

**County of Orange Social Services Agency  
Family Self-Sufficiency & Adult Services Division**

**Program/Area:** CalWORKs/Welfare-To-Work  
**Title:** Family Support Assessment Process  
**Number:** 408  
**Effective Date:** 7/1/2022  
**Approved:**

**Status:** *Signature on file*  
**Revision Date:**

---

**PURPOSE**

To provide guidelines for the Family Support Assessment (FSA) process for CalWORKs (CW) and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) families. The goal of the FSA process is to utilize a holistic, supportive approach to assist families identify areas of need, overcome barriers, and promote self-sufficiency. The FSA process includes assessing the family's needs, organizing Family Support Team (FST) Meetings, monitoring the family's progress for up to 12 months and measuring FSA outcomes.

This policy includes the following guidelines:

- [Identifying the Need for the FSA](#)
- [Specialized Assignments](#)
- [Initiating the FSA Process](#)
- [Pre-FST Meeting](#)
- [FST Meeting](#)
- [Post FST Meeting](#)
- [Designated FST Meeting Days](#)
- [12-Month Monitoring](#)
- [Closing the FSA Process](#)
- [Service Providers](#)
- [FSA Outcomes Report](#)
- [Child and Family Team Meetings](#)
- [FSA Required by Other CW/WTW Policies](#)

---

**DEFINITIONS**

- [FSA Process Definitions - Attachment 1](#)

---

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

- [FSA Process Responsibilities - Attachment 2](#)

---

**IDENTIFYING THE NEED FOR THE FSA**

The need for the FSA can be assessed by any Case Worker working with the family. Once the FSA process is in place, the County and/or Contracted Regional Case Manager (CM) will be responsible for monitoring the family's progress. For those cases not assigned to a Regional CM, a Specialized CM will be temporarily assigned to the case. Refer to the [Specialized Assignment](#) section of this policy.

Strong indicators that the family would benefit from the FSA include but are not limited to:

- Domestic Abuse
- Homelessness
- Safety Concerns
- Mental Health
- Substance Use
- Legal/Custody/Immigration Issues
- Welfare-to-Work (WTW) Participation Concerns

The need can be identified during the following but not limited to:

- Eligibility Workers during the:
  - CalWORKs (CW) or Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) Intake Application
  - Semi Annual Reporting Processing
  - Annual Redetermination
  - Any time client contact is made (as needed)
- Regional CMs during the:
  - WTW Appraisal
  - Any time client contact is made (as needed)
- Specialized CMs when:
  - Initiated by FST Regional Coordinator
  - Requirements per the following CW/WTW policies
    - [Policy 402 - Domestic Abuse Services](#)
    - [Policy 405 - Extraordinary Client Circumstances](#)
    - [Policy 406 - CalWORKs Home Visiting Program](#)
    - [Policy 407 - Family Stabilization Program](#)
- Requests from Family Self-Sufficiency and Adult Services (FSS-AS) Policy and Quality Assurance (PQA) staff, Regional Management, other Social Services Agency (SSA) staff and/or Service Providers by either notifying:
  - The assigned Regional CM in-person, via telephone contact or email.
  - The FST Regional Coordinator via the [FST Regional Coordinators Inbox](#).

---

## **SPECIALIZED ASSIGNMENTS**

Cases that do not have a Regional CM assigned will be temporarily assigned to a Specialized CM in PQA. These cases include but are not limited to, RCA, Zero Parent, Safety Net, Timed Out, Sanctioned, or Exempt. These cases are soft assigned and will not be assigned in the data system.

When a need for a Specialized CM is identified:

- The FST Regional Coordinator will email the designated FSS PQA SSSI.
- The FSS PQA SSSI will soft assign the case to the Specialized CM in PQA on a rotational basis.

- The Specialized CM in PQA will attend the FST Meetings and monitor the case up to 12 months.

Cases with exempt individuals who become WTW mandatory, exempt volunteers, and/or sanctioned individuals who wish to cure the sanction will be returned by the FST Regional Coordinator for Regional CM assignment.

RCA, Zero Parent, Safety Net, and Timed Out cases will be referred to Service Providers in the community that can assist them with their needs.

---

## INITIATING THE FSA PROCESS

### **CASE WORKER (Eligibility Worker and/or Regional/Specialized CM)**

Upon identifying or being notified of the need for the FSA, the Case Worker will offer and explain the FSA process to the client by going over the [FSA Brochure \(F063-30-974\)](#).

#### **If the client accepts:**

- Review the most recent version of the CalWORKs 2.0 Tools in OnBase to identify any barriers and established goals.
- Complete any additional CalWORKs 2.0 Tools if the client's situation has changed or if recommended by the FST Regional Coordinator.
- Complete the FSA Discussion Guide (F063-30-975) in collaboration with the client to assess the needs/barriers and identify their strengths and goals.
- Image the completed [FSA Discussion Guide](#) (F063-30-975) into OnBase.
- Inform the client of the option to have a representative present to provide support during the FST Meeting.
- Obtain the client's availability for the FST Meeting.
- Inform the client of the FST Meeting options which include in-person, telephonic, or via WebEx virtual meeting.

**NOTE:** WebEx is the only virtual meeting platform compliant with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

- Assess the urgency for the FSA using the information on the [FSA Discussion Guide](#) (F063-30-975)
  - If urgent, request an FST Meeting the same day (if possible) or within one business day. An urgent need stems from a family situation that creates stress and/or crises and requires urgent action including but not limited to:
    - Current Domestic Abuse
    - Current Eviction/New Homelessness
    - Immediate Safety Concerns
    - Mental Health Crisis
    - Immediate Legal Assistance or Custody Disputes
    - Immigration/ Refugee status change or crisis

- If standard, request an FST Meeting on the designated day. Refer to the [Designated FST Meeting Days](#) section of this policy. Non-urgent or standard request reasons include, but are not limited to:
  - WTW Participation Concerns
  - Ongoing Homelessness
  - Truancy/School Concerns with Children
  - Domestic Abuse Waiver Expiration
  - Refugee Assistance (assimilation, language barriers, resources)

**NOTE:** Consult the FST Regional Coordinators for assistance in determining the urgency.

- Identify the need for participation from Behavioral Health Services (BHS), Public Health Nurse (PHN), Domestic Abuse Services Unit (DASU) Senior Social Worker (SSW) or other Service Providers depending on the needs.
  - Consider those providers already working with the family.
  - Consider any additional service needs identified during the completions of the [FSA Discussion Guide](#) (F063-30-975).
- Complete Section 1 through Section 3 of the [FSA Referral](#) (F063-30-976) and send it to the [FST Regional Coordinators Inbox](#) with a copy to the supervisor.
- Collaborate with the FST Regional Coordinator to schedule the Pre-FST Meeting, FST Meeting, and Post FST Meeting depending on the urgency and the client's availability for the FST Meeting.
- Complete the [FST Meeting Appointment Letter](#) (F063-30-977) and provide the client a copy via mail, email, or text message. Include the WebEx instructions provided by the FST Regional Coordinator when client chooses a virtual meeting.
- Image the appointment letter into OnBase.
- Encourage the client to make every effort to attend the FST Meeting or call to reschedule if the meeting date/time is not convenient.
- Enter a Case Narrative indicating the FSA process was initiated and the FST Meeting date and time.
- Utilize the [FST Meeting Preparation Checklist](#) (F063-30-980) as a tool to assist in being fully prepared for the meeting.

**If the client declines**, enter a Case Narrative indicating the FSA process was offered but declined.

- Consult with the supervisor to determine if the FSA process should continue without the client's participation. Indicators that the FSA process should continue include but are not limited to:
  - Domestic Abuse Waiver Extensions per [Policy 402 - Domestic Abuse Services](#)

- Extraordinary Circumstances per [Policy 405 - Extraordinary Client Circumstances](#)
- Child/Elder Abuse Situations

### **FST REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

The FST Regional Coordinator will monitor the [FST Regional Coordinators Inbox](#) daily on a rotational basis. Upon receipt of an [FSA Referral](#) (F063-30-976), the FST Regional Coordinator will:

- Collaborate with the initiating Case Worker to schedule the FST Meetings depending on the urgency and client's availability for the FST Meeting.
- Complete *Section 4* of the [FSA Referral](#) (F063-30-976) and image a copy into OnBase.
- Provide the initiating Case Worker the FST Meeting date, time, WebEx meeting information, and [FST Meeting Preparation Checklist](#) (F063-30-980).
- Send the Pre-FST Meeting invitation via Outlook to all potential meeting participants (except the client) and attach a soft copy of [FSA Referral](#) (F063-30-976).
- Review all CalWORKs 2.0 Tools in OnBase and recommend the completion of additional tools depending on the client's situation.

### **CASE WORKER SUPERVISOR**

- Attend the Pre-FST Meeting, FST Meeting, and/or Post FST Meeting as needed.
- Collaborate with the FST Regional Coordinator to ensure coverage in the event the Case Worker is not available.
- Follow-up with the Case Worker and/or client on any requests from the FST Regional Coordinator.

---

**PRE-FST MEETING** The Pre-FST Meeting shall be convened prior to the FST Meeting. It will be scheduled the same day as the FST Meeting when possible or one day prior. The meeting shall be attended by FST members, including the Case Worker, FST Regional Coordinator, other SSA staff, and Service Providers. The meeting will address the purpose for the FSA and will identify the family's strengths and needs. The client(s) and their support persons will not be present at this meeting.

### **FST REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

- Facilitate the meeting by:
  - Going over the meeting objectives and ground rules
  - Serving as timekeeper and keeping the group focused.
- Ensure attendance and participation from all required FST members.
- Retrieve the [FSA Discussion Guide](#) (F063-30-975) from OnBase.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of previously offered services or those currently being provided to the family.
- Assess the situation and options to further assist the family.
- Set desired goals for the family.
- Discuss the CalWORKs Time Limits when appropriate.
- Summarize the discussion.
- Collaborate with the Case Worker to initiate the [FSA Action Plan](#) (F063-30-979).

### **CASE WORKER**

- Attend the meeting and provide a case overview with relevant and appropriate information.
- Collaborate with the FST Regional Coordinator in the development of the [FSA Action Plan](#) (F063-30-979).
- Complete additional referrals to expedite services as needed.

---

### **FST MEETING**

The FST Meeting will be scheduled depending on the urgency and the client's availability. This meeting shall be attended by FST members including the Case Worker, FST Regional Coordinator, other SSA staff, Service Providers, the client, and any support representative the client chooses. The FST Regional Coordinator and Case Worker determine the FST members who will attend the meeting depending on the situation. The meeting will address strengths, needs, and action steps. Subsequent meetings may be requested by any of the FST members.

### **FST REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

- Facilitate the meeting by:
  - Going over the meeting objectives and ground rules.
  - Serving as timekeeper and keeping the group focused.
- Ensure attendance and participation from all required FST members.
- Discuss barriers, strengths, and goals.
- Summarize the goals, objectives, and next steps.
- Collaborate with the Case Worker to finalize [FSA Action Plan](#) (F063-30-979) by the next business day after the meeting.
- Provide a copy of the [FSA Action Plan](#) (F063-30-979) and any revisions to the Case Worker and FST members who attended the Pre-FST Meeting.

### **CASE WORKER**

- Attend the FST Meeting and provide appropriate input during meeting.
- Provide a copy of the [FSA Action Plan](#) (F063-30-979) to client by the next business day after the meeting.
  - Ensure the client understands the additional services being provided.

- Provide information regarding proposed services, include contact persons, phone numbers and Service Providers' locations.
  - Image the [FSA Action Plan](#) (F063-30-979) into OnBase.
- Enter a Case Narrative indicating the outcome of the FST Meeting, including, but not limited to:
  - FST Meeting attendees (include the client and any representative providing support).
  - Services offered and whether they were accepted or declined.
  - Next steps.
  - Any additional relevant information.

**NOTE:** Confidential and sensitive information will not be included in the Case Narrative such as domestic violence or child/elder abuse information.

## **POST FST MEETING**

The Post FST Meeting is optional and shall be held immediately after the FST Meeting on a case-by-case basis. This meeting shall be attended by FST members including the Case Worker, FST Regional Coordinator, other SSA staff, and Service Providers. The FST Regional Coordinator determines the FST members who will attend the meeting. This meeting will address next steps which will contribute to the success of the family. The client will not be present at this meeting.

### **FST REGIONAL COORDINATOR:**

- Facilitate the meeting by:
  - Discussing and clarifying next steps with FST members and follow up with those not present.
- Collaborate with the Case Worker to update [FSA Action Plan](#) (F063-30-979) as needed and ensure the client is notified of any changes.
- Follow-up with Service Provider(s) as needed.

### **CASE WORKER**

- Attend the meeting.
- Contact the client to go over any updates on the [FSA Action Plan](#) (F063-30-979).
  - Ensure client understands the changes to the plan and provide a copy.
  - Image the plan into OnBase.
- Enter a Case Narrative indicating changes to the [FSA Action Plan](#) (F063-30-979) as needed and the date the client was informed of the changes.

## **DESIGNATED FST MEETING DAYS**

Each region will be designated a day of the week to ensure coverage among the FST Regional Coordinators. However, if the family's situation requires a meeting to be scheduled outside the region's designated day, the Case

Worker will contact the FST Regional Coordinator to accommodate a new meeting date/time. FST Meetings will be held weekly in an effort to ensure the needs are met timely.

The regions have been designated the following days and sessions:

Region	Date	Sessions
Anaheim Regional Center Laguna Hill Regional Center Foster Care Regional Center	Tuesdays	1. 8:30 am - 10:00 am 2. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm 3. 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm 4. 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm
Santa Ana Regional Center Cypress Regional Center	Wednesdays	1. 8:30 am - 10:00 am 2. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm 3. 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm 4. 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

## 12-MONTH MONITORING

To ensure the family's success in the FSA process, the family's progress will be monitored up to 12 months from the date the first FST Meeting is held. The FST Regional Coordinator will work in collaboration with Regional/Specialized CM to monitor the family's progress and determine if the FSA process will continue. The FST Regional Coordinator and the Regional/Specialized CM will evaluate if the family requires monitoring beyond the 12-month period or subsequent FST Meetings are needed on a case-by-case basis.

### **REGIONAL/SPECIALIZED CASE MANAGER**

- Follow up with the client to ensure the next steps per the [FSA Action Plan](#) (F063-30-979) are understood. Client contacts will be required as follows:
  - One week after the first FST Meeting.
  - Monthly thereafter.
- Provide support to the client to ensure they understand how to access the services being provided.
- Provide update(s) to the FST Regional Coordinator monthly or as requested.
- Complete the [FSA Progress Monitoring Form](#) (F063-30-978) monthly.
- Enter a Case Narrative indicating each client contact and any relevant information.

### **FST REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

- Review the [FSA Progress Monitoring Form](#) (F063-30-978) submitted by the Regional/Specialized CM.
- Ensure the Regional/Specialized CM monitors the family's progress.
- Collaborate with Regional/Specialized CM's supervisor on any concerns.



- Update the FSA Outcomes Report with updates provided by the Case Manager.

### **REGIONAL/SPECIALIZED CM SUPERVISOR**

- Ensure the Regional/Specialized CM follows up with client as required.
- Ensure updates are being provided to the FST Regional Coordinator as required.
- Follow-up on concerns brought forth by the FST Regional Coordinator.

---

### **CLOSING THE FSA PROCESS**

The FST Regional Coordinator and the Case Worker will collaborate in determining when the FSA process is no longer needed. If it is determined that services will end, the FSA process will conclude 10 days from the date the determination is made. The family may request FSA services again at any time by contacting any of their assigned Case Workers. Services for ongoing needs such as DAS, BHS etc. may continue.

**NOTE:** A formal timely notice of action is not required. Therefore, the FSA process may conclude mid-month. Example: On June 10th it is determined that the FSA services are no longer needed. The FSA process termination date is June 20th.

The [FST Closing Letter](#) (F063-30-981) will be sent to the client as a courtesy to inform that FSA process will end.

The following are indicators that the FSA process may no longer be needed:

- All needs have been addressed.
- Client is making progress toward WTW participation.
- Domestic Abuse Waiver has been extended or denied.
- Client's lack of cooperation in the FSA process after multiple attempts.

### **CASE WORKER**

- Discuss the family's status with FST Regional Coordinator and determine if the FSA process is no longer needed.
- Send the [FST Closing Letter](#) (F063-30-981).
- Enter a Case Narrative indicating that the FSA process is no longer needed, and that FSA process have concluded including the effective date and the reason.

### **FST REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

- Inform impacted Service Providers and SSA staff that the FSA process will end including the effective date and the reason.
  - Update the FSA Outcomes Report.
-

- SERVICE PROVIDERS** Service Providers have a critical role in the FSA process. They will collaborate with the FST Regional Coordinator, Case Worker and/or Case Worker Supervisor to assist in overcoming any barriers to self-sufficiency. Service Providers include internal, external, contracted, or community partners who will:
- Attend the Pre-FST, FST and Post FST Meetings as requested by the FST Regional Coordinator.
  - Collaborate with the Case Worker and FST Regional Coordinator in assessing the situation.
  - Recommend additional services.
  - Offer and explain the services.
  - Provide services per policy and/or contract requirements.
  - Provide the Case Worker and FST Regional Coordinator updates on the family's progress or additional needs.
  - Send a request to initiate the FSA process to the Case Worker or FST Regional Coordinator as needed.
- 

**FSA OUTCOMES REPORT** The FSA Outcomes Report measures the efficiency of the FSA process by using key elements of the process such as the needs, services provided, and the length of time it took to overcome the challenges. The FST Regional Coordinator is responsible for updating the report for the respective region. The FST Regional Coordinator will collaborate with the FSS-AS PQA designee to analyze trends in needs, effectiveness of services, training needs, etc.

**FST REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

- Update the FSA Outcomes Report after each FST Meeting, upon receiving updates, and when the FSA process ends.
- Meet monthly with the FSS-AS PQA Subject Matter Expert (SME) and go over the report to identify trends.
- Provide recommendations to improve processes or services when appropriate.

**FSS-AS PQA SME**

- Provide FSS-AS Administration Team updates on the FSA Process.
  - Provide recommendations to improve processes or services when appropriate.
- 

**CHILD and FAMILY TEAM (CFT) MEETINGS** CFT Meetings for Children and Family Services address safety concerns, placement issues, or custody issues for children with open Dependency or Voluntary cases with CFS. CFT Meetings for Mutual Clients and Family Reunification Cases take precedence over the FSA process as the family needs are addressed during the CFT Meetings. However, if the CalWORKs Case Worker identifies that the family needs are not addressed during the CFT Meetings, the CalWORKs Case Worker will offer the FSA services to the family and will complete a referral if services are accepted.

---

**FSA REQUIRED  
BY OTHER  
CW/WTW  
POLICIES**

Refer to the following policies for more information on situations that require an FSA:

- [Policy 402 - Domestic Abuse Services](#)
  - [Policy 405 - Extraordinary Client Circumstances](#)
  - [Policy 406 - CalWORKs Home Visiting Program](#)
  - [Policy 407 - Family Stabilization Program](#)
- 

**FORMS**

- [Family Support Assessment Brochure \(F063-30-974\)](#)
  - [Family Support Assessment Discussion Guide \(F063-30-975\)](#)
  - [Family Support Assessment Referral \(F063-30-976\)](#)
  - [Family Support Assessment Progress Monitoring Form \(F063-30-978\)](#)
  - [Family Support Assessment Action Plan \(F063-30-979\)](#)
  - [Family Support Team Meeting Appointment Letter \(F063-30-977\)](#)
  - [Family Support Team Meeting Preparation Checklist \(F063-30-980\)](#)
  - [Family Support Team Closing Letter \(F063-30-981\)](#)
- 

**REFERENCES**

- [Policy 402 - Domestic Abuse Services](#)
- [Policy 405 - Extraordinary Client Circumstances](#)
- [Policy 406 - CalWORKs Home Visiting Program](#)
- [Policy 407 - Family Stabilization Program](#)