corp. <i>Nichole Griese</i> <a href="mailto:ngriese@neicac.org">ngriese@neicac.org</a>
6	Operation Threshold <i>Leanne Corwin</i> <a href="mailto:lcorwin@operationthreshold.org">lcorwin@operationthreshold.org</a>	14	Community Action of Siouxland <i>Jessi Bergin</i> <a href="mailto:jbergin@caasiouxland.org">jbergin@caasiouxland.org</a>
7	Polk County Family Enrichment Center <i>Doug Stodgel</i> <a href="mailto:doug.stodgel@polkcountyiowa.gov">doug.stodgel@polkcountyiowa.gov</a>	15	New Opportunities <i>Jamie Johnston</i> <a href="mailto:jjohnston@newopp.org">jjohnston@newopp.org</a>
8	South Central Iowa Community Action Program <i>Jamie Swearingin</i> <a href="mailto:jswearingin@scicap.org">jswearingin@scicap.org</a>		

# Introduction

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## **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.



# Introduction

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## 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

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## **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 and are given priority of service.

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.



# Introduction

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## 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

 <b>FAMILY NEEDS</b>	 <b>CORE PROGRAM COMPONENTS</b>	 <b>SHORT-TERM RESULTS</b>	 <b>LONGER-TERM OUTCOMES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Skills to identify and prioritize their needs</li> <li>· Resources to stabilize the family and address their basic needs (food, housing, transportation)</li> <li>· Resources to address personal and family challenges (such as intimate partner violence, substance use, mental disorders, and involvement with the justice system)</li> <li>· Help/advocacy navigating complex, rigid systems</li> <li>· Healthy, supportive relationships</li> <li>· Parenting skills</li> <li>· An understanding of how to help children meet their developmental milestones</li> <li>· Awareness of their career and life potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Structured home visits</li> <li>· Full family approach (2Gen model) (e.g., parenting skill development, setting goals with all family members)</li> <li>· Assessments that support healthy self-exploration</li> <li>· Scienced-informed goal pursuit</li> <li>· Life, career, and self-advocacy skill building</li> <li>· Connecting families to stabilizing supports in their communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Stable, quality child care</li> <li>· Connection to basic supports (e.g., food, housing, etc.)</li> <li>· Connection to specialized supports (e.g., mental health and substance use treatment)</li> <li>· Goal progress</li> <li>· Engaged in activities that improve career readiness</li> <li>· Increase in social and career networks</li> <li>· Address child development delays</li> <li>· Parenting skills</li> </ul>	<p><b>Parent</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Obtain and retain a job</li> <li>· Increased earnings and income</li> <li>· Increased education level</li> <li>· Improved self-sufficiency and reduced reliance on TANF and other public assistance</li> <li>· Improved sense of health and well-being</li> </ul> <p><b>Child</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Improved child health and well-being</li> <li>· Improved child development</li> </ul> <p><b>Family</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Improved family functioning</li> </ul>
 <b>RESOURCES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Funding</li> <li>· Grantee agency leadership and support</li> <li>· Qualified supervisors</li> <li>· Skilled Specialists</li> <li>· Transportation</li> <li>· Technology</li> </ul>			



# Serving Families

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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**.





# Serving Families

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## **FORM LETTERS**

FaDSS grantees are required to utilize provided form letters to communicate information to families throughout their engagement with FaDSS. Grantees may only modify the areas in each letter highlighted in yellow. All form letters must be provided to the family in color, on the template provided, and in accordance with the FaDSS brand guidelines. Form letters must be documented in Iowa FaDSS both in the Contacts tab and uploaded to the Documents tab.

### **Form Letter 1: Notification of Waiting List Placement**

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**

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 given to the family to contact FaDSS or complete the enrollment visit by 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 that 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**

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.

**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

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## **Form Letter 4: Recruitment After Referral — No Waiting List**

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 given to the family to contact FaDSS by 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**

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

**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**

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**

This letter *must* be sent to families who are determined 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.

## **Form Letter 8: Currently Enrolled — Written Attempt to Contact**

This letter *may* be sent to families when Specialists are trying to reach 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.



# Serving Families

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## Form Letter 9: Currently Enrolled — Re-engagement

This letter *must* be sent to families who are currently enrolled but the Specialist has not had contact with the family for more than 45 days or 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. The date given to the family to contact FaDSS by must be dated at least 10 days from the date the letter was mailed.

**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 — No Contact/Home Visit

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, Form Letter 9 is sent to provide a date by which the family must respond in order to remain in services, the date in Form Letter 9 passes and there is no contact with the family, Form Letter 10 gets sent and the family is exited.

# Serving Families

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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 11 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 45 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 must be at least ten days from the date the letter is mailed to the family to provide them time to respond. 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 **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.



# Serving Families

## 2

Contact Type Descriptions		
Contact Type	Definition	
<b>Home Visits</b>	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.	
	<p>Within 7 business days after a home visit, the Specialist will need to complete a contact note in Iowa FADSS. On the initial <b>Contact Info tab</b> of the <b>Contact Detail</b>, 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 <b>Family Members tab</b>, 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 <b>General Observations section</b> of the <b>Contact Narrative</b>.</p>	
<b>Quality Visits</b>	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. <b>Family Investment Agreement (FIA)</b> appointments are considered quality visits.	<p>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.</p>
<b>Significant Contact</b>	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Substantive communication i.e. resource sharing or support</li> <li>· Not a QV or HV</li> <li>· May or may not include discussion of goals</li> </ul> <p>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.</p>	<p>Contact notes should be completed in Iowa FADSS within 7 business days of the significant contact.</p> <p>On the initial <b>Contact Info tab</b> of the <b>Contact Detail</b>, 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 <b>Family Members tab</b>, the Specialist will indicate who was present at the home visit and if they were engaged. In the <b>Notes section</b>, write brief details of the engagement or why they were not engaged. The <b>General Contact Narrative</b> should include the details of the contact such as information provided and family's progress.</p>

# Serving Families

SECTION

2

Contact Type Descriptions	
Contact Type	Definition
<b>Other Contact</b>	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not Significant Contact</li> <li>May be one-way or two-way communication</li> <li>Includes sending a text, email, leaving a message, etc.</li> </ul> <p>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.</p>
<b>Attempted Contact</b>	<p>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.).</p> <p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not Significant Contact</li> <li>No-call/no-show for visit</li> <li>Mail returned, phone number disconnected, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration Contact</b>	<p>Communication with professionals or other individuals supporting the family on behalf of the family. Example: contacting PROMISE JOBS to request the family's FIA.</p>
	<p>Documentation Guidance</p> <p>Within 7 business days after the Other contact, the Specialist will need to complete a contact note in Iowa FADSS.</p> <p>On the initial <b>Contact Info tab</b> of the <b>Contact Detail</b>, 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 <b>Family Members tab</b>, the Specialist will indicate who was present at the home visit and if they were engaged. In the <b>Notes section</b>, write brief details of the engagement or why they were not engaged. The <b>General Contact Narrative</b> should include the details of the contact.</p>
	<p>Within 7 business days after the Attempted contact, the Specialist will need to complete a contact note in Iowa FADSS.</p> <p>On the initial <b>Contact Info tab</b> 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 <b>General Contact Narrative</b> should include the details of the attempted contact.</p>
	<p>Within 7 business days after the Collaboration contact, the Specialist will need to complete a contact note in Iowa FADSS.</p> <p>On the initial <b>Contact Info tab</b> of the <b>Contact Detail</b>, 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 <b>Third Party section</b>, the Specialist will indicate the person or agency that the collaboration is with. The <b>General Contact Narrative</b> should include the details of the collaboration contact, this could be a copied email or overall description of the contact.</p>

# Serving Families

## 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
<b>Face to Face</b>	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.
<b>Phone</b>	Communication with a family via phone (does not include text messaging). This includes the use of phone apps such as Google Duo, FaceTime, etc.
<b>Text</b>	Communication with or to a family via text message.
<b>Email</b>	Communication with or to a family via email.
<b>Mail</b>	Communication with or to a family via mail.
<b>Other</b>	If the Specialist is communicating with or to a family via a mode not captured above, the "other" option should be selected.



# Serving Families

## 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, 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.





# Serving Families

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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

## **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

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## Confidentiality

- Grantees who provide electronic services should develop agency protocols and policies to protect family confidentiality. Grantees should use encryption software and firewalls and periodically assess confidentiality policies and procedures to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and program and ethical standards.

## 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

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## 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 28 CFR Part 66, grantees must maintain family records for 5 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

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## **ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES**

Electronic signatures should be obtained on forms, whenever possible. 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

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## **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.

#### **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

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## 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.

## 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.



# Serving Families

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## **Sending Electronic Communication**

In the absence of an agency-approved or agency-mandated confidentiality disclaimer for electronic communication, grantees must include the following statement on 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.

**“THIS MESSAGE CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION. UNAUTHORIZED USE OR DISCLOSURE IS PROHIBITED.”**

When replying to a message that contains confidential information, the statement must be added to the beginning of the reply even if the sender included it in the original message. 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.

## **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.





# Serving Families

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## **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.

## **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 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.



# Serving Families

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## **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*

## **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) (1)(i), 164.506 and 164.512(f)(1)*



# Serving Families

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## **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 or 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 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)*



# Serving Families

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## **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.
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.



# Serving Families

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## 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.

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 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

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## TRANSFERRING FAMILIES (FaDSS POLICY 5.0)

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that enrolled families are offered and provided transfer services from one grantee to another when eligible for such services (see **FaDSS Policy 2.0 – Eligibility**). 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 waitlist 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.

Recruitment Status means one or more contacts or attempted contacts have been made to the family.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Transfers from one grantee to another are not considered exits. Every effort should be made to ensure a seamless transfer from one FaDSS grantee to another. 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 critical to ensuring continuity of services throughout the transfer. There may be circumstances in which it may be 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 prudent for the current Specialist to continue to work with the family. The new grantee’s FaDSS coordinator will make the final decision, keeping the best interest of the family in mind.

If the family is in a new PROMISE JOBS area and the current grantee retains the family, the Specialist will contact PROMISE JOBS to inform them that the family is enrolled in FaDSS and ensure the FIA includes FaDSS.



# Serving Families

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## 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 current grantee will contact the new grantee's FaDSS coordinator to initiate the transfer and exchange contact information for the current Specialist and newly assigned Specialist.
3. The current Specialist will communicate with the new Specialist to:
  - a. Coordinate a joint visit (whenever possible) with the enrolled family and the new Specialist and
  - b. Provide the new Specialist with relevant information to ensure continuity of services to the family until the transfer is complete.
4. The current Specialist will ensure that all data entry requirements are up-to-date by the effective date of the transfer. The current Specialist will not complete Family Exit Information.
5. 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).
6. Whenever possible, a joint meeting between the family and both Specialists will be conducted.

## FINALIZING A TRANSFER OF ENROLLED FAMILY

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

1. If 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 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.
3. State Staff will reassign the family to the new grantee in Iowa FaDSS.
4. 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 to ensure that FaDSS remains in the FIA.

If a transfer is not successfully completed (for example, the new grantee is unable to engage the transferred family), the transferring grantee will complete all required exit documentation for that family. The new grantee will inform the transferring grantee and the State Staff of all unsuccessful transfers.



# Serving Families

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## **SERVICE PROVISION FOR TRANSFERRED FAMILIES**

When initiating services with a transferred family, the new grantee 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 is able to complete at least one home visit and has staffed the family to determine the appropriate level of service intensity going forward. 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 current grantee's service area to another grantee's service area and wishes to continue recruitment phase or waiting list status for FaDSS 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.
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.





# Serving Families

## HOME VISITOR SAFETY

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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.

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 referrals from PROMISE JOBS and other sources be accepted by the grantee, assessed for appropriate waiting list placement (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 a confidentiality statement. If your agency does not have a confidentiality statement, use the following statement on your email correspondence:

**“THIS MESSAGE CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION. UNAUTHORIZED USE OR DISCLOSURE IS PROHIBITED.”**



# Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION

3

- 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.

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

- 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)
- 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 eligible families referred for services, the agency may need to operate on a waiting list for services.

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 meeting the priority of service criteria are served before otherwise eligible families 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.



# Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION

**3**

## PRIORITY OF SERVICES (FaDSS POLICY 2.2)

It is the policy of the FaDSS Program that a family shall be granted priority for FaDSS services if the following condition is met at the time of referral:

1. The family receives cash assistance through the Family Investment Program (FIP) or is participating in PROMISE JOBS (i.e. FIA before FIP)

Priority of services means that families who receive FIP must be served in the program before otherwise eligible families not receiving FIP. If a grantee has a waiting list for services, families receiving FIP must be positioned on the waiting list to receive services before otherwise eligible families who do not receive FIP.

Priority of service criteria are assessed at the time of referral. If a family is placed on the Priority of Service waiting list based on their receipt of FIP and/or participation in PROMISE JOBS, their waiting list placement is not impacted by a change in their FIP/PJ status.

If other families on the waiting list receive FIP, families will be positioned on the waiting list according to the date of referral. Grantees must also follow **FaDSS Policy 1.1 – Waiting List**.

## 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).





# Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION

**3**

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 referral but unable to contact them to schedule a meeting, 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. This 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 this 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.

## **CATEGORICAL VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

If the family is receiving FIP cash assistance during the month of eligibility determination, or participating in PROMISE JOBS (FIA before FIP or curing a subsequent Limited Benefit Plan), the family is categorically eligible for the FaDSS program. The Specialist is responsible for verifying FIP eligibility and documenting the information on the **Initial Eligibility Determination form**. Families receiving FIP and/or participating in the PROMISE JOBS program meet all program eligibility criteria.

## **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.



# Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION

3

**Table 1**

Eligibility Criteria	Family Members Required to Meet Criteria
Income at or below 175% FPL	Both of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Head of Household</li> <li>· HoH's spouse or 2nd parent of a 2-parent household (if applicable)</li> </ul>
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Head of Household</li> <li>· At least one dependent child</li> </ul>
Social Security Number/ Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Head of Household</li> <li>· At least one dependent child</li> </ul>
At-risk criteria	One of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Head of Household</li> <li>· HoH's spouse or 2nd parent of a 2-parent household (if applicable)</li> <li>· Dependent child</li> </ul>

## 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** is the other parent of any of the identified dependent children (they share a child with the Head of Household and are cohabitating).

**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.*



# Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION

**3**

## **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 they have in-person contact with their child through visitation/custody/guardianship at least some of the time. 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.

The FaDSS Specialist will document this information on the FaDSS **Initial Eligibility Determination form**.

## **VERIFYING SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS**

FaDSS Specialists must see the social security number for all required family members on at least one of the documents listed below. If a required family member does not have a social security number, the family must show proof that they have applied for a social security number. If there are more than one dependent children in the family, only one must show proof of social security number.

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

### **Approved Documentation of Social Security Number & Citizenship/Legal Status**

- Social Security Card
  - Option 1: no restrictions (name and SSN)
  - Option 2: "Valid for Work Only with DHS/INS Authorization"
  - Option 3: "Not Valid for Employment"
- Driver's License or State-issued Photo Identification Card (ID)
- Passport with Social Security Number
- Birth Certificate
  - Requirement for an SSN is waived for a child 120 calendar days old, or younger if the family has applied to obtain a social security card.
- Payroll stub or W-2 showing the SSN
- Military ID card showing the SSN
- Any official document or form coming from the Social Security Administration that contains the social security number.



# Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION

**3**

- Medicare Card, if it contains the member's social security number (new cards will not include the SSN). This is acceptable only if the household is unable to provide other documentation and can attest to the fact this is their actual Social security number.
- Federal tax returns 1040, and related forms completed by a professional tax preparer are acceptable. The Federal tax return must include the appropriate page of the return, which shows the name of the professional preparer.
- Veterans Universal Access Identification
- Bank statement with SSI ACH deposit which includes the Social Security Number
- A printout from the IRS (Internal Revenue Service), showing the Social Security Number
- Selective Service Registration Acknowledgment
- Military discharge papers, provided it includes the needed social security number
- I-94 Form
- Form I-551
- Form I-688B
- Form I-766
- Form I-66B
- Form I-571

## **VERIFYING U.S. CITIZENSHIP OR LEGAL IMMIGRANT STATUS**

Required family members can declare their citizenship or legal immigrant status. The FaDSS Specialist will document the date of declaration on the **Initial Eligibility Determination form**. Verification of social security number also meets the verification of U.S. Citizenship/Legal Immigrant Status.

## **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**.



# Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION

**3**

## **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)
- 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



# Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION

**3**

## **VERIFYING FAMILY INCOME AT INITIAL ELIGIBILITY**

### **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 determination, 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 determination, 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)

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 175% federal poverty level. The income of dependent children is not counted. 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.

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



# Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION

3

## 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
- 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.



# Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

SECTION

3

**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.
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.
Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)	Count SSDI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum.
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 document this in the **Contact Narrative** and document this on the **Initial Eligibility Determination form**.





# Pre-Enrollment & Initial Eligibility Determination

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SECTION

**3**

## 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.

## ENROLLMENT

Only when it has been determined that a family meets all of the eligibility criteria will the family be enrolled into the FaDSS program. Please see **Section 4** of this manual for more details about the enrollment visit.

## DOCUMENTATION

All families referred to FaDSS are entered into the Iowa FaDSS system, this includes all families that are referred and did not enroll and enrolled families as well as re-enrollments. To create a new family record, click the "Family Records" menu item and select "Create New Record" from the drop-down. Please see the **Iowa FaDSS User Guide** for more detail in how to add and manage records.

Specialists will complete the **Initial Eligibility Determination form** which will be uploaded to the **Documents tab** in Iowa FaDSS upon completion of the eligibility determination.



# Enrollment

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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.



# Assessment & Screening

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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

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.	<p>In the Self Sufficiency Matrix tab, the Specialist will complete the assessment by answering each question.</p> <p>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.</p>
	General Family Functioning	<p>Specialists will introduce the process or tool designed to assess the family holistically. This may include evaluating systems and relationships that impact the family.</p> <p><b>Approved Tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Eco Map</li> <li>· Timeline</li> <li>· Genogram</li> </ul>	<p>A copy of the completed tool will be uploaded into the Assessment folder within the <b>Documents tab</b>.</p> <p>In each <b>Contact Detail</b>, the Specialist will mark either Yes or No if a General Family Function assessment was completed.</p> <p>In the <b>Narratives section</b> of the <b>Contact Detail</b>, 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.</p>

# Assessment & Screening

Timeframes	Screening or Assessments	Process	Documentation Guidance
<b>Within 90 days of enrollment</b>	Domestic Violence Screening	<p>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.</p> <p><b>Approved Tool</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Relationship Assessment Tool</li> </ul>	<p>A copy of the tool will be uploaded into the Assessment subfolder within the Documents Tab on Iowa FaDSS.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>In the <b>Narratives section</b> 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.</p>
<b>Within 120 days of enrollment</b>	Child Development Screening	<p>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.</p> <p><b>Approved Tool:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ASQ</li> </ul>	<p>A copy of the score sheet will be uploaded into the Assessment subfolder within the <b>Documents tab</b> on Iowa FaDSS.</p> <p>In the Contact Details, the Specialist will select Yes, No, No - Declined, No - Not Applicable (and the reason for marking N/A) or Obtained.</p> <p>In the <b>Narratives section</b> 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.</p>

# Assessment & Screening

Timeframes	Screening or Assessments	Process	Documentation Guidance
<b>Every 6 months after enrollment</b>	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 <b>Self Sufficiency Matrix tab</b> , 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.
<b>Within 30 days of Exit</b>	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 <b>Self Sufficiency Matrix tab</b> , 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 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.



# Goal Setting

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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

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## **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 for 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

Timeframes	Process with Families	Documentation Guidance
<b>First 1 – 3 Visits</b>	<p>Specialists introduce the goal-setting process and tools to the family. Begin teaching the family the framework and skills needed for goal-setting.</p> <p><b>Tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FaDSS Goal 4 It! Framework</b></li> <li>• <b>4 Steps of Goal 4 It!</b></li> </ul>	<p>In the goal-setting tab of the <b>Contact Narrative</b>, describe the introduction to goal-setting that was provided to the family and any tools you reviewed. Forms stay with the family.</p>
<b>By 4th Visit</b>	<p>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).</p> <p><b>Tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FaDSS Stepping Stones to Family Success</b></li> <li>• <b>My Pathway</b> (if appropriate)</li> <li>• <b>My Goal Plan</b> (if family is ready to proceed)</li> </ul>	<p>In the goal-setting tab of the <b>Contact Narrative</b>, 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).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>If any goals are set, complete the Goals tab in Iowa FaDSS including the goal, actions steps, timeframes, person(s) responsible, etc.</p> <p>Forms stay with the family. Specialists should upload a picture of the initial Stepping Stones tool to Iowa FaDSS.</p>
<b>By 5th Visit</b>	<p>Review the FaDSS Stepping Stones to Family Success and guide the family through the goal-setting process.</p> <p><b>Tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>My Goal Plan</b></li> <li>• <b>My Pathway</b> (if appropriate)</li> <li>• <b>Potholes &amp; Detours</b> (if appropriate)</li> </ul>	<p>In the goal-setting tab of the <b>Contact Narrative</b>, 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).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>If any goals are set, complete the Goals tab in Iowa FaDSS including the goal, actions steps, timeframes, person(s) responsible, etc.</p> <p>Forms stay with the family. Specialists should upload a picture of the initial Stepping Stones tool to the Documents tab of Iowa FaDSS.</p>



# Goal Setting

Timeframes	Process with Families	Documentation Guidance
<b>As Needed</b>	<p>Check in on goal progress at each visit. If the family seems stuck or you detect ambivalence about change, use the Potholes &amp; Detours document to revisit the goal and determine if the goal(s) still apply or if they need to be modified or discontinued.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><b>Tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Potholes &amp; Detours</b> (if appropriate)</li> <li>• <b>My Goal Plan</b> (if appropriate)</li> <li>• <b>FaDSS Stepping Stones to Family Success</b> (if appropriate)</li> </ul>	<p>In the goal-setting tab of the <b>Contact Narrative</b>, 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).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Document goal reviews or modifications in the Goals tab in Iowa FaDSS.</p> <p>Forms stay with the family.</p>
<b>Every 6 Months</b>	<p>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).</p> <p><b>Tools:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FaDSS Stepping Stones to Family Success</b></li> </ul>	<p>In the goal-setting tab in the <b>Contact Narrative</b>, 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.</p> <p>Forms stay with the family.</p>

# Activities and Skill Building

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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. 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. 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.



# Activities and Skill Building

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## **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**.

### **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.

### **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.



# Activities and Skill Building

**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	
Apr 2024	Yes		\$1,653.00	\$361.00	\$0.00	Actions ▾
Mar 2024	Yes		\$1,653.00	\$361.00	\$0.00	Actions ▾
Feb 2024	Yes		\$758.00	\$361.00	\$0.00	Actions ▾
Jan 2024	No		\$361.00	\$361.00	\$361.00	Actions ▾
Dec 2023	No		\$361.00	\$361.00	\$361.00	Actions ▾
Nov 2023	No		\$361.00	\$361.00	\$361.00	Actions ▾
Oct 2023	No		\$361.00	\$361.00	\$361.00	Actions ▾
Sep 2023	No		\$361.00	\$361.00	\$361.00	Actions ▾
Aug 2023	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.

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.



# Activities and Skill Building

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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 2024. 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 2023.

## 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 2024.

## 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 2024. 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 2024. 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

## 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

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## 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. An **Assessment of Program Continuation** supports the need for further services

Eligibility for the FaDSS program is only 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 field 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

**Table 1**

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, or participating in PROMISE JOBS (FIA before FIP or curing a subsequent Limited Benefit Plan), 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

## 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
<b>Income at or below 225% FPL</b>	Both of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Head of Household</li> <li>· HoH's spouse or 2nd parent of a 2-parent household (if applicable)</li> </ul>
<b>Dependent Child in the home</b>	Head of Household must have at least one dependent child in the home
<b>Resides in Iowa</b>	Both of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Head of Household</li> <li>· At least one dependent child</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment of Program Continuation</b>	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** is the other parent of any of the identified dependent children (they share a child with the Head of Household and are cohabitating).

**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 they meet the definition of 2-Parent Household.*

# Eligibility Reviews

## **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 they have in-person contact with their child through visitation/custody/guardianship at least some of the time. 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.

## **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 determination, 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)

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.



# Eligibility Reviews

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
- Family's records of tip income

**Table 3**

Countable Income Source	Description/Details
<b>Adoption Subsidy</b>	Payments made to adoptive parents. Count in the month received.
<b>Alimony Payments</b>	Payments made to a spouse or former spouse following a separation or divorce. Count in the month received.
<b>Annuities</b>	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.
<b>Blood Plasma Sale</b>	Count as earned income, the blood plasma center is considered the employer.

# Eligibility Reviews

**Table 3**

<b>Countable Income Source</b>	<b>Description/Details</b>
<b>Boarding Home Income</b>	Income from a boarding house is considered self-employment. Count in the month received.
<b>Bonus</b>	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.
<b>Bottle and Can Refund</b>	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.
<b>Child Support Income (including back pay)</b>	Count voluntary and court-ordered child support payments. Only include back pay if it was received for more than one month.
<b>Disability Insurance Payments (private)</b>	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.
<b>Income from Employment</b>	Includes paid internships, self-employment, military pay, seasonal employment and work study. Count in the month received.
<b>Pensions, Retirement Income, Railroad Retirement</b>	Count payments received with the exclusion of early withdrawals, which are considered non-recurring lump sums.
<b>Rental Income</b>	Income from rental properties is considered self-employment. Count in the month received.
<b>Supplemental Security Income (SSI)</b>	Count monthly SSI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum.
<b>Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)</b>	Count SSDI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum.
<b>Strike Benefits</b>	Payments to workers on strike.

# Eligibility Reviews

**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 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 document this in the **Contact Narrative** and document this in the Eligibility Review tab in Iowa FaDSS.

## 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, in collaboration with the family, should assess the family's progress and determine if the FaDSS program is still appropriate for the family using the **Assessment of Program Continuation**.

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 Reviews

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## **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.

## **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.

# Transition

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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

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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 **form letter guidance memo**. 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
  - 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

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## **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

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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.



# Program Exit

## 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

## FaDSS EXPECTATIONS FOR COLLABORATION WITH PROMISE JOBS

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

When families enrolled in FaDSS are also participating in PJ, Specialists should collaborate with the PJ case manager to support the family in meeting the goals of their **Family Investment Agreement (FIA)**.

A release of information is not required for communication between IM, PJ and FaDSS for families receiving FIP cash assistance, PJ and FaDSS services. All information shared must be used only for the purpose of administration of programs, services or assistance.

When working with PJ families, 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

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



# Serving PROMISE JOBS Families

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- 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:

- 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

## 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



# Serving PROMISE JOBS Families

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## COMMUNICATION BEST PRACTICES

Referrals from PJ and PJ appointment notifications should occur by email and should include the PJ Supervisor and PJ Case Manager as well as the assigned FaDSS Specialist (when applicable) and FaDSS Coordinator. Referrals should be sent to the FaDSS Coordinator who will assign a Specialist when recruitment begins. Replying to all on the emails will ensure that all parties are receiving the same information. The exception to this is if there are people not within the PJ or FaDSS program copied on the email, in that instance, a release of information is required.

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 is important and may include joint communication to support the family in doing so.

There may be circumstances in which a family requests that the FaDSS Specialist not share information with PJ. With the exception of notification of program exit, the family's request must be honored.

## PROMISE JOBS EXPECTATIONS FOR COLLABORATION WITH FaDSS

Income Maintenance (IM) workers determine initial and ongoing eligibility for Family Investment Program (FIP). Many families receiving FIP cash assistance are required to participate in the PROMISE JOBS (PJ) program administered by Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) through a contract with the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) program gives priority of services to families receiving FIP. Participation to 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 in meeting the goals of their **Family Investment Agreement (FIA)**.

A release of information is not required for communication between IM, PJ and FaDSS for families receiving FIP cash assistance, PJ and FaDSS services. All information shared must be used only for the purpose of administration of programs, services, or assistance.

## REFERRAL TO FaDSS

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:
  - Referrals should be sent to the FaDSS Coordinator who will assign a Specialist when recruitment begins
  - Referral date, family name(s), case #, SID #(s), address, phone, email address(es), and immediate needs/concerns/comments as appropriate
  - Attach the current FIA that lists FaDSS as an activity
- Case note the referral in IowaWORKS



# Serving PROMISE JOBS Families

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## **SERVICE DELIVERY**

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

- Invite the FaDSS Specialist to attend FIA appointments
  - Email a copy of the Notice of Appointment (NOA) or Clear Written Reminder (CWR), if applicable, to the Specialist informing them of the appointment to meet with the customer
  - Email copies of CWRs to the Specialist in efforts to resolve participation issues
- 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, etc.)
  - 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 FSSG
- Communicate any changes in PJ personnel such as:
  - Change in PJ Case Manager

## **PROGRAM EXIT**

When a family's FIP cancels, resulting in cancellation of PJ services, the PROMISE JOBS worker 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 worker should notify FaDSS upon discovery of the reinstatement or reopening of FIP.

## **JOINT PROGRAM QUARTERLY MEETINGS**

The FaDSS and PJ supervisors will collaborate to jointly facilitate a quarterly team meeting. 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. At minimum, each FaDSS grantee must meet quarterly with at least one PJ team. Meeting agendas must be maintained in the FaDSS supervisor's records and will be reviewed as part of the Administrative Review during model fidelity reviews.





# Serving PROMISE JOBS Families

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SECTION

**11**

For information on specific PJ program policies and procedures, Specialists should reference the **PROMISE JOBS Provider Manual**.

If a family has received at least 59 months of FIP, they may apply for a hardship exemption using the **Hardship Exemption Form**. This form is also an authorization for release of information that allows IM, PJ, Service, and FaDSS to share with each other substance abuse, mental health, and AIDS/HIV-related information about the family that may be relevant to the hardship exemption determination. IM issues this form as early as month 58 of the family's 60-month limit. If the family is not receiving FIP, they must also fill out a **Food and Financial Support Application**.

If a family is unhappy with any aspect of services in PROMISE JOBS, the Specialist should encourage the family to talk to the PROMISE JOBS supervisor about their concerns. If the concerns surround personnel issues involving the PROMISE JOBS supervisor, the Specialist should instruct the family to contact the PROMISE JOBS Bureau Chief and help the family make this contact, if needed:

**Jeremy Ritchie**

Bureau Chief, PROMISE JOBS

[Jeremy.Ritchie@iwd.iowa.gov](mailto:Jeremy.Ritchie@iwd.iowa.gov)

(563) 445-320 Ext. 43309

Families may appeal any decision involving FIP or PROMISE JOBS services by completing an Appeal and Request for Hearing. Families may also complete this form electronically at <https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/appeals>

Families who feel they have been discriminated against also have the right to file a complaint with the following entities:

**Iowa Civil Rights Commission**<https://icrc.iowa.gov/>

Iowa Civil Rights Commission

Grimes State Office Building

400 E. 14th Street

Des Moines, IA 50319-0201

515-281-4121, 1-800-457-4416

Fax 515-242-5840

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Civil Rights**<https://www.hhs.gov/ocr/index.html>

200 Independence Ave, S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20201

(800) 368-1019



# Personnel Requirements

## 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.

FaDSS Training, Onboarding, and Tracking Requirements		
Requirement	Timeframe	Details/Minimum Expectations
<b>Background Check</b>	Prior to Hire	All personnel must follow Iowa Code Section 217.30
<b>Mandatory Reporter Notice</b>	Within one month of hire	All personnel must follow Iowa Code Section 217.30 <b>Policy 4.0 – Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting</b>
<b>Confidentiality Training</b>	Within one month of hire	All personnel must follow Iowa Code Section 217.30 <b>Policy 3.0 – Confidentiality</b> <b>Confidentiality Training and Knowledge Check</b>
<b>Background Check</b>	Every 2 years	All personnel must follow Iowa Code Section 217.30
<b>Orientation</b>	Within first 3 months of hire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· New FaDSS personnel are oriented to:</li> <li>· The organization’s mission, philosophy, goals, and services</li> <li>· The cultural and socioeconomic characteristics of the service population</li> <li>· The organization’s place within the community</li> <li>· The organization’s personnel manual</li> <li>· Lines of accountability and authority within the organization</li> </ul>
<b>Code of Ethics Training (online)</b>	Within one month of hire	<b>Code of Ethics:</b> <a href="https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/12105/download?inline=">https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/12105/download?inline=</a> <b>Code of Ethics Training:</b> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SoRhbxMMgQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SoRhbxMMgQ</a> <b>Quiz:</b> <a href="https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/12107/download?inline=">https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/12107/download?inline=</a>
<b>Initial Mandatory Reporter Training</b>	Within 6 months of hire	<a href="https://lsglm700.learnsoft.com/lsglm/login/iowalogindhs.aspx">https://lsglm700.learnsoft.com/lsglm/login/iowalogindhs.aspx</a>



# Personnel Requirements

FaDSS Training, Onboarding, and Tracking Requirements		
Requirement	Timeframe	Details/Minimum Expectations
<b>Subsequent Mandatory Reporter Training</b>	Every 3 years	<a href="https://lsglm700.learnsoft.com/lsglm/login/iowalogindhs.aspx">https://lsglm700.learnsoft.com/lsglm/login/iowalogindhs.aspx</a>
<b>Iowa FaDSS Training</b>	Within 3 months of hire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proper documentation techniques and maintenance and security of case records</li> <li>How to write case notes</li> <li>How to document all required information in Iowa FaDSS</li> </ul> <b>Resources:</b> <b>User Manual</b> <b>Iowa FaDSS Document Management</b>
<b>FaDSS Program Training</b>	Within 3 months of hire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training on assessment tools outlined in the grant application</li> <li>Training on goal setting framework and documentation</li> <li>The <b>Family Handout</b></li> <li>Training on program eligibility determination and eligibility reviews</li> <li>Training on resources, materials, or curricula to support activities and skill building with families</li> </ul>
<b>Self-Sufficiency Matrix Training</b>	Within 3 months of hire	Recorded training in Iowa FaDSS
<b>Specialist Certification</b>	Within 1 year of hire	<b>Option 1:</b> <a href="https://institutefsp.org/usercertificationexampage">https://institutefsp.org/usercertificationexampage</a> <b>Option 2:</b> <a href="https://nrcfcp.uiowa.edu/training-and-technical-assistance/training-schedules-and-registration">https://nrcfcp.uiowa.edu/training-and-technical-assistance/training-schedules-and-registration</a>
<b>FaDSS New Worker Training</b>	Within 1 year of hire	Provided by State Staff
<b>Ongoing Annual Training</b>	10 hours/fiscal year	10 hours total, 2 of which must be on a justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI) topic of the agency's choice



# Supervision Requirements

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## 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.

## 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.



# Supervision Requirements

Supervision Requirement	Frequency	Documentation
<b>Family Record Reviews (file reviews)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the 6th month of enrollment</li> <li>Every 6 months thereafter</li> <li>More frequently as determined through Intensive TA plan</li> </ul>	Iowa FaDSS Supervision Tab <i>(note in file review section)</i>
<b>Family Staffing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3rd month of enrollment</li> <li>6th month of enrollment</li> <li>Every 6 months thereafter</li> <li>Anytime service intensity is reviewed</li> </ul>	Iowa FaDSS Supervision Tab <i>(note in supervision section)</i>
<b>Eligibility Reviews</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial eligibility determination is reviewed during the 6th month family record review</li> <li>Family eligibility reviews are reviewed during family record reviews every 6 months (or anytime a review is completed) and discussed during family staffing</li> </ul>	Iowa FaDSS Supervision Tab <i>(note in file review section)</i>
<b>FaDSS Coaching Supervision Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly meetings with each Specialist to set, review, or revise Specialist goals using the FaDSS Supervision Coaching tools</li> <li>Completion of the Coordinator Competency tool and quarterly review of goals with State Staff</li> <li>Support of ongoing professional development</li> </ul>	Maintain documentation for review upon request.
<b>Home Visit Observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 per year conducted with each Specialist</li> <li>More frequently as determined through Intensive TA plan</li> </ul>	Maintain documentation for review upon request.

# Supervision Requirements

Supervision Requirement	Frequency	Documentation
<b>Oversight of Required Personnel Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Mandatory reporter notice</li> <li>· Background check, prior to hire               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Repeated every 2 years</li> </ul> </li> <li>· Specialist onboarding</li> <li>· Required Training within 3 months of hire               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Confidentiality</li> <li>· Self-Sufficiency Matrix</li> <li>· Iowa FaDSS</li> <li>· Code of Ethics</li> <li>· FaDSS 101 (an online training module)</li> </ul> </li> <li>· Mandatory Reporter Training (initial)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Repeated every 3 years</li> </ul> </li> <li>· Family Support Professional Certification or Family Development Specialist Certification within 1 year of hire</li> <li>· Attend FaDSS New Worker Training in person within 1 year of hire</li> <li>· 10 additional hours of training</li> <li>· 2 hours of training on justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI)</li> </ul>	<p>Complete the <a href="#">FaDSS Training &amp; Onboarding Tracking Form</a> and maintain records for review upon request.</p>
<b>Participation in FaDSS Program Required Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Quarterly Quality Assurance meetings with State Staff</li> <li>· FaDSS Coordinator Meetings</li> <li>· FaDSS Annual Retreat</li> </ul>	

# Comprehensive Quality Improvement Process

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SECTION

**14**

## **INTRODUCTION**

All FaDSS grantees will engage in a Continuous Quality Improvement process. All components of the plan are designed to facilitate a cycle of continuous quality improvement with the overarching goal of achieving improved outcomes for families served in the program. The Continuous Quality Improvement process will include:

1. Quarterly review of the Organizational Self-Assessment tool, including performance and outcomes indicators and individualized grantee program goals.
2. The use of the FaDSS leadership and supervision practice and FaDSS coaching model at all levels
3. Model fidelity review based on the core components of the FaDSS model.
4. Intercultural Development Inventory assessment, consultation and plan development
5. Intensive technical assistance and continued monitoring for programs identified as needing additional support.
6. Fiscal monitoring

**State Staff are committed to providing feedback and technical assistance using the following guiding principles:**

- Mutual respect
- Open communication
- Joint problem solving
- Commitment to continuous quality improvement of the FaDSS program

## **DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES**

### **Organizational Self-Assessment**

The FaDSS Organizational Self-Assessment tool is designed to identify and prioritize areas for program improvement, uncover potential implementation roadblocks, and create benchmarks for measuring progress over time through gathering input from FaDSS personnel at various levels within the grantee agency. Developed based on research findings along with input from existing FaDSS personnel, the tool incorporates both the performance standards based on home visitor core competencies and performance outcomes and indicators.

### **FaDSS Coaching Model**

The FaDSS program utilizes a science-informed approach to coaching for change at all levels in the program; State Staff coach Coordinators, Coordinators coach Specialists, and Specialists coach families. The supervision practice is grounded in the program performance standards and is inclusive of the specific duties of FaDSS personnel and is designed to identify areas of strength as well as areas in need of improvement. As part of the CQI process, the implementation of the coaching model will be reviewed quarterly with FaDSS Coordinators.



# Comprehensive Quality Improvement Process

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SECTION

14

## Model Fidelity Review

To complement insights gained through regular review of program performance and outcomes data, a Model Fidelity Review will be conducted every three years. The review will include an evaluation of the adherence to the core components of the FaDSS model. The review will be conducted by a third party reviewer and FaDSS Program Managers. These reviews will be completed in five phases:

1. Pre-Review
2. Onsite Visit
3. Model Fidelity Review Report
4. Technical Assistance

The **Pre-Review** will include collaboration between FaDSS program managers, the fidelity reviewer and the FaDSS Coordinator to coordinate the dates and activities of the onsite visit and the transfer of any needed documentation or records. This will include review of performance and outcome measures, family record reviews, supervision and personnel materials, the organizational self-assessment, family feedback interviews, and stakeholder interviews.

The **Onsite Visit** will include home visit observations, staff interviews, and leadership interviews.

The **Report** will include a written report summarizing the model fidelity review and recommendations for further action by the grantee, including opportunities for technical assistance.

The **Technical Assistance** will include individualized support and ongoing monitoring based on the comprehensive model fidelity review.

## DEI ASSESSMENT, CONSULTATION & PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is an important foundation for our work with families. Every three years, grantees will work with a DEI Consultant throughout the Assessment and Plan Development process. This will be conducted at both the individual and organizational level in two parts.

**Part 1: Assessing the Individual** will include all FaDSS personnel completing the Intercultural Development Inventory to assess their personal intercultural competence. Each staff member will receive a personalized Development Plan template with suggested activities and training based on the assessment results. FaDSS personnel will then create their Development Plan, which will be reviewed during regular supervision sessions in accordance with the FaDSS coaching model.

**Part 2: Consultation & Plan Development** will include the FaDSS personnel engaging with the Consultant to integrate what was learned from the assessments into the continuous quality improvement process. Along with the individual IDI profiles, teams will be provided their aggregate data and profile as a team. The Consultant will use this report to guide the team through creation of an action plan to address short and long term areas of growth.





# Comprehensive Quality Improvement Process

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SECTION

**14**

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & ONGOING MONITORING**

State Staff, along with identified third party collaborators, will provide intensive technical assistance to grantees based on the report generated from the model fidelity review. State Staff will work collaboratively with the local grantee agency to determine the types and frequency of technical support based on the review findings.

## **FISCAL MONITORING**

Iowa HHS will conduct fiscal monitoring of programs. Fiscal monitoring reports will be provided to the grantee agency.



# Appendix A

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

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Eligibility Tools

Serving Families

Personnel Tools



# Supporting Documents

ELIGIBILITY TOOLS



## FaDSS Program Initial Eligibility Determination Form

### Section 1: Basic Information

HoH Name	
Date Referral Received	
Recruitment Start Date	
Referral Source	
Date of Eligibility Determination	
Name of FaDSS Staff	

### Section 2: Categorical Eligibility

Is the household currently receiving FIP cash assistance or participating in PROMISE JOBS?

Yes (proceed to Section 6)

FIP Verification Documentation:

Date of Specialist Verification:

No



## FaDSS Program Initial Eligibility Determination Form

### Section 3: Required Family Member Information

Family Member Type	Name	Required Documentation	Verification Documentation & Date Verified
Head of Household		Proof of SSN	
Dependent child		Proof of SSN	
		<b>Not Required</b>	<b>Not Required</b>
		<b>Not Required</b>	<b>Not Required</b>
		<b>Not Required</b>	<b>Not Required</b>
		<b>Not Required</b>	<b>Not Required</b>
		<b>Not Required</b>	<b>Not Required</b>

Family Size:



## FaDSS Program Initial Eligibility Determination Form

### Section 4: Income Verification

Is the household currently receiving SNAP benefits?

Yes (proceed to Section 5)

SNAP Verification Documentation:

Date of Specialist Verification:

No

#### Option 1: 30-Day Lookback

Family had no countable sources of income (if selected, do not complete the table below).

Family Member(s) Receiving	Countable Income Source	Amount Received in Most Recent 30 days	Approved Verification Documentation	Date Verified by Specialist
<b>TOTAL COUNTABLE FAMILY INCOME</b>	\$			



## FaDSS Program Initial Eligibility Determination Form

### Option 2: Three Month Lookback

Family Member(s) Receiving	Countable Income Source	Amount Received in Most Recent 90 days	Approved Verification Documentation	Date Verified by Specialist
<b>TOTAL COUNTABLE FAMILY INCOME</b>	\$			

<b>2024 Monthly Income Limits</b>	
<b>Family Size</b>	<b>175% FPL</b>
1	\$2,197
2	\$2,981
3	\$3,766
4	\$4,550
5	\$5,335
6	\$6,120
7	\$6,904
8	\$7,689
For each additional person beyond 8, add \$785	



## FaDSS Program Initial Eligibility Determination Form

### Section 5: At-Risk Criteria

Select all that apply (based on family self-disclosure)

#### Education level of Head of Household

- Less than a high school education
- Lacks basic literacy skills

#### Work Experience of Head of Household

- Never been employed
- Multiple episodes of employment lasting less than one year
- Currently unemployed

#### Household Composition

- 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 alcohol or substance abuser
- Household includes a past or current perpetrator of child abuse or domestic violence
- Household includes a member with a record of incarceration

#### Background of Head of Household

- 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 past or current victim of child abuse or domestic violence
- Head of Household grew up in a household with alcohol or substance abuse

#### Public Assistance History

- 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

#### Other Conditions

- Geographic location
- Lack of employment opportunity
- Lack of available services
- Lack of transportation





## Section 6: Review of Initial Eligibility Determination

Family receives FIP and/or is participating in PROMISE JOBS

**OR** all of the following criteria have been confirmed:

Family resides in Iowa

Family has dependent child(ren)

HoH and at least one dependent child has SSNs

The family meets one or more approved at-risk criteria

The family is at or below 175% of the federal poverty level based on size

**Eligible**

**Not Eligible**

**Date of initial Eligibility Determination:**

**Eligibility Review Month/Year:**



**AGENCY NAME**

**Self-Employment Form**

<b>Customer Name:</b> _____	
<b>Name of Business (if applicable):</b> _____	
<b>Description of Business (if applicable):</b> _____	
<b>Date of Application:</b> _____	<b>Date Received:</b> _____
<b>Self-Employment Started (MM/YYYY):</b> _____	

This form applies to each source of self-employment income when a **tax return cannot be used** (e.g., a new business, taxes weren't filed, etc.).

Indicate the verification period below (most recent 30 days, most recent 12 months, or most recent calendar year):

- 30 Days
- 12 Months
- Calendar Year

Month	Year	Gross Income Received (gross receipts, sales, other gains, rental and other income)*
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
June		
July		
August		
September		
October		
November		
December		
<b>Total Gross Income Received</b>		

- Must file a tax return to claim deductions.
- \* Attach additional documentation as needed.

By signing this document you are stating the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I understand that I must complete this worksheet for my application for energy assistance.</li> <li>- I have reported the total gross income received during this time period.</li> <li>- I declare that this information is true and accurate.</li> <li>- I understand that I may be prosecuted for fraud and perjury under Iowa statutes if I knowingly provide false information.</li> </ul>	
Customer Signature _____	Date _____

06/24/20



# Supporting Documents

SERVING FAMILIES





# HOME VISIT GUIDE

FAMILY: \_\_\_\_\_

Attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## PRE-PLANNING

Assessments due: \_\_\_\_\_

Activities planned: \_\_\_\_\_

Other follow up: \_\_\_\_\_

## CHECK IN WITH FAMILY

## GOALS

Stepping Stones	Name the Why	My Pathways	My Goal Plan	Potholes & Detours

## ACTIVITY SUMMARY

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## NOTES

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## ACTION ITEMS

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



# Stepping Stones to Family Success

MY NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

1 What is your overall stress level right now? (FILL IN A CIRCLE)

I AM VERY STRESSED! 
        I AM NOT STRESSED AT ALL.

2 Where do you feel you and your family currently are in these Life Areas? (FILL IN A CIRCLE IN EACH ROW)

	THRIVING	JUST OK	IN CRISIS	
<b>Housing</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Stable, safe, secure and affordable shelter that meets our needs
<b>Transportation</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Safe, consistent, reliable transportation and a backup plan
<b>Child Care</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Able to select quality child care of their choice
<b>Health</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Seeks care appropriately, follows doctor's orders, makes lifestyle changes
<b>Mental Health</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	No symptoms OR symptoms are controlled
<b>Substance Use</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	No history or current use or abuse or currently clean or in recovery program
<b>Legal</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	No active criminal involvement in 12+ months and/or no felony criminal history
<b>Parenting</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Parents are loving, responsive, praise child(ren), and able to regulate them well
<b>Child Development</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Able to anticipate child development changes and use appropriate activities with child(ren) daily
<b>Relationship With Partner</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	In a supportive, loving, and committed relationship with one another
<b>Support Network</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Consistent support from formal and informal sources that are able to help and is reciprocal
<b>Education</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Has the necessary level of education or training to get the job they want
<b>Language</b> <small>(non-native English speakers only)</small>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Fully bi-lingual
<b>Employment</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Maintained employment for 3+ months, enjoys current job enough to continue
<b>Income</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Stable income, current on bills, and has money for saving and spending

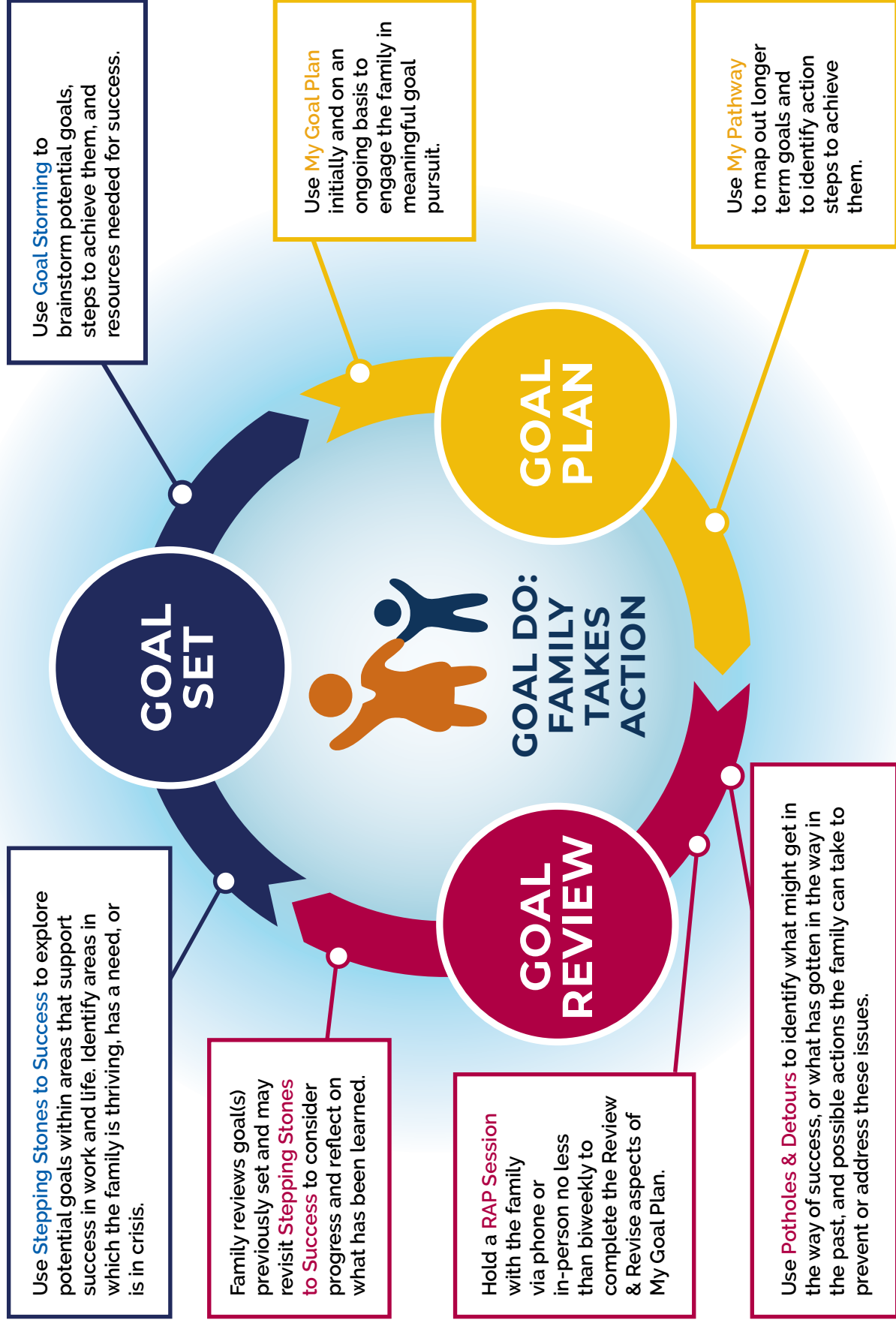
3 Is there anything that you want to discuss in your next meeting?



# The FaDSS Goal4 It™ Framework

MY NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_



## The Steps for Goal4 It!™

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### GOAL

- Aim for something you truly care about
  - Consider something that is challenging but within your reach
  - Be specific about your goal
  - Imagine how your life might be different if you accomplished your goal
- 



### PLAN

- Develop a detailed plan and commit to a specific time for getting started
  - Break your plan down into small steps with a short time horizon
  - Identify a pothole - something within your control that is most likely to get in the way of accomplishing your plan
  - Identify a detour - something you could do to overcome or work through your pothole
  - Combine your pothole and detour in the form of an "If [pothole], then [detour]" statement
- 



### DO

- Share your goal and plan with someone you trust and ask them to check in with you and hold you accountable
  - Use reminders or supports (such as an app on your phone) to help you get started, manage your time, stay organized, or stick with it
- 



### REVIEW +REVISE

- Review your progress in response to these questions: What did you learn? What worked well? Where are you stuck? What got in your way? What could you do differently?
  - Revise your goal, your plan, and/or your pothole-detour combination based on what you've learned
  - Remember that, regardless of whether or not you achieved your goal, this process is an opportunity for personal growth and learning
-

# How to use FaDSS Stepping Stones to Family Success



- ✓ Introduce the Stepping Stones to Family Success tool and process.
- ✓ Ask the family to select their status in each of the work and life areas.
- ✓ Help the family identify and prioritize the areas in which they are most motivated to make a change.
- ✓ Get specific. What one or two concrete changes does the family want to make in an area and by when?
- ✓ Ask the family to pause and envision how their life might be different if they make the change. Why is this important to them?
- ✓ Define a detailed plan with the family that maps the steps that will lead to success. Be specific, realistic, and clear.
- ✓ Identify potential challenges (potholes) and what they might do to address them (detours).
- ✓ Review progress. Invite the family to reflect on what worked well and what didn't work well.
- ✓ Repeat the process.



# You know you are on the right track if you...

## Do

- Share the Stepping Stones tool with the family and ask them to fill it out before your home visit or during it.
- Create space for the family to listen to their own voice by going slow, facilitating the process rather than telling people what to do, and embracing the silence.
- If a family seems stuck, give them a piece of paper and something to write with. Set a timer for 2 minutes and ask them to write down or draw all the changes they might want to accomplish within the next few weeks to generate ideas.
- Look and listen for signs that the family is motivated, such as a smile or excitement in their voice.
- Create a plan that is specific (for example, "Tomorrow at 2 p.m. in my kitchen, I will..."), time bound (in the next 1 to 2 weeks), and realistic (small, doable steps).
- Emphasize that the family owns their goal and plan. You can ask for a copy to follow up with them on their progress.
- Celebrate successes and invite the family to reflect on what worked well and why they were successful.
- See challenges as an opportunity for growth and learning.

## Say

- "Stepping Stones to Family Success is a tool to help us think about the different areas of your professional development and personal growth. It can help you identify which aspect of your work and life is most important right now and where we can focus our work together."
- "Stepping Stones is organized by areas for work and life that fall into multiple general categories. But we only have to focus on one. We can drill down further within each area."
- "If you do not wish to talk about an area or issue right now, please just let me know and we can move on to a different topic. I want to focus on the areas of your life that you are motivated to change."

## Ask

- "Which area feels most important to you right now? What would you like to be different?"
- "How might your life be different if you make that change? Tell me more about that!"
- "What might get in the way of making this change?"
- "What additional resources or support might you need to make this change?"
- "What do you have in place now that you can build on?" (for example, "Is the family aware of areas that they might need to strengthen? Are their areas where they are already strong, but would like to get even better? Are their interested in career development opportunities to cultivate their leadership skills?")
- When revisiting the Stepping Stones plan, ask them, "What went well and what didn't go as well? What did you learn?"
- If a family is not making progress, then ask yourself: (1) Do they need a new or different goal?; (2) Do they need to revise their plan?; or (3) Is something else getting in their way of success? Reiterate that this is a process for growth and self-discovery!



# My Goal Plan

<b>GOAL</b>	<p>What do I want to do?</p> <p>Visualize the outcome</p>
<b>PLAN</b>	<p>How &amp; when will I do it?</p> <p>Pothole that is within ME:</p> <p>Detour:</p>



<b>REVIEW</b>	<p>How did it go?</p> <p>What did I learn?</p>
<b>REVISE</b>	<p>What do I do next?</p>



## My Pathway



WHERE I'M HEADED

**GOAL 01** TARGET DATE:

ACTION STEPS

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**GOAL 02** TARGET DATE:

ACTION STEPS

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**GOAL 03** TARGET DATE:

ACTION STEPS

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# Potholes and Detours



What might get in my way?  
(external or within ME)

POTHOLE



How will I respond?

DETOUR

POTHOLE



DETOUR

POTHOLE



DETOUR

## 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 Coordinators, in collaboration with the family, should assess the family's progress and determine if the FaDSS program is still appropriate for the family using the Assessment of Program Continuation.

The Assessment of Program Continuation must be documented in the Supervision tab in Iowa FaDSS. If an involuntary exit is determined to be appropriate, the assigned State Program Manager 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.

A family not making progress towards their goals does not automatically justify a planned exit. A comprehensive review of the family situation and the services and supports provided by the Specialist should be conducted prior to determining that exit is appropriate. This includes discussion with the family. This should occur in conjunction with eligibility reviews and staffing the family every six months.

A family who exits after the Assessment of Program Continuation may reapply if there are changes to their situation or they identify new goals to pursue. There is no limit to the number of times a family can re-enroll in the program. Families who disagree with their Assessment of program continuation have the right to appeal the decision.

### Family Input

- Does the family want to continue their enrollment in the FaDSS program?
  - If not, discuss the family's reasons for not wishing to continue. Ensure that the family is making an informed decision before exiting.
  - If yes, continue through the Assessment of Program Continuation.

Supervisor Notes:

### Contacts

- Have you had contact with the family within 45 days?
  - If no, exit the family (Note- if there has been no contact with a family for 45+ days, an exit may occur prior to the Assessment of Program Continuation).
- Have you conducted a Home/Quality visit with the family in the last two months?
  - If no, exit the family (Note- if there has not been a home/quality visit for three consecutive months, an exit may occur prior to the Assessment of Program Continuation).

Supervisor Notes:



### Goal Setting

- Does the family have goals they are interested in pursuing? This may be determined only after the following have occurred:
1. Stepping Stones to Family Success have been reviewed
  2. Specialist has reviewed the program expectations including the role of goal setting in the program with the family
  3. Supervisor has contacted the family to reiterate the role of goal setting in the program and attempt to re-engage the family in the goal-setting process (if needed).
- Yes- continue in the program
- No- continue Assessment of Program Continuation

Supervisor Notes:

### Quality of Coaching

The Supervisor must review the family record and determine, has the Specialist provided quality goal-setting with fidelity to the framework?

- How is the Specialist framing the goal-setting process to the family?
- How is the Specialist tapping into the family's motivation for change?
- Has the Specialist completed the 'Potholes & Detours' tool with the family?
- Has the Specialist broken down the goal/action steps to make it more manageable?
- Is the Specialist consistently offering/providing activities to support the family to achieve their goals?
- If no, coach the Specialist on how to improve and complete a home visit observation with the family
- If yes, continue Assessment of Program Continuation

Supervisor Notes:

### Additional Considerations (note- these are encouraged although not required)

- If the family is at or below 175% FPL, they are still eligible and may re-enroll at any time. It is important to communicate how FaDSS can assist the family and what the expectations are for participating in the program.
- Would transferring to a different Specialist help the family move forward?
- Has the FaDSS team reviewed this case as a group to brainstorm additional resources/strategies?

Supervisor Notes:



**When it is determined that exit is appropriate, and the State Program Manager has reviewed the case, ensure the following:**

- A conversation with the family explaining the plan to begin a three-month transition period prior to exit
- Aftercare planning is completed and documented in Iowa FaDSS
- Collaboration contacts notified that family is exiting
- Ensure the Activity Outcome tab is updated
- Exit Self-Sufficiency Matrix completed in Iowa FaDSS
- The Exit Form Letter must be sent to the family
- Justification for exiting the family is documented in the Supervision tab and includes input from the family and Coordinator.
- The Assessment of Program Continuation form may be uploaded in the Documents tab (optional).
- Family Information at Exit tab completed in Iowa FaDSS
  - Mark “family exit criteria are met” for involuntary exits

Supervisor Notes:



## Family Participation Agreement

My family agrees to join the FaDSS program. We understand that FaDSS helps our family achieve our goals for well-being and self-sufficiency. We agree to work with our FaDSS Specialist throughout our time in the program. As a family participating in FaDSS, we understand and agree to the following:

1. We will work toward self-sufficiency and well-being for our entire family.
2. Our family can expect to be treated ethically, honestly, fairly, and respectfully without regard to age, race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, religion, familial status or gender identity. Our beliefs, culture, and values are respected and valued.
3. We may ask questions at any time, in ways that best meet our needs. We may request information in writing or verbally, in a language of our preference, and we may request accommodations related to disability at any time. We may also request a language interpreter to be provided by FaDSS.
4. We agree to meet with our FaDSS Specialist two times a month for our first three months in the program. We agree to meet at least monthly after that.
5. When possible, I will give advance notice when I need to reschedule a home visit with my Specialist.
6. We will actively work with our Specialist to explore and set goals for our family's success.
7. I understand I will be given the opportunity to participate and complete assessments provided by my Specialist to help guide goal-setting and activities.
8. We may request referrals to other resources or programs that may be useful to our family.
9. Our FaDSS Specialist may advocate for or with our family as we work toward our goals.
10. What we share with our FaDSS Specialist, including case record documentation will be kept confidential unless we give written permission. There may be limited situations when our FaDSS Specialist may share confidential information without my written permission. These include the following: If our family faces imminent danger or harm or in the case of suspected child abuse or neglect. Our FaDSS Specialist may share relevant information with our PROMISE JOBS or Income Maintenance workers (if applicable and appropriate).
11. Data collected in the FaDSS program is used for program support, operations and quality improvement.
12. The FaDSS Specialist may only conduct electronic searches of family members with my prior consent and when necessary and relevant to the provision of services. Exceptions to obtaining my consent include emergencies when a family member poses a serious, imminent risk to self or others.
13. The FaDSS Specialist may ask that pets be contained in a separate area during visits if the pet is showing signs of aggression.
14. We agree that any potential dangerous items such as weapons or illegal substances will be put away during visits.
15. If someone in the household is intoxicated or under the influence at the time of a visit, I understand that the visit may be rescheduled.
16. We will provide accurate information to my Specialist for eligibility reviews within the given time period.
17. We may continue to participate in FaDSS until we no longer meet program eligibility criteria, we are no longer actively engaged in the program, or we choose to exit the program.
18. We may voluntarily withdraw from FaDSS at any time.

If we have concerns about participation in FaDSS or any of the items agreed upon above, we may contact the FaDSS Coordinator about the concern or incident.





**Appeal Process:** If we are not satisfied that our concerns have been addressed by the FaDSS Coordinator, we may contact the FaDSS State Program Manager by telephone or in writing (email or mail). If in writing, I may write a letter explaining the reason I disagree or are unsatisfied with services. I understand I have the right to remain in the program throughout the appeal process.

**Address**

Page Humphrey, *FaDSS Program Manager*  
[FaDSS@hhs.iowa.gov](mailto:FaDSS@hhs.iowa.gov)  
Lucas State Office Building, 3rd Floor  
321 E 12th St  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

**Phone**

515-343-6459

\_\_\_\_\_  
Family Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Specialist Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Family Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# Supporting Documents

PERSONNEL TOOLS



## FaDSS Training & Onboarding Tracking Form

<b>Staff Name:</b>		<b>Hire Date:</b>	
<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Details/Minimum Expectations</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
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 (Online)	Within one month of hire	All personnel must follow Iowa Code Section 217.30  Policy 3.0- Confidentiality  Confidentiality Training <a href="#">Recording</a> and <a href="#">Knowledge Check</a>	
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organization’s mission, philosophy, goals, and services</li> <li>• The cultural and socioeconomic characteristics of the service population</li> <li>• The organization’s place within the community</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organization's personnel manual</li> <li>• Lines of accountability and authority within the organization</li> </ul>	
Code of Ethics Training (online)	Within one month of hire	<p>All personnel must read the FaDSS <a href="#">Code of Ethics</a> and complete the required training and quiz.</p> <p><a href="#">Code of Ethics Recorded Training</a></p> <p><a href="#">Quiz link</a></p>	
Initial Mandatory Reporter Training	Within 6 months of hire	<a href="https://lsglm700.learnsoft.com/lsglm/login/iowalogindhs.aspx">https://lsglm700.learnsoft.com/lsglm/login/iowalogindhs.aspx</a>	
Subsequent Mandatory Reporter Training	Every 3 years	<a href="https://lsglm700.learnsoft.com/lsglm/login/iowalogindhs.aspx">https://lsglm700.learnsoft.com/lsglm/login/iowalogindhs.aspx</a>	
Iowa FaDSS Training	Within 3 months of hire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proper documentation techniques and maintenance and security of case records</li> <li>• How to write case notes</li> <li>• How to document all required information in Iowa FaDSS</li> </ul>	
FaDSS Program Training	Within 3 months of hire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training on assessment tools outlined in the grant application</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training on goal setting framework and documentation</li> <li>• The Family Handout</li> <li>• Training on program eligibility determination and eligibility reviews</li> <li>• Training on resources, materials, or curricula to support activities and skill building with families</li> </ul>	
Self-Sufficiency Matrix Training	Within 3 months of hire	Recorded training in Iowa FaDSS	
Specialist Certification	Within 1 year of hire	<p>Option 1:  <a href="https://instituteofsp.org/usercertificationexamplepage">https://instituteofsp.org/usercertificationexamplepage</a></p> <p>Option 2:  <a href="https://nrcfcp.uiowa.edu/training-and-technical-assistance/training-schedules-and-registration">https://nrcfcp.uiowa.edu/training-and-technical-assistance/training-schedules-and-registration</a></p>	
FaDSS New Worker Training	Within 1 year of hire	Provided by State Staff	
Ongoing Annual Training	10 hours/fiscal year	10 hours total, 2 of which must be on a Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion topic of the agency's choice	







# Stepping Stones to Specialist Success

MY NAME

DATE

	EXPERT	ADVANCED	INTERMEDIATE	BASIC	
<b>Relationship Skills</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Interactions are compliance-focused and/or deficit based
<b>Builds Trust</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Primarily focuses on completing tasks first, rather than responding to family needs
<b>Nonjudgmental</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Commonly asks questions that generate limited insight, reflection, or dialogue
<b>Family Engagement</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Delays responding to families until supervisor or coworkers give direction
<b>Family-centered</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Unaware of their approach in working with families, potentially increasing stress or trauma
<b>Goal-directed</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Unaware of personal biases and/or biases influence judgements about family's goals and/or abilities
<b>Self-empowering</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Directive interaction primarily centered on delivering information and telling families what they need
<b>Managing the Job</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Communicates with families sporadically
<b>Organization</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Sets goals without family input and/or goals are broad or misaligned with family's expressed needs
<b>Program Knowledge</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Develops vague, open-ended action plans without smaller steps aligned with family's expressed needs
<b>Resourcefulness</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Limited or no follow up with goal progress or rigidity with modifying goals
<b>Self-Development</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Difficulty modeling advocacy behavior
<b>Self-care</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Difficulty detecting and/or avoidance addressing ambivalence about change
<b>Professional Growth</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Family files contain errors or lack detail
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Attends family visits without a plan, revisiting previously identified needs
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Misunderstands and/or misapplies program processes, rules, and regulations
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Unable to inform and/or connect families with resources and/or ineffectively partners with providers
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Derives secondary stress and trauma from family interactions and workload consistently interferes with specialist well-being
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Boundaries with colleagues and families are inconsistent, and/or unclear, or unprofessional
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Limited or no focused effort on improving knowledge, skills, or abilities relevant to job and career path
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Asks questions, but collaborates minimally, often working in a silo
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Resists participating in DEI activities/training and ignores or dismisses its impact on families



# Appendix: Specialists' Stepping Stones for Success

Expert	Advanced	Intermediate	Basic
<p><b>Relationship skills</b>  <b>BUILDS TRUST: Helps families feel welcome by consistently showing them unconditional positive regard</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains an observable rapport</li> <li>• Consistently initiates meaningful two-way conversation</li> <li>• Shows humility and respect for the family's identity and cultural values</li> <li>• Regularly validates the family's feelings and shows empathy</li> <li>• Consistently uses inclusive language, positive body language, and inviting expressions</li> <li>• Puts the family at ease with home visitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often maintains an observable rapport</li> <li>• Generally initiates two-way conversation</li> <li>• Usually shows respect for the family's identity and cultural values</li> <li>• Generally validates the family's feelings and shows empathy</li> <li>• Sometimes uses inclusive language and positive body language</li> <li>• Typically puts family members at ease with home visitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistently maintains an observable rapport</li> <li>• Uses scripted questions for interactions; maintains dialogue from there</li> <li>• Occasionally shows understanding toward the family's identity and cultural values</li> <li>• Sometimes validates the family's feelings; struggles to show empathy</li> <li>• Occasionally uses inclusive language</li> <li>• Makes the family somewhat uncomfortable with home visitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little to no observable rapport</li> <li>• Relies on scripted questions for interactions; conversations are often one-sided</li> <li>• Shows impatience or disregard for the family's identity and cultural values</li> <li>• Does not validate the family's feelings; lacks empathy</li> <li>• Does not use inclusive language, positive body language, and/or inviting expressions</li> <li>• Makes the family uncomfortable with home visitation</li> </ul>
<p><b>BUILDS TRUST: Creates a safe, supportive, environment and relationships built on trust</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently takes direction from the family (where to meet or sit in the home, etc.)</li> <li>• Respects the family's values</li> <li>• Consistently initiates clear, transparent communication</li> <li>• Clearly states what the family can expect from the specialist and the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally takes direction from the family (where to meet or sit in the home, etc.)</li> <li>• Respects the family's values</li> <li>• Engages in clear communication</li> <li>• Responds to the family's questions, but does not always state expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follows own direction</li> <li>• Rarely considers the family's values</li> <li>• Engages in vague communication</li> <li>• Vaguely states what the family can expect from the specialist and the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follows own direction</li> <li>• Dismisses the family's values</li> <li>• Engages in vague communication</li> <li>• Does not ensure the family knows what to expect from the specialist and the program</li> </ul>





# Appendix: Specialists' Stepping Stones for Success

Expert	Advanced	Intermediate	Basic
<b>BUILDS TRUST: Actively listens to identify family's needs</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approaches interactions with a positive attitude and an open mind</li> <li>Always uses open-ended questions and reflective statements to guide the family toward solutions</li> <li>Asks permission before giving non-directive advice or suggestions</li> <li>Defers judgment regardless of how the family engages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approaches interactions with a positive mindset</li> <li>Often uses open-ended questions and reflective statements to guide the family toward solutions</li> <li>Sometimes gives directive advice or suggestions</li> <li>Defers judgment regardless of how the family engages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approaches interactions without a positive attitude and mindset</li> <li>Asks closed-ended questions; rarely uses reflective statements</li> <li>Some instances of directive advice and/or dismissing</li> <li>Is, at times, judgmental of the family's choices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attitude is negative or ambivalent at times</li> <li>Asks closed-ended questions; rarely uses reflective statements</li> <li>Gives direct advice without asking permission</li> <li>Judgmental when the family's choices do not align with the specialist's views</li> </ul>
<b>BUILDS TRUST: Responds promptly to family's requests and follows through on commitments</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follows through on commitments in a timely, consistent manner</li> <li>Provides information immediately</li> <li>Always keeps scheduled visits/contacts or notifies the family of changes in advance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Often quickly follows through on commitments</li> <li>Provides information quickly, but not immediately</li> <li>Notifies the family of scheduling changes in advance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sometimes follows through, but not always quickly</li> <li>Provides information after researching the answer(s)</li> <li>Changes scheduled visits/contacts often or without much notice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follows through in an inconsistent, untimely manner</li> <li>Inconsistently provides information</li> <li>Changes scheduled visits/contacts frequently and does not always notify the family</li> </ul>
<b>BUILDS TRUST: Uses a trauma-informed approach when serving families</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follows through on commitments in a timely, consistent manner</li> <li>Provides information immediately</li> <li>Always keeps scheduled visits/contacts or notifies the family of changes in advance</li> <li>Focuses on future possibilities instead of the past</li> <li>Actively listens without judgment when family members talk about trauma or other experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally understands trauma and ACEs</li> <li>Sometimes supports family members who have experienced trauma by being non-judgmental and respectful</li> <li>Usually focuses on family strengths rather than deficits or traumas</li> <li>Generally focuses on future possibilities instead of the past</li> <li>Sometimes listens without judgment when family members talk about trauma or other experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates little understanding of trauma and ACEs</li> <li>Rarely considers family members who have experienced trauma</li> <li>Often focuses on family deficits or traumas rather than strengths</li> <li>Often focuses on the past instead of future possibilities</li> <li>Demonstrates indifference when family members talk about trauma or other experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates no understanding of trauma and ACEs</li> <li>Never considers family members who have experienced trauma</li> <li>Consistently focuses on family deficits or traumas instead of strengths</li> <li>Consistently focuses on the past rather than future possibilities</li> <li>Demonstrates indifference when family members talk about trauma or other experiences</li> </ul>



# Appendix: Specialists' Stepping Stones for Success

Expert	Advanced	Intermediate	Basic
<p><b>Relationship skills</b>  <b>NONJUDGMENTAL: Aware of biases and how they might influence their work with families</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believes in a person's ability to succeed</li> <li>• Consistently respects family members' decisions, regardless of the choice or outcome</li> <li>• Regularly examines beliefs and assumptions; seeks to understand different beliefs and values</li> <li>• Strives to embrace differences</li> <li>• Empathizes with family members, even if unable to relate</li> <li>• Embraces and celebrates diversity through words and actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often believes in a person's ability to succeed</li> <li>• Generally respects family members' choices</li> <li>• Usually examines beliefs and assumptions; ignores beliefs if different than their own</li> <li>• Generally embraces differences</li> <li>• Usually empathizes with family members, even if unable to relate</li> <li>• Often celebrates diversity through words and actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doubts a person's ability to succeed</li> <li>• Criticizes family members' choices</li> <li>• Often neglects beliefs and assumptions; ignores beliefs if different than their own</li> <li>• Rarely embraces differences</li> <li>• Typically demonstrates indifference when family members share their experiences</li> <li>• Often criticizes diversity through words and actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doubts a person's ability to succeed</li> <li>• Criticizes family members' choices</li> <li>• Neglects beliefs and assumptions; ignores different beliefs</li> <li>• Never embraces differences</li> <li>• Demonstrates indifference and impatience when family members share their experiences</li> <li>• Consistently excludes and criticizes diversity through words and actions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Family Engagement</b>  <b>FAMILY CENTERED: Facilitates a process to help families identify their needs and potential solutions</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds authentic relationships with family members</li> <li>• Uses screening and assessment tools to help the family self-reflect</li> <li>• Consistently asks open-ended questions to help the family identify needs, interests, and priorities</li> <li>• Regularly aligns the family's needs with their goals</li> <li>• Teaches routine processes for identifying personal and family challenges (and developing solutions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds relationships with family members</li> <li>• Uses screening and assessment tools</li> <li>• Generally asks open-ended questions to help the family identify needs, interests, and priorities</li> <li>• Typically aligns the family's needs with their goals</li> <li>• Often teaches routine processes for identifying personal and family challenges, but lacks solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seldom builds strong relationships with family members</li> <li>• Forgets to use screening tools or uses them at inappropriate times</li> <li>• Rarely asks open-ended questions to help the family identify needs, interests, and priorities</li> <li>• Seldom aligns the family's needs with their goals</li> <li>• Rarely teaches routine processes for aligning the family's needs with their goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not build strong relationships with family members</li> <li>• Neglects screening and assessment tools and/or does not use them to help the family self-reflect</li> <li>• Never asks open-ended questions to help the family identify needs, interests, and priorities</li> <li>• Never aligns the family's needs with their goals</li> <li>• Does not teach routine processes for identifying personal and family challenges</li> </ul>



# Appendix: Specialists' Stepping Stones for Success

Expert	Advanced	Intermediate	Basic
<p><b>Family Engagement</b>  <b>FAMILY CENTERED: Consistently engages families in home visiting activities that improve their economic and life circumstances</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintains positive communication by conducting home visits and other forms of communication (emails, texts, phone/video calls)</li> <li>Consistently develops a strong connection with each family member</li> <li>Regularly facilitates goal-setting that strengthens the family unit</li> <li>Consistently sees the family's potential and engages them in activities that benefit every member</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintains communication by conducting home visits and other forms of communication (emails, texts, phone/video calls)</li> <li>Develops a strong connection with most family members</li> <li>Sometimes promotes goal-setting that strengthens the family unit</li> <li>Often sees the family's potential and engages them in activities that benefit every member</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rarely maintains consistent communication</li> <li>Rarely develops connections with some family members</li> <li>Seldom facilitates goal-setting that strengthens the family unit</li> <li>Sees the family's potential, but does not always engage them in activities that benefit every member</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not maintain consistent communication</li> <li>Does not develop a connection with every family member</li> <li>Does not engage in goal-setting that strengthens the family unit</li> <li>Does not see family's potential; often discourages them from specific activities (deems them unrealistic, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p><b>GOAL-DIRECTED: Specialists support families in identifying meaningful work, education and parenting goals</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently supports the family in identifying and prioritizing various self-sufficiency goals</li> <li>Regularly facilitates a process to help the family tap into what motivates them in work, education, basic skills, and parenting</li> <li>Consistently helps the family identify goals that are challenging, yet achievable and meaningful</li> <li>Regularly helps family members understand the importance of their goals (their "why")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally supports the family in identifying and prioritizing some self-sufficiency goals</li> <li>Usually promotes a process to help the family tap into what motivates them in work, education, basic skills, and parenting</li> <li>Often helps the family identify goals that are challenging, yet achievable and meaningful</li> <li>Typically helps family members understand the importance of their goals (their "why")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rarely supports the family in identifying and prioritizing self-sufficiency goals</li> <li>Rarely helps the family tap into what motivates them in work, education, basic skills, and parenting</li> <li>Seldom helps the family identify goals that are challenging, yet achievable and meaningful</li> <li>Rarely helps family members understand the importance of their goals (their "why")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not support the family in identifying and prioritizing self-sufficiency goals</li> <li>Does not help the family tap into what motivates them in work, education, basic skills, and parenting</li> <li>Does not help the family identify goals that are challenging, yet achievable and meaningful</li> <li>Does not help family members understand the importance of their goals (their "why")</li> </ul>



# Appendix: Specialists' Stepping Stones for Success

Expert	Advanced	Intermediate	Basic
<p><b>Family Engagement</b></p> <p><b>GOAL-DIRECTED: Helps families develop plans by breaking goals into small, achievable steps</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently asks reflective, open-ended questions to help the family articulate a concrete, manageable plan</li> <li>Consistently considers the necessary skills and resources needed to achieve goals</li> <li>Prompts the family to define a time frame for starting and achieving goals</li> <li>Consistently distinguishes between internal and external obstacles; encourages focus on internal obstacles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Often asks open-ended questions to help the family articulate a concrete, manageable plan</li> <li>Typically considers the necessary skills and resources needed to achieve goals</li> <li>Often encourages the family to define a time frame for starting and achieving goals</li> <li>Typically distinguishes between internal and external obstacles; focuses on internal obstacles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rarely asked open-ended questions to help the family articulate a concrete, manageable plan</li> <li>Overlooks the necessary skills and resources needed to achieve goals</li> <li>Seldom encourages the family to define a time frame for starting and achieving goals</li> <li>Rarely distinguishes between internal and external obstacles; focuses on external obstacles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not ask open-ended questions to help the family articulate a concrete, manageable plan</li> <li>Ignores the necessary skills and resources needed to achieve goals</li> <li>Does not encourage the family to define a time frame for starting and achieving goals</li> <li>Does not distinguish between internal and external obstacles</li> </ul>
<p><b>GOAL-DIRECTED: Asks families to reflect on goal progress, modifies goals when needed</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regularly holds review/revise discussions with the family to reflect on goal progress</li> <li>Encourages self-reflection and learning, regardless of goal outcomes</li> <li>Consistently troubleshoots with family members when they do not achieve a goal by revising the goal, plan, and/or pothole and detour</li> <li>Regularly celebrates progress and accomplishments</li> <li>Consistently encourages family members to self-reflect and embrace growth (learn from setbacks and successes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holds review/revise discussions with the family to reflect on goal progress</li> <li>Encourages learning, regardless of goal outcomes</li> <li>Typically troubleshoots with family members when they do not achieve a goal by revising the goal, plan, and/or pothole and detour</li> <li>Generally celebrates progress and accomplishments</li> <li>Encourages family members to self-reflect and embrace growth (learn from setbacks and successes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seldom holds discussions to check in on goal progress</li> <li>Encourages self-reflection based on goal outcomes</li> <li>Sometimes troubleshoots with family members when they do not achieve a goal by focusing on what went wrong</li> <li>Rarely celebrates progress and accomplishments</li> <li>Encourages family members to focus on what they are doing wrong and where they are lacking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not hold regular review/revise discussions to revisit goals</li> <li>Encourages learning based on goal outcomes</li> <li>Does not troubleshoot with family members about what went wrong</li> <li>Does not celebrate progress and accomplishments</li> <li>Encourages family members to focus on what they are doing wrong and where they are lacking</li> </ul>



# Appendix: Specialists' Stepping Stones for Success

Expert	Advanced	Intermediate	Basic
<b>Family Engagement</b> <b>SELF-EMPOWERING: Coaches families on how to advocate for themselves</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently coaches and role plays with the family to help them navigate systems to get what they need</li> <li>Regularly encourages the family to engage in community/agency activities</li> <li>Consistently provides constructive feedback to the family</li> <li>Regularly shares appreciation with parents when they advocate for their family's needs</li> <li>Consistently helps increase the family's self-awareness to improve their self-advocacy skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Often coaches the family to help them navigate systems to get what they need</li> <li>Typically encourages the family to engage in community/agency activities</li> <li>Sometimes provides constructive feedback to the family</li> <li>Often shares appreciation with parents when they advocate for their family's needs</li> <li>Sometimes helps increase the family's self-awareness to improve their self-advocacy skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tells the family how to navigate systems to get what they need</li> <li>Rarely encourages the family to engage in community/agency activities</li> <li>Provides feedback to the family</li> <li>Seldom shares appreciation with parents when they advocate for their family's needs</li> <li>Rarely helps increase the family's self-awareness to improve their self-advocacy skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tells the family how to navigate systems to get what they need</li> <li>Does not encourage the family to engage in community/agency activities</li> <li>Provides harsh feedback to the family</li> <li>Does not share appreciation with parents when they advocate for their family's needs</li> <li>Does not increase the family's self-awareness to improve their self-advocacy skills</li> </ul>
<b>SELF-EMPOWERING: Detects and addresses ambivalence about change</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quickly detects the family's ambivalence about making a particular change</li> <li>Consistently uses open-ended questions and reflective statements that draw out the root of the family's ambivalence</li> <li>Consistently recognizes and understands the family's readiness to change</li> <li>Knows when to push the family outside of their comfort zone and when to allow space in the process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detects the family's ambivalence about making a particular change</li> <li>Generally uses open-ended questions and reflective statements that draw out the root of the family's ambivalence</li> <li>Usually recognizes and understands the family's readiness to change</li> <li>Typically knows when to push the family outside of their comfort zone and when to allow space in the process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slowly detects the family's ambivalence about making a particular change</li> <li>Rarely uses open-ended questions and reflective statements that draw out the root of the family's ambivalence</li> <li>Somewhat able to recognize and understand the family's readiness to change</li> <li>Somewhat aware of when to push the family outside of their comfort zone and when to allow space in the process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to detect the family's ambivalence about making a particular change</li> <li>Does not use open-ended questions or reflective statements that draw out the root of the family's ambivalence</li> <li>Does not recognize and understand the family's readiness to change</li> <li>Unaware of when to push the family outside of their comfort zone and when to allow space in the process</li> </ul>



## Appendix: Specialists' Stepping Stones for Success

Expert	Advanced	Intermediate	Basic
<p><b>Managing the Job</b></p> <p><b>ORGANIZATION: Maintains thorough, accurate, and timely documentation in family case files</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently completes administrative tasks on time</li> <li>Regularly submits high-quality case notes and family records on time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usually completes administrative tasks on time</li> <li>Submits standard case notes and family records on time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inconsistently completes administrative tasks on time</li> <li>Inconsistently submits standard case notes and family records</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inconsistently completes administrative tasks; often late</li> <li>Inconsistently submits low-quality, incomplete case notes and family records</li> </ul>
<p><b>ORGANIZATION: Prepares for family visits to ensure they are responsive to families' needs and impactful</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently reviews past home visit/contact narratives and gathers necessary resources before visiting</li> <li>Comes prepared with an agenda; has flexibility to address new or pressing issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Typically reviews past home visit/contact narratives and gathers necessary resources before visiting</li> <li>Comes prepared; has flexibility to address new or pressing issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rarely reviews past home visit/contact narratives; gathers necessary resources before visiting</li> <li>Comes unprepared, but has flexibility to address new or pressing issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not review past home visit/contact narratives or gather necessary resources</li> <li>Comes unprepared with little flexibility to address new or pressing issues</li> </ul>
<p><b>PROGRAM KNOWLEDGE: Understands and appropriately applies program processes, rules and policies</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently understands and applies program rules and policies</li> <li>Commands deep knowledge of program processes</li> <li>Effectively helps the family understand program policies and processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally understands and applies program rules and policies</li> <li>Commands some knowledge of program processes</li> <li>Helps the family understand program policies and processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rarely understands or applies program rules and policies</li> <li>Has little knowledge of program processes</li> <li>Rarely helps the family understand program policies and processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not understand and/or inappropriately applies program rules and policies</li> <li>Has very little to no knowledge of program processes</li> <li>Does not help the family understand program policies and processes</li> </ul>



# Appendix: Specialists' Stepping Stones for Success

Expert	Advanced	Intermediate	Basic
<p><b>Managing the Job</b></p> <p><b>RESOURCEFULNESS: Partners with providers to connect families to the resources they need</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently provides the family with details and information about resources</li> <li>Consistently completes referrals using required paperwork, including releases of information (when needed)</li> <li>Consistently makes a warm hand-off (personal connection) between the family and the provider</li> <li>Consistently demonstrates a strong knowledge of community resources beyond agency connections</li> <li>Consistently explains to the family what to expect from resources and how to access them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally provides the family with details and information about resources</li> <li>Generally completes referrals using required paperwork, including releases of information (when needed)</li> <li>Generally makes a warm hand-off between the family and the provider</li> <li>Generally demonstrates a strong knowledge of community resources beyond agency connections</li> <li>Generally explains to the family what to expect from resources, but is unclear on how to access them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides the family with inconsistent details and information about resources</li> <li>Often makes mistakes when completing referrals and paperwork</li> <li>Rarely makes a hand-off between the family and the provider</li> <li>Demonstrates little knowledge of community resources beyond agency connections</li> <li>Confuses the family about what to expect from resources and how to access them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides the family with unclear information about resources</li> <li>Is unclear about how to complete referrals or necessary paperwork</li> <li>Never makes a hand-off between the family and the provider</li> <li>Does not know about community resources beyond agency connections</li> <li>Does not explain to the family what to expect from resources or how to access them</li> </ul>
<p><b>Self-Development</b></p> <p><b>SELF-CARE: Effectively manages time and workload while maintaining a healthy work-life balance</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workspace and home visiting materials are organized</li> <li>Proactively manages cases by regularly following up on tasks and client-related issues</li> <li>Works during the week, allowing for flexibility to accommodate families' needs; avoids working on weekends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workspace and home visiting materials are somewhat organized</li> <li>Manages cases by regularly following up on tasks and client-related issues</li> <li>Often works after hours to "catch up" on tasks not completed during the workday</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workspace and home visiting materials are poorly organized</li> <li>Inconsistently follows up on tasks and client-related issues</li> <li>Often works an excessive amount of hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workspace and home visiting materials are not organized</li> <li>Does not follow up on tasks and client-related issues</li> <li>Consistently works an excessive number of hours</li> </ul>



# Appendix: Specialists' Stepping Stones for Success

Expert	Advanced	Intermediate	Basic
<p><b>Self-Development</b>  <b>SELF-CARE: Sets clear and consistent boundaries with colleagues and families</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stress level is consistently well-managed and rarely interferes with effectiveness at work</li> <li>Consistently avoids personally investing in family crises and upholds professional boundaries</li> <li>Manages secondary trauma by seeking appropriate support from others</li> <li>Rarely takes responsibility for the family's tasks; family members take primary responsibility for their action steps</li> <li>Structure and length of visits are consistent and manageable across all families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stress level is consistently well-managed, but sometimes interferes with effectiveness at work</li> <li>Avoids personally investing in family crises but maintains weak professional boundaries</li> <li>Manages secondary trauma by seeking appropriate support from others</li> <li>Takes some responsibility for the family's tasks; family members take most responsibility for their action steps</li> <li>Structure and length of visits are somewhat consistent and manageable across families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stress level is inconsistently managed and oftentimes interferes with effectiveness at work</li> <li>Often personally invests in family crises and upholds poor professional boundaries</li> <li>Mishandles secondary trauma by rarely seeking appropriate support from others</li> <li>Takes responsibility for the family's tasks; family members take some responsibility for their action steps</li> <li>Structure and length of visits are inconsistent and unmanageable across families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stress level is inconsistently managed and interferes with effectiveness at work</li> <li>Regularly personally invests in family crises and fails to maintain professional boundaries</li> <li>Mishandles secondary trauma by avoiding appropriate support from others</li> <li>Always takes responsibility for the family's tasks; family members take little to no responsibility for their action steps</li> <li>Structure and length of visits are highly inconsistent and unmanageable across families</li> </ul>
<p><b>PROFESSIONAL GROWTH: Consistently improves knowledge, skills, or abilities relevant to their career path</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactively articulates concrete, measurable goals for professional growth</li> <li>Proactively seeks constructive feedback about knowledge, skills, or abilities</li> <li>Responsively adjusts practices and styles in response to constructive feedback</li> <li>"Early adopter" of new approaches and practices</li> <li>Proactively pursues professional development (training, mentoring, stretch opportunities)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulates concrete, measurable goals for professional growth</li> <li>Seeks constructive feedback about knowledge, skills, or abilities</li> <li>Adjusts practices and styles in response to constructive feedback</li> <li>Pursues professional development (training, mentoring, stretch opportunities)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulates abstract, difficult-to-measure goals for professional growth</li> <li>Avoids constructive feedback about knowledge, skills, or abilities</li> <li>Rarely adjusts practices and styles in response to constructive feedback</li> <li>Sometimes engages in professional development (training, mentoring, stretch opportunities)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulates abstract, immeasurable goals for professional growth</li> <li>Ignores constructive feedback about knowledge, skills, or abilities</li> <li>Keeps the same practices and styles despite constructive feedback</li> <li>Does not engage in professional development unless required</li> </ul>





# Appendix: Specialists' Stepping Stones for Success

Expert	Advanced	Intermediate	Basic
<p><b>Self-Development</b></p> <p><b>PROFESSIONAL GROWTH: Develops and maintains positive working relationships with co-workers, supervisors, families, and community partners</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoids unnecessary, harmful conflicts in the workplace to ensure focus on professional goals</li> <li>• Works well independently and with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoids harmful conflicts in the workplace to ensure focus on professional goals</li> <li>• Works well independently and with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participates in unnecessary conflicts in the workplace</li> <li>• Works well only independently or only with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participates in unnecessary and harmful conflicts in the workplace</li> <li>• Works poorly independently and with others</li> </ul>
<p><b>PROFESSIONAL GROWTH: Embraces a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) mindset and practices when working with colleagues and families</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently uses inclusive language and is sensitive to cultural/lifestyle differences amongst families</li> <li>• Consistently seeks to understand and embrace varying circumstances and characteristics of families</li> <li>• Consistently listens to families while raising awareness of inherent biases</li> <li>• Treats each family equally (with time, access to resources, openness, etc.)</li> <li>• Connects authentically with each family based on their strengths rather than limitations</li> <li>• Practices empathy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Typically uses inclusive language and is sensitive to cultural/lifestyle differences amongst families</li> <li>• Typically seeks to understand and embrace varying circumstances and characteristics of families</li> <li>• Typically listens to families with some regard toward raising awareness of inherent biases</li> <li>• Makes an effort to treat each family equally (with time, access to resources, openness, etc.)</li> <li>• Connects with each family based on their strengths rather than limitations</li> <li>• Practices some empathy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rarely uses inclusive language and is sensitive to cultural/lifestyle differences amongst families</li> <li>• Avoids understanding and embracing varying circumstances and characteristics of families</li> <li>• Listens to families with little regard toward raising awareness of inherent biases</li> <li>• Treats each family differently (with time, access to resources, openness, etc.)</li> <li>• Connects with each family based on their strengths rather than limitations</li> <li>• Practices little empathy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not use inclusive language and is sensitive to few cultural/lifestyle differences amongst families</li> <li>• Neglects understanding and embracing varying circumstances and characteristics of families</li> <li>• Listens to families with no regard toward raising awareness of inherent biases</li> <li>• Treats each family differently (with time, access to resources, openness, etc.)</li> <li>• Makes a forced connection with families based on their strengths rather than limitations</li> <li>• Does not show empathy</li> </ul>



# FaDSS Leadership Practice

CORE FUNCTION	COMPETENCY	MASTER OF COMPETENCY	MY PERFORMANCE		
STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND VISION			CONSISTENTLY TRUE	SOMEWHAT TRUE	RARELY TRUE
<b>Embodies the vision of FaDSS program</b>	Understands and unites colleagues around the FaDSS vision	Articulates the vision that motivates and directs FaDSS services and specialists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Mission- and vision-driven	Promotes specialists' mindsets and behaviors that further the FaDSS mission and vision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Change management skills</b>	Positive attitude and open mind	Embraces challenges and sees the best in specialists; seeks input from specialists, families, and community partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Demonstrates a growth mindset	Practices an adaptive leadership approach that is responsive and embraces continuous quality improvement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Creative, innovative, and solution-focused	Balances policies and procedures while facilitating new ideas and practices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Fosters motivation	Inspires motivation among specialists to propel quality services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Cultural humility and awareness</b>	Embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)	Actively engages in efforts that advance DEI; uses DEI self-assessment tools to increase awareness and create a personal development plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Exhibits self-awareness	Aware of stereotypes and cultural biases in interactions with specialists and families	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT</b>					
<b>Administration and operations</b>	Task delegation	Looks for opportunities to streamline tasks; delegates to specialists based on their skills and knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Time management	Prioritizes tasks and manages time; rarely works additional hours to complete everyday work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Detail-oriented	Attends to details that promote high-quality work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Decisive	Makes sound decisions based on a clear understanding of the FaDSS program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Actively manages performance to align with FaDSS standards</b>	Data analysis	Uses data to communicate program outcomes; implements new strategies to improve services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Timely, high-quality data reports	Turns in data reports before quarterly calls; attends call prepared to discuss and use the data to inform practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Fiscal management	Understands program budget (including third-party costs and other funding); clearly communicates program needs to leadership and fiscal staff; practices fiscal responsibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Quality assurance	Articulates and consistently maintains expectations and quality standards (e.g., completes timely file reviews, family staffings, and home visit observations; regularly follows up with specialists)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



# FaDSS Leadership Practice

CORE FUNCTION		COMPETENCY	MASTER OF COMPETENCY	MY PERFORMANCE		
OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)				CONSISTENTLY TRUE	SOMEWHAT TRUE	RARELY TRUE
<b>Proactive and responsive to work environment</b>	Ability and willingness to serve families	Steps in and provides quality services to families when short-staffed		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Knowledge of program policies and procedures	Equips specialists to execute FaDSS policies, standards, and procedures; voices expectations of quality services		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Accountable to self and others	Takes responsibility for actions and is transparent; follows through		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Responsiveness and support	Responds to staff and families by answering questions, supporting changes, and addressing needs; uses inputs from family and staff to set the level of service intensity		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Communication</b>	Active listening	Gives others undivided attention; defers judgment; summarizes, shares, and reflects when interacting with others		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Communicates clear expectations	Identifies and clearly states goal(s) in written communication and case files; displays direct written and verbal communication; documents expectations in writing; immediately addresses miscommunication		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Relationships with partners	Develops and maintains strong partnerships in the community to build relationships and streamline service coordination for FaDSS families		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>DEVELOPMENTAL SUPERVISION</b>						
<b>Guides and supports professional development</b>	Training	Provides initial and ongoing training to equip staff with knowledge to carry out their jobs		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Psychological safety	Fosters open, safe communication and feedback; validates specialists' experiences and feelings; consistently shows nonjudgmental positive regard toward specialists and families		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Professional development	Supports specialists' unique needs for growth in FaDSS program; provides leadership opportunities whenever possible		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Showcases support	Recognizes and brings out specialists' strengths; celebrates successes		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Self-care	Models and promotes self-care		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Adaptive management</b>	Conflict management	Maintains neutrality and diffuses emotion when managing conflict; identifies win-win solutions		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Crisis management	Remains calm and strategic when managing crises		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Meaningful, timely accountability	Holds specialists accountable to their goals, job responsibilities, and essential quality services		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Reflective engagement	Regularly engages specialists using the FaDSS coaching tools to help them reach their potential		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Promotes goal-directed behaviors	Coaches specialists to pursue goals focused on core competencies and skills that relate to roles and responsibilities		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## FaDSS Supervision Requirements Waiver Request Form

**Only waiver requests containing all required information will be considered. Waiver requests that are missing required information will be returned to the sender.**

<b>REQUIRED INFORMATION</b>
Name of person seeking waiver:
Program Name:
Immediate Supervisor Name:
Date:
Years of experience providing supervision in a family support program:
Reason for the request (which part of the standard do you not currently meet):
Briefly describe your experience working in the health, human services or education field:
Briefly describe your experience working in a supervisory role:
Provide a list of all family support supervisor professional development activities successfully completed. Include the name of the activity, year received, length (in hours), and a brief (one or two sentence) description of the activity:
Attach a letter of support from the immediate supervisor.
Attach a CV or resume.

### STATE STAFF USE ONLY

The Waiver to FaDSS qualifications outlined in the FaDSS contract is:

- Granted
- Not Granted

This waiver will be in effect until the waiver-approved individual is no longer working in the FaDSS program as a supervisor.

\_\_\_\_\_  
FaDSS Program Manager Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Effective Date of Waiver





## Home Visit Observation

Specialist:

Home Visit Date:

Observer:

Were the following competencies demonstrated during the visit:

- Yes  No Prepared in advance for the home visit
- Yes  No Demonstrated unconditional positive regard for the family
- Yes  No Fostered a safe, supportive environment and relationship built on trust
- Yes  No Actively listened to the family
- Yes  No Responded promptly to family's requests and follows through on commitments
- Yes  No Facilitated the goal setting process to help family identify their needs and potential solutions
- Yes  No Engaged family in activities that support goal attainment
- Yes  No Asked family to reflect on goal progress, modified goals when needed
- Yes  No Completed accurate, thorough documentation following the visit

Strengths observed during the visit:

Missed opportunities:



### File Review Checklist

Head of Household:	Specialist:
Month/Year of Review:	Next Review Due:
Reviewed by:	

#### General Documentation Review

*Ensure that the following tabs are accurately and completely filled out*

- Family Information at Enrollment
- Contact Information
  - If no email address is listed, confirm that specialist has a plan to assist family in obtaining an email address
- Family Members
  - Birthdate
  - Gender
  - Race
  - Language
  - Disability
  - Relationship
- Self-Sufficiency Matrix
  - Entry (within 60 days of enrollment)
  - Interim (every 6 months)
  - Exit (by the 10th of the month following exit)
- Employment & Income
  - Monthly income entered for each month of enrollment
  - FIP History tab reflects all changes to FIP eligibility
- Activity Outcomes (note: this tab may not be completed until exit)
- Family Exit Information (if applicable)
- Supervision
  - Service Intensity during 3rd month of enrollment
  - Supervision, File Review, Service Intensity reviewed every 6 months
- Documents (verify that the following documents are uploaded appropriately)
  - Initial Eligibility Determination form
  - Eligibility Review form (if applicable)



- Family Participation Agreement
- Agency Media Release (if applicable)
- Internal Agency Release (if applicable)
- Release of Information for external partners (list below)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- ASQ, if applicable (score sheet only)
- Ecomap
- FIA (PJ Families Only)
- Family Stepping Stones to Success
  - Initial
  - Every 6 months of enrollment

**Reviewer Notes:**



**Procedural Documentation Review***Review for content quality as well as procedural compliance* **Initial Eligibility Determination**

- The initial eligibility determination is completed within 30 days (of referral or of coming off the waiting list)
  - If the *family* needs more than 30 days to provide required documentation, up to an additional 30 days is granted and justification is documented.
- The initial eligibility determination form is accurately and thoroughly completed including all required information.
  - All required family members are listed and their documentation is verified
  - Income verification includes verifying the income from an Identified Program or through use of approved verification documents
  - All countable sources of income are included and verified
- If the family is not determined eligible based on income using one option listed on the form, option two is explored to determine eligibility.
- The family meets all eligibility criteria prior to enrollment in the program.

**Reviewer Notes:** **Eligibility Review**

- The Family Eligibility Review field in Iowa FaDSS is accurately and thoroughly completed including all required information
- The review was completed during the correct month
- Family income information is calculated and verified correctly
- All eligibility criteria are met for continued enrollment
- If the family is found ineligible, the Coordinator reviewed the determination, the Specialist notified the family and sent the proper form letter. The Family began a 3-month transition period including after care planning

**Reviewer Notes:**



**Contacts**

- Referral source was notified within one month of the outcome of the referral
  - If placed on waiting list, or recruitment efforts are extended past one month, referral source & family are notified of this
- Collaboration contacts are covered by appropriate releases of information
- Specialists make every effort to collaborate with other professionals also providing services/supports to the family
- Contacts are time stamped within 7 days of the contact occurring
- Enrollment Visit
  - Reviewed program expectations, rights and responsibilities
- Collaboration contacts notified of enrollment
- Assessments
  - Ecomap within 60 days
  - DV Screening within 90 days
  - Child Development Screening within 120 days
  - Results from assessments and screenings are shared with the family and used to inform goal-setting, referrals and other services
- Engaging other family members
  - Family members besides HoH were engaged in HV/QV at least 25% of the time
  - HV/QV contacts indicating that other family member(s) were engaged, include documentation in the narrative to support and verify this
  - The engagement meaningful/significant
  - Feedback from reviewer on missed opportunities:
- Service Intensity
  - 2 HV and 1 SC conducted in each of the first three months of enrollment
    - Appropriate attempts and justification documented, if not met
  - Service intensity set beginning 4th month of enrollment
    - Seeks input from family during initial months of enrollment to determine service intensity level
  - Service intensity met each subsequent month
    - Appropriate attempts and justification documented, if not met
- Contact narratives are thorough and include all necessary information
  - General observations include the location and rationale, an overview of the general situation, activities completed during the visit, and other pertinent information.
  - Screening includes a description of the process of screening or assessing the family including which tools were used/discussed, how results inform



goal setting, referrals and advocacy, and any rationale for not completing or delaying completion of a tool.

- Goal Setting in the contact narrative describes the tools used and the general information supporting the goal setting process.
- Referrals include a description of the identified needs and corresponding referrals including how the family will connect to resources and supports, how the Specialist will support the family in moving toward self-sufficiency and other pertinent information.
- Timeline/Aftercare
  - The estimated timeline for completing the program will be documented.
  - Aftercare planning includes a description of the informal and formal supports that the program and/or family will put in place to ensure family success after exit.
- Next steps include a description of the next steps to take place and the next scheduled home visit as well as needed follow up contacts.

**Reviewer Notes:**

- Activities & Skill Building**
  - The Specialist conducts meaningful skill building activities with families
    - Financial Literacy
    - Life Skills
    - Parenting Skills
    - Work Preparedness Skills
    - Other:
  - The Specialist makes appropriate referrals
    - Were appropriate releases obtained?
    - Was there a warm handoff?
    - Was there follow through and follow up to ensure needs were met?
  - Career Development
  - Reviewer Identified Missed Opportunities:

**Reviewer Notes:**



**Goal Setting**

- Goal-setting framework is introduced during the first 1-3 visits
- Family Stepping Stones to Success is completed during the first 1-4 visits
  - If not, justification is clearly documented
- Documentation that the family completed the My Goal Plan is included in the narrative
- Documentation that the family completed the My Pathways tool is included in the narrative, if appropriate
- The Specialist helped the family identify their motivation (the “why”) for their goal(s)
- The Specialist introduced the Potholes & Detours tool to families to proactively help them overcome execution barriers or as those barriers arrive
- Families complete the Stepping Stones to Family Success as often as needed but at minimum every 6 months
- The Goals tab includes the family’s goals associated with correct domains
  - Action steps are realistic and attainable
  - Timeframes are realistic and attainable
- The Reviews tab within the Goals tab is completed when goals are reviewed/revised with the family
  - Additional details of the goal review are documented in the goal setting box of the contact narrative.
- There are very few HV/QV in which goals are not set, reviewed or revised.

**Reviewer Notes:**

- Exit**
  - Collaboration contacts notified that family is exiting
  - Justification for exiting the family is documented and includes input from the family and coordinator.
    - If family is exited due to no contact, sufficient attempts have been made
    - If the family is exiting due to not making progress, consider the following:
      - Does the family want to continue their enrollment in the FaDSS program?
      - Does the family have identified areas of focus informed by the Stepping Stones to Family Success?
      - How is the Specialist tapping into the family's motivation for change?
      - Is the Specialist consistently offering/providing activities to support the family to achieve their goals?
      - Would transferring to a different Specialist help the family move forward?
      - How has family progress and expectations for engagement been communicated to the family?
      - Has the coordinator conducted a home visit observation with this family?
      - Has the FaDSS team reviewed this case as a group to brainstorm additional resources/strategies?
    - If the family was involuntarily exited:
      - Documentation of the Assessment of Program Continuation was completed is included in the record
      - Appropriate Exit Letters were mailed to the family and documented in record

**Reviewer Notes:**



## Iowa FaDSS Document Management

### Section 1: General Information

All documentation accrued will be maintained in Iowa FaDSS for all families.

#### Allowable File Types & Size:

The following file types are allowable within the system:

docx,.doc,.bmp,.gif,.jpeg,.jpg,.odp,.odt,.png,.pdf

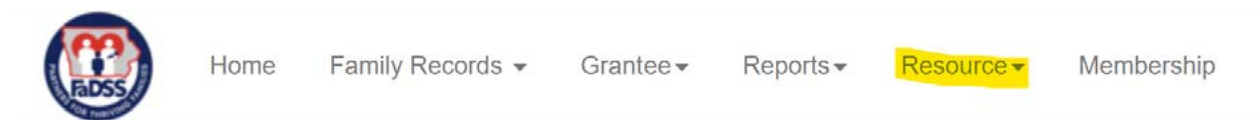
Users should make every effort to minimize the number of scanned documents uploaded into the system. Files larger than 10MB cannot be uploaded.

#### Document Types:

All documents uploaded into Iowa FaDSS will be assigned a Document Type label selected from a drop down menu. The document type is associated with a category. When a document is uploaded, it will appear in the appropriate category or subtab based on the selected document type.

#### Document Templates & Fillable Forms:

Document templates can be accessed in the Resource tab in Iowa FaDSS by selecting Document Templates from the dropdown menu.



Document templates can also be accessed in the Documents tab within each family record:

List of Documents

Download Template ▾
Upload New File

Intake & Eligibility(0)
Family Consent(0)
Assessments(0)
PROMISE JOBS(0)
DHS(0)
Correspondence(0)
Other(0)

Date/Time Uploaded	Document Type	Description	First Name	Last Name
Upload New File				

The document templates are fillable forms that can be saved to a user's device and uploaded to the Documents tab in a family record. Not all templates are required for use and requirements vary by grantee. For example, the Specialist Checklist is an optional fillable template. However, if utilized, the user must upload the saved fillable template rather than scanning a document into the system. Please reference the list in Section 2 of this document for more information.



## Section 2: Categorizing Documents

Within the Documents tab of Iowa FaDSS, there are seven sub tabs or categories, which include:

- Intake & Eligibility
- Family Consent
- Assessments
- PROMISE JOBS
- DHS
- Correspondence
- Other

When uploading documents, users will select the Document Type from the drop down menu. The uploaded document will appear in the subtab organized by category. Users may enter a description for the document. For example, a user could include the date the FIA for a family was received as shown in the example below. Using descriptions may aid in the efficiency of file reviews.

Upload Document ✕

**File**

Allowed Types: .docx,.doc,.bmp,.gif,.jpeg,.jpg,.odp,.odt,.png,.pdf

Note: File upload more than 10MB not allowed

**Document Type**

**Family Member**

**Description**

The following list shows the various documentation maintained in family records according to Document Type and the categories for each.

Document Type	Category	Notes
Initial Eligibility Form	Intake & Eligibility	Required for all families. Uploaded upon completion
Eligibility Review Form	Intake & Eligibility	If used, uploaded upon completion
Intake Form	Intake & Eligibility	Optional. If used, upload upon completion. Use to gather info for Iowa FaDSS if not entering directly into the Iowa FaDSS website



Specialist Checklist	Intake & Eligibility	Optional. If used, upload fillable form
Other	Intake & Eligibility	Use for other agency-specific Intake & Eligibility documents
Agency Media Release	Family Consent	Optional. If used, upload electronically signed PDF
Internal Agency Release	Family Consent	Optional. If used, upload electronically signed PDF
Participation Agreement	Family Consent	Required for all families. Upload electronically signed PDF
Release of Information	Family Consent	Optional. If used, upload electronically signed PDF
Other	Family Consent	Use for other optional agency-specific consent forms
Stepping Stones to Family Success (completed at minimum every 6 months)	Assessments	Required for all families. Scan and upload or upload a picture of the completed document.
AC-OK Screening	Assessments	If completed, upload the fillable form.
ASQ	Assessments	If completed, upload only the score sheet.
ASQ-SE	Assessments	If completed, upload only the score sheet.
Budget Worksheet	Assessments	If completed, save as PDF before uploading
Ecomap	Assessments	If completed, upload a picture or scanned document.
Financial Literacy	Assessments	If completed, documentation in the contact tab will suffice and the completed tool is not required to be uploaded. If uploaded, a picture or scanned document is allowable.

Genogram	Assessments	If completed, upload a picture or scanned document.
FaDSS Getting to Know You	Assessments	If completed, upload fillable form
Parenting	Assessments	If completed, documentation in the contact tab will suffice and the completed tool is not required to be uploaded. If uploaded, a picture, PDF or scanned document is allowable.
Relationship Assessment Tool	Assessments	If completed, documentation in the contact tab will suffice and the completed tool is not required to be uploaded. If uploaded, a picture, PDF or scanned document is allowable.
Timeline	Assessments	If completed, upload a picture, PDF or scanned document.
Other	Assessments	Use for other agency-specific assessments
Family Investment Agreement	PROMISE JOBS	Required for all PJ families. Upload saved document in PDF format
PJ Clear Written Reminder	PROMISE JOBS	If received, upload saved document in PDF format
PJ Job Search Log	PROMISE JOBS	If received, upload saved document in PDF format
PJ LBP Notice	PROMISE JOBS	If received, upload saved document in PDF format
PJ Notice of Appointment	PROMISE JOBS	If received, documentation in the contact tab will suffice and document not required to be uploaded. If uploaded, save document in PDF format
PJ Referral Form	PROMISE JOBS	If received, upload saved document in PDF format
PJ Time & Attendance	PROMISE JOBS	If received, upload saved document in PDF format
Report of Incapacity	PROMISE JOBS	If received, upload saved document in PDF format



Other	PROMISE JOBS	Use for other PJ-related documentation.
Appeal Information	DHS	Optional. Upload saved document in PDF format
DHS Notice of Decision	DHS	Optional. Upload saved document in PDF format
Other	DHS	Optional. Use for other DHS-related documentation.
Email Correspondence	Correspondence	Optional. All correspondence must be documented in the Contacts tab. Use this tab at your discretion for attachments or to save emails in PDF format.
Mail Correspondence	Correspondence	Required to upload any form letters mailed to families. Upload saved document in PDF format.
Other	Correspondence	Use for other correspondence.
Other	Other	Use for other documentation

**Follow these simple steps to save your email as a PDF.**

1. Find your email. Open the email in your inbox that you intend to save as a PDF document.
2. Start the download. Click the Print option.
3. Select the PDF option. When the printer menu opens, select Save as PDF from the destination drop-down menu.

## Section 3: 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.

The screenshot displays the 'List of Documents' interface. At the top left is a 'Download Template' dropdown menu. To the right is a yellow 'Upload New File' button. Below these are several sub-tabs representing different document categories, each with a count in parentheses: 'Intake & Eligibility(0)' (highlighted in blue), 'Family Consent(0)', 'Assessments(0)', 'PROMISE JOBS(0)', 'DHS(0)', 'Correspondence(0)', and 'Other(0)'. Underneath the sub-tabs is a table with the following columns: 'Date/Time Uploaded', 'Document Type', 'Description', 'First Name', and 'Last Name'. At the bottom right of the table area, there is another '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.

### Actions

**Download:** by selecting Download from the drop down Action menu next to a document, the uploaded document will download to the users device.

**View:** by selecting View from the drop down Action menu next to a document, the uploaded document will appear in a new tab. User device settings may prohibit this feature from functioning as intended and documents may automatically download to the users device. Users are encouraged to contact their IT departments for assistance adjusting settings.

**Delete:** by selecting Delete from the drop down Action menu next to a document, the user can delete a document. A prompt will appear asking if the user is sure they would like to delete the document.



# Manual Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have reviewed the FaDSS Program Manual. I understand that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with the content and ask questions of my supervisor when needed.

---

Specialist Printed Name

---

Date

---

Specialist Signature

**TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE**



# Appendix B

FADSS POLICIES



# Referrals to the FaDSS Program

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POLICY

**1.0**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that referrals from PROMISE JOBS and other sources be accepted by the grantee, assessed for appropriate waiting list placement (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 a confidentiality statement. If your agency does not have a confidentiality statement, use the following statement on your email correspondence:

**“THIS MESSAGE CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION. UNAUTHORIZED USE OR DISCLOSURE IS PROHIBITED.”**

## PROMISE JOBS REFERRAL TO FADSS

- 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.

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



# 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: 07/01/2023



# Waiting List for Services

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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

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

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 meeting the priority of service criteria are served before otherwise eligible families 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





# Initial Program Eligibility

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## 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 referral but unable to contact them to schedule a meeting, 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. This 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 this 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.

## CATEGORICAL VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

If the family is receiving FIP cash assistance during the month of eligibility determination, or participating in PROMISE JOBS (FIA before FIP or curing a subsequent Limited Benefit Plan), the family is categorically eligible for the FaDSS program. The Specialist is responsible for verifying FIP eligibility and documenting the information on the **Initial Eligibility Determination form**. Families receiving FIP and/or participating in the PROMISE JOBS program meet all program eligibility criteria.



# Initial Program Eligibility

## 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Head of Household</li> <li>· HoH's spouse or 2nd parent of a 2-parent household (if applicable)</li> </ul>
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Head of Household</li> <li>· At least one dependent child</li> </ul>
Social Security Number/ Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Head of Household</li> <li>· At least one dependent child</li> </ul>
At-risk criteria	One of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Head of Household</li> <li>· HoH's spouse or 2nd parent of a 2-parent household (if applicable)</li> <li>· Dependent child</li> </ul>

## 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** is the other parent of any of the identified dependent children (they share a child with the Head of Household and are cohabitating).

**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.*



# Initial Program Eligibility

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## **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 they have in-person contact with their child through visitation/custody/guardianship at least some of the time. 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.

The FaDSS Specialist will document this information on the FaDSS **Initial Eligibility Determination form**.

## **VERIFYING SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS**

FaDSS Specialists must see the social security number for all required family members on at least one of the documents listed below. If a required family member does not have a social security number, the family must show proof that they have applied for a social security number. If there are more than one dependent children in the family, only one must show proof of social security number.

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

### **Approved Documentation of Social Security Number & Citizenship/Legal Status**

- Social Security Card
  - Option 1: no restrictions (name and SSN)
  - Option 2: "Valid for Work Only with DHS/INS Authorization"
  - Option 3: "Not Valid for Employment"
- Driver's License or State-issued Photo Identification Card (ID)
- Passport with Social Security Number
- Birth Certificate
  - Requirement for an SSN is waived for a child 120 calendar days old, or younger if the family has applied to obtain a social security card.
- Payroll stub or W-2 showing the SSN
- Military ID card showing the SSN
- Any official document or form coming from the Social Security Administration that contains the social security number.



# Initial Program Eligibility

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- Medicare Card, if it contains the member's social security number (new cards will not include the SSN). This is acceptable only if the household is unable to provide other documentation and can attest to the fact this is their actual Social security number.
- Federal tax returns 1040, and related forms completed by a professional tax preparer are acceptable. The Federal tax return must include the appropriate page of the return, which shows the name of the professional preparer.
- Veterans Universal Access Identification
- Bank statement with SSI ACH deposit which includes the Social Security Number
- A printout from the IRS (Internal Revenue Service), showing the Social Security Number
- Selective Service Registration Acknowledgment
- Military discharge papers, provided it includes the needed Social Security Number
- I-94 Form
- Form I-551
- Form I-688B
- Form I-766
- Form I-66B
- Form I-571

## VERIFYING U.S. CITIZENSHIP OR LEGAL IMMIGRANT STATUS

Required family members can declare their citizenship or legal immigrant status. The FaDSS Specialist will document the date of declaration on the **Initial Eligibility Determination form**. Verification of social security number also meets the verification of U.S. Citizenship/Legal Immigrant Status.

## 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**.



# Initial Program Eligibility

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POLICY

**2.0**

## 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)
- 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



# Initial Program Eligibility

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POLICY

**2.0**

## **VERIFYING FAMILY INCOME AT INITIAL ELIGIBILITY**

### **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 determination, 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 determination, 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)

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 175% federal poverty level. The income of dependent children is not counted. 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.

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



# Initial Program Eligibility

## 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
- 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.

# Initial Program Eligibility

**Table 2**

Countable Income Source	Description/Details
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.
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.
Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)	Count SSDI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum.
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 document this in the **Contact Narrative** and document this on the **Initial Eligibility Determination form**.

## **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.





# Initial Program Eligibility

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## **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

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## **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. An Assessment of Program Continuation supports the need for further services

Eligibility for the FaDSS program is only 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 field 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

**Table 1**

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, or participating in PROMISE JOBS (FIA before FIP or curing a subsequent Limited Benefit Plan), 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

## 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Head of Household</li> <li>· HoH's spouse or 2nd parent of a 2-parent household (if applicable)</li> </ul>
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Head of Household</li> <li>· At least one dependent child</li> </ul>
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** is the other parent of any of the identified dependent children (they share a child with the Head of Household and are cohabitating).

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 they meet the definition of 2-Parent Household.*



# Eligibility Review

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## **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 they have in-person contact with their child through visitation/custody/guardianship at least some of the time. 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.

## **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 determination, 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)

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.



# Eligibility Review

**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
- Family's records of tip income

**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.

# Eligibility Review

**Table 3**

Countable Income Source	Description/Details
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.
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.
Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)	Count SSDI payments. Back Pay is considered a non-recurring lump sum.
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.

# Eligibility Review

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## **NO INCOME**

If the family reports none of the types of income outlined in Table 2, the FaDSS Specialist must document this in the contact narrative and document this in the Eligibility Review tab in Iowa FaDSS.

## **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, in collaboration with the family, should assess the family's progress and determine if the FaDSS program is still appropriate for the family using the Assessment of Program Continuation.

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.

## **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: July 1, 2024





# Priority of Services

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POLICY

**2.2**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of the FaDSS Program that a family shall be granted priority for FaDSS services if the following condition is met at the time of referral:

1. The family receives cash assistance through the Family Investment Program (FIP) or is participating in PROMISE JOBS (i.e. FIA before FIP)

Priority of services means that families who receive FIP must be served in the program before otherwise eligible families not receiving FIP. If a grantee has a waiting list for services, families receiving FIP must be positioned on the waiting list to receive services before otherwise eligible families who do not receive FIP.

Priority of service criteria are assessed at the time of referral. If a family is placed on the Priority of Service waiting list based on their receipt of FIP and/or participation in PROMISE JOBS, their waiting list placement is not impacted by a change in their FIP/PJ status.

If other families on the waiting list receive FIP, families will be positioned on the waiting list according to the date of referral. Grantees must also follow **FaDSS Policy 1.1 – Waiting List**.

Effective: 07/01/2023



# Confidentiality

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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

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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

In the absence of an agency-approved or agency-mandated confidentiality disclaimer for electronic communication, grantees must include the following statement on 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.

**“THIS MESSAGE CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION. UNAUTHORIZED USE OR DISCLOSURE IS PROHIBITED.”**

When replying to a message that contains confidential information, the statement must be added to the beginning of the reply even if the sender included it in the original message. 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

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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

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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 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) (1)(i), 164.506 and 164.512(f)(1)*

## **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 or 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 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

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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

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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

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POLICY

**5.0**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of the FaDSS program that enrolled families are offered and provided transfer services from one grantee to another when eligible for such services (see **FaDSS Policy 2.0 – Eligibility**). 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 waitlist 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.

Recruitment Status means one or more contacts or attempted contacts have been made to the family.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Transfers from one grantee to another are not considered exits. Every effort should be made to ensure a seamless transfer from one FaDSS grantee to another. 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 critical to ensuring continuity of services throughout the transfer. There may be circumstances in which it may be 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 prudent for the current Specialist to continue to work with the family. The new grantee’s FaDSS coordinator will make the final decision, keeping the best interest of the family in mind.

If the family is in a new PROMISE JOBS area and the current grantee retains the family, the Specialist will contact PROMISE JOBS to inform them that the family is enrolled in FaDSS and ensure the FIA includes FaDSS.



# Transferring Families

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## 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 current grantee will contact the new grantee's FaDSS coordinator to initiate the transfer and exchange contact information for the current Specialist and newly assigned Specialist.
3. The current Specialist will communicate with the new Specialist to:
  - a. Coordinate a joint visit (whenever possible) with the enrolled family and the new Specialist and
  - b. Provide the new Specialist with relevant information to ensure continuity of services to the family until the transfer is complete.
4. The current Specialist will ensure that all data entry requirements are up-to-date by the effective date of the transfer. The current Specialist will not complete Family Exit Information.
5. 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).
6. Whenever possible, a joint meeting between the family and both Specialists will be conducted.

## FINALIZING A TRANSFER OF ENROLLED FAMILY

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

1. If 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 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.
3. State Staff will reassign the family to the new grantee in Iowa FaDSS.
4. 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 to ensure that FaDSS remains in the FIA.

If a transfer is not successfully completed (for example, the new grantee is unable to engage the transferred family), the transferring grantee will complete all required exit documentation for that family. The new grantee will inform the transferring grantee and State Staff of all unsuccessful transfers.



# Transferring Families

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POLICY

**5.0**

## **SERVICE PROVISION FOR TRANSFERRED FAMILIES**

When initiating services with a transferred family, the new grantee 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 is able to complete at least one home visit and has staffed the family to determine the appropriate level of service intensity going forward. 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 current grantee's service area to another grantee's service area and wishes to continue recruitment phase or waiting list status for FaDSS 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.
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.

Updated July 1, 2024



# Caseload Size

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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

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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

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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 should use encryption software and firewalls and periodically assess confidentiality policies and procedures to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and program and ethical standards.

### **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 28 CFR Part 66, grantees must maintain family records for 5 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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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## 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

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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

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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.

