

Chapter
(02/22/2024)

Non-Custodial Parent Engagement

- I. **PURPOSE:** To establish general principles to guide the involvement of the parent who is identified as the Non-Custodial parent.
- II Statute Authority: Best Practice
- III. Applicability: All §938 cases
- IV. Definitions: Non-Custodial parent is defined as a parent who does not have placement of, live in the home with, or have legal physical custody of their child(ren)/youth.
- V. **Policies:**
 - A. Every effort will be made to identify and notify the Non-Custodial parent from the beginning of the Youth Justice (YJ) case. Initial attempts will be made at Intake, Initial Appearance Hearing, or TPC hearing.
 1. The Intake Worker will review the Law Enforcement Referral to identify who is the primary parent.
 2. The Intake Worker will review eWISACWIS (Ewis) to determine if there is a case.
information specific to the Non-Custodial parent
 3. If no information is identified in Ewis. the Intake Worker will email Child Support Case Initiation inbox to ask about Child Support and if they have name and address for the Non-Custodial parent.
 - B. The Intake worker will schedule the Intake 15 minutes in advance of the actual appointment to give the parent time to fill out the registration form.
 1. Upon arrival and check-in, the administrative staff at the front window will provide the registration form to the parent to fill out.
 2. At the beginning of the Intake, the Worker will review the registration form to determine if the Non-Custodial parent has been identified.
 3. If the Non-Custodial parent is not identified, then the Intake Worker will ask about this person and their contact information. Information will also be asked about the Non-Custodial parent's relationship with the youth.
 4. The Non-Custodial parent information will be updated in both TCM and Ewis.
 - C. If an Intake is unable to occur, then it will be the responsibility of the Ongoing Social Worker to gather this information at the Initial Appearance.
 1. Prior to the hearing, the Ongoing Social Worker will review the notice of hearing to determine if a second parent is identified on the notice.

2. If information is identified, the Social Worker will review this information against what is documented in Ewis and update information if necessary.
 3. If the information is not identified, the Social Worker will ask for information about the Non-Custodial parent at the Initial Appearance and provide name and address to the Clerk's office if received.
 4. The Social Worker asks about the Non-Custodial parent and current relationship with youth.
- D. The Social Worker will have conversation with both the custodial parent and the youth to establish an understanding of what the relationship currently is between the Non-Custodial parent and youth. The Social Worker will also discuss what the youth would like that relationship to be moving forward. Every attempt should be made to include the Non-Custodial parent into the case as an additional resource or support to the youth.
1. If there is a reason that the Non-Custodial parent is not being contacted, this situation should be discussed with the Supervisor and documented in the case notes and court report if one is being written.
 2. Situations may exist related to previous abuses that occurred by the Non-Custodial parent that would put the youth or other parent in danger and therefore contact will not be made with the Non-Custodial parent.
 3. If the youth determines that they do not want contact with the Non-Custodial parent and is able to identify their reasoning and the Department has information that supersedes the youth's wishes, the Social Worker will continue to gather information to decide. The Supervisor should be made aware of this along with documentation occurring in Ewis.
- E. Minimum contact expectations for Non-Custodial parent.
1. If a youth is in out of home placement and the Non-Custodial parent is not involved, then bi-monthly attempts must be made to contact the Non-Custodial parent. This includes CCAP checks and Ewis checks.
 2. If the youth is placed within the home the Social Worker is to discuss with the Non-Custodial parent the frequency of contact between the Social Worker and Non-Custodial parent. The non-custodial parent should be advised that they can communicate with the Social Worker any time they would like to get updated information. Contact with Non-Custodial parent whom a child is not having contact with will receive the Social Worker's contact

information and will be encouraged to reach out whenever they would like updates.

4. If the youth is placed within the home and it has been determined that contact with the Non-Custodial parent will not be occurring because of safety concerns or no-contact orders, the Social Worker shall not contact the Non-Custodial parent.

5. If the parent is in jail, the Social Worker will have conversation with the custodial parent and youth about the relationship that exists between the parent and the child. If there is a relationship the Social Worker shall send a letter to the incarcerated parent making that Non-Custodial parent aware of the Department's involvement and how the Non-Custodial parent can reach the Social Worker.

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