

CHAPTER 172  
FAMILY-CENTERED SERVICES

PREAMBLE

These rules define and describe procedures for delivery of family-centered services. The rules describe the service definitions, eligibility criteria, and procedures for client appeals.

[ARC 9491B, IAB 5/4/11, effective 7/1/11; ARC 5248C, IAB 11/4/20, effective 1/1/21]

**441—172.1(234) Definitions.**

*“Agency”* means the Iowa department of human services.

*“Agency child welfare service case”* means at least one child in a household is involved in agency services with an agency-assigned social work case manager.

*“Agency worker”* means the agency child welfare worker who has been assigned responsibility for a child and family’s case, either to perform a child abuse assessment, family assessment, or child in need of assistance (CINA) assessment or assume case management responsibility for ongoing agency child welfare service cases.

*“Candidate for foster care”* means a child who is identified in a prevention plan as being at imminent risk of entering foster care but who can remain safely in the child’s home or in a kinship placement as long as services or programs that are necessary to prevent the entry of the child into foster care are provided. *“Candidate for foster care”* includes a child whose adoption or guardianship arrangement is at risk of a disruption or dissolution that would result in a foster care placement.

*“Child,” “children,”* or *“youth”* means a person or persons who meet the definition of a child in Iowa Code section 234.1(2).

*“Child abuse”* means one or more of the categories of child abuse defined in Iowa Code section 232.68.

*“Child abuse assessment”* means an assessment process by which the agency responds to all accepted reports of child abuse that allege child abuse as defined in Iowa Code section 232.68(2) *“a”*(1) through (3) and (5) through (11); or that allege child abuse as defined in Iowa Code section 232.68(2) *“a”*(4) that also allege imminent danger, death, or injury to a child. A child abuse assessment results in a disposition and a determination of whether a case meets the definition of child abuse and a determination of whether criteria for placement on the registry are met.

*“Child in need of assistance”* or *“CINA”* means a child adjudicated by juvenile court to be a child in need of assistance pursuant to Iowa Code section 232.2.

*“Child vulnerability”* means the degree that a child cannot on the child’s own avoid, negate, or minimize the impact of present or impending danger.

*“Contractor”* means a private organization authorized to do business in Iowa that has entered into a contract with the agency to provide one or more of the services defined in this chapter. *“Contractor”* refers to the organization that is named as the responsible party in the contract and whose authorized representative has signed the contract.

*“Family assessment”* means an assessment process by which the agency responds to all accepted reports of child abuse that allege child abuse as defined in Iowa Code section 232.68(2) *“a”*(4), but do not allege imminent danger, death, or injury to a child. A family assessment does not include a determination of whether a case meets the definition of child abuse and does not include a determination of whether criteria for placement on the registry are met.

*“Family-centered services”* means the services provided by contract pursuant to this chapter.

*“Family preservation services”* or *“FPS”* means short-term, intensive, home-based crisis interventions targeted to families that have children at imminent risk of removal and placement in foster care. Family preservation services combine skill-based interventions and flexibility so that services are available to families according to their individual needs.

*“Fictive kin”* means a person who is unrelated to a child by blood, adoption, or marriage, but who has an emotionally significant relationship with the child or the child’s family.

*“Household”* means the place where a child resides.

“*Kinship caregiver*” means a relative or fictive kin providing care for a child.

“*Kinship navigator services*” means the services and supports providing information, referral, and follow-up to kinship caregivers who are caring for and raising children to link kinship caregivers to benefits and other resources they need.

“*Non-agency-involved case*” means a case in which no one in the household is involved with an agency-assigned social work case manager.

“*Permanency*” means a child has a safe, stable, custodial environment in which to grow up and a lifelong relationship with a nurturing caregiver.

“*Protective capacities*” means the family strengths or resources that reduce, control, or prevent risks from arising or from having an unsafe impact on a child.

“*Risk*” means the probability or likelihood that a child will experience maltreatment.

“*Safe*” means that no signs of present or impending danger to a child are identified or that one or more signs of present or impending danger are identified but the child’s degree of vulnerability or the caregiver’s protective capacities offset the current threat. The child is not likely to be in imminent danger of maltreatment.

“*SafeCare®*” means an evidence-based training curriculum for parents who are at risk or have been reported for child abuse. Through SafeCare®, parents receive weekly home visits to improve skills in several areas, including home safety, health care, and parent-child interaction.

“*Solution Based Casework®*” or “*SBC*” means an evidence-based, family-centered model of child welfare assessment, case planning, and ongoing casework. The goal of SBC is to work in partnership with the family to help identify the family’s strengths, to focus on everyday life events, and to help the family build the skills necessary to manage difficult situations.

“*Solution focused meeting*” means a gathering of family members, friends, and formal and informal supports, with the assistance of a trained facilitator, to draw on past successes of the family in problem solving and work in partnership with the family to enhance safety of the children.

[ARC 9491B, IAB 5/4/11, effective 7/1/11; ARC 1156C, IAB 10/30/13, effective 1/1/14; ARC 5248C, IAB 11/4/20, effective 1/1/21; ARC 6936C, IAB 3/8/23, effective 5/1/23]

**441—172.2(234) Purpose and scope.** Family-centered services are services designed to prevent the child from entering foster care and to assist the family when the needs of the child, parent, or kinship caregiver are directly related to the safety, permanency, or well-being of the child. The outcome of the services may be to maintain the child with a parent or in the home of the kinship caregiver, to reunify the child safely with a parent or kinship caregiver, or to achieve permanent family connections for the child.

**172.2(1)** Family-centered services provide interventions and supports based on identified needs of children and families that have come to the agency’s attention because of:

a. Evaluation of the findings of a child abuse assessment report and the family’s risk assessment score; or

b. The child’s adjudication as a child in need of assistance pursuant to Iowa Code section 232.2; or

c. The child’s placement out of home under the agency’s care and supervision.

**172.2(2)** Family-centered services shall be designed to:

a. Identify and build on the family’s strengths and enhance the family’s protective capacities;

b. Address the risk factors that affect the child’s safety, permanency, and well-being;

c. Strengthen family connections to community resources and informal support systems in order to promote greater self-reliance; and

d. Remain culturally competent and respectful of the family’s cultural, ethnic, and racial identity and values.

**172.2(3)** Family-centered services shall utilize evidence-based interventions to the greatest possible extent.

**172.2(4)** Family-centered services shall include the following persons:

a. A child eligible for services under this rule, as defined by the agency;

*b.* Any sibling of that child who resides in the same household at the time of service referral or moves into the household during the service delivery period; and

*c.* A parent, stepparent, or kinship caregiver of the child.

**172.2(5)** Family-centered services shall include SBC for agency child welfare service cases when criteria in subrule 172.2(1) are met.

**172.2(6)** Based on child and family needs, a child and family with an open agency child welfare service case that are receiving SBC may also be approved to receive the following additional services, which are referred separately:

*a.* SafeCare®.

*b.* Family preservation services.

*c.* Solution focused meeting (SFM) and youth transition decision-making (YTDM) meeting facilitation.

**172.2(7)** Case management. During the time that a child and the child's family are approved to receive family-centered services on an open agency child welfare service case, the agency worker shall be responsible for maintaining contact with the child and family to ensure that:

*a.* The factors that present risks of harm to the safety and well-being of all children in the family are being adequately addressed; and

*b.* Services and supports are in place to achieve the child's permanency goal.

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**441—172.3(234) Authorization.** When the agency has approved provision of family-centered services for a child and family, the agency worker shall notify the contractor by issuing the referral and authorization for child welfare services form. This authorization form shall indicate:

1. The specific service category authorized; and

2. The duration of the authorization.

[ARC 9491B, IAB 5/4/11, effective 7/1/11; ARC 1156C, IAB 10/30/13, effective 1/1/14; ARC 5248C, IAB 11/4/20, effective 1/1/21]

**441—172.4(234) Reimbursement.** Rescinded ARC 5248C, IAB 11/4/20, effective 1/1/21.

**441—172.5(234) Client appeals.** Clients may appeal the agency's decision pursuant to 441—Chapter 7 when:

1. The client's application for services as described in this chapter is denied, or

2. The services are terminated.

[ARC 9491B, IAB 5/4/11, effective 7/1/11]

**441—172.6(234) Reviews and audits.** Rescinded ARC 5248C, IAB 11/4/20, effective 1/1/21.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 234.6.

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