

Circuit Self-Assessment Instruction Sheet

The following components are to be addressed in your circuit self-assessment. The Outcome and Demographic Information gives additional information about your circuit, and the data should be used as a basis for your narrative. When using data, be sure to note any changes that have occurred over the past three years (State Fiscal Years). Identify and discuss factors that have affected the changes noted and effects on the children and families in the circuit.

Be as complete as possible in addressing each component of the self-assessment. Your narrative should include identified strengths and concerns, plus a discussion of any recent practice changes or trends in each of the areas listed below. There are “possible questions to be answered” provided in most of the self-assessment components. These questions are intended to guide and assist you in your self-assessment process, and we encourage you to use *any* additional pertinent information. If information is taken from any source, such as peer record reviews, please reference the source (do not send the supporting documentation with your self-assessment). A self-assessment template is available on the Children’s Division Intranet website at <http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2004/53/assessment.doc>

Circuit Demographics: Identify key demographics of your circuit and how they impact the provision of services (i.e. general population, circuit economics, number of children served etc). Possible questions to be answered:

- Do you serve a population that resides in an area of high crime? Please explain.
- Does crime impact the number of children and families served or the method of serving them?
- Does the race/ethnic origin of your circuit mirror your foster care population? If not, please describe the disparities?
- Are there language barriers prevalent in your circuit?
- Is there a lack of affordable housing in your circuit?
- Are there identified cultural training needs in your circuit?
- What is your circuit’s community awareness regarding issues around child abuse and neglect?

Circuit Structure: Attach a current organizational chart to the self-assessment.

- Identify strengths and challenges in relation to the structure.

Circuit Staffing: Describe staff education, experience, expertise, potential to remain with the agency, current staffing levels, supervisor-to-worker ratios, and support staff availability, expertise and compatibility. Describe any specialized units in your circuits.

Possible questions to be answered:

- Number of clerical/number of vacancies/any impact from extended leaves
- Number of field workers/number of vacancies/any impact from extended leave
- Number of supervisors/number of vacancies/any impact from extended leave
- Number of specialist/program managers, etc./any impact from extended leave
- Field Workers—highest level of education, HS diploma, Bachelor’s Degree, Master’s Degree, Above Master’s— Type of degree held.

- Supervisor—highest level of education, HS Diploma, Bachelors Degree, Master's Degree, Above Master's—Type of degree held.
- Number of years field workers and supervisors have been with the Children's Division
- Supervisor to Worker Ratio
- Avg. Caseload for Foster Care Program (# of children served)
- Avg. Caseload for Hotlines per worker
- Avg. Caseload for Family Centered Services (# of families served)
- Number of cases/percentage assigned to contractors
- If you have contractors in your circuit, are they accredited?

Management: Describe management program knowledge and skill, administrative knowledge and skill and ability to access assistance and support. Explain how communication occurs in your circuit. Please specify any training needs your management staff may have.

CQI Process: This section is to provide information about how your Circuit is participating and valuing the CQI process (use timeframes according to the State Fiscal Year). Discuss the degree of staff and management involvement in the CQI process, as well as the use of Quality Assurance information to manage the circuit.

Possible questions to be answered:

- In the CQI process (during SFY-03), what have been your issues concerning grievance, incidents and accidents? Percentages of issues resolved at the local level? Percentages of issues taken to area level? Any trends noted?
- Have you had any Service Delivery Grievances? If so, what were they? Any trends noted?
- Have any of your foster parents grieved a case decision through the Alternative Care Review Board? What reasons did they grieve? Any trends noted?
- How do you make the Foster Parents aware of the Fair Hearing Process? Have any foster parents in your circuit participated in the Fair Hearing process? If so, please give more information about the process. Any trends noted? Did you have any concerns about this process? What were the outcomes?
- Does your circuit use consumer survey information? If so, how? If not, why not?
- How does your circuit respond to constituent information?

Personnel Practices: Discuss your Personnel Performance Evaluation Process, the timeliness of those evaluations and how staff development plans are used to follow-up with staff.

Possible Questions to be answered:

- Percentage of staff with current evaluations (within 1 year)
- Are there identified general training needs of your staff? If so, what are they?
- Are there identified needs for personnel practice training? For example, performance appraisals, development plans, recognizing strong performance, etc. If so, what are they?
- Do you have an internal confidentiality policy? For instance, are all discussions about clients held in private, held in supervisor's office, occurring at worker's desk, etc? If you do have this policy, please discuss.
- Does your work area compromise your ability to have confidential conversations? Please explain.

Facilities: Describe facility work space, professional work atmosphere and case record security.

Possible Questions to be answered:

- Does your office have security locks? If not, has this been explored?
- Does your office have private interview rooms? If not, are there any alternatives?
- Is there a family visitation room? If not, where do workers hold visits?
- Does the visitation room have a one-way mirror? Is this a detriment? Please explain.
- Have your fire extinguishers been recently inspected? If not, has this been reported?
- Does your office have a safety plan for disasters? If not, has this topic been brought to someone's attention? Please explain.
- Does your office have the ability to secure case files? If not, how are the cases kept confidential?
- Is there adequate parking available? If not, please explain any alternatives available.
- How many offices do you have in your circuit?
- How many locations does your circuit have for out-based workers? Please describe their geographic locations and the number placed at each of the out-based facilities.

Juvenile Court: Discuss the relationship of the court to the Circuit. Include an analysis of the court's buy-in to ASFA best practices.

Possible questions to be answered:

- Do Juvenile officers attend FST meetings? Please discuss.
- Are partnering efforts occurring with the court? If so, please discuss.
- Are there any special court projects? If so, please discuss.
- What is the involvement of community stakeholders in court projects? Please discuss.
- Does your circuit court have specific expectations of the agency? What is your assessment of those expectations?
- What are the strengths and concerns regarding your court?

Community Partnering: Describe any formal/informal partnerships, access to community resources and any current community partnering activities.

Possible questions to be answered:

- What community organizations are active in your circuit?
- Which community organizations are only for information and resource sharing?
- Describe significant collaboration efforts in the provision of services for children and families.
- What is the purpose of each of your community partnering groups?
- What are the desired results for your partnering groups?
- Who from your circuit participates in community partnerships?
- Do your community partners have any identified training needs?

Service Array: Describe both formal and informal services available in your community or within a 50 mile radius.

Possible questions to be answered:

- Does your circuit have adequate community resources? Are they accessible? Are there barriers or limitations to services?
 - For mental health needs?

- Family counseling?
 - Individual counseling?
 - Behaviorally challenged children?
 - Psychiatric Disorders?
 - For alcohol and drug abuse treatment?
 - For adolescents?
 - For adults?
 - For the poor?
 - Homeless shelters?
 - Soup kitchens?
 - Community aid programs?
 - For adequate dental care?
 - For educational special needs?
 - For parenting classes?
 - For family/parent aide services?
 - For transportation services?
 - Services for non-English speaking consumers?
- Does your circuit have adequate resource families available within a fifty mile radius?
 - Do you have a sufficient number of resource families to serve the older youth?
 - Do you have resource families willing to take sibling groups?
 - Do you have resource families for disabled and medically fragile children?
 - What is your number and percentage of Behavioral Foster Care beds?
 - What is your number and percentage of Career beds?
 - Do schools in your circuit adequately provide for the educational needs of the children we serve? Please describe both strengths and concerns.
 - Does your circuit have a residential care facility within a 50 mile radius? List and describe. Do the facilities meet the needs of children and families?
 - Do you have a foster parent association or support group established?

Case Work Practice: Discuss how your circuit performs in the following case work elements. Discuss the method your circuit uses in assessing this performance.

Possible questions to be answered:

- Are families and children actively engaged in early decision-making?
- Does your staff fully engage clients in the intervention process? What indicators did you use to determine this?
- Does your case work reflect thorough or adequate assessment of children and families?
 - Does the assessment address child(ren)'s safety?
 - Does the assessment address education, physical and mental health needs?
 - Does the assessment address functional areas: living, learning, working, playing?
 - Does the assessment address strengths, capabilities, risks, barriers, and needs?
 - Does the assessment address primary caregiver's strengths, needs, and views?
 - Does the assessment address the family's need for supervision, assistance and supports?
 - Does the assessment reflect caregiver's lifestyle preference, personal goals, and circle of friends, social supports, and affiliations?
 - Does the assessment provide the "big picture" of the child and family?
- Are the needs identified in the assessment reflected in the case plan?
 - Are case plans understandable and concise?

- Are case plans tailored for the individual needs of the child(ren) and family?
- Does the case plan provide behaviorally specific goals?
- Are the tasks in the case plans time limited?
- Are the tasks in the case plans reasonable and achievable?
- Were members of the family offered the opportunity to participate in the case plan?
- In your circuit, how is the continuity of family relationships preserved?
- In your circuit, what is the general practice for sibling placement? What is done to preserve those sibling connections?
- What is the usual visitation and contact pattern for workers and parents, workers and child(ren), workers and foster parents, and sibling to sibling?
- How are relative placements explored?
- What is your local practice for relative placements and kinship care? Is your court a strength/barrier in placing children with relatives?
- What, if anything, does your circuit do to measure the quality of child welfare practice?
- How do you use that information?

Case Work and Documentation: Discuss the degree of the documentation of case work in the record.

Possible questions to be answered:

- How are Family Support Meetings tracked in your circuit?
- Does this tracking mechanism cover the quality and quantity of Family Support Team Meetings?
- Describe the method of documentation used for the Family Support Team Meetings?
- Who generally facilitates the meetings?
- How do they gain their facilitation skills?
- In your circuit, what is the most common method of recording narrative? For instance, do workers type their own, use voice recording for clerical transcription, or hand write for clerical to type.
- Does documentation reflect opening summaries, case contact summaries, monthly progress, quarterly re-assessments, closing summaries and transfer summaries?
- Is the quality of the narrative adequate? If not, is there further training needed?
- Is there consistency in recordkeeping?

Outcomes: Using the data available, provide a summary about overall safety, permanency and well-being of children in your circuit. Examine data on initial CA/N contact, timeliness of completing CA/N's, recurrence of maltreatment, % of relative placements, incidence of maltreatment in foster care, reunification rates, stability of placements, adoption rates, % timeliness of FST meetings and the percentage of Family Centered Service Cases opened over 12 months. Provide explanation for outcomes below state or federal standard. As stated in the instruction paragraph be sure to note any data changes that have occurred over the past three years. Identify and discuss factors that have affected the changes noted and effects on the children in the circuit. Please identify your strengths and concerns in each of the outcome data areas. Examine your Peer Record Reviews. Identify strengths and areas of concerns in all program areas.

Training Needs: Discuss the training needs in your circuit.

Possible questions to be answered:

- Are there any identified training needs in program areas?
- How do you assess training needs for your circuit? (Examples: data trends, customer concerns, community concerns, etc.)
- Is systems training adequate?
- Are computer updates timely? How did you assess?
- Is on-the-job training occurring for new hires? What method is most commonly used? For instance, supervisor guidance, assignment of a mentor, or shadowing of a co-worker.
- Do you use birth parents in training (possibly panel discussions)?
- Do you use foster youth in training (possibly panel discussions)?
- Do you use resource families in training (possible panel discussions)?

Circuit Strengths and Challenges: Discuss circuit strengths and circuit-specific challenges faced in serving children and families. Any other additional strengths and concerns not captured in a specific category?

Circuit Assessment of Readiness for Accreditation: This section is for Circuits to analyze needs for improving readiness, both technical and fiscal, to achieve accreditation. You may use the scale below for guidance when writing this portion of the narrative; however, please send the chart along with the completed narrative. Please include a justification for your score in the narrative.

Possible questions to be answered:

- Does your staff have barriers to overcome to move forward in the accreditation process?
- What positives are occurring that could be built upon to move toward accreditation?
- Is your staff considering strategies to overcome any identified barriers?
- Is your staff supportive of this process?

Below is a self-scoring tool to use to rate your circuit on a continuum of readiness. This section is also found on the Self-Assessment Template and may be returned electronically. Please score and return, with your narrative, to your Regional Director/Metro Director.

Self-Scoring of Readiness for Accreditation	
Reflecting on what you have already written, how would you rate the readiness of your circuit in each of the following areas? Please grade on a 4 point scale where: “1” means “not ready in most areas”; “2” means “partially ready in some areas”; “3” means “partially ready in most areas”; “4” means “ready in most areas.”	
1. Circuit Staffing.	<input type="checkbox"/> =1 <input type="checkbox"/> =2 <input type="checkbox"/> =3 <input type="checkbox"/> =4
2. Management Staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> =1 <input type="checkbox"/> =2 <input type="checkbox"/> =3 <input type="checkbox"/> =4
3. CQI Process:	<input type="checkbox"/> =1 <input type="checkbox"/> =2 <input type="checkbox"/> =3 <input type="checkbox"/> =4
4. Personnel Practices:	<input type="checkbox"/> =1 <input type="checkbox"/> =2 <input type="checkbox"/> =3 <input type="checkbox"/> =4
5. Facilities:	<input type="checkbox"/> =1 <input type="checkbox"/> =2 <input type="checkbox"/> =3 <input type="checkbox"/> =4
6. Juvenile Court:	<input type="checkbox"/> =1 <input type="checkbox"/> =2 <input type="checkbox"/> =3 <input type="checkbox"/> =4
7. Community Partnering.	<input type="checkbox"/> =1 <input type="checkbox"/> =2 <input type="checkbox"/> =3 <input type="checkbox"/> =4
8. Case Work and Documentation:	<input type="checkbox"/> =1 <input type="checkbox"/> =2 <input type="checkbox"/> =3 <input type="checkbox"/> =4
9. Outcomes.	<input type="checkbox"/> =1 <input type="checkbox"/> =2 <input type="checkbox"/> =3 <input type="checkbox"/> =4
10. Overall score rating of your staff’s willingness and readiness to participate in the COA process.	<input type="checkbox"/> =1 <input type="checkbox"/> =2 <input type="checkbox"/> =3 <input type="checkbox"/> =4