

Chapter 7

APPROVAL OF INFORMAL PROVIDERS IN SAFETY PLANS

7-1. Purpose. An “Informal Provider” is a responsible adult identified by a parent/legal guardian who agrees to provide safety management services as specified in a safety plan.

a. The child welfare professional creating or modifying the safety plan will determine that any safety plan provider is responsible, capable, and dependable to implement their role in the safety plan, including agreeing to child abuse and criminal history checks.

b. When a safety plan is necessary in response to present or impending danger, the child welfare professional will ask the parent/legal guardian, when available, if there are parents, family members, friends or neighbors who might be willing and able to provide any of the safety services needed.

c. The child welfare professional will determine that the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are willing for the following to occur:

(1) Full disclosure to informal safety plan provider of family dynamics and conditions resulting in danger threat to the child.

(2) An agency interview with informal safety plan provider and a background check.

7-2. Interview with Informal Provider.

a. The child welfare professional will conduct an interview with the informal safety plan provider to determine if they meet all of the following criteria. See Appendix B of this operating procedure, “Safety Management Provider Can and Will Protect the Child,” for specific examples.

b. The providers must demonstrate that they:

(1) Understand and believe the danger threats.

(2) Are aligned with the child’s need for protection.

(3) Understand the protective actions they are being asked to provide.

(4) Are willing, able and have the time to provide the protective actions requested.

(5) Agree to child abuse and local/state criminal background checks and provide information as to what a records check will reveal.

(6) Agree to communicate openly and frequently with agency staff responsible for monitoring.

(7) Agree to work as a team member with other safety plan providers involved.

7-3. Background Screening.

a. After the child welfare professional has conducted an interview to determine if the informal safety plan provider is appropriate, the child welfare professional will conduct background screening to include child abuse history, a Florida Sexual Offenders and Predators registration check and local criminal history check.

b. The child welfare professional will determine whether the results of any of the background checks reveal information that may indicate a need for further information gathering and assessment. Additional information should be obtained from the individual and others who know him/her to assess whether the behaviors or circumstances that contributed to background results are still active and/or present in ways that would compromise the person's ability to provide dependable or suitable to care and/or protection for the child.

c. Informal safety plan providers will be involved in the development of the safety plan and must be provided with a copy of the safety plan.

7-4. Supervisor Consultation. As part of the Supervisor Consultation conducted to approve a safety plan, the supervisor must determine that:

a. It is clear how the informal safety plan providers will control and manage the danger threat(s).

b. Appropriate interviews, background checks and assessment of providers have been completed.

7-5. FSFN Documentation.

a. The child welfare professional will document all interviews conducted to gather information for approval of an informal safety management provider in FSFN case notes.

b. The child welfare professional will document the approved informal safety plan provider as a "Family Support Network" member, including their phone contact information on the "Professional / Family Support Network contacts" tab on the "Maintain Case" page. This information must also be recorded in the participants tab under "Family Support Network" on the FFA-Ongoing and Progress Update.

c. Any informal providers responsible for actions in a safety plan will sign the plan.

d. A copy of the safety plan with all signatures must be uploaded to FSFN within two business days of its creation or modification.