



## Policy Attachment: 11.1

**Subject:** **FAST CASE PROTOCOL** Protocol for Completion of the Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST)

**Additional Information:** Supplemental to DCS Policies: 11.1 Assessment Process and Tools, 14.7 Child Protective Services Investigation Track, 14.26 Child Protective Services Assessment Track, and 14.29 Ongoing Non-Custodial Worker Responsibilities

The purpose of the Family Advocacy & Support Tool (FAST) is to help identify strengths and underlying issues and needs for families that have been brought to the Department's attention. The FAST has been designed to work with non-custodial children (in home) and their families through the CPS track, as well as FSS and FCIP cases. The FAST centers on the family unit as a whole in order to assess a family's strengths, risks and/or needs for planning and measuring of services; therefore, all members of the household, regardless of age, are included in the assessment. Completing the FAST at different times during the life of a non-custodial case can help verify that the implemented services are appropriate in affecting change.

The purpose of the Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST) is to help identify safety concerns, underlying risks, needs and strengths of families involved with the Department. The FAST is the initial intervention assessment tool designed to be utilized with non-custodial children and families that have had contact with Child Protective Services (CPS) and any Ongoing Non-Custodial Services to include Family Crisis Intervention Program (FCIP) cases, Family Support Services (FSS) cases and any non-custodial aftercare services. The FAST assesses the family unit as a whole in order to determine child safety, identify risks, needs and assist workers in identifying protective factors. After evaluating these factors, the FAST then guides the case manager in identifying any needed planning and/or service provision. The initial FAST should be completed prior to or during any Child and Family Team Meetings to assist with this service planning. All children and caregivers in the household, regardless of age, are included in the FAST assessment. The FAST should be reassessed throughout the life of the case to evaluate implemented services and adjust, as necessary, to affect the desired change. DCS staff must be certified prior to completing the FAST.

### 1. FAST Assessment

The FAST assessment tool is to be completed by DCS staff in order to assess the strengths and needs of the child and family. Gathering this information may take place by:

The FAST is comprised of three assessment components all of which are completed within ten (10) business days of a referral on all CPS and Ongoing Non-Custodial cases, by gathering information from multiple sources including, but not limited to:

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- a. Interviews with child(ren) and family
- b. Observations
- c. Records checks (see forms [CS-0687, Background Checklist and Results Summary/ Internet Records Clearance](#)) and [CS-0687, Criminal History and IV-E Eligibility Checklist](#).
- d. Collateral and/or witness interviews or reports
- e. Evaluations
- f. Medical records
- g. Education records
- h. Pictorial tools (i.e. genogram, timeline, family map, photographs)
- i. Other DCS assessment tools

~~2. DCS staff shall interact with families and children in a strength-based, culturally responsive, and family centered manner using culturally competent interpersonal skills that demonstrate genuineness, empathy, and respect for the family in accordance with DCS policy [31.7, Building, Preparing and Maintaining Child and Family Teams](#).~~

~~3. Responsibility: All certified DCS employees that work with non-custodial (in home) children and their families (excluding Juvenile Justice) shall ensure that the assessments are conducted appropriately and contain accurate information on all members of the family.~~

**A. Safety Assessment Component**

The Safety Assessment component is comprised of 16 items of the FAST. These 16 items focus on immediate safety for the child and once addressed, will recommend if immediate intervention may be needed. The outcome to the Safety Assessment is designed to be used as a decision support tool to support planning and/or protective measures implemented for the child(ren). The 16 items included in the Safety Assessment include:

Family Together:

- Physical Condition of the Home
- Home Maintenance
- Family Conflict
- Family Safety

Caregiver:

- Developmental
- Mental Health
- Substance Use
- Criminal Activity
- Supervision
- Discipline
- Involvement in Caregiving Functions
- Knowledge of Youth and Family Needs

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Youth:

- Sexual Abuse Status
- Physical Abuse Status
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect

Based on the ratings given in each section, the Safety Assessment will result in one of two outcomes: Immediate Intervention Recommended or Immediate Intervention Not Recommended. The worker will consider the outcome and, if necessary, address protective factors or safety concerns requiring intervention within the justification sections of the assessment tool. Each item of the Safety Assessment that is rated as a 2 or 3 requires a justification. The exception is Home Maintenance which will require a justification regardless of the rating.

Timeframes:

- CPS - 72 hours from initial contact with the first child or completion of Good Faith Efforts
- Ongoing Non-Custodial -10 business days from referral

**B. Risk and Service Need Assessment Component**

The Risk and Service Need Assessment component is comprised of the remaining fifteen (15) items of the FAST. These fifteen (15) items identify strengths, risks, needs and possible service planning for the child(ren) and family. Once the fifteen (15) items are rated, the worker will be provided a level of risk associated with the family. This outcome will assist the worker in the type of service provision needed. The outcome to the Risk and Service Need Assessment is designed to be used as a decision support tool to support plans or services identified for the child and family.

Family Together:

- Financial Resources
- Residential Stability
- Natural Supports
- Resiliency

Caregiver:

- Adjustments to Trauma Experience
- Physical Health (Caregiver)

Youth:

- Traumatic Grief
- Witness to Family, School or Community Violence
- Relationship with Primary Caregiver
- Education
- Physical Health (Youth)
- Developmental
- Mental Health

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- Substance Use
- High Risk Behavior

Based on the ratings given in each section, the Risk and Service Needs Assessment will result in one of 4 service intensity levels:

*No Service Intensity* – services not recommended and worker will continue to complete required tasks for case closure.

*Low Service Intensity* – worker may proceed to case tasks or closure contingent on supervisor approval and no new safety or risk concerns.

*Moderate Service Intensity* – worker may initiate referrals for appropriate services that have been identified for any family member's needs. If services are initiated, a plan should address the identified items from the assessment that led to the outcome (items rated 2 or 3). A case conference with the supervisor should be held to assess progress and to ensure identified needs are being addressed. If the worker proceeds without initiating services, the supervisor will review and determine if the decision is appropriate or will advise for additional needs of the family.

*High Service Intensity* – worker may initiate immediate referrals for appropriate services that have been identified for any family member's needs. A plan should be created to address the identified items that scored 2 or 3. A case conference with the supervisor should be held to assess progress and to ensure identified needs are being addressed. Case closure is not likely to occur until identified services have been put in place and progress can be observed.

Timeframes:

- CPS - 10 business days from referral
- Ongoing Non-Custodial -10 business days from referral

**C. Trauma Score Component**

The Trauma Score is automatically generated by TFACTS based on the ratings given to 6 specific items on the FAST. The Trauma Score is assigned to each youth assessed with a completed FAST. This score is based on the severity of ratings in the following FAST items:

- Sexual Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect
- Traumatic Grief
- Witness to Family, School or Community Violence.

The Trauma Assessment is provided upon completion of the Risk and Service Needs Assessment and will provide the worker with a basic knowledge of potential trauma to the child and family. The trauma score can assist in guiding the service plans developed. While a lower score may indicate a need for services specifically addressing trauma, a higher end score represents the worker's assessment of multiple traumas present in the case that could be addressed through service provision.

## **Initial Referrals**

1. The initial CPS Investigation Worker (CPSI), the CPS Assessment Worker (CPSA), or the Family Service Worker (FSW) (including FSS or FCIP), working with a non-custodial (in home) case, will be responsible for initiating the FAST. All FAST assessments must be completed by a Certified User.

2. The initial FAST must be completed within the first 30 days of referral/case intake date on any non-custodial (in home) case that will stay open past the initial 30 days because services are required. However, the FAST must be completed prior to the non-custodial planning FSTM or CFTM – see [Child and Family Team Meeting Protocol](#). If child enters custody within the first 30 days of referral, a CANS will be completed in lieu of the FAST.

3. The DCS Team Leader will review the FAST during monthly conferences with their staff in order to ensure that information gathered is accurate and that the determination of service needs is based on answers.

## **Reassessment FAST**

### **2. FAST Reassessment**

1. For CPS investigation cases, the FAST will be re-administered at closure of the case unless the previous FAST was completed within the last 30 days.

2. For CPS assessment cases, a FAST will be re-administered every 90 days and/or at closure of the case in order to track progress and service efficacy.

3. For court ordered involvement and/or transferred non-custodial cases, the FSW (including FSS or FCIP) will re-administer the FAST on a quarterly basis throughout the life of the case.

4. The DCS Team Leader will review the re-administered FAST during their monthly case conferences with staff in order to track progress of the services suggested from the previous FAST.

#### **a) CPS Investigations**

For CPS Investigations, a reassessment of the FAST will be completed at case transfer or closure unless the previous FAST assessment was completed within the last thirty (30) calendar days. A reassessment of the FAST may also occur at any time during the life of the case to indicate a change in safety, risk, trauma or service need.

#### **b) CPS Assessments**

For CPS Assessments, a reassessment of the FAST will be completed at minimum every ninety (90) calendar days and/or at case closure (unless previous FAST was completed within thirty (30) calendar days of closure) in order to track progress and service efficacy. If the case is being transferred, an updated reassessment will be completed unless the previous FAST was within thirty (30) days of the transfer. A

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reassessment of the FAST may also occur at any time during the life of the case to indicate a change in safety, risk, trauma or service need.

### **c) Non-Custodial Cases**

For all Non-Custodial cases, workers will reassess the FAST at a minimum of every ninety (90) calendar days following the date of the last FAST and/or at case closure (unless previous FAST was completed within thirty (30) calendar days of closure. A reassessment of the FAST may also occur at any time during the life of the case to indicate a change in safety, risk, trauma or service need.

### **Case Closure/Transfer**

- ~~1. An updated FAST must be re-administered prior to case closure or transfer (if case has been open for at least 30 days), unless the previous FAST was completed within the last 30 days.~~
- ~~2. Before closure or transfer, the caseworker (CPS or FSW) and TL will review all FAST administered for the case to determine if progress has been made in areas of concern that services were recommended or provided.~~

### **FAST Documentation**

- ~~1. Indicated strengths from the FAST should be reflected in the family plan as well as any scores of 2 or 3 indicating a concern that needs to be addressed.~~
- ~~2. Any indicated strengths from the FAST and any scores of 2 or 3 should be documented in the current FFA to capture the information on the child and family in greater depth.~~
- ~~3. Copies of all FAST should be placed in the child's record.~~
- ~~4. The DCS worker should document the FAST scores of concern in **TFACTS** case recordings.~~

### **3. Documentation**

Documentation within the FAST informs future work with a child and family. All ratings of a 2 or 3 must have justifications entered to indicate any identified protective factors, or a lack thereof, risk factors and services/interventions that have been put in place to address ongoing needs. Child and family strengths or ratings of 2 or 3 that have been identified through the FAST assessment should also be documented in the Family Functional Assessment.

### **Service Intensity Interpretation**

~~The FAST service intensity levels are used to determine safety and risk factors that should be addressed through service provision. They can also be used to assess the family strengths to assist the family in addressing the identified needs.~~

### **Low Service Intensity**

Original Effective Date: 12/01/09  
Current Effective Date: **Pending**  
Supersedes: 01/01/13  
RDA SW22

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Move forward with investigative/assessment tasks or case closure and contingent TL staffing (refer to policies and work aids 2 and 3).

### **Moderate Service Intensity-**

Initiate referrals for appropriate services that have been identified for ANY family member's needs. Follow policies for required family contacts based on investigative or assessment track. If a decision is made for case closure, a TL staffing to review and determine that there are no safety/risk concerns must occur before closure. A family plan should address the identified FAST '2' and '3' actionable needs for any family member. Ensure services are in place prior to case closure and continue after case is closed.

### **High Service Intensity-**

Immediately initiate referral for appropriate services that have been identified for ANY family member's needs. Follow policies for required family contacts based on investigative or assessment track. A TL staffing must occur in accordance with policy to ensure identified needs are being addressed and to assess progress. Case closure cannot occur until appropriate services are in place and progress is clearly shown. A family plan should address the identified FAST '2' and '3' actionable needs for any family member. Ensure services are in place prior to case closure and continue after case is closed.

A FAST must be re-administered to help identify ongoing needs and progress with a family.

## **4. Supervisor Approvals**

### **a) Safety Assessment**

The Safety Assessment must be reviewed and approved by the supervisor within seventy-two (72) hours of submission by the worker.

### **b) Risk Assessment**

The Risk Assessment must be reviewed and approved by the supervisor within seventy-two (72) hours of submission by the worker.

### **c) Reassessment**

The supervisor will review the FAST reassessment during monthly case conferences with staff to ensure that progress is being tracked and adjusted, when necessary.

## **Training and Reliability**

1. Child Protective Services workers, Investigators, CPS assessment workers, FSS and FCIP workers, and their supervisors will be trained and certified to use FAST. FSW's that carry a combined caseload which consists of non-custodial/ongoing cases and their supervisors will also be trained. Only certified individuals can complete and/or review the FAST. Any case worker that is not certified must have a certified user assisting them with the FAST when it is administered. Staff must be familiar with its language, and be able to demonstrate skill in administering and scoring the FAST. All applicable DCS staff will require yearly certification. Staff should be certified at a .70 or above on a training vignette.

2. Training will be provided by Certified Trainers. A FAST manual and form will be provided during training sessions.

## **5. Training**

All DCS staff responsible for completing the FAST will need to be trained and certified by the regional Center of Excellence FAST Consultants. All applicable DCS staff will require yearly re-certification. In order to be certified, staff must score a 70 or above on a training vignette.

## **6. Reassignments**

When a CPS or Ongoing Non-Custodial case has been reassigned to another worker, location or program area (apart from a case transfer), communication between the appropriate supervisors is necessary to determine who will complete the Safety Assessment and Risk and Service Needs Assessment components of the FAST. Generally, the worker who possesses the most information will be expected to complete the initial FAST.