



The CPS Reintegration Project

*Bringing
Children Back
to their
Community*

A collaboration of:



GUIDE

to the

CPS REINTEGRATION PROJECT (CRP)

*We look forward to supporting you and your family
as you welcome a child/youth into your home.*



*We hope the information and resources inside help you
navigate this important time of change for your family.*



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CRP Vision

*Children and youth with mental health and behavioral challenges
live at home safely with family and community support*



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What is the CPS Reintegration Project (CRP)?

The CPS Reintegration Project (CRP) provides home- and community-based services to youth who are involved in the Child Protective Services system and have mental health challenges.

The goal of CRP is to help youth successfully return to the community from intensive out-of-home placements.



What types of support does CRP offer?

- Help communicating your family's strengths and needs
- Support to realistically plan for challenges you may experience when the child comes to live with your family
- Help understanding and interacting with mental health, educational, health, child welfare, and other systems
- Mentoring, individual & family therapy, supportive recreational and enrichment activities, respite care, camps, parenting support, crisis support, and other non-traditional services
- Help connecting with other caregivers for sharing and support
- Assistance with building up kin and community supports

CRP uses the Wraparound Process: the youth and family take the lead in setting goals and deciding how to meet them. CRP uses the Wraparound way of working because we believe it gives each family the best chance to get what they need and to be successful.



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How Can I Be A Successful CRP Participant?



For you and your family to be successful with this project, you must **agree** with the following statements:

- **My family wants the child in our home.**
- **My family believes the child has special needs that require support.**
- **My family believes that we need support in order for the child to be successful in our home.**
- **My family understands that this will be a very challenging process. We are willing to work hard, make adjustments, have patience, and accept help from our team to resolve issues.**

The Reintegration Project (CRP) is **voluntary**.

You get to **choose** whether you want to participate or not.

Each family must make their own informed decision about participating in the Reintegration Project.

The Reintegration Project **is not part of Child Protective Services**. CRP is a Travis County program that works with Child Protective Services.



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The 5 Steps of the CPS Reintegration Project (CRP)



- 1) **Referral:** CPS worker refers you and the child in foster care to the Reintegration Project. The CPS worker understands the child may have challenging behaviors and complex needs, and believes you could use extra support to make sure the child's return home is successful. CRP is designed to give you and your family that extra support.
- 2) **Screening:** CRP Care Coordinator contacts you to meet and talk about our project. The Care Coordinator will give you information and answer your questions about CRP. Your participation in CRP is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you sign enrollment paperwork.
- 3) **Planning:** Your CRP Care Coordinator helps you set goals, create a plan for the child's return home, and arrange needed services and supports. The plan will include you (the caregiver) and other siblings and children in your home. You participate in Child & Family Team Meetings with your CRP Care Coordinator, CPS, and other important people in your life who are working to help you and the child prepare for their coming home.
- 4) **Integration:** The child comes home and you continue to work with your Team to make sure all your and the child's needs are being met. Your Care Coordinator will help you problem-solve any issues as they come up, make sure you have crisis support, and will help you build and maintain useful relationships with the child's school and other service providers. You can change or add goals or services to your plan as needed. CPS will remain a Team member for about another 6 months.
- 5) **Ongoing:** After CPS closes their case, you continue to work with your CRP Care Coordinator and service providers until you no longer want to participate in the project. Families generally continue with the Reintegration Project for 6 months or so after CPS dismisses their case.

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Who is a Care Coordinator?

... and what will my CRP Care Coordinator do for me?

You decide what help you want from your CRP Care Coordinator. It is up to you to choose which services you would like to participate in, and to communicate to your Care Coordinator about your family's unique needs and your expectations.

Here are some of the ways your Care Coordinator can support you:

- **Information** — help you learn about the needs of the child in your care, by making sure you have good information about their history and future goals, their health and mental health needs, their strengths and challenges
- **Communication Liaison** — Support you in talking with your CPS worker and making sure that you are able to communicate your needs, and that you are aware of plans, visits, changes/updates, things to complete, court dates, etc.
- **Visits** — help make sure visits are set up by CPS so you have time together before the child comes home to stay permanently
- **Facilitate meetings** — schedule and organize Child & Family Team Meetings, and lead the meetings to make sure everyone gets a chance to express themselves and participate in the group process
- **School system** — help you navigate the school system, to get the supports needed for the child in your care to be successful. This might include attending ARDs and other school meetings, arranging for testing, finding tutors, etc.
- **Mental Health system** — help you find your way through the system to get the right kind of mental health treatment and support for the child, your family, and yourself. This might include individual therapy, family therapy, and medication.
- **Unique family services** — help you connect to “non-traditional” services like mentors, parent coaches, crisis support, recreational activities, respite care
- **Community resources** — help you get connected with many other kinds of resources that you might need in the community; like emergency financial assistance, neighborhood centers, public benefits, etc.
- **Skill-building** — help you learn new ways to manage the child's behaviors, emotions, needs, and challenges



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What is Wraparound?



Wraparound is a process.

Wraparound is a way to improve the lives of children and families who have complex needs. With Wraparound, all the different people and systems involved with the child and family work together as a Child & Family Team to come up with a plan that fits the family. The team plans for each child's physical, emotional, social, educational, and family needs at home, school, and in the community.

Using the Wraparound approach, we look at things in a different way.

Instead of focusing on problems, we focus on strengths.

Instead of using the same plan for everyone, we make a unique plan for each family.

We start with the family.

We help to make sure each person, service, and system the family is involved with all work together to "wrap" themselves around the family, creating a network of support. We call that network a System of Care. We see each family as the center of their unique support network.

Wraparound is Family-Driven and Youth-Guided.

The family is an equal partner on the Child & Family Team who participates actively in developing the team and the family plan.

Here are some of the main ways Wraparound works:

- **We focus on strengths** – People's strengths pull them through life's difficult and challenging moments, not their problems or diagnoses
- **We create a Child & Family Team** – we include the people who are important to the family, as well as all legal parties and service providers who work with the family
- **We include everyone** – starting with the child and the parents/caregivers, in the planning, decisions, and activities that involve or affect the family
- **We are flexible and creative** – we create a plan for the child and family that will work for your unique situation; we can change the plan as your needs change
- **We collaborate** – working as active partners with your family and all the people and systems involved with your family



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Service Providers



What kinds of supports and services can the Reintegration Project provide?

Service Providers: Most families participating in the Reintegration Project receive support and services from people who are **experts at different things**. They could include:

- **Parent Coach** – Gives support and helps you come up with a system that works for you to manage behaviors with structure and discipline
- **Mentor** – Gives the child time with an adult role model who gives them support and encouragement and spends time together outside the home working on social and behavioral goals
- **Counselor or Therapist** – Supports and encourages you, the child, and your family to work through challenges and find solutions and personal strengths
- **Crisis Support** – Helps you make a plan to know what to do when things get hectic or overwhelming, and gives you support to take care of yourself and keep everyone safe
- **Respite** – Allows you to have a needed break from taking care of the child so you can take care of yourself



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PESA



What is PESA?

PESA stands for “**Parent Engagement and Self-Advocacy**”. It is a class for parents, caregivers, foster parents and caseworkers to learn about how the child welfare system impacts the child, the parent / caregiver, and the family -and to learn how to get what you need for the child or children in your care.

It is a time for you to **learn**, get **support**, and feel like part of a **community**.

It's the first step in making sure you're ready to manage the child's complex needs - and it prepares you to get all the support and services you need to care for the child. (And they give you dinner and provide free childcare.) You don't want to miss it!

***I'm already participating in the Reintegration Project.
Why do I need to complete the PESA training too?***

All families participating in the Reintegration Project are required to attend the **free 6-week training**. Here are some of the reasons why families find it useful:

- **Support** – you will gain support from other parents and caregivers who have similar experiences, challenges, and questions
- **Information** – you will learn about how CPS impacts your child, yourself, and your family; how to get services you need for the child in your care; how to effectively communicate (with the school, the doctor, CPS, the court); how to organize yourself; how to get what you need
- **Advocacy Skills** – you will get hands-on practice in assertive communication, and build your confidence at the same time



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Legal Team Members

What legal parties work with the Reintegration Project?

Legal Team Members:

Families participating in the Reintegration Project also work with Child Protective Services and other people involved in the **legal processes and decisions** that involve your child and family.

While CPS is involved, **all legal parties will be included as part of your family's Wraparound Team**. You may have some or all of these legal members involved with you and the child:

- **CPS worker** – CPS Case Worker in charge of child's placement and planning; reports to the court
- **CASA volunteer** – Court-appointed Special Advocate for the child provides extra support to the child; might spend time with the child at school, at home, or doing outings or activities in the community; makes recommendations to the court about what they feel will best meet the child's needs; supervised by CASA supervisor
- **CASA supervisor** – Supervisor to the Court-appointed Special Advocate for the child, supports the CASA volunteer in making recommendations to the court
- **Attorney ad Litem** – The child's attorney
- **Juvenile Probation Officer** – If the child has committed a crime and been arrested, they may have a Probation Officer
- **Parent's Attorney** – If you are the parent of the child, and the CPS case is not final, you may have a lawyer to represent your interest in the CPS lawsuit



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Other Team Members



Who else can be included as part of our Child & Family Team?

Many families participating in the Reintegration Project have at least one trusted person in their lives who provides support.

You are welcome to invite anyone important to you and the child to join your family's Wraparound Team.

Maybe you'd like to include your:

- **Friend**
- **Family Member**
- **Neighbor**
- **Community member**
- **Member of your church, mosque, temple or spiritual group**
- **Sponsor**
- **Counselor**
- **Mentor**
- **Teacher**
- **School staff person / child care provider**



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Family Guide to Informed Consent

What is Informed Consent?

Informed consent is a process of communication between a patient and clinician that results in the patient's authorization or agreement prior to undergoing a specific treatment intervention. Parent/Caregiver should have the opportunity to ask questions to gain a better understanding of the treatment before they can make an informed decision to proceed or to refuse treatment.¹

Clinicians (therapists, psychiatrists, pediatricians, etc.) / Service Providers (mentors, respite providers, tutors, etc) will give you information about a particular treatment, test, medication and service to help you to decide whether or not to consent (agree and authorize) for the child to have the treatment, test, medication and service. The process of understanding and accepting the risks and benefits of the treatment, test, medication or service is called informed consent.

The communication process, and ensuring that parents/caregivers are truly informed prior to consenting for the child to be treated, is both an ethical obligation and a legal requirement.²

What is Informed Consent by a child?

Informed Consent is the process of:

- A Parent/Caregiver being knowledgeable about the proposed treatment, test, medication and service for a child
- Involving children in a discussion about their treatment, test, medication and service in a way that they can understand.
- Telling the child what he or she can expect from a treatment, test, medication and service.
- Making sure the child understands the treatment, test, medication and service.
- Finding out whether the child is willing to accept the care based on the available options.

Consent helps children and caregivers feel more in control, gain trust with providers and may help treatment to be more successful.

What does Informed Consent Involve?

The parent and/or caregiver should talk to the clinician / service provider about the child until you have enough information to make a decision about what is the best for the child. Here are some of the things you should discuss:

- What is the child's medical problem?
- What is the child's mental health diagnosis? What does that diagnosis mean? How does the diagnosis impact the child?
- What kind of treatment, test, medication and service is recommended for the child?
- Why is this kind of treatment, test, medication and service recommended?

¹ Cited from the American Medical Association (AMA)

² Cited from the American Medical Association (AMA)

- How will the treatment, test, medication and service help the child?
- Does the treatment, test, medication and service have any risks/side effects?
- Are there other alternatives?

What does Informed Consent Involve regarding medication?

The parent/caregiver should be informed of all the known effects of any recommended drug, and have a copy of the current information listed on the recommended drug(s).

- Has the FDA approved this drug for use in children?
- Has the FDA approved the use of this drug for the specific condition that it is being prescribed?

What if you have more questions or concerns?

- You can talk with your child's current clinician / service provider.
- You may take the child to another clinician / service provider or a specialist for a second opinion.
- You may also talk to other people who are involved with the child such as child welfare, education, juvenile justice, health care professionals and mental health providers.

What are my responsibilities as a Parent/Caregiver?

1. Be Informed and Knowledgeable

- Know the child's medical condition and/or mental health diagnosis
 - Parent/Caregivers must know and understand a child's medical condition and/or mental health diagnosis
 - Parent/Caregiver must know the child's medical history and needs before consenting to medical/mental health care
 - Parent/Caregiver must know about any new appointments and/or any changes in the child's medical care, treatment, or mental health diagnosis
- Provide Opportunities for Consent by the Child
 - In order for a child to consent to their care in a way that they can understand, they must be given knowledge about their diagnosis, care and treatment options.
 - Parent/Caregiver provides those opportunities for the child to participate in decisions about their own care.

2. Share the Knowledge and Participate Actively

- Provide summary of child's medical / mental health care
 - Parent/Caregiver provides a complete medical history to all treating professionals
 - Pre-Natal Care/History
 - Developmental History
 - Onset of symptoms
 - Treatment history of symptoms
 - Other professionals involved in the care and treatment of the child
- Participate in medical / mental health appointments.
 - Parent/Caregivers are the best source of information regarding the child and their presence and participation is critical at each medical appointment.
- Ensure child receives regular medical care
 - Annual physicals
 - Twice yearly dental exams
 - Maintain current immunizations
 - Mental Health appointments as indicated



CPS Reintegration Project – Participant Rights

I am an active participant in the CPS Reintegration Project.
What are my rights?

As a participant in the Reintegration Project:

- You have the right to be treated respectfully and fairly.
- You have the right to meaningful preparation and effective support from your team as you do the work of parenting the children in your care.
- You have the right to participate fully in planning, coordinating, and decision-making about the service plan, goals, and supports in place for the children in your care.
- You have the right to express your thoughts and ideas, and to be listened to and heard without judgment.
- You have the right to choose and use the services you need, to provide feedback about those services, and to make changes to the services if they are not meeting your family's needs.
- You have the right to ask questions and receive honest answers.
- You have the right to utilize available financial and community resources to provide services and supports for the children in your care.
- You have the right to receive help so that you can take care of yourself as well as the children in your care.
- You have the right to provide honest feedback about your experience as a participant in the Reintegration Project.



CPS Reintegration Project – Participant Responsibilities

I am an active participant in the CPS Reintegration Project.
What are my responsibilities?

As a participant in the Reintegration Project, you will be supported in meeting these responsibilities:

- You have the responsibility to provide a home to a child/youth with complex needs and be that child's permanent caregiver.
- You have the responsibility to actively participate in Team Meetings, which are held at least once every month.
- You have the responsibility to participate in all services ordered by the Court.
- You have the responsibility to communicate regularly and openly with all Team Members.
- You have the responsibility to choose and use the services you need, to provide feedback about those services to the team, and to work with your team to make sure the services in place are meeting your family's needs.
- You have the responsibility to ask questions when any part of the plan for the child in your care is unclear.
- You have the responsibility to participate in PESA and/or any other training designed to support and increase your skills in parenting a child with complex needs.
- You have the responsibility to utilize any available and appropriate personal and community resources to provide services and supports for the child in your care.
- You have the responsibility to ask for crisis support when you need it.



CPS Reintegration Project – Grievance Policy & Procedure

I am an active participant in the CPS Reintegration Project.
What can I do if I have an unresolved complaint?

The CPS Reintegration Project (CRP) is part of the System of Care Community in the Austin/Travis County area. The System of Care Community Team is made up of representatives from various local social service agencies.

Policy:

Situations may occur where a CRP participant believes that he or she has not been treated fairly, according to the CRP policies and standard practices. In most cases, CRP expects that the participant will be able to satisfactorily address such concerns by speaking directly with their CRP Care Coordinator. However, when the Care Coordinator has not resolved a recent or continuing problem satisfactorily, CRP wishes to provide participants an alternative way to address their complaint or grievance.

No participant shall be subjected to discrimination or adverse treatment for participating in a grievance procedure.

Procedure:

All participants in the CPS Reintegration Project are encouraged to follow the steps below to address any complaint or grievance having to do with their experience participating in CRP.

- You may first speak directly with your Care Coordinator about the issue of concern.
- If your Care Coordinator is unable to satisfactorily resolve your complaint, you may contact the CRP Supervisor, Laura Peveto, to discuss your complaint.
Phone: (512) 854-7874
Fax: (512) 854-5879
Email: laura.peveto@co.travis.tx.us
- If the CRP Supervisor is unable to satisfactorily resolve your complaint, you may request a meeting to discuss and try to resolve your grievance with all interested parties and with the System of Care Community Team.
You must fill out a Grievance Form, check the box “Request a Meeting” and return it to the address on the bottom of the form. The System of Care Team will notify all parties listed on the Grievance Form about the meeting.
- If you do not want a meeting, but would like to receive a written response to your complaint, you must fill out a Grievance Form, check the box “Request a Written Response” and return it to the address on the bottom of the form. You will receive a written response by mail.
- If you simply want to file your complaint, and do not want any meeting or written response, then you may fill out a Grievance Form, check the box “Filing only” and return it to the address on the bottom of the form.

SUBMIT GRIEVANCE FORMS TO:
BY MAIL: SYSTEM OF CARE COMMUNITY TEAM, P.O. BOX 1748, AUSTIN, TX 78767
BY FAX: 512.854.5879



CPS Reintegration Project – Grievance Form

To be completed by any caregiver, child or family member
who has an unresolved complaint

Name of Child and Family _____

Care Coordinator / Provider _____

Description of issue: _____

Important people involved (List name and contact information for each person):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Describe any steps you have already taken to resolve your complaint / grievance:

- I talked with my Care Coordinator about my complaint / grievance on _____(date).
 - I talked with the CRP Supervisor, Laura Peveto, about my complaint / grievance on _____(date).
 - Additional steps taken (please describe): _____
-
-
-

(Form Continued on back of page)

What do you hope will happen to resolve this issue? _____

Please choose only ONE of the following requests:

- I request a meeting to discuss and try to resolve above complaint / grievance with the people involved and the System of Care Team. The System of Care Team will notify the important people I listed about the meeting.
- I do not request a meeting at this time. I request a written response to my complaint / grievance.
- I request that my complaint / grievance be filed in the CRP case file.

Submitted By:

Signature _____ *Date* _____

Print Name _____ *Phone* _____

Address _____

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:
BY MAIL: SYSTEM OF CARE COMMUNITY TEAM, P.O. BOX 1748, AUSTIN, TX 78767
BY FAX: 512.854.5879

Court Guide



Court Locations and Judges

Certain legal decisions about children must be made in a court. Court hearings for CPS-related matters are held in civil court, either at the Downtown Austin Courthouse or at Gardner-Betts Juvenile Justice Center in South Austin, and by one of 3 judges who make decisions in CPS cases.

Locations:

Downtown Courthouse

1000 Guadalupe Street Austin 78701 (11th & Guadalupe)

Parking pay stations are located throughout the downtown area and they take quarters, dimes, nickels, or debit cards (no dollar bills). There is also a parking lot located at 9th St. and San Antonio. Be sure to arrive with enough extra time to find parking and walk to the courthouse.

When you arrive at the Courthouse, you will enter the building at the main entrance on Guadalupe, and will go through a metal detector. Then you will take the elevator or stairs to the 4th floor, where CPS cases are heard. You will wait outside the courtroom on the 4th floor until your case is called.

Gardner Betts Juvenile Justice Center

2515 S. Congress Austin 78704 (S. Congress & Oltorf)

Parking is free in the parking lot across Long Street, which runs between Gardner Betts and the shopping center. You should be able to find parking in that lot, or on the street.

When you arrive at Gardner Betts, you will go through a metal detector, and then you will sign in at the Information Desk and get a badge. The person at the Information Desk will be able to tell you in which courtroom CPS cases are being heard. You will wait outside the courtroom until your case is called.

Judges:

Judge Darlene Byrne hears cases at the **Downtown Courthouse**, on the 4th floor.

Judge Byrne's court runs on **Mondays**. Her docket typically starts at 8:30 am and runs through the afternoon.

Judge John Hathaway hears cases at **Gardner Betts**, on the 1st floor.

Judge Hathaway's court runs on **Wednesdays** and typically starts at 9 am.

Judge Texana Davis (or alternate) hears cases at the **Downtown Courthouse**, on the 4th floor. Judge Davis's court runs on **Fridays** and typically starts at 9 am.



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Court Guide



The Court Experience

Before Court

- Get some sleep the night before, so you can **arrive well-rested and alert**.
- Make sure to eat something before you arrive.
- **Dress as if you were going on a job interview** – in neat, modest clothing. You want to leave a good impression on the judge, and your appearance is important. It is a good idea to leave flip-flops, cut-off shorts, ripped jeans, tank tops and tight or revealing shirts/dresses/jeans at home.
- **Arrive early**, with enough time to find parking. Don't forget money for parking downtown if needed.
- As soon as you arrive to the court, **silence your cell phone and put it away** in your purse or pocket.
- Find your CPS worker and request a copy of the **Court Report** if you haven't already received one; **read the Recommendations** section, and make sure to **ask questions** about anything you don't understand in the report.

During court

- Any of the Legal Parties may be present at the hearing, including the CPS worker, CASA volunteer and supervisor, Attorney ad Litem, parents' attorneys.
- Your CRP Care Coordinator may also attend, as a supportive observer.
- If children are present, they may need to wait with an adult outside the courtroom during the hearing. The judge may call them in to talk with them during the hearing.
- Only enter or exit the courtroom in between hearings.
- Do **listen** to the judge and the legal parties during the hearing.
- Do respond to the judge when asked a question. Speak respectfully.
- **Remain calm**. Court can bring up many emotions. Breathe, and try to stay focused on the present and future, rather than getting caught up in feelings about the past.

After court

- Make sure to ask the CPS worker for a copy of the Court Orders.
- Make sure you understand your responsibilities and tasks set out by the judge. If you have any questions, ask the legal parties right away.
- **Take care of yourself!** Take some time to "debrief" with a friend or family member, or try any of your other favorite self-care activities.

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Public Benefits

Food Stamps (SNAP) and Medicaid Benefits

Information by phone:

Call [211](tel:211) for more information about how to apply for public benefits.

Staff can talk with you Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

If you are unable to connect to 2-1-1, you can also reach 2-1-1 by calling toll-free 1-877-541-7905.

When you call 2-1-1, you pick a language and then pick from 3 options: Press 2 to learn about state benefits, such as: SNAP food benefits, Medicaid, CHIP, and TANF.

Local benefits offices:

To apply for Food Stamps (SNAP), Medicaid, CHIP, and TANF, you may go to your local Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) office.

1165 Airport Blvd, Austin, Tx 78702
Phone (512) 929-7330
Fax (512) 919-7302
TDD (512) 919-7295

1601 Rutherford Ln, Austin, Tx 78754
Phone (512) 339-8868
Fax (512) 873-6336
TDD (512) 876-6333

724 Eberhart Ln, Austin, Tx 78745
Phone (512) 445-0022
Fax (512) 416-5271
TDD (512) 416-5299

On the internet:

To see if you or others in your household may be eligible for public benefits such as Food Stamps, Medicaid, CHIP, or TANF, go to this website: www.yourtexasbenefits.com.

Social Security Benefits

Information by phone:

National Toll-Free Number: 1-800-772-1213

Local benefits offices:

Address: 1029 Camino La Costa, Austin, TX 78752
Phone: 512-206-3700 or TTY 1-512-206-3724
Hours: Mon – Fri 9a.m.-4p.m.

On the internet:

Social Security benefits and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits can be applied for at this website: www.ssa.gov.



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Mental Health Crisis Resources

Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES)

For immediate mental health emergencies 24 hours/day, 7 days/week:

- **Contact the Hotline for Help** 512-472-4357 (472-HELP) or TTY: 512-703-1395.
- **Go to PES, located at: 56 East Ave, Austin, TX, 78701.** You will need to sign in and wait in a common area to be seen by a psychiatrist or psychiatric emergency staff.

Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT)

- MCOT is a mobile team; **they can come to you where you are** (including at home) to provide psychiatric assessments and crisis intervention services
- **MCOT** is available 7 days a week from 10am – 8pm; call 512-472-4357.

Mental Health Officers (Austin) or Deputies (Travis County)

Specially trained Mental Health Officer or Deputy may be available to respond to crisis calls. In an emergency, when you dial 911, you may request a Mental Health officer or deputy.

Suicide Prevention Lifeline

24/7 Hotline: 1-800-784-2433

Seton Shoal Creek Hospital

Psychiatric treatment and stabilization for people in crisis and for drug/alcohol dependence. Phone: 512-324-2000. Location: 3501 Mills Ave, Austin, TX, 78731.

Austin State Hospital (ASH)

Psychiatric treatment and stabilization for people in crisis. Phone: 512-452-0381. Location: 4110 Guadalupe, Austin, TX, 78741.

SafePlace Domestic and Sexual Violence Survival Center

24/7 Bilingual Hotline: (512) 267-7233.

Services include emergency shelter for those in physical danger from partner, counseling, legal and hospital advocacy and accompaniment, transitional housing, outreach and community education.

National Domestic Violence Hotline

24/7 Bilingual Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 (1-800-799-SAFE) or TTY 1-800-787-3224

The hotline provides crisis intervention and advocacy, information about sources of assistance, and referrals to shelters for victims of domestic violence. Nationwide information and referrals.



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Mental Health Counseling Resources

Austin Travis County Integral Care (ATCIC) **new name for MHMR**

Phone: 512-472-4357, **Option 2**. (7:30am - 5:00pm, Monday – Friday).

Call to complete a telephone screening for service eligibility and to schedule an intake appointment. More in-depth clinical and financial screenings are done at the intake appointments.

Provides counseling, psychiatric services, medication management, and case management services. Provides assessments and services to individuals with DMR or DD who meet eligibility criteria. Accepts Medicaid.

Austin Child Guidance Center (ACGC)

810 West 45th Street, Austin, TX, 78751. Phone (512) **451-2242**.

Call for information and/or to schedule an intake appointment. Provides individual, group and family counseling for emotional, social or behavioral problems. Also provides psychiatric evaluation, psychological and neuropsychological assessments, assessments for learning disabilities, ADHD, intelligence testing, etc. Services available in Spanish. Accepts Medicaid; sliding scale from \$9 to \$90.

Capital Area Counseling

2824 Real St, Austin, TX, 78722. Phone (512) **302-1000 ext. 100**.

Call for short telephone screen and to schedule intake. Provides low-cost, no-session-limit counseling for individuals, couples, families, children, and groups in a variety of areas including anxiety, depression, anger, relationship issues, substance use, emotional trauma, and sexual abuse. Offers a sliding fee scale (\$10-\$50).

Lifeworks

2001 Chicon (East Austin). Phone: (512) 478-1648

1221 W. Ben White Blvd. (South Austin). Phone: (512) 735-2400

8913 Collin Field Dr (North Austin). Phone: (512) 324-6870

Provides individual, couple and family counseling, and family violence counseling. Also provides walk in emergency shelter to youth (including parents and children); call South site at 478-1648 for more information. Provide services for deaf community and Spanish speakers. Accepts Medicaid, MAP, sliding scale \$18 to \$100.

Waterloo Counseling Center

314 E Highland Mall Blvd. □ Suite 301 □ Austin, TX, 78752. Phone (512) **444-9922 ext 204**.

Call for general information and intake. Provides counseling for all individuals and couples and group, primarily gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual or are HIV+. Sliding scale: \$30 to \$90 for individual, \$15 to \$40 for groups and \$40 to \$90 couples. No insurance is accepted.

YWCA Women's Counseling and Referral Center

2015 South I-35, Suite 110, Austin TX, 78741. Phone (512) **326-1222**.

Provides individual counseling to women only, for stress, depression, self-esteem, suicide, substance abuse, anger management, anxiety, relationship difficulties. 10 sessions (max) per calendar year. Spanish speaking services available. Sliding scale starts at \$5. No insurance accepted.



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Financial Emergency Resources



Travis County Family Support Services

What kind of assistance is available? Rent/Mortgage Assistance, Utility Assistance, Food Vouchers, Clothes Closet, Food Pantry, Prescriptions Assistance, and determination of eligibility for Weatherization / Home Repairs with Travis County Housing Services

How do I apply for assistance?

Go to the center that is most convenient for you. Call for more information.

What documentation will I be asked to provide?

Driver's License / Photo ID, Social Security cards for all household members, proof of income for all household members for last 30 days, Proof of Travis County residency for at least 60 days (recent bills addressed to you), Current Utility Bill (most recent month), Past due rent/mortgage bill

Locations and Hours:

The Family Support Services locations listed below are all open Mon – Fri: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Downtown:

Palm Square Building

100 N. IH 35, Suite 1000

Phone: 854-4120 Fax: 854-4118

Del Valle:

South Rural Community Center

3518 FM 973

Phone: 247-4407 Fax: 247-3108

South:

Post Road

2201 Post Road, Suite 101

Phone: 854-9130 Fax: 854-9158

Manor:

East Rural Community Center

600 W. Carrie Manor St.

Phone: 272-5561 Fax: 272-8750

Oak Hill:

West Rural Community Center

8656-A Hwy 71 W., Suite A

Phone: 854-2130 Fax: 854-2145

Pflugerville:

Travis County Community Center

15822 Foothill Farms Loop, Bldg D

Phone: 251-4168 Fax: 251-4385

Jonestown:

Northwest Rural Community Center

18649 FM 1431, Suite 6A

Phone: 267-3245 Fax: 267-4068

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Financial Emergency Resources

City of Austin Neighborhood Centers

What kind of assistance is available?

Services include Emergency Food Pantry, Clothing Closets, Seniors Programs, Financial Assistance, Prescription Assistance, Seasonal Programs, Home Improvement / Weatherization Programs. Assistance generally limited to once every 3 months.

How do I apply for assistance?

Go to the center that serves your zip code. Call for more information.

What documentation will I be asked to provide?

Your ID, Social Security card and proof of income for last 30 days

Locations and Hours:

The City of Austin Neighborhood Centers listed below are all open Mon – Fri: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

BLACKLAND: 2005 Salina

(512) 972-2005

Serves Zip Codes 78722, 78723, 78724, 78725

East Austin: 211 Comal

(512) 972-6650

Serves Zip Codes 78702 only

MONTOPOLIS: 1416 Montopolis

(512) 972-5710

Serves Zip Codes 78741, 78744

ROSEWOOD/ZARAGOSA: 2808 Webberville Road

(512) 972-6740

Serves Zip Codes 78702, 78721

ST. JOHN'S: 7500 Blessing Avenue

(512) 972-5780

Serves Zip Codes 78751, 78752, 78753, 78754, 78755, 78758

South Austin: 2508 Durwood

(512) 972-6840

Serves Zip Codes 78704, 78745, 78748



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Financial Emergency Resources

Caritas of Austin

What kind of assistance is available?

Caritas' Community Support Program is a Basic Needs Service and will provide assistance with past due rent and past due utility bills only. (This does not include telephone bills).

How do I apply for assistance?

Call for more information and to schedule an appointment to see if you are eligible.

What documentation will I be asked to provide?

Call for more information about required documentation – what to bring to your eligibility/intake appointment.

Locations and Hours:

Location: 611 Neches, Austin, Texas 78702

Phone: (512) 472-4135

Hours: Mon, Weds & Thurs 8:30 a.m.- 4:45 p.m.; Tues 8:30a.m.-6:45 p.m.; Fri 8:30-11:45a.m.

211

Simply dial 2-1-1, or call toll-free from your cell phone at 1-877-541-7905.

What kind of assistance is available?

Calling 2-1-1 is a free, easy way to find out about services you can get in your area. It is a great place to start when you need help finding resources near you.

When you call 2-1-1, you pick a language and then pick from 3 options: **Press 1** to learn about **services in your area**, such as: Emergency Assistance, Rent/Utility Assistance, Food, Housing, Child care, After-school programs, Senior services.

What information will I be asked to provide?

Staff will ask you where you live (zip code) and what type of service you are looking for. You may ask for more than one thing; for example: need help with my utility bill, and need to find the nearest food pantry.

Hours:

2-1-1 is a free phone service that allows you to talk with a real person to search for resources and services. **Staff can talk with you about services in your area anytime you call – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

***If you need to speak to someone at 211 regarding your **SNAP or Medicaid** application or benefits, call between **8 am and 8pm Monday through Friday** and select **option 2**.*



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Family Support Groups

Informational Classes & Support Groups

Family Support Co-op

The Family Support Co-op is a gathering open to parents and caregivers of a child/children with disabilities. It's a great place to go if you are looking for information, ideas, and support.

It is **free** and no registration is necessary to attend. Childcare is available onsite. Each month, there are a variety of sessions to choose from on different topics. When you arrive, you will enter the front door of the school, sign in and choose from a list of the sessions/meetings happening. Arrive early if you can: pizza is provided in the school gym/cafeteria.

Date/Time: 2nd Tuesday of each month; 6-8:30pm (pizza at 5:30)

Location: Rosedale School

For more information: Call Rosemary Alexander at (512) 414-2049.



NAMI Education and Support Groups

NAMI Austin is the local area branch of the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

NAMI's **Mental Health Education and Support Group Resource Guide** lists groups and classes happening all over the Austin area on a variety of topics.

Groups and classes are available for people with mental illness, family members, and peers. A wider variety of topics and groups are available – many are free, some are not.

Call 420-9810 or go to www.namiaustin.org to download a copy.



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Family Fun



What can I do for fun with my family?

Many families find it challenging to come up with activities that everyone can really enjoy together that don't cost a lot. But if you keep it simple, you can find fun even in everyday activities. Here are some starter suggestions:

- **Take it Outdoors** – Explore your local hike and bike trails, community parks and pools, or pack a picnic for your back patio
- **Check out your community's Library** – Get a free library card to borrow books, DVDs, CDs; use the internet for free; take your younger kids to story time or sign up for fun reading challenges
- **Festivals and other Free Events** – Check your local paper or parenting magazine for all kinds of free events in your community
- **Potluck** – Invite your family, friends, neighbors to bring a dish to share; pick a theme if you like - BBQ, Italian, desserts, you name it!
- **Arts & Crafts Day** – Use stuff you find around the house, like boxes, old fabric or clothes, old greeting cards, string, tape, etc...
- **Cook** – Get creative with new recipes, let the child take charge of a meal, make a plan to include everyone's favorite meal each month
- **Game Night** – Pull out those old board games and let the child teach you how to play!
- **Movie Marathon** – Watch your favorite movies together at home

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Self Care for the Caregiver



What is “self care”?

Most of us have many responsibilities and worries. We spend our time taking care of other people, and tend to put off our own needs for later. But **taking care of yourself** is the only way to make sure you’ll be able to take care of others. Here are some tips:

- **Rest** – Get yourself to bed on time so you can get enough sleep
- **Eat** – Regular meals. Try to limit foods high in fat, sugar, caffeine
- **Breathe** – Remember to keep breathing. Practice slow, deep breathing in through the nose to fill the belly, and then picture your stress leaving your body and mind with every breath out
- **Connect** – talk with someone you trust: a friend, neighbor, spouse or partner, family member, counselor, pastor, or other support person
- **Laugh** – laughter keeps us in the present, and it can be a great natural pick-me-up when things feel heavy or difficult
- **Exercise** – do an exercise video at home, take a walk around your apartment complex or neighborhood, do some simple stretches
- **Pamper yourself** – take a relaxing shower or bath, give yourself a facial, make yourself a cup of tea or cocoa, listen to your favorite music, take a nap, or just take some quiet alone time to yourself
- **Do what you love** – do you knit, paint, love to read, play an instrument, do crossword puzzles or sudoku, or something else? Take time to have fun!

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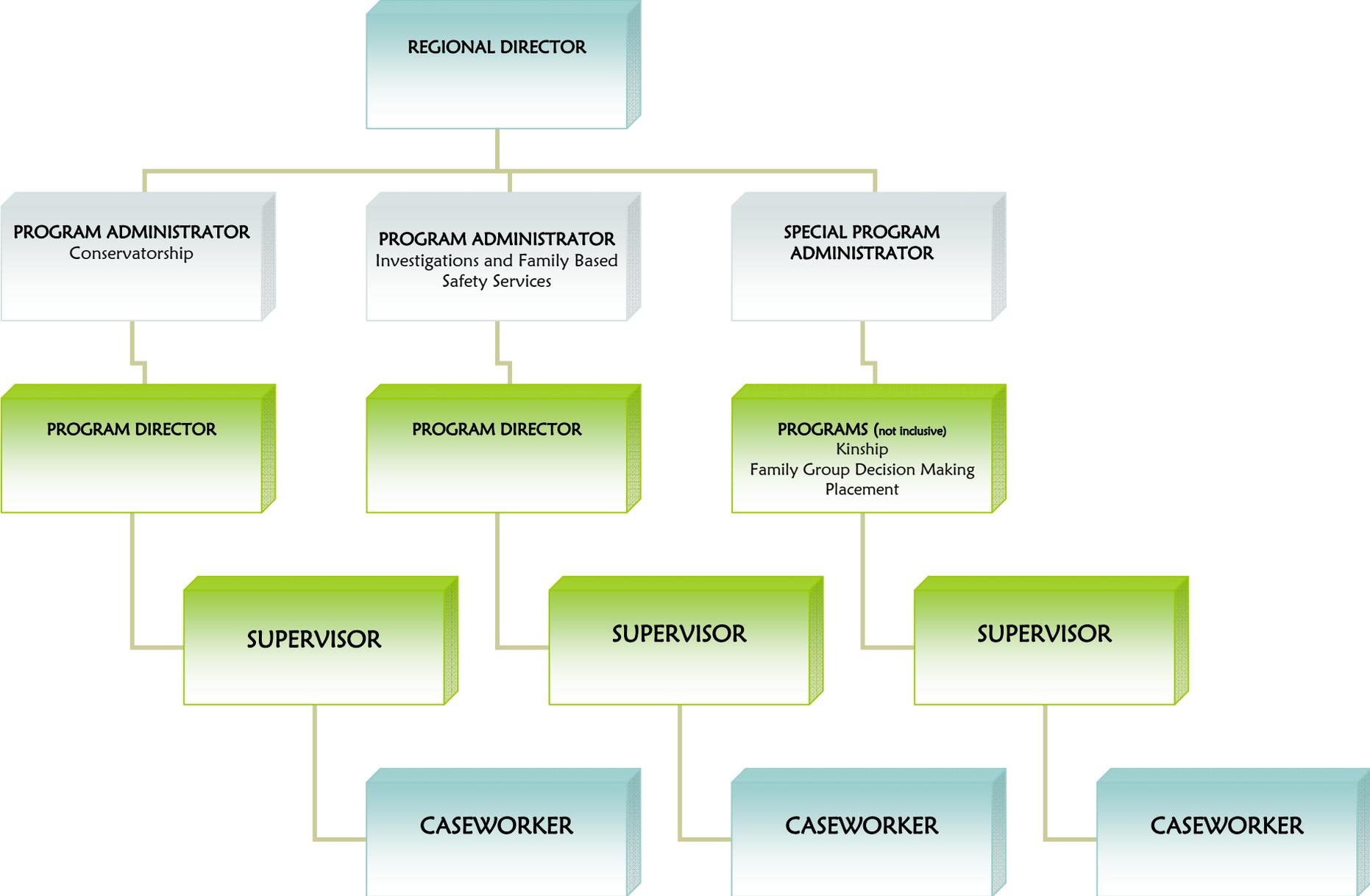
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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES REGIONAL ORGANIZATION CHART



Court Hearings for CPS Cases

Time	Type of hearing
Within 24 hours of removal	<p>Emergency hearing</p> <p>When conducting an emergency removal, the court holds a hearing on or before the first working day after the removal. In Travis County, this is done <u>ex-parte</u>, meaning that CPS is the only party talking with the judge and the parents are not present.</p>
Within 14 days of removal	<p>Adversary / show cause / 262 hearing</p> <p>Parents are present at this hearing and can be appointed an attorney if eligible. The child must be returned UNLESS court finds that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There was a danger to the child caused by the person in possession of the child 2. It is contrary to the child's welfare to remain in the home 3. Reasonable efforts were made to eliminate or prevent the child's removal 4. Reasonable efforts have been made to enable the child to return home
Within 60 days from the date CPS received temporary custody	<p>Status hearing</p> <p>Parents are present at this hearing and may be represented by an attorney. The purpose of this hearing is to review the service plan developed for the parents and child.</p>
*Within 180 days (6 months) from the date CPS received temporary custody	<p>Initial permanency hearing</p> <p>Parents are present at this hearing and may be represented by an attorney. The purpose of this hearing is for the court to review the permanent plan for the child; this will include how the family is doing with their service plan and in making the changes needed to have the child returned home if that is the permanent plan for the child. The court must return the child home if the parents can show that they are willing and able to provide the child with a safe home environment and it is in the child's best interest. Children are encouraged by law to be present at this hearing.</p>
*Within 120 days (4 months) of last Permanency Hearing	<p>Subsequent permanency hearing</p> <p>Parents are present at this hearing and may be represented by an attorney. The purpose of this hearing is for the court to review the permanent plan for the child; this will include how the family is doing with their service plan and in making the changes needed to have the child returned home if that is the permanent plan for the child. The court must return the child home if the parents can show that they are willing and able to provide the child with a safe home environment and it is in the child's best interest. Children are encouraged by law to be present at this hearing.</p>
1 year from the date CPS received temporary custody	<p>Trial, dismissal, extension, or return and monitor</p> <p>Before the first anniversary of CPS receiving temporary custody of the child, the court must dismiss the case either by agreement or by trial. The court may also grant an extension of up to 6 months if extraordinary circumstances exist to continue the case. This allows parents an additional 6 months to work services. The court may also order CPS to keep temporary custody but order the return of the child to the parents with close CPS supervision. This may be done at any time within 18 months of CPS getting temporary custody of the child.</p>

*Hearings are usually done more frequently. Permanency Review Hearings are usually conducted every 3-4 months.

The CPS Reintegration Project

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Allegations – describes what type of abuse and/or neglect CPS investigates; these are the categories CPS uses to “define” their concerns around abuse, neglect, and protectiveness of children and family; begins in the investigation stage of service; Physical Abuse, Physical Neglect, Neglectful Supervision, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Refusal to Accept Parental Responsibility, Medical Neglect

Assistance District Attorney (ADA) – attorneys employed by the county to represent the Department of Family and protective Services (DFPS).

Attorney Ad Litem (AAL) – The attorney appointed by the court to represent your child/children.

Attorney General’s Office (AG’s) – the State of Texas is represented by the Attorney General’s Office. Typically in family law matters, the AG’s office is involved to enforce child support payments. Parents and caregivers use the AG’s office to set up child support orders and payments.

Best Interest – the court must make decisions based on what’s in the best interest of the child. Best interest factors include: child’s age, child’s physical and mental health, if the child has been a victim of harm, if the child is fearful of going home, results of psychological evaluations for the child, history of substance abuse or domestic violence in the home, willingness of the family to participate in counseling services and make any needed changes, and family’s ability to use safe parenting skills with the child.

Child Protective Services (CPS) – the division of the **Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)** that works with children. “CPS” and “DFPS” are terms frequently used to mean the same thing. Sometimes CPS or DFPS is also called “the Department”. The job of DFPS is to investigate referrals for possible child abuse and neglect, and to provide services to families to prevent abuse and neglect, and to take legal actions when necessary to protect children.

CPS History – Your family’s past involvement with CPS. This includes ALL allegations and investigations regarding you, your child/children and the other parent of your child/children, your partner and/or spouse; it also includes your history as an adult and a child. This may also include history for another state. CPS will also check the history of any possible placements for your child or children (everyone in the home over the age of 18).

Conservatorship (CVS) – The name of the stage of service that handles your CPS legal case once your child has been placed foster care (CPS has legal custody of your child or children). Some of the duties of this stage of service include, but are not limited to: monitoring your child’s placement, providing ordered services to your child or children, creating a service plan for the parents based on the ordered services.

CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) –A person who appears at court hearing as a volunteer advocate on behalf of your child; is appointed by the court; Not all children are appointed a CASA. If a CASA is appointed, then they appear in court and report on what they think is in the child’s best interest.

Court Ordered Services (COS) – Also known as **Family Based Safety Services (FBSS)** -Court Ordered Services. In this stage of service, parents retain legal custody of their child or children; Parents may be “court ordered” to engage in services. Children may be living in the home with the parent or parents or “voluntarily” placed out of the home with a relative or fictive kin.

The CPS Reintegration Project

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Disposition: This is the final determination that CPS places on the allegations (from the investigation stage of service); Reason to Believe (RTB); Unable to Determine (UTD); Ruled Out (RO); Administratively Closed.

Domestic Violence - any act of violence towards a family or household member.

Extension – If the family has demonstrated “substantial progress” toward completion of the ordered services **and** the case is close to either trial dates or dismissal dates, **and** parents need more time to demonstrate children will be safe and protected if reunified, and extension of the legal case may be requested; typically an extension is for 6-months

Family Group Decision Making – A decision-making process that CPS uses that focuses on the strengths of the family and community resources, to develop plans to insure child safety and well-being. It is a voluntary activity where family members, family support systems, service providers and community members gather to talk about the child and family’s future. CPS has trained facilitators who plan and run these meetings.

There are three kinds of meetings:

Circle of Support (COS) – to plan for the future with older children who will be “aging out” of CPS care;

Family Group Conference (FGC) – to plan with family, relatives, friends, and support people for the safe care of children to protect children from any future harm;

Family Team Meeting (FTM) – to plan with family before a child is removed from the home, to talk about how to keep the child safe in the home.

Final Order – A court order that ends the court involvement in the parent-child relationship. This may include returning a child to a parent, giving permanent custody of a child to a relative, giving permanent custody of a child to CPS, or terminating the parental rights to a child.

Foster Care – Child Protective Services has obtained legal custody of the child or children; child or children may be placed a foster home, emergency shelter, group home, residential treatment center, and sometimes relative home; there is a legal lawsuit filed by the State against the parents

Guardian Ad Litem – A person who may or may not be an attorney, who is appointed by the court to investigate and report back to the court what is in the best interest of the child. CASA can be appointed as Guardian Ad Litem.

Home Study - A report about the home and people living there which assist the court in determining if children should be placed in the home during the CPS case; completed on all foster homes and relatives and/or fictive kinship placements. Home study is needed for almost all placements during the conservatorship stage of service maybe required for relative placements during the Family Based Safety Services stage of service; may be completed by an independent contractor (paid by CPS) or by a CPS worker; a denied home study may result in children not being placed in the home by CPS.

Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) – Federal law that applies to families who are members of an Indian tribe. If a family is identified as tribe member, then different rules apply to the legal case.

Kinship/Relative Placement – The placement of a child in the home of a relative or fictive kin

Mediation – A meeting that is court ordered where all the parties (CPS, parents, attorney for child) come together and try to reach an agreement about what should happen with the child and family **instead of going to trial**

The CPS Reintegration Project

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Office of Child Representation (OCR) – The Travis County law office that is appointed to represent children involved in CPS cases.

Office of Parental Representation (OPR) – The Travis County law office that is appointed to represent parents involved in CPS cases.

OSAR (Outreach Screening Assessment and Referral) – A drug and alcohol assessment and referral program that determines, if applicable, what type of substance abuse treatment is needed, i.e., intensive outpatient (IOP); Inpatient treatment services

PC (Permanency Conference) – held by CPS to review the ordered services, service plan and goals for the child, youth, and parents.

Permanency Review Hearing – A court hearing held to review the plan for the family including the parent process on ordered services

PMC (Permanent Managing Conservatorship) – Permanent custody for the child given through a court order. PMC can be given to the Department (typically means parents rights have been terminated); PMC can be given to relative or fictive kin

Protective Parenting – A type of parenting training or classes that focuses on teaching parents how to be protective so that abuse or neglect of their child does not occur in the future.

Psychiatric Evaluation- Evaluates mental health of parent or child; may provide a mental health diagnosis; the psychiatrist who does the evaluation can prescribe medicine if necessary; may provide recommendations for additional services, which become part of ordered services

Psychological Evaluation – Evaluates a person's level of functioning, mental illness and intellectual abilities. The psychologist who does this evaluation cannot prescribe medicine, may provide recommendations for additional services which become part of ordered services

Relinquishment - a legal action where the parent voluntarily gives up their parental rights to the child.

Residential Treatment Center (RTC) – A place where a child in CPS custody may be placed to live to receive specialized treatment for emotional, behavioral, or psychological problems.

Return and Monitor – order that allows CPS to keep temporary custody of a child, but the child returns to the parents and is intensively monitored by CPS. Can last up to 6 months; may be considered a possible beginning stage of reunification for children and parents

Service Plan – A plan developed by CPS which identifies the expectations for changes needed in order for the child to be returned home safely and the services CPS will provide to help the parent make those changes.

Substitute Care – includes foster care, kinship care, and placement in Residential Treatment Centers.

Suit Affecting the Parent -Child Relationship (SAPCR) – type of lawsuit filed by CPS that affects the parent-child relationship.

TMC (Temporary Managing Conservatorship) – Legal order that give s temporary custody to CPS.

