

HB 1453: Family Support Team Meetings (FSTM)

Section 210.145.11 of HB 1453 requires that the Children's Division (CD) comply with standards of who must be invited to a Family Support Team Meeting (FSTM). Section 210.762.1 of HB 1453 requires the CD to initiate a FSTM within 24 hours of a protective custody hearing. Section 210.147.1-2 of HB 1453 requires confidentiality of the FSTM. Section 210.160.2 of HB 1453 requires that Guardian Ad Litem are invited and allowed to attend all FSTM's.

Current Policy:

FSTM Invitees:

- FST consists of the Children's Service Worker, Supervisor of family worker, parents, children (if age appropriate), juvenile officer, guardian ad litem and/or CASA, parent's attorney, family helper/advocate, placement provider, currently involved treatment provider and school personnel, as applicable.

FSTM Following Protective Custody Time Frame:

- FSTM is to meet within 72 of the child being placed out of home

FSTM Confidentiality:

- General confidentiality rules apply

New Policy:

FSTM Invitees:

- FST invitees must include parents, legal counsel for parents, foster parents, legal guardian for the child, GAL, and CASA shall be provided notice of the meeting.
- Family members (other than alleged perpetrator), or other community formal or informal service providers may be invited.
- Family members may request other individuals be invited (other than alleged perpetrator) and once they have been invited they will continue to be invited at the discretion of the family.

FSTM Following Protective Custody Time Frame:

- CD shall arrange a FSTM prior to or within 24 hours following the protective custody hearing for the child
- CD shall arrange additional FSTM's prior to taking any action relating to the placement of such child
- In emergency situations CD may make a temporary placement and shall schedule a FSTM within 72 hours

FSTM Confidentiality:

- At the beginning of each Family Support Team Meeting the Children's Division state: "All information provided in this meeting is confidential. Any one not agreeing to keep information disclosed confidential can be asked to leave the meeting for any portion in which he/she is not testifying." Documentation of those in agreement or disagreement should be included in the CS-1.
- All information provided at meetings or administrative hearings regarding removal of a child is confidential
- A parent or party may waive his/her right to confidentiality
- A parent has a right to audio or video tape a meeting to the extent of the law (MO law = only one party has knowledge of the taping).
- No parent or party will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement before they provide information
- Any person other than a parent or party, who doesn't agree to maintain confidentiality may be excluded from any portion of the meeting he/she is not testifying in

Expected Outcomes:

Compliance with the above sections of HB 1453 will continue the current effort of the Children's Division to hold Family Support Team Meetings in a manner that will be most productive to the child and families wellbeing. Additionally, this legislation requires CD to invite supportive individuals, named by the family, to be notified of future meetings and to participate in such meetings.