

## COVID-19 Supplemental Interview Guide: Interview Questions by Item and Key Case Participant

### **Safety Outcome 2**

#### **Item 3**

##### **Questions for Parents:**

- Did the child welfare agency caseworker take time to meet separately with your child(ren)? How did they meet with the child(ren)? (video calls, telephone calls, etc.)
- Did the child welfare agency caseworker make time during visits to speak privately with you? Can you share what was often/usually discussed during this private time?

##### **Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:**

- During the pandemic, did you complete initial safety and risk assessments in-person or via other technology? How did you determine if a face-to-face contact needed to occur or if a virtual visit was able to be used? Did you find a way to view the home virtually if the contacts were not made in-person? Were you able to talk to the children or other participants privately to complete your assessments?

### **Permanency Outcome 1 – Foster Care Cases ONLY**

#### **Item 4**

##### **Questions for Resource Parents:**

- Were placement changes needed or considered for the child/youth in your care? Were decisions affected (moves delayed or postponed) during the pandemic? Were services considered to help you manage the child/youth's behaviors so that a placement change was not needed? If so, what services were considered? Were the services implemented? Was the child/youth able to remain in your home? (Connects to Item 12C)
- If there were issues regarding a child/youth's behaviors in your home and you considered asking/did ask for a placement change, are you satisfied that the agency provided the needed services to address the issues? If no, what other actions/services were needed? (Connects to Item 12C)

Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:

- If applicable, were changes in placement due to either the child or a member of the foster family having COVID-19 symptoms? What steps were taken to help prevent a move to a different resource home? What was done to support the resource home in keeping the child safe if COVID was an issue within the resource home?

Questions for Child/Youth in care:

- Thinking back from last March (if applicable) until now, did you request a placement change due to your concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic? If you did, what were your concerns regarding being in the placement? What did your county caseworker and/or Guardian ad Litem do in response to your request? Were you moved?

**Item 5**

Questions for Parents:

- If your family is court-involved, how did the court process change during the pandemic (last spring until now)? Were courts closed? Were court hearings cancelled or postponed?
- When the courts re-opened, were hearings conducted in-person or through telephone or videoconference? Were you given a choice in how to attend the hearing? Are/Were you satisfied with your participation in the new format? Do you feel that the courts listened to your questions and concerns?

Questions for Resource Parents:

- If the child/children/youth in your care are court-involved, did court practices/procedures change in late March/April of 2020? How did the court practices change (hearings postponed or delayed; hearings by telephone or virtual)? How long did the changes last? When in-person options for court hearings resumed, were you given a choice in how you would prefer to participate? Does the court listen to your views/outlook?

Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:

- Were there significant delays in court hearings due to the pandemic? How did this impact permanency for the child(ren) in this case? How were hearings conducted during the pandemic (video, telephone, etc.)? How did the family participate in hearings during the pandemic? Did the pandemic cause barriers to the family participating in hearings? What was offered to help encourage the family's participation (technology, telephone minutes, etc.)?

- (For a TPR case) If applicable, was the TPR delayed due to the pandemic? Was this due to court closure? How were the parents able to continue to work towards the goal of reunification during the pandemic? What additional services or supports were used to support the family during the pandemic (supply technology to allow participation in visits, services, etc.) Did the agency request compelling reasons due to the interruption of services that was caused by the pandemic? (These interruptions may constitute compelling reasons to delay TPR) If a TPR did occur, were the parents able to continue to access the necessary services that can lead to the opportunity to reunify throughout the case including during the pandemic? What was put in place to remove any barriers to services for the family to achieve their goal of reunification during the pandemic? What evidence did the agency present to show TPR was warranted given the pandemic?

## **Item 6**

### Questions for Parents:

- During the pandemic, what changes/adaptations did the agency or service providers make to help you to continue to work on your goal of reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangements? Were their barriers to working towards your goal during the pandemic? Were you given alternative ways to work towards the goal such as videoconferencing instead of in-person contacts? Do you feel the changes helped you continue to work towards your goal?
- What efforts did the agency make to achieve timely permanency for your family given the impact of COVID-19? (Note: This question necessarily pulls from the other items to summarize agency efforts towards permanency achievement, but also considers how service interruption could impact the parents' ability to meet case plan goals and changes in goal to TPR/Adoption.)

### Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:

- Were court hearings timely? If hearings were delayed, what efforts were made by the agency and court to address the delays so permanency could be achieved? (Note: This question should be based on individual case circumstances.) If all court hearings were postponed due to COVID, what did the agency and court do to hold hearings virtually or by phone, when possible, based on case circumstances? What impact did court postponements have on achieving permanency goals?
- What efforts did the agency make to achieve timely permanency given the impact of COVID-19? (Note: This question necessarily pulls from the other items to summarize agency efforts towards permanency achievement, but also considers

how service interruption could impact the parents' ability to meet case plan goals and changes in goal to TPR/Adoption.)

**Permanency Outcome 2 – Foster Care Cases ONLY**

**Item 7**

Questions for Parents:

- If applicable, during the pandemic last spring, did the child welfare agency arrange for your child(ren) to visit or have contact with his/her siblings who are not in out of home care? How did the visits take place (video calls, telephone, etc.)? How often were visits or contacts? If visits were missed, were makeup visits scheduled?

Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:

- Did COVID prevent the children from being placed together in an out of home placement? Were possible alternatives explored to mitigate COVID that would have allowed siblings to be in out of home placement together? What concerted efforts were made to place the children together after COVID issues were resolved?
- Was the agency able to maintain a child's contact and/or visitation with siblings who are not in out of home placement? How was this done during the pandemic? If applicable, what additional resources were needed to support the child's contact with siblings (technology to provide video calls, phone access, etc.)?

**Item 8**

Questions for Parents:

- If your child(ren) was/were in out of home placement last spring, were you able to maintain visits and contact? In what ways (telephone call, video conference, etc.)? Have in-person visits resumed? If so, where did in-person visits take place (in the community, at the residential center or with the resource/foster parents or at the child welfare agency)? Given restrictions imposed by the state or county, are you satisfied with the visits and contact that the agency provided? What could the agency have done better?

Questions for Resource Parents:

- If visits between the child/youth and the birth parents were occurring prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, did they change late last March/April? How did they change?
- Did the agency encourage/support visitation between the child/youth in your care and his/her birth parents? Did visits change in late March/April 2020? How did the visits change (telephone or virtual? If applicable, were the visits as frequent as before the pandemic? Were they scheduled as frequently and/or for as long? Have the visits resumed to in-person? When did they return to in-person visits?
- If applicable, did the agency encourage/support visitation between the child/youth in your care and siblings not placed or not placed with him/her? Did visits change during the pandemic (late March/April 2020)? How did they change (telephone, virtual, community – did the frequency/length of time for visits change? Have in-person visits between the siblings resumed? When did they resume?

Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:

- During the pandemic given the stay-at-home orders, how was visitation between child(ren) in out of home placement and their families (mother, father, and siblings) provided? If the visits were in-person, what safety protocols were put in place for all participants (for example, health screenings, masks, social distancing, etc.) If visits were not in-person, how did the visits occur? What supports did the agency provide to help these visits occur (phones, technology, etc.)? Did the frequency of visitation change during the pandemic? If visits were missed, was there a way to offer make up visitation time? How are visits occurring at the present time? What efforts were made to try to transition from virtual visits to in-person visits?

Questions for Youth in care:

- If applicable, when the pandemic started last spring and everyone was required to stay at home, did the child welfare agency or your foster care agency arrange remote visits for you with your parents? Please describe how the visits took place? How often were you able to visit with your parents during late March – early June 2020? Were you able to have phone calls with your parents? How often?
- If applicable, thinking back to last spring and the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, did the county child welfare agency or foster care agency arrange for you to visit remotely with your siblings who are/were not in out of home care? Describe how the visits were conducted. If they happened, how often did the visits take place Were you able to have phone calls with your siblings? How often?

**Item 9**

### Questions for Parents:

- If applicable, did the child welfare agency help your child/youth maintain connections to extended family, community and school friends, etc.? Describe how the agency helped maintain those connections (video or telephone call, transportation assistance, etc.)

### Questions for Resource Parents:

- If applicable, did the agency encourage/support maintaining the child's connections to extended family, former school classmates or community organizations/church/activities? Did these efforts change in late March/April of 2020? Have pre-pandemic efforts resumed? Are these efforts different now – frequency, type of contact? If visits returned to pre-pandemic standards, when did they resume?

### Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:

- If applicable, can you describe how the agency supported or provided services and supports for child(ren) to maintain connections with their community or tribe during the pandemic? If needed, was technology provided for children to connect to groups, extended family, school classmates, etc.?

### Questions for Youth in care:

- Were you able to participate in any of your activities (church, sports, community groups) during the pandemic? How did you participate (In-person, video chat, etc.?) Who helped you stay connected to your activities?
- Were you able to stay in contact with other family members (for example, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins) during the period last spring when everyone was asked not to travel? Who helped you stay in contact with these family members? Describe your contacts and how often they took place.

## **Item 11**

### Questions for Parents:

- If your child/youth is in out-of-home placement, were you invited by the agency or resource parents/placement provider to the child's medical, dental or behavioral health appointments? Were you still invited to appointments after the onset of the pandemic? If invitations to appointments stopped, have they resumed? In person or virtually?
- If your child is in out-of-home placement, were you invited to parent-teacher conferences, school activities and planning meetings (IEP or 504 Plan)? Did that

change during the start of the pandemic? Are you now invited to meetings and activities at the school? When did invitations resume?

Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:

- Was the agency able to continue to include parents in their child(ren)'s medical, dental, school, and other service appointments during the pandemic? How were the parents included? (in-person, video, phone) Did the agency provided any needed technology to help support involvement? Did the agency try to find ways to have in-person involvement when possibly to do in a safe way?

Questions for Youth/Child in care:

- If applicable, during the travel restrictions in spring 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, do you know if your parents were invited to participate in your medical, dental, and/or behavioral health appointments? If they were, did they participate? How did they participate remotely?
- If applicable, during the travel restrictions in spring 2020 due to the COVID-19, do you know if your parents were invited to attend school meetings conducted on your behalf (parent-teacher conferences, IEP meetings, etc.)? Did they attend? How did they participate remotely?

**Well-Being Outcome 1**

**Item 12**

Questions for Parents:

- Were visits by service providers interrupted during the PUR? If they were, when did the visits resume and in what manner (in-person, video conference, other)? If in-person, did the visits take place in your home, outside at your home (porch, lawn, driveway, etc.), at the provider agency or at a community location? Were you (are you) satisfied with the remote participation?
- Were your needs or those for your child(ren) assessed when social distancing restrictions were in place? If yes, how was the assessment conducted? Was (were) the assessment(s) comprehensive? Did the assessment(s) help the agency better understand your needs or concerns? In what way(s)?
  - Were services/supports identified for your children as a result of the pandemic (for example, socialization or age-appropriate activities)? Were the services/supports implemented or provided? Are you satisfied with the services/supports provided? Were there services/supports that the agency could not/did not implement?
  - If you were affected by the pandemic (layoffs/loss of employment/reduction in hours at work; food insecurity, issues regarding

paying rent, utilities, making car payments, etc.) did the child welfare agency help you? In what ways?

- When you interacted with service providers during the pandemic (from last spring to now) to discuss your concerns and ideas for services or supports, do you (did you) feel that the provider(s) listened to your point of view and secured services/supports to address your concerns and needs?

#### Questions for Resource Parents:

- Were services that you needed to be/continue to be a resource/foster parent available to you during the pandemic? If no, what did you need or request that was not provided? What were the reasons given for the gaps?

#### Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:

- During the pandemic, how were you able to assess the family's needs? Were you able to use any formal tools to assess the family needs and how did that occur? Were you able to refer families to the services that addressed their identified needs? Were there barriers to accessing services due to the pandemic? What steps were taken to work around the barriers that were encountered? Were services that were needed available during the pandemic and, if not, was the family able to receive an alternative service or provided additional resources in the interim? Did the family have an increased need due to the pandemic? (loss of income, lack of food, technology and/or connectivity to the Internet, etc.) Was the agency able to provide resources and supports to address those additional COVID-19 needs? (financial supports, grocery cards, technology, connections to the Internet, etc.)

#### Questions for Child/Youth:

- If applicable (your case was opened in mid-March 2020 through mid-June 2020), did you have any needs or request any services that were due to the COVID-19 pandemic? For example, did you request any help to get technology (cell phone, laptop, tablet computer) so that you could stay in touch with your friends or schoolmates? Did you request help/funds to participate in remote activities – on-line enrichment classes, fitness classes, music lessons, etc.?
- If applicable (youth age 16+) were you involved in Independent Living or transition services at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic last spring or did you become involved in IL or transition services after the start of the pandemic? Describe how your IL program provided services and related supports to you during the period when travel was restricted? Have services changed since the travel restrictions were lifted? How are the services different? Does the IL or transition program adequately address the needs that you have?

- If you were enrolled in post-secondary education in the Spring of 2020 and were living on campus, were you required to leave your residence hall before the end of the semester? If so, did the child welfare agency assist you in transitioning off-campus? What services were provided to you (housing assistance or placement in a host/foster home, rent, stipends for living expenses, food, etc.)?
- If you lived in a campus residence hall or off-campus residence during the Fall and/or Spring Terms in 2020-21 and the institution went to on-line learning, were you required to leave your residence hall or off-campus residence? Were services requested and provided to you by the child welfare or foster care agency? Please describe the help that you received.

### **Item 13**

#### Questions for Parents:

- Did case planning with child welfare agency staff members (Family Service Plans, Child Permanency Plans, Family Group Decision-Making, etc.) change during the pandemic during the past year? Please explain how planning meeting and/or your participation changed? Are you satisfied with the changes in planning and your level of participation? Do you (did youth feel respected during planning? Did you feel that the team members listened to your points of view, requests for services, etc.? Did the child welfare agency arrange for your participation in the services or provide supports that you requested?
  - If applicable: Has the child welfare agency resumed the way that it interacted with your family and you prior to the pandemic? Or has it adapted its approach (for example, giving you the choice of in-person or remote participation in planning meetings? Visits to your home?)

#### Questions for Resource Parents:

- Has your involvement in case planning changed since late March/April of 2020? In what ways? Are you satisfied that your voice is heard in case planning?

#### Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:

- During the pandemic, how did you include the family (mother, father, child(ren)) and/or resource parents in case planning? (virtual, in-person, etc.) Did you receive a copy of the plan after participating in the meeting?

#### Questions for Youth in care:

- If applicable, describe how you were involved in case planning decisions during the period in Spring 2020 when COVID-19 travel restrictions were in place. Were you invited to case planning meetings with Children and Youth services (Family Service Plan, Child Permanency Plan or Independent Living/Transition plan? How did you attend (videoconference, phone call, etc.)? Were you able to voice your opinions and talk about case direction, services that you would like and opportunities that you would like to try? Did you feel that the team respected your points of view and tries to move your case in the direction that you would like?

Questions for Providers:

- Thinking back to last March-June when travel restrictions due to COVID-19 were in effect, how did you involve children, youth and families in planning and setting directions for the services that your agency or you provide? Were planning efforts suspended for a period of time? When were they suspended? When you were able to engage children, youth and families in planning, describe how they were involved? What was the frequency of meetings? Have you resumed planning using pre-pandemic formats or have you adapted planning? Please describe what you are currently doing to engage children, youth and families in planning?

**Item 14**

Questions for Parents:

- Were visits by child welfare agency caseworkers interrupted last year? If they were, when did they resume and in what manner (in-person, video conference, other)? If in-person, did the visits take place in your home, outside at your home (porch, lawn, driveway) or in community locations?
  - If caseworker visits were interrupted, did the agency check in with you by telephone, text or e-mail until visits resumed?
  - If the visits were by video conference, did you have the technology needed to participate (laptop, tablet, Internet service)? If you lacked access, did the agency help you and provide the technology for you or help you access it from community resources? If the agency helped you access the technology, how did they help?
  - Were you (are you) satisfied with remote participation?

Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:

- How did you maintain contact and visits with the child(ren) during the pandemic? (telephone, virtual, in-person) If visits occurred in-person, what safety precautions were taken? (masks, health screenings, social distancing, etc.) If visits occurred virtually, who prepared the child(ren) for the virtual visit? Did the agency purchase technology or help the family learn how to use the technology? Were you able to meet with the child(ren) one-on-one/privately? (connects to Item 3) How often were you able to do contacts/visits with child(ren)? Did the frequency of your visits change during the pandemic? Were you able to successfully review case goals? How did you assess the safety of the child(ren) during these visits? (Informally through one-on-one conversations?) Were you able to see the home environment to check safety during virtual visits? Did a family member take you on a video tour throughout the home? If applicable, were service providers in the home able to share information with you regarding the child and the home?

#### Questions for Child/youth:

- How did you see your caseworker over the last year? Did they always come to your home or did you talk to them in other ways (telephone, video, etc.)?
- Did the caseworker make time to speak with you privately? Did he/she engage you (talk about your interests, hobbies, sports, problems)? Did the caseworker ask if you had any concerns or needs that weren't being addressed (socialization, age-appropriate activities or building a relationship with one of your parents with whom you are not as close as you'd like)?

#### **Item 15**

#### Questions for Resource Parents:

- Thinking back to the start of the pandemic, did the child welfare agency's visits to your home change in March/April 2020? Explain what was different (telephone, virtual, no contact, etc.) Have the visits continued this way or have visits reverted back to in-person? If they changed back to in-person, when did they resume?

#### Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:

- How did you maintain contact and visits with the family (mother, father, child(ren)) during the pandemic? (telephone, virtual, in-person) If visits were done virtually, what occurred to help the family prepare for virtual visits? If visits occurred in-person, what safety precautions were taken? (masks, health screenings, social distancing, etc.) Were you able to meet with different family members one-on-one/privately? (connects to Item 3) How often were you able to do contacts/visits with families? Did the frequency of your visits change during

the pandemic? Were you able to successfully review case goals? How did you assess the safety of the child during these visits? (Informally through one-on-one conversations?) Were you able to see the home environment to check safety during virtual visits? Did a family member take the video throughout the home? If applicable, were service providers in the home able to share information with you regarding the child and the home?

### **Well-Being Outcome 2**

#### **Item 16**

##### **Questions for Parents and/or Resource Parents:**

- If applicable to case opening/agency involvement: How did your school system address the COVID-19 pandemic last spring? If schools were closed to in-person instruction, did the school offer remote instruction options? What were they (all remote, hybrid or remote and in-person)? If instruction was all remote or a hybrid (remote and limited in-person), did your family have the technology (computers and/or Internet connection) to participate? If you did not have the resources, did the school system or Intermediate Unit, the child welfare agency or a community organization help you? What did they do?
- If applicable, does your child or do your children have IEP or 504 Plans? How did the school system, Intermediate Unit or child welfare agency address their special needs and/or accommodations for instructional support outlined in the plan?
- Are classes remote, in-person or a hybrid for the 2020-21 academic year? If the school started in person instruction, did the school make any changes during the school year? If you had issues with technology access or instructional services, how did the school or child welfare agency assist you in addressing those needs?

##### **Questions for Caseworker/Supervisor:**

- If applicable, was school for this child in-person, hybrid or virtual or combination in late Spring 2020? How is the school providing/did provide instruction for the 2020-21 school year? Does this child have an IEP? If school was virtual did the agency need to provide any support to assure the child was able to attend school? (technology, etc.) If the child has an IEP and was attending virtual classes, what adaptations were made to assure the child was receiving the services that are needed per the IEP? Did the agency provide any support or did the school provide all the needed services and/or equipment to meet the IEP?

##### **Questions for Child/youth:**

- If your case was open in late spring 2020 (mid-March- early June), did you request any help in getting technology or in having services for you to participate in classes remotely? What technology or services did you request? Were you able to get the tech or services that you needed? Who provided them (school district, caseworker, local library, other?)
- During the 2020-21 school year (August/September to May/June 2021)), did you request any help in getting technology or in having services for you to participate in classes remotely? What technology or services did you request? Were you able to get the tech or services that you needed? Who provided them (school district, caseworker, local library, other?)
- If applicable, if you were in a post-secondary institution in Spring 2020, did you request/require any additional education-related services or supports to complete your semester? What were those needs (technology, tutoring, etc.? Did the child welfare agency and/or foster care and/or college provider listen to your needs and respond appropriately?
- If applicable, if you were in a post-secondary institution, did you request or need additional education-related services or supports to remain in classes for the 2020-21 school year (August/September 2020 to May/June 2021)? What services did you request (technology, tutoring, etc.)? Who was able to assist you? How did the child welfare agency or foster care agency respond to your needs?

### **Well-Being Outcome 3**

#### **Item 17**

##### **Questions for Parents, Resource Parents and Caseworker/Supervisor:**

- Did the child have a scheduled medical/dental appointment that was canceled due to COVID-19? What steps were taken to mitigate this? Was the appointment rescheduled quickly? Were telehealth services used?
- If applicable, did you have continued access to any prescribed medications during the pandemic?

##### **Questions for Older Youth:**

- If applicable, were you able to keep medical and dental appointments in late spring 2020? If you were, were appointment rescheduled or shifted to telehealth visits? Did you have any medical or dental needs that were not addressed due to COVID-19 travel restrictions?

#### **Item 18**

##### **Questions for Parents, Resource Parents and Caseworker/Supervisor:**

- If the child was receiving therapy or other mental/behavior health services, were the services able to continue during the pandemic? Did services continue in-person or through telehealth or video conferencing? Were the mental health needs address using these alternative methods? How are the services currently being received?

Questions for Older Youth:

- If applicable, were you able to keep behavioral health appointments in late March – early June 2020 due to COVID-19 travel restrictions? Were behavioral health appointments re-scheduled or switched to remote/telehealth sessions? If the appointments switched to remote/telehealth formats, have your appointments resumed in-office visits or have you continued in a remote/telehealth setting? If your behavioral health appointments are remote/telehealth, were you given a choice as to how you would like to participate?