

Conditions for Return (CFR)

Developed by ACTION for Child Protection, Inc. In-Service Training as part of in-service training on "Developing Safety Plans" under DCF Contract #LJ949.

If at the conclusion of the Family Functioning Assessment-Investigation, the Safety Planning Analysis results in a decision that an out-of-home safety plan is necessary to sufficiently manage child safety, the next immediate activity involves the supervisor and child welfare professional documenting explicitly what would be required in order for an in-home safety plan to be established and the child(ren) returned home.

The requirements (i.e., conditions that must exist) in order to return children to their caregivers are directly connected to the specific reasons/justification from the Safety Planning Analysis as to why an in-home safety plan could not be put into place at the conclusion of the FFA and/or maintained as a part of ongoing safety management.

These "conditions" for return statements are intended to delineate what is required in the home environment and of caregivers to be able to step down the level of intrusiveness for safety management and implement an in-home safety plan.

Question #1:

The parents/legal guardians are willing for an in-home safety plan to be developed and implemented and have demonstrated that they will cooperate with all identified safety service providers.

Willing to accept and cooperate refers to the most basic level of agreement to allow a Safety Plan to be implemented in the home and to participate according to agreed assignments. Caregivers do not have to agree that a Safety Plan is the right thing, nor are they required liking the plan; plans are not negotiable in regards to the effectuation of the plan.

Conditions for Return and Use of an In-Home Safety Plan:

CFR statements associated with a caregiver's lack of acceptance and willingness to participate in developing an in-home safety plan should reflect what would be different in comparison to what was determined to be the justification for why an in-home safety plan could not be used.

Examples:

- *Caregiver [name] is open to having candid discussion about the reason for a safety plan and what the safety plan would involve regarding child [name] safety and the need for a safety plan;*
- *Caregiver [name] expresses genuine remorse about [specific maltreatment] toward child [name] and is willing to discuss the need for a safety plan;*
- *Caregiver [name] expresses a genuine interest in doing what is necessary to have the child [name] return to the home;*
- *Caregiver [name] is willing to allow for safety services in the home and demonstrates openness to cooperate with whatever level of involvement from safety service providers is required to assure child safety;*

- *Caregiver can talk about how he/she felt before when not being willing to cooperate with an in-home safety plan, and why/how he/she feels different.*

Question #2:

The home environment is calm and consistent enough for an in-home safety plan to be implemented and for safety service providers to be in the home safely.

Calm and consistent refers to the environment, it's routine, how constant and consistent it is, its predictability to be the same from day-to-day. The environment must accommodate plans, schedules, and services and be non-threatening to those participating in the Safety Plan.

Conditions for Return and Use of an In-Home Safety Plan:

CFR statements associated with the home environment should reflect what would need to be different in comparison to what was determined to require an out-of-home safety plan.

Examples:

- *The home environment is consistent [describe what would be different] enough for in-home safety services to be put into place;*
- *Specific individuals [identify and describe what was problematic about certain people being in the home and threatening to child safety] no longer reside in the home and the caregiver's [name] commitment to keeping them out of the home is sufficiently supported by in-home safety services;*
- *Caregiver [name or other individual in the home] no longer expresses or behaves in such a way that reasonably will disrupt an in-home safety plan-[describe specifically what would be different that was preventing in-home safety plan], expresses acceptance of the in-home safety plan and concern for child; and safety services are sufficient for monitoring and managing caregiver behavior as necessary;*
- *Specific triggers for violence in the home are understood and recognized by caregivers, and in-home safety services can sufficiently monitor and manage behavior to control impulsivity and prevent aggressiveness;*
- *Caregiver [name] acknowledges the need for self-management and is demonstrating evidence of increased impulse control and behavior management, and there is a judgment that in-home safety services can provide sufficient monitoring of family member interactions [describe specific what would be monitored in terms of situations and interactions] and manage behavior [describe what specific behavior must be managed];*
- *Child [name] no longer expresses fear of the home situation;*
- *Child [name] no longer expresses fear of being around the caregiver, and in-home safety services can be a sufficient social connection for the child to monitor his/her feelings and/or emotional reactions;*
- *There is enough of an understanding regarding the home environment, dynamics of family interactions and caregiver functioning that in-home safety services can sufficiently supervise and monitor the situation and/or manage behavior and/or manage stress and/or provide basic parenting assistance [describe specifically what safety services would be necessary];*

- *Caregiver [name] interactions with a child during visitation reveals a positive change in perception and attitude toward the child [describe specifically what change would be necessary to implement an in-home safety plan];*
- *Caregiver [name] has expressed a desire to improve the quality of the relationship with his/her child, and demonstrates enough notable progress toward having a change in perception and more positive interactions with the child that in-home safety services can sufficiently supervise and monitor the situation;*
- *The home environment is reasonably consistent on a day to day basis [describe what minimally reasonably consistent would look like for a particular family];*
- *There is an increased structure in the home environment and a general routine that makes it possible to plan for the use of in-home safety services;*
- *There is no indication that there are unknown, questionable or threatening people in and of the home on a routine or inconsistent basis;*
- *All individuals residing in the home are known to the agency, cooperative and open to intervention;*
- *There is an increased understanding of how Impending Danger [described negative condition that must be better understood] is manifested on a day to day basis, and there is a judgment that in-home safety services can be put into place at the times and level of effort required to assure child safety;*
- *There is an understanding regarding when Impending Danger is more likely to become active and in-home safety services can be put into place at the times and level of effort required to sufficiently control and manage out of control emotions, perceptions and/or behavior [describe specifically what would need to be controlled].*

Question #3:

Safety services are available at a sufficient level and to the degree necessary in order to manage the way in which impending danger is manifested in the home.

Safety Management Services are dependent upon the identified impending danger threat. *Available* refers to services that exist in sufficient amount. *Access* refers to time and location. *Accessible* services are those that are close enough to the family to be applied and can be implemented immediately.

Conditions for Return and Use of an In-Home Safety Plan:

CFR statements associated with the sufficiency of resources should reflect what would need to exist in comparison to what was determined to be the justification for an out-of-home safety plan. See the previous examples related to the justification for an in-home safety plan as a reference point for considering possible Conditions for Return related to sufficient resources.

Examples:

- *There are sufficient and suitable safety service resources at the level of effort necessary to manage behavior and/or provide social connections and/or provide basic parenting assistance etc. [identify what specific safety service you would need to manage safety in the home].*

Question #4:**An in-home safety plan and the use of in-home safety management services can sufficiently manage impending danger without the results of scheduled professional evaluations.**

This question is concerned with specific knowledge that is needed to understand Impending Danger Threats, caregiver capacity or behavior or family functioning specifically related to Impending Danger Threats. The point here is the absence of such information obviates DCF's ability to know what is required to manage threats. Evaluations that are concerned with treatment or general information gathering (not specific to Impending Danger Threats) can occur in tandem with In-Home Safety Plans.

Conditions for Return and Use of an In-Home Safety Plan:

CFR statements associated with a caregiver's capacity should reflect what would need to be different in comparison to what was determined to be the justification for why an in-home safety plan would be insufficient.

Examples:

- *There are sufficient safety service resources available and immediately accessible to compensate for a caregiver's cognitive limitations and provide basic parenting assistance at the level required to assure that the child [name] is protected and has basic needs met;*
- *There are sufficient safety service resources available and immediately accessible to compensate for a caregiver's physical limitation by providing basic parenting assistance to assure child [name] basic needs are met;*
- *There is a change in circumstances [describe specific change] whereby there are sufficient safety services [identify specific safety services] available and immediately accessible to assure that child [name] special needs can be managed with an in-home safety plan;*
- *Caregiver [name] emotions/ behaviors are stabilized [describe specifically what stabilized "looks like" for a caregiver] to the extent that in-home safety services are sufficient for effectively managing caregiver [name] behavior;*
- *Caregiver [name] is demonstrating progress toward [describe specifically what would need to be different- e.g., stabilizing emotionally; increased control of behavior] to the extent that in-home safety services are sufficient and immediately available for effectively managing caregiver behavior;*
- *Caregiver's [name] emotional functioning is stabilized and predictable enough for a sustained period of time [designate appropriate time] such that it will not disrupt an in-home safety plan;*
- *Caregiver's [name] substance use [or addiction] is stabilized and there is demonstration of increased self-control to avoid using [drugs/ alcohol] for a sustained period of time such that it will not disrupt an in-home safety plan;*
- *Caregiver [name] demonstrates increased emotional stability/ behavioral control [describe specifically what would be different] to the point where an in-home safety plan and safety management can assure child safety;*
- *Caregiver [name] acknowledges the need for having different expectations for child [name] that are more reasonable given his/her limitation, and there are sufficient in-home safety services to assist with modifying caregiver behavior and providing basic parenting assistance;*

- *Caregiver [name] can be relied upon to comply with; participate in; accept and cooperate with the schedules, activities and expectations in the in-home safety plan;*
- *Caregiver [name] will be at the home and/or will respond to phone and other kinds of contact as identified related to the specifics of the in-home safety plan;*
- *Caregiver [name] responds to safety providers in reasonable and accepting ways and in accordance with schedules and expectations in the in-home safety plan;*
- *Caregiver [name] is sufficiently able and responsible about managing his or her behavior consistent with and as required by specifics of the in-home safety plan;*
- *Caregiver [name] is tolerant of safety service providers, schedules, identified expectations, role and behavior of safety service providers that are spelled out in the in-home safety plan;*
- *Caregiver [name] is open and can set aside his or her personal choices; independence that conflicts with the in-home safety plan; wishes and preferences which are contrary to specific expectations/requirements of the in-home safety plan.*

Question # 5:

The parents/legal guardians have a physical location in which to implement an in-home safety plan.

Physical location refers to (1) a home/shelter exists and can be expected to be occupied for as long as the Safety Plan is needed, and (2) caregivers live their full time. Home refers to an identifiable domicile. DV or other shelter, or friend or relative's homes qualify as an identifiable domicile if other criteria are met (e.g., expected to be occupied for as long as the safety plan is needed, caregivers live their full time, etc.).

Conditions for Return and Use of an In-Home Safety Plan:

CFR statements associated with a caregiver's residence should reflect what would need to exist in comparison to what was determined to be the justification for an out-of-home safety plan.

Examples:

- *Caregiver [name] has a reliable, sustainable, consistent residence in which to put an in-home safety plan in place;*
- *Caregiver [name] maintains the residence and there is confidence that the living situation is sustainable;*
- *Caregiver [name] demonstrates the ability to maintain a sustainable, suitable, consistent residence [describe specifically on an individual case by case basis what would be a sufficient demonstration of a caregivers ability to maintain an adequate place to reside and implement an in-home safety plan];*
- *The condition of the residence is suitable and structurally adequate [describe what specifically about the condition of residence must be different] to safely put an in-home safety plan in place;*
- *Caregiver [name] has a reasonable plan for how his/she will use resources to maintain a stable residence.*