**What is a Decision Team Staffing (DTS)?** A DTS is a multi-disciplinary staffing that is scheduled to enhance the assessment and analysis of risk and safety factors and determine the services and supports available to mitigate safety concerns and begin to reduce risk of future abuse or neglect. The overall goal is to safely reduce the number of children removed from their homes. Please note: the acronyms DTS (Decision Team Staffing) and DTC (Decision Team Consultant) Staffing are often used interchangeably.

**What is the purpose of a Decision Team Staffing?** The purpose of a DTS is to enhance the assessment and analysis of risk and safety factors through an expedited multidisciplinary team staffing process, to determine if a child can remain safely in their home. The overall goal is to arrive at a shared decision on the best approach to mitigate safety concerns and begin to reduce risk of future abuse or neglect by providing expedited services and assistance to vulnerable families.

**Which cases are appropriate for a Decision Team Staffing?** Child Protective Investigators should refer all cases that are being considered for in-home supervision or possible legal action to be scheduled for a Decision Team Staffing. Diversion cases will not be staffed unless we are considering a different pathway for the family.

**Can an FCC or FCS request a Decision Team Staffing?** Decision Team Staffing requests are made by DCF only. If a case is already open to case management services, these cases should be staffed directly with the Quality Operations Manager (QOM) or their designee.

**Who will be invited to a Decision Team Staffing?** This list is not exhaustive; others can be invited if determined as appropriate. The CPI should inform the DTC, prior to the staffing, if they have particular individuals (e.g., current provider, guidance counselor) that they want to ensure be invited.

* CPI - DCF
* CPIS -DCF
* OPA - DCF
* OMC II -DCF
* CMA Staff Representative
* CLS
* Local Law Enforcement
* FIS (Meridian/Substance Abuse)
* DV Advocates
* FTC Coordinators
* MCRT staff
* CPT and/or CAC Representative
* School Personnel
* Providers

**What information should I expect to receive on the Decision Team Staffing Form?** Prior to the staffing occurring, the DTC researches the family’s criminal, abuse and service history, as well as current allegations. They then provide this information to the team as part of the staffing process. The DTC also documents the team discussion which will include at a minimum: investigative information, developmental stage(s), strengths/protective capacities, exceptions to the problem, the family’s perception of the current situation, family and individual level issues/concerns, safety planning activities, immediate case actions needed (with person responsible and date due) and service needs to be addressed at the FTC. The DTC will also clearly identify the team’s decision as it relates to case direction. If a case will be receiving In-home Supervision, a tentative date for the early engagement visit will also be included on the form (as arranged between the FCS and the CPI at the time of the staffing).

**How can I access the Decision Team Staffing Form?** The DTS summary is saved as a note in FSFN and the entire DTS Form is saved in Image Now and is emailed as an attachment to the FCS. If you are unable to locate the information please contact the DTC directly (see contact information below).

**Why is there sometimes a different staffing form used?** If a CPI has an urgent request for a Decision Team Staffing, due to immediate concerns for child safety, an Emergency Staffing may be requested. An Emergency Staffing will involve at the minimum the DTC, CPI, CPIS, and CLS and a decision will be made about the need for legal action. Due to there being no time for the DTC to prepare and research prior to the staffing, the notes will either be taken on a Case Staffing Form or may simply involve a note placed directly in FSFN.

Please note: In situations where it is not possible to hold a DTS prior to deciding case direction due to unavailability of the DTC, the case is staffed directly with the CPI Supervisor, CLS, and/or the case management agency, depending upon the direction being sought. The case is not re-staffed as a DTS once a decision has been made about case direction and the CPI is responsible for documenting the staffing in FSFN.

**How do Decision Team Staffings benefit the Case Management Agencies?** Family Care Supervisors are invited to play an active role in the DTS process. Through their participation, the FCS can have input into decisions about case direction, help identify service needs for the family and help determine who is responsible for specific case actions prior to accepting the case.

Additionally, details included on the DTS Form contain valuable background and investigative information that should be used as a tool for future decisions and continued assessment of the family. For example, the DTS Form may document the parents’ own history of being victimized as a child which may help to understand current patterns of abuse/neglect; it will help to identify the circumstances surrounding the current incident of abuse/neglect so that exceptions to the problem may be identified; it helps to identify family strengths that may be utilized to positively impact the family and individual level concerns; or it may help identify which services and/or supports have been beneficial (or not so beneficial) to the family in the past, so that a more effective family plan may be developed.

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