



Iowa DHS Social Worker Competencies

Iowa Child Welfare

Individual Learning Needs Survey & Individual Learning Plan

Introduction

Welcome to the Child Welfare Staff **Individual Learning Needs Survey**. This survey is designed to assist each social worker with a review of their competencies and individual learning needs. A companion **Individual Learning Plan** provides a format to plan future training for improved individual professional practice. This plan is developed in collaboration with the supervisor.

The information gathered from the completed surveys and plans are compiled to identify priority statewide training needs. This information is the foundation for the statewide training plan and helps identify new training to meet staff learning needs.

In addition, the surveys, the plans, and identification of statewide training needs assist in meeting the Training Systemic Factor requirements of the Child and Family Service Review by providing a feedback loop for communicating staff training needs.

Individual Learning Needs Survey

Workers who have more than 12 months experience and have completed all new worker basic training complete this **Individual Learning Needs Survey**.

This **Individual Learning Needs Survey** contains a list of competencies specific to the Child Welfare field. *Competencies are statements of knowledge, skill and/ or commitments* that are necessary for the performance of job tasks. The competencies are **italicized red** statements in the survey. As workers move through the survey, workers compare their knowledge, skills, and abilities with the competencies and rate their proficiency.

This survey has three [3] levels of proficiency:

- **Exemplary** – Works autonomously with a high level of skill in that area and could serve in a mentoring role in helping co-worker/s in their knowledge, work or thinking. Professional development is self-directed and ongoing.
- **Proficient - Competent** professional. Could benefit from advanced training in the skill area.
- **Emerging** - Training and supervisory mentoring are needed to improve skill area to proficient. Emerging needs are prioritized for developing the Individual Learning Plan.
- **Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

When determining the level of competence for each competency, it is important to note the rationale for each selection. The worker asks themselves, "How do I know I have this competency? How do I know this is the correct rating? How have I demonstrated this knowledge, skill or ability?" When determining the level of competence, mentally note the source/s of information for making each selection instead of just a feeling as you rate each competency.

Examples of demonstration or verification of having a competency would include:

- Individual Case Practice Examples
- Validation from Supervisor, other Professionals, or clients
- Direct observation of Supervisor or other Professionals
- Examples from Client records
- Employee self evaluation
- Examples from Case Staffing or other group supervision
- Individual supervision sessions
- Other _____



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Complete the survey on this paper copy so you can maintain it for your record. After completing both the **Individual Survey and Learning Plan**, this information is entered into the electronic database for statewide data collection. Here is the link to Survey Monkey:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/F35363R>

Individual Learning Plan

The survey competencies include broad learning areas. The **Individual Learning Plan** promotes individualizing the learning needs and developing a plan to address that need in the future.

The **Individual Learning Plan** is designed to be completed by the Supervisor in consultation with their worker. The Worker and the Supervisor review the worker's **Individual Learning Needs Survey** and select the top four learning needs. On the Individual Learning Plan, they list the four priority learning needs by listing the number of the competency and brief description of what the Supervisor would like the worker to be able to do. The supervisor and worker together suggest and determine learning opportunities to promote professional practice improvement.

Transferring Information to the Database

When both the survey and learning plan are completed, go to the web link above and complete the information for statewide collections. **Keep this paper copy for your record.**

Frequently Asked Questions

The following questions and answers give more detail about the **Individual Learning Needs Survey** and the resulting **Individual Learning Plan**:

Do new workers complete the Individual Learning Needs Survey and Individual Learning Plan?

NO. *New social workers within the first twelve months of employment are still completing Basic training and they do not fill out this survey. New workers are considered to be on the novice level during the first 12 months of new worker training and are not included in this survey.*

Do the Supervisor and the Worker need to complete the entire Individual Learning Needs Survey?

Yes. *However, if a competency does not apply to the worker's job duties, mark **Not Applicable** and go on to the next competency statement.*

Is this like an evaluation?

No. *The **Individual Learning Needs Survey** helps identify what ongoing learning Child Welfare staff need in order to continue their professional development. The **Individual Learning Needs Survey** is a projection of future learning.*

How is the information used?

The Training Program will use the state and service area aggregate information to prioritize training needed by Child Welfare staff across the state. Learning opportunities will be developed to provide training based on the information provided.



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Core Competencies

Career Understanding

1. **The worker understands what their position entails and is committed to improving their practice skills and performance.**

- Exemplary** is represented as: Focuses on furthering professional knowledge and skills as an Iowa DHS social worker. Actively seeks opportunities to learn from professional experts. Helps emerging and proficient professionals improve their skills through mentoring. Demonstrates and engages in best practice. Maintains values and ethics in terms of professional responsibilities and principles of the profession.
- Proficient** is represented as: Demonstrates an active interest in career and in Iowa DHS worker responsibilities. Actively solicits assistance and applies feedback from others to increase knowledge and improve skills; demonstrates dedication to the principles, values and ethics of the social work profession.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to develop to a proficient level in their understanding of the scope, responsibilities and expectations of the child welfare profession as an Iowa DHS social worker. Demonstrates motivation to learn the skills needed to be proficient.

Focus on Iowa DHS Child Welfare Outcomes

2. **The worker makes critical decisions consistent with the outcomes of Safety, Permanency, Well Being, Academic Preparation and Skill Development as defined in the Iowa Department of Human Services Model of Practice.**

- Exemplary** is represented as: Consistently makes decisions and incorporates focus on indicators and outcomes. Consistently utilizes practices and skills that result in the outcomes defined in the Model of Practice. Understands how their role impacts the family and statewide outcomes of safety, permanency and well being. Mentors co-workers on key practice decisions and uses of a full range of formal and informal resources to achieve outcomes. (Case Reading Tool Pattern of Practice)
- Proficient** is represented as: Consistent pattern of recognizing and making decisions that supports good outcomes. Utilizes practices and skills that result in the outcomes defined in the Model of Practice. Understands how their role impacts the family and statewide outcomes of safety, permanency and well being. Utilizes and understands the rationale for a full range of formal and informal resources to achieve the outcomes. (Case Reading Tool Pattern of Practice)
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to recognize and understand their role in the decisions and practices that contributes to good outcomes for children and families defined in the Model of Practice. Needs assistance in utilizing a full range of formal and informal resources to achieve the outcomes. (Case Reading Tool Pattern of Practice)

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Utilizing Data to Inform Practice

3. *The worker knows how to access their individual case load data, understands how the data relates to their specific practice and case decisions, understands the connection between data, practice, and outcomes for families, and utilizes data to measure and improve their professional practice.*

- Exemplary** is represented as: Routinely accesses data related to family and child outcomes and indicators for their caseload, regularly reviews that data to monitor family outcomes on their caseload, improves practice and moves the agency toward the achievement of the goals of permanency, safety and well-being for families. When individual performance data is available, the worker utilizes the data to self-assess areas of strength in their practice and areas needing improvement and makes adjustments. Mentors others in understanding the connection between their practice as reflected in data and good outcomes for families.
- Proficient** is represented as: Knows how to access data related to family and child outcomes and indicators for their caseload, reviews that data to monitor family outcomes on their caseload, improves practice and moves the agency toward the achievement of the goals of permanency, safety and well being for families. When individual performance data is available, the worker utilizes the data to self-assess areas of strength in their practice and areas needing improvement.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to access and understand data related to family and child outcomes and indicators for their caseload, and to improve practice and move the agency toward the achievement of the goals of permanency, safety and well being for families. When individual performance data is available, the worker in collaboration with their supervisor utilizes the data to self-assess areas of strength in their practice and areas needing improvement.

Respects Differences in Ethnicity

4. *The worker interacts with members of all groups (ethnic, racial, religious, sexual orientation, political, social class, age, etc.), and demonstrates respect of differences, actively seeks knowledge of cultural values and ethnicity, and applies this knowledge to decision-making and the family change process. Understands and demonstrates ICWA requirements and understands decision points that contribute to disproportionality of minority youth.*

- Exemplary** is represented as: Interacts consistently with members of all groups (ethnic, racial, religious, sexual orientation, political, social class, age, etc.), and is always respectful of differences, actively seeks knowledge of cultural values and ethnicity, and applies this knowledge to decision-making and the family change process and all race and ethnicity fields are all completed in data collection. When encountering a new group, actively seeks knowledge of cultural values and ethnocentricity. Understands and follows ICWA requirements and understands decision points that contribute to disproportionality of minority youth and actively works to resolve system issues. Recognizes, monitors, and addresses their own biases. Always applies this knowledge to decision-making and the family change process. Mentors other co-workers.
- Proficient** is represented as: Interacts with members of all groups (ethnic, racial, religious, sexual orientation, political, social class, age, etc.), and is respectful of differences. Actively seeks knowledge of cultural values and ethnicity, and applies this knowledge to decision-making and the family change process and documents race and ethnicity fields for all cases in the information system. When encountering a new group, actively seeks knowledge of cultural values and ethnocentricity. Understands and follows ICWA requirements and understands decision points that contribute to disproportionality of minority youth and works to resolved system issues. Recognizes, monitors, and

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addresses their own biases. Consistently applies this knowledge to decision-making and the family change process.

- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to acquire knowledge and skills to interact with members of all groups (ethnic, racial, religious, sexual orientation, political, social class, age, etc.). Is respectful of differences and actively seeks knowledge of cultural values and ethnicity. Applies this knowledge to decision-making and the family change process and documents race and ethnicity field for 85% of cases in the information system. When encountering a new group, actively seeks knowledge of cultural values and ethnocentricity. Uses supervisory assistance to follow ICWA requirements and to know decision points that contribute to disproportionality of minority youth. Uses supervisory clinical consultation to recognize, monitor, and address their own biases. Applies this knowledge to decision-making and the family change process.

Effectively Utilizes Supervision and Mentoring

5. ***The worker actively uses supervision and mentoring to enhance the learning process and improve practice.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Actively utilizes supervisor to enhance their understanding and seeks skill-enhancing relationships from supervisor and expert practitioners. Mentors others. Actively seeks opportunities to learn from professional experts.
- Proficient** is represented as: Actively solicits and applies feedback from supervisor and colleagues to enhance learning and improve performance.
- Emerging** is represented as: Engages in a trust-based relationship with mentor/s and utilizes supervision and coaching to improve practice to proficiency. Requests and accepts feedback positively and applies it to improve performance and enhance learning.

Works Collaboratively with Other Professionals

6. ***The worker effectively interacts with co-workers and child welfare partners in various positions and capacities. Identifies and engages key partners in helping the family and/or individual(s) progress toward targeted outcomes.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Highly effective in building, keeping and enhancing key partnerships with the Department and community partners to reach targeted outcomes and to problem solve to make the system more effective. Assures that the family and/or individual(s) fully understand the goals and positively respects and promotes the team approach and consistently mentors other staff.
- Proficient** is represented as: Consistently embraces the family and/or individual(s), Department and community partners as allies in moving toward targeted outcomes; is effective in identifying key partners and keeps them connected; assures that the family and other team members understand the goals and promotes the team approach. Understands others' responsibilities and respects and supports their position.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to acquire the skills to promote teamwork and identify the members of an effective team. Accepts various team roles. Demonstrates respect for other Department personnel and community partners and develops good peer relationships.

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Worker Well Being

7. *The worker identifies and employs actions for her or his well being.*

- Exemplary** is represented as: Independently recognizes emotional risks of secondary trauma and stress. Maintains an ongoing balance of their emotional well-being and their positive perspective by utilizing relaxation techniques, support systems, exercise, nutrition, play, rest, sleep, routines and resources through the Department and community to cope. Maintains a calm and positive attitude, enthusiasm and commitment to social work principles. Contributes to a systematic culture that prioritizes worker well-being. Has good coping behaviors and mentors others in dealing effectively with job related stress.
- Proficient** is represented as: Recognizes emotional risks of secondary trauma and stress and uses relaxation techniques, support system, exercise, nutrition, play, rest, sleep, routines and resources through the Department and community to cope. Has coping behaviors and utilizes supervisor/mentor in dealing effectively with job related stress.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs help in recognizing emotional risks of secondary trauma and stress and seeks appropriate responses through resources in the department and the community. Needs assistance and mentoring to deal effectively with job related stress.

Worker Safety

8. *The worker identifies and employs actions for her or his safety.*

- Exemplary** is represented as: Always gathers available data surrounding case to make an advance personal safety plan. Communicates with supervisory and county attorney on all safety issues. Consistently uses precautions when making home visits or meeting clients in the office and does not put themselves or others at risk. Extremely skilled in managing conflict by anticipating and immediately de-escalating situations that could get out of hand. Accurately reads cues and threats in the environment and knows when to exit the situation/home. Always recognizes emotional risks of secondary trauma and stress and seeks appropriate responses through resources in the Department and the community. Mentors others in safe worker practices.
- Proficient** is represented as: Usually gathers available data surrounding case to make a personal safety plan. Communicates with supervisor and county attorney on all safety issues. Uses precautions when making home visits or meeting clients in the office. Good at anticipating and de-escalating situations that could get out of hand. Reads cues and threats in the environment and knows when to exit the situation/home. Consistently recognizes emotional risks of secondary trauma and stress and seeks appropriate responses through resources in the Department and the community.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to identify and use data surrounding cases to manage conflict effectively. Can articulate and demonstrate basic actions to take in the field and in the office to protect themselves and others. Becoming aware of cues and threats in the environment and knows when to exit the situation/home. Needs help in recognizing emotional risks of secondary trauma and stress and seeks appropriate responses through resources in the Department and the community.

Technology

9. *The worker appropriately accesses and utilizes technology resources and maintains electronic security*

Exemplary is represented as: Masterfully utilizes a range of electronic resources (client or non-client information, government programs, Internet resources) to assist families. Accesses online policy manual and navigates through sections easily. Independently completes electronic training components in a timely manner. Always implements and

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- applies DHS policies on electronic security. Is innovative in seeking other forms of technology in working together and in assisting families in communicating. Mentors others in utilizing electronic tools and resources.
- Proficient** is represented as: Knows how to utilize and access a range of electronic resources. Effectively utilizes policy manual online. Completes electronic training components in timely manner. Utilizes electronic resources (client or non-client information, government programs, Internet resources). Implements and applies DHS policies on electronic security.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to increase or update knowledge and skills to access electronic resources. Uses relevant tutorials. Can access and utilize policy manual online. Beginning to use information that can be accessed using technology resources rather than asking peers or supervisor.

Fundamental Relationship with Families

10. ***The worker demonstrates respect, genuineness, empathy, honesty, integrity in all interactions with families and individuals; creates open dialogue/ communication, develops a trust-based relationship, and engages the family in problem solving and self-determination to improve family functioning and safety of children.***
- Exemplary** is represented as: Quickly, unbiased and unobtrusively engages family and others with respect, genuineness, empathy, honesty, integrity in all interactions. Excellent verbal and non-verbal skills that creates open communication and develops a trust-based relationship. Actively listens and promotes the family as a full partner and/or individual(s) to assume ownership of problem solving and leadership in the change process to improve family functioning and safety of children by exploring positive alternatives. Has a repertoire of tools to establish rapport and does so with great skill.
 - Proficient** is represented as: Exhibits courteous, friendly and empathetic interactions with all family members. Demonstrates consistent skills to build trust-based relationships with families and communicates using verbal and non-verbal skills in a professional unbiased manner and genuinely interested in helping the family. Actively listens to the family and/or individual(s) while keeping a good rapport; shows respect; engages them in problem solving and explores positive alternatives; considers additional needs of the family and/or individual(s) beyond the presenting concern. Sees the family as a full partner in the problem solving process.
 - Emerging** is represented as: Understands engagement principles and communication skills with families for problem solving and case planning but needs training and mentoring to utilize these skills proficiently with all families. Actively listens and responds appropriately. Approaches family with respect and honesty.

Domestic Violence

11. ***Accurately identifies indicators and dynamics of domestic violence (including physical, psychological, sexual) and utilizes critical decision making skills to inform practice, implementing evidence based best practice approaches when possible. Understands the effects on the family system and applies this knowledge in all work with children and families.***
- Exemplary** is represented as: Utilizes critical decision making skills to effectively identify and respond to evidence of domestic violence by implementing best practice approaches. Understands how domestic violence increases safety threats for children in the home. Coordinates the planning and delivery of services to children who have been maltreated as a result of domestic violence. Able to clearly integrate the domestic violence problem issues into the family assessment, safety plan, and case plan. Mentors other staff with their knowledge and continually seeks new knowledge.

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- Proficient** is represented as: Looks for evidence and understands impact of domestic violence and responds effectively. Understands how domestic violence increases safety threats for children in the home and assesses and documents this in the family assessment, safety plan, case plan. Recognizes need for continually learning.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to fully recognize and understand evidence of domestic violence and makes appropriate responses. Needs clinical consultation to understand effects on children and seeks consultation and training to meet children's needs effectively.

Substance Abuse

12. ***Accurately identifies evidence and dynamics of substance abuse and utilizes critical decision making skills to inform practice, implementing evidence based best practice approaches when possible. Understands the effects on the family system and applies this knowledge in all work with children and families. Understands how dual diagnosis of family members increase risks for children in the home.***
- Exemplary** is represented as: Utilizes critical decision making skills to effectively respond to evidence of substance abuse by implementing best practice approaches. Understands how dual diagnosis of family members increase risks for children in the home. Coordinates the planning and delivery of services to children who have been maltreated as a result of substance abuse and services to families. Able to clearly integrate the substance abuse issues into the family assessment and case plan. Mentors other staff with their knowledge and continually seeks new knowledge.
 - Proficient** is represented as: Looks for evidence and understands impact of substance abuse and responds effectively. Understands how dual diagnosis of family members increase risks for children in the home. Documents substance abuse issues into the family assessment and case plan. Recognizes need for continually learning.
 - Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to fully understand evidence of substance abuse issues and makes basic responses. Needs clinical consultation to understand effects on children and makes appropriate responses to these issues. Needs assistance from supervisor for documenting substance abuse issues in family assessment and case plan.

Mental Health

13. ***Accurately identifies dynamics and indicators of mental health issues including those associated with trauma events. Utilizes critical decision making skills to inform practice, implementing evidence based best practice approaches when possible. Understands the effects on the family system and applies this knowledge in all work with children and families. Understands how dual diagnosis of family members increase risks for children in the home.***
- Exemplary** is represented as: Utilizes critical decision making skills to respond effectively to evidence of mental health issues. Understands how dual diagnosis of family members increase risks for children in the home. Coordinates the planning and delivery of services to children and families and uses evidence based practices. Is able to clearly integrate the mental health issues into the family assessment and case plan. Mentors other staff with their knowledge and continually seeks new knowledge.
 - Proficient** is represented as: Looks for evidence and understands impact of mental health issues and responds effectively. Understands how dual diagnosis of family members increase risks for children in the home. Documents mental health issues into the family assessment and case plan. Recognizes need for continually learning.

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- **Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to fully understand evidence of mental health issues and makes basic responses. Needs clinical consultation to understand effects on children and makes appropriate responses to these issues. Needs assistance from supervisor for documenting mental health issues in family assessment and case plan.

Functional Assessment Skill

- 14. **Demonstrates ability to complete a comprehensive functional assessment that includes gathering, analyzing, comparing, and synthesizing the information from various sources to come to an understanding of family strengths and needs relating to child's safety, permanency and well being. Applies this skill to support practice decisions throughout the life of the case. This assessment provides a shared understanding with the family of the child and family's situation, underlying issues and identifies the change necessary for safe case closure.**
- **Exemplary** is represented as: Analyzes, compares and synthesizes assessment information from various sources and easily recognizes patterns and themes; critically judges the accuracy of information and draws conclusions about its meaning and relevance to children's safety, permanency and well being. Has extensive range of understanding of mental health, substance abuse, child development, domestic violence, poverty, family system functioning and other conditions that result in families coming to the attention of the Department and continues to update their knowledge. Mentors others in gathering information and critically judging the information for decision-making and behavioral changes needed for safe case closure.
- **Proficient** is represented as: Gathers, analyzes and synthesizes the information to come to a clear understanding of family strengths, needs and contributing factors relative to child safety, permanency and well being. Has an understanding of mental health, substance abuse, child development, domestic violence, poverty, family system functioning and other conditions that result in families coming to the attention of the Department and seeks to update their knowledge. Critically judges information and understands behavioral changes needed for safe case closure.
- **Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring in gathering, analyzing and synthesizing the information to come to an understanding of family strengths, needs and risks relative to child safety, permanency and well being. Needs training and mentoring to ask critical questions and develop the capacity to ask fresh questions when the next steps are not clear. Knows that understanding is never perfect so always keeping an eye to what is not working and what information is needed to inform the change process. Needs training and mentoring to enhance their understanding of mental health, substance abuse, child development, domestic violence, poverty, family system functioning and other conditions that result in families coming to the attention of the Department. Has a basic understanding of behavioral changes relevant to the functional assessment.

Trauma Informed Practice

- 15. **The worker understands trauma effects, recognizes behavioral indicators in parents and children, addresses trauma effects through core case work functions and actively works to decrease system induced stressors and build resiliency for families. Workers plan and implement placements that reduce stress and prevent trauma for families and promote placement stability for children.**
- **Exemplary** is represented as: Actively demonstrates and mentors others in the understanding of trauma effects in all aspects of case work practice, screens for symptoms and impact on development, collects a comprehensive trauma history, and completes a referral for trauma-informed mental health services when needed. Recognizes and mentors others in understand system induced stressors and uses sensitive practice and case practice tools, e.g. Family Team Decision Making (FTDM), Pre-Removal Conferences (PRC), and Family Interaction (FI), to decrease system

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induced stressors for families. Teams with trauma-informed therapists and providers to address trauma effects and developmental issues for children and parents. Recognizes and mentors others in identifying strengths/protective capacities and building resiliency. Actively advocates for children with trauma, helping other professionals and caregivers understand and strategize to decrease trauma-effects in all domains; home, school, community. Targets the effects of adverse childhood experiences on parenting ability and helps parents understand the effects of abuse and neglect for their children. understands how trauma therapy helps individuals heal and seeks out trauma-informed evidence-based practices for children and parents who have trauma-effects. Promotes stability of placement through strategizing effective management of overwhelming emotions and behaviors, appropriately addressing behavior management issues, and providing support to caregivers with overwhelming parenting demands.

Proficient is represented as: Knows and demonstrates understanding of trauma effects in case work practice, screens for symptoms and impact on development, collects a comprehensive trauma history, and completes a referral for trauma-informed mental health services when needed. Recognizes and understands system induced stressors and uses case practice tools, e.g. Family Team Decision Making (FTDM), Pre-Removal Conferences (PRC), and Family Interaction (FI), to decrease system induced stressors for families. Teams with trauma-informed therapists and providers to address trauma effects and developmental issues for children and parents, recognizing strengths and building resiliency. Advocates for children with trauma, helping other professionals and caregivers understand and strategize to decrease trauma effects in all domains; home, school, community. Targets the effects of adverse childhood experiences on parenting ability and helps parents understand the effects of abuse and neglect for their children. Understands how trauma therapy helps individuals heal and seeks out trauma-informed evidence-based practices for children and parents who have trauma-effects. Promotes stability of placement through strategizing effective management of overwhelming emotions and behaviors, appropriately addressing behavior management issues, and providing support to caregivers with overwhelming parenting demands.

Emerging is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to access and understand trauma informed care and the trauma effects in case work practice. Screens for symptoms and impact on development, collects a comprehensive trauma history, and completes a referral for trauma-informed mental health services when needed. Recognizes and understands system induced stressors and uses case practice tools, e.g. Family Team Decision Making (FTDM), Pre-Removal Conferences (PRC), and Family Interaction (FI), to decrease system induced stressors for families. Teams with trauma-informed therapists and providers to address trauma effects and developmental issues for children and parents, recognizing strengths and building resiliency. Advocates for children with trauma, helping other professionals and caregivers understand and strategize to decrease trauma effects in all domains; home, school, community. Targets the effects of adverse childhood experiences on parenting ability and help parents understand the effects of abuse and neglect for their children. Understands how trauma therapy helps individuals heal and seeks out trauma-informed evidence-based practices for children and parents who have trauma-effects. Promotes stability of placement through strategizing effective management of overwhelming emotions and behaviors, appropriately addressing behavior management issues, and providing support to caregivers with overwhelming parenting demands.

Child Safety

16. ***Differentiates between Safety and Risk and appropriately utilizes assessment tools to effectively support case practice decisions.***

Exemplary is represented as: Skillfully differentiates between safety and risk using the safety constructs. Mentors other staff in distinguishing between safety and risk by

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applying the three constructs of threats of maltreatment, vulnerability of the child and protective capacity.

- Proficient** is represented as: Fully understands safety by applying the three constructs of threats of maltreatment, vulnerability of the child and protective capacity. Consistently differentiates between safety and risk.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to fully understand safety and how safety is determined using the three constructs of threats of maltreatment, vulnerability of the child and protective capacity. May need supervisory assistance to consistency differentiate between safety and risk.

Safety Assessments and Safety Plans

17. **Effectively utilizes safety assessments throughout the life of a case to support case practice decisions. Demonstrates knowledge and skill in the design and implementation of safety plans to protect children with the family.**

- Exemplary** is represented as: Involves the immediate and extended family members as appropriate; uses the three constructs, the safety assessments and safety plans when a determination of conditionally safe has been made. Are thorough and specific to the family and supplements the protective capacities, controls for the present or impending danger and is monitored. Always completes safety assessments and safety plans in a timely manner. Provides mentoring on safety assessment and planning.
- Proficient** is represented as: Completes safety assessment using the three constructs. Develops a safety plan when a determination of conditionally safe has been made. The safety plan is specific, supplements the protective capacities, controls for the present or impending danger and is monitored. Completes safety assessments and safety plans in a timely manner. Involves immediate and extended family members.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to gain a more solid understanding and implementation of the safety constructs, safety assessments and safety plans. Has an understanding of the purpose of safety planning. Completes safety assessments and safety plans in a timely manner. Understands the importance of involving immediate and extended family members.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Child Development

18. **Demonstrates knowledge of stages, tasks, and milestones of normal child development in physical, cognitive, social and emotional domains/birth through adolescence and can accurately identify dynamics and indicators of child maltreatment.**

- Exemplary** is represented as: Always articulates knowledge of child development, quickly picks up on child development problems in cases and accurately documents in each case by synthesizing information. Makes a timely referral when needed. Can articulate dynamics and indicators, addressing underlying issues for the child and is able to include abuse or neglect, recognizes all of them and documents in the functional assessment throughout the life of a case. Critically judges what they know and what they need to know and seeks new information. Mentors others.
- Proficient** is represented as: Articulates knowledge of child development, quickly picks up on problems in child development in cases, documents in each case. Makes a referral when needed. Articulates dynamics and indicators, including abuse or neglect,

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recognizes all of them, and documents in the functional assessment throughout the life of a case.

- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to articulate knowledge of child development, generally picks up on problems in child development in cases, documents those problems that they encounter. Utilizes supervisory assistance to make referrals when needed. Can generally articulate dynamics and indicators, including abuse or neglect, recognizes them most of the time, and documents those that are caught in the functional assessment throughout the life of a case.

Interviewing

19. **Knows the impact of the time, location, and environment of an interview. Organizes key questions to effectively gather critical information through strength-based process. Continually critically judges what is known and what they need to know. Effectively engages the family by employing active listening, reflecting, reframing, and utilizes appropriate questions to explore, focus and guide the information gathering. Understands verbal and non-verbal cues.**
 - Exemplary** is represented as: Knows the time, place, and recommended sequence of interviewing and is able to effectively utilize this or modify it to maximize the effectiveness of the interview. Utilizes follow-up questioning that leads to an increased understanding. Analyzes and synthesizes the information as they are interviewing. Can explain the rationale for their sequence of interviewing and follows the recommended sequence for interviewing which helps to ensure the safety of children. Is able to effectively use the interview to engage the families to become motivated to make changes that will keep their children safe.
 - Proficient** is represented as: Consistently knows the time, place, and recommended sequence of interviewing. Can explain the rationale for their sequence of interviewing. Follows the recommended sequence for interviewing which helps to ensure the safety of children. Is good at interviewing and getting useful information. Uses the interview to engage the families to become motivated to make changes that will keep their children safe.
 - Emerging** is represented as: Articulates the concepts of time, place, and recommended sequence of interviewing but needs training, and mentoring to integrate these skills into practice to gather the critical information for the safety of children and to engage the families to become motivated to make changes that will keep their children safe.

Court/Legal Issues

20. **Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of state and federal statutes in child welfare casework and the importance of adhering to these regulations.**
 - Exemplary** is represented as: Thorough understanding of how child welfare state and federal statutes and other related laws relate to best practice in helping a child achieve safety, permanency and well being. Mentors other staff surrounding legal procedures and utilizes supervisor as a consultant in applying critical thinking to their practice.
 - Proficient** is represented as: Knows and understands child welfare state and federal statutes and other related laws. Understands the importance of adhering to these regulations and applies it to their practice. Utilizes clinical supervision as needed.
 - Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to fully know the state and federal statutes for child welfare and other related laws. Needs clinical supervision to adhere to state and federal practice.

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Court/Legal Issues

21. ***Demonstrates familiarity and knowledge of legal documents and understands what types of information must be gathered, documented and maintained in family case records to support court proceedings.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Completes legal documents accurately and timely and includes extensive detail and supporting documents that aid in successful case disposition. Mentors other staff in documentation for legal purposes.
- Proficient** is represented as: Completes legal documents accurately and timely. Understands the types of information necessary and supporting documents for each legal document, and knows when to use each document. Seeks supervisory assistance as needed.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to complete legal documentation accurately and timely and with detail to support the court proceedings. Needs supervision to complete paperwork.

Court/Legal Issues

22. ***Demonstrates knowledge of effective preparation, testifying, and court etiquette.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Articulates proper court and testifying preparation and behavior. Thoroughly prepares for testimony, testifies well, and is appropriately assertive in court. Demonstrates and understands the importance of appropriate court decorum and a calm and confident demeanor. Able to respond effectively to direct and cross-examination. Skillfully demonstrates the presentation of case knowledge into evidence. Mentors other staff with their experience and knowledge of the legal system and their knowledge of requirements and limitations around written and oral information to parties in the case in a legal action.
- Proficient** is represented as: Articulates proper court and testifying preparation and behavior. Prepares for testimony, testifies and handles cross-examination adequately. Is appropriately assertive in court. Demonstrates and understands the importance of a calm and confident demeanor. Understands requirements and limitations around written and oral information to parties in the case in a legal action.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training, mentoring and supervisory case consultation to prepare testimonies, cross-examination and to appear confident and assertive in the courtroom. Seeks supervisor's consultation to understand requirements and limitations around written and oral information to parties in the case in a legal action.

Engages with the Family

23. ***Engages with the family and helps the family identify appropriate participants for a family team decision meeting in order to have a plan with the family that focuses on behavioral goals/outcomes that address child safety, permanency and well being.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Consistently engages all members of the family and their supports to set the foundation for an effective family team decision meeting. Develops, with great detail and insight, family case plans that focus on strengths, needs, including underlying needs and strategies/interventions to promote change that results in child

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safety, permanency, and well being. Consistently promotes family team decision meetings and mentors other staff. Mentors others in writing behavioral goals/outcomes.

- Proficient** is represented as: Understands the concepts of family team decision meetings and the development of family plans. Engages all members of the family and their supports to set the foundation for an effective family team decision meeting. Incorporates the family team decision meeting plan into a plan that is family focused. Promotes necessary change in family behavior around child safety, permanency and well being due to completing thorough functional assessments and using effective strategies/interventions. Consistently writes behavioral goals/outcomes.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring in understanding the concepts of family team decision meetings and the development of family plans and in engaging families for a family team decision meeting. Needs mentoring in incorporating the family team decision meeting plan into a plan that is family focused. Needs training and mentoring to gather pieces of information to create case plans representative of the families' strengths, and strategies/interventions to promote changes in family behavior for child safety, permanency and well being. Understands the concept of behavioral goals/outcomes.

Involvement of Kin

24. ***Demonstrates and values the involvement of kin (related and not-related) in the child's life by doing early diligent searches of maternal and paternal relatives and others and engaging them as informal supports/ family resources. Understands multi-generational family systems and as a result can anticipate and secure resources to mediate family conflict at its emergence.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Masterfully involves and supports kin in the lives of their children. Uses genograms or other visual representation for understanding of family functioning and multi-generational family patterns. Understands family dynamics and effectively mediates family conflict at its emergence . Secures additional resources when necessary. Promotes and mentors in kinship practice.
- Proficient** is represented as: Consistently involves and supports kin in the lives of their children. Uses genograms or other visual representation for understanding of family functioning and-multi-generational family patterns. Recognizes family dynamics and the need for mediating family conflict and demonstrates basic negotiation skills and secures additional resources when necessary.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training, mentoring and case consultation to fully integrate these concepts into practice. Understands the importance of kin involvement in case planning and practice. Uses genograms or other visual representations for identifying and understanding family relationships.

Involvement of Non-custodial parent

25. ***Demonstrates and values the positive role and involvement of the non-custodial parents in the child's life. Demonstrates proficiency with a variety of search tools to locate non-custodial parents. Supports and encourages the involvement of the non-custodial parents early and often in case planning and decision-making. Responds to the needs of the non-custodial parents. Demonstrates the ability to negotiate the family issues that prevent engagement of non-custodial parents.***

Exemplary is represented as: Understands and consistently implements the practice guidelines for making concerted efforts to engage the non-custodial parent in the life of the case. Easily negotiates and resolves barriers to non-custodial parental involvement and mentors and promotes this practice to others. Promotes and mentors others in engaging the non-custodial parent.

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- Proficient** is represented as: Understands and makes efforts to follow the practice guidelines for making concerted efforts to engage the non-custodial parent in the life of the case. Understands barriers and works to manage those barriers.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to fully integrate these concepts into practice. Generally understands the importance of non-custodial parent's involvement in case practice.

Intake

26. ***Demonstrates knowledge of criteria for child abuse, dependent adult abuse and CINA assessments to provide the detailed information necessary for making correct determinations of acceptance through use of critical questions.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Masterfully demonstrates knowledge of the child abuse and dependent adult abuse categories, CINA criteria and community resources. Provides detailed information for decision-making through skilled interviews and asking critical questions of the reporter. Knows and uses all information data systems to complete a thorough, accurate and complete intake. Mentors co-workers in asking critical questions and searching for essential information criteria for abuse and CINA assessments.
- Proficient** is represented as: Knows and demonstrates knowledge of child abuse and dependent adult categories and CINA criteria. Asks critical questions and provides detailed information necessary to make the determination.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs coaching and mentoring in learning and understanding child and dependent adult abuse categories and CINA criteria in order to gather critical information necessary to make a determination. Needs training and mentoring to enhance critical questioning skills.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Intake

27. ***Accurately gathers information and applies screening criteria necessary to make an accurate pathway assignment. Documents the intake information on Child Protective Services Intake, Form 470-0607.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Documents intake information thoroughly and accurately to support the decision to accept or reject according to Iowa Code. Completes documentation with respect to all necessary fields required and reflects the content and quality of the interview and critical thinking. Is able to mentor other staff in how to quickly and effectively complete the form.
- Proficient** is represented as: Documents the gathered intake information with no critical errors. Provides information with sufficient detail to make a decision and be useful to relevant staff. Demonstrates increasing capacity to reflect the content and quality of the interview and critical thinking needed on routine intake calls. Needs on-going mentoring for difficult and unusual intake situations.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs coaching and mentoring to be able to provide sufficient information in which to make a decision or be of assistance to relevant staff.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

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Intake

28. **Sees the referral aspect of Intake as an educational service and part of public relations. Refers to the relevant community resources when the situation does not meet the criteria for child abuse, dependent adult abuse or CINA assessment.**

- Exemplary** is represented as: Masterfully takes referrals, engages and builds rapport with the caller. Is polite, professional, knowledgeable, and helpful to the caller. Sees the role of Intake as educational and part of public relations and mentors other staff in engaging with callers, building rapport and making appropriate referrals.
- Proficient** is represented as: Is skilled at taking referrals, engages with the caller, and builds positive rapport, especially with other professionals. Responds politely and with helpful information to all callers. Sees the role of Intake as educational and part of public relations and projects a positive image. Makes appropriate referrals to community resources.
- Emerging** is represented as: Sees the role of Intake as part of public relations yet needs coaching and mentoring in engaging and building positive rapport with callers and in making referrals to community resources.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Child Abuse Assessments

29. **Demonstrates knowledge of appropriate time frames for initiation, observation of child victims and other subjects and completion of assessment summary report. Makes accurate determinations. Completes required Information System Screens.**

- Exemplary** is represented as: Always recognizes present and impending danger and assures child victim and other subjects are safe. Critically analyzes and makes case determination during an assessment. Provides comprehensive documentation to support all determinations. Uses information and participates in teaching situations with co-workers. Recognizes when to seek supervisory consult. Accurately and thoroughly completes the Information System screens and is able to teach others how to maneuver through the different screens.
- Proficient** is represented as: Always recognizes present and impending danger and assures child victim and other subjects are safe. Consults with supervisor on difficult and unusual case determination. Documents findings in the Information System. Provides documentation necessary to support all determinations.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs coaching and mentoring to consistently recognize imminent danger and consults with supervisor to help make accurate safety determinations. Knows required time frames. Asks for help as needed to document in the Information System. Needs coaching and mentoring to provide documentation necessary to support all determinations.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Child Abuse Assessments

30. **Demonstrates knowledge of information needed from medical profession for child maltreatment. Knows what a physician can and cannot detect. Knows how to take appropriate action when there is a discrepancy between the medical diagnosis and other evidence. Understands the medical issues involved in an assessment and seeks out appropriate physician consultation.**

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- Exemplary** is represented as: Interacts professionally with the medical community to identify information and related medical concerns and conditions as they relate to safety for the child. Gathers extra information that would be helpful to the ongoing worker, often identifying underlying conditions. Initiates appropriate action when there is a discrepancy between expert opinion or the medical diagnosis and other evidence and identifies how it affects outcomes for the child. Utilizes supervisor for clinical supervision. Mentors other co-workers, models and articulates critical thinking processes.
- Proficient** is represented as: Gathers information from medical reports and accurately documents medical information in the assessment. Gathers extra information that would be helpful to the ongoing worker, often identifying underlying conditions. Takes appropriate action when there is a discrepancy between the expert opinion or the medical diagnosis and other evidence. Consults with supervisor for clinical input to make a determination on a regular basis.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring in gathering information for medical reports and in documenting medical information in the assessment. Uses supervisory assistance to take appropriate action when there is a discrepancy between the expert opinion or the medical diagnosis and other evidence. Asks supervisor for clinical input to make a determination.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Child Abuse Assessments

31. ***Coordinates and implements multi-disciplinary approach to conducting assessments including child protective services (CPS), law enforcement, and medical professionals (including child protection centers).***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Clearly identifies the roles of CPS, law enforcement and medical professionals, including child protection centers. Consistently coordinates well with these professionals and other community partners during child abuse assessments. Able to coach and mentor workers who do not have as much experience.
- Proficient** is represented as: Knows the protocol for joint assessment with law enforcement, medical professionals, including child protection centers and coordinates adequately with these and other community partners during child abuse assessments.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring around the roles of CPS, law enforcement and child protection centers and medical professionals related to child abuse assessments. Needs mentoring and training in the interviewing protocol specific to a joint child abuse assessment with law enforcement.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Family Assessments

32. ***Demonstrates ability to complete a comprehensive family assessment that includes gathering, analyzing, comparing, and synthesizing the information with the family to come to an understanding of family strengths and needs relating to child's safety, permanency and well being. Organizes key questions to effectively gather critical information utilizing a strength-based process. Continually critically judges what is known and what needs to be known.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Clearly explains family assessment when engaging with the family. Effectively engages the family by employing active listening, reflecting, and reframing. Utilizes appropriate questions to explore, focus and guide the information gathering process. Understands verbal and non-verbal cues and can adapt their interview techniques in response to the cues of others. Knows the impact of time, location, and environment on an interview and adapts these variables as possible to maximize

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engagement with the family. Is able to coach and mentor co-workers who do not have as much experience. Understands when the situation may warrant a change in pathway and seeks supervisory consultation.

- Proficient** is represented as: Knows the protocol for family assessment and engages with the family. Is able to engage the family by employing active listening, reflecting, and reframing. Utilizes appropriate questions to explore, focus and guide the information gathering process. Understands verbal and non-verbal cues. Knows the impact of time, location, and environment on an interview. Understands the screening criteria and seeks supervisory consultation when more information becomes known that would necessitate a change in pathway.
- Emerging** is represented as: Knows the screening criteria and seeks supervisory consultation if they believe a criterion has been met. Needs training and mentoring around understanding the protocol for family assessment and family engagement strategies related to family assessments.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Dependent Adult Abuse Evaluations or Assessments

33. ***Demonstrates knowledge of appropriate time frames for initiation, observation of dependent adults and completion of summary report. Makes accurate determinations. Completes required Information System screens.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Always recognizes present and impending danger and assures dependent adults are safe. Critically analyzes and makes case determination during an evaluation or assessment. Provides comprehensive documentation to support all determinations. Uses information and participates in teaching situations with co-workers. Recognizes when to seek supervisory consultation. Accurately and thoroughly completes the Information System screens and is able to teach others how to maneuver through the different screens.
- Proficient** is represented as: Always recognizes present and impending danger and assures dependent adults are safe. Consults with supervisor on difficult and unusual case determination. Documents findings in the Information System. Provides documentation necessary to support all determinations.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs coaching and mentoring to consistently recognize imminent danger and consults with supervisor to help make accurate safety determinations. Knows required time frames. Asks for help as needed to document in the Information System. Needs coaching and mentoring to provide documentation necessary to support all determinations.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Dependent Adult Abuse Evaluations or Assessments

34. ***Demonstrates knowledge of information needed from medical profession for dependent adult maltreatment. Knows what a physician can and cannot detect. Knows how to take appropriate action when there is a discrepancy between the medical diagnosis and other evidence. Understands the medical issues involved in an assessment and seeks out appropriate physician consultation.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Interacts professionally with the medical community to identify information and related medical concerns and conditions as they relate to safety for the dependent adult. Initiates appropriate action when there is a discrepancy between expert opinion or the medical diagnosis and other evidence and identifies how it affects outcomes for the dependent adult. Utilizes supervisor for clinical supervision. Mentors other co-workers, models, and articulates critical thinking processes.

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- Proficient** is represented as: Gathers information from medical reports and accurately documents medical information in the assessment. Takes appropriate action when there is a discrepancy between the expert opinion or the medical diagnosis and other evidence. Consults with supervisor for clinical input to make a determination on a regular basis.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring in gathering information for medical reports and in documenting medical information in the assessment. Uses supervisory assistance to take appropriate action when there is a discrepancy between the expert opinion or the medical diagnosis and other evidence. Asks supervisor for clinical input to make a determination.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties

Dependent Adult Abuse Evaluations or Assessments

35. *Coordinates and implements multi-disciplinary approach to conducting evaluations or assessments including adult protective services, law enforcement, and medical professionals.*

- Exemplary** is represented as: Clearly identifies the roles of adult protective services, law enforcement, and medical professionals. Consistently coordinates well with these professionals and other community partners during abuse evaluations or assessments. Is able to coach and mentor co-workers who do not have as much experience.
- Proficient** is represented as: Knows the protocol for joint assessment with law enforcement and medical professionals. Coordinates adequately with these professionals and other community partners during dependent adult abuse evaluations or assessments.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring around the roles of adult protective services, law enforcement, and medical professionals related to dependent adult abuse evaluations or assessments. Needs mentoring and training in the interviewing protocol specific to a joint assessment with law enforcement.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Life of a Case Process

36. *Exhibits knowledge of the life of a case processes, including case documentation, reports to be reviewed, and time frames to meet including worker visitation.*

- Exemplary** is represented as: Consistently reviews and utilizes the six standards for quality case documentation when gathering information and completing documentation. Reports follow the time frames and are always up to date with case documentation. Schedules frequent visitation and effectively engages family in case planning and serves as a mentor in case documentation and visitation. Can help others to develop a system for completing life of the case processes.
- Proficient** is represented as: Completes appropriate case documentation, utilizes the standards for quality case documentation, and reviews and reports follow the time frames. Uses monthly visitation to engage with families in case planning and seeks supervisory support as needed. Has a working system for completing life of the case processes.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to complete case documentation within applicable time frames. Needs supervisory support to complete documentation and to meet visitation goals and case planning with the family. A system to complete life of a case processes needs to be developed.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

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Resource Utilization

37. *Seeks knowledge of resources and develops relationships with community partners available to assist in connections and supports for families and demonstrates an effective use of resources.*

- Exemplary** is represented as: Demonstrates thorough knowledge and collaborative use of the resources and community partners available for successful connections and supports for families. Assists families in accessing and utilizing both formal and informal resources. Mentors other staff.
- Proficient** is represented as: Identifies and collaboratively utilizes the resources and community partners available for successful connections and supports for families. Assists families in accessing resources.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs mentoring to fully identify and utilize the resources and community partners available for successful connections and supports for families.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Collaborative Relationships

38. *Develops collaborative relationships for children in care, shared parenting between birth and out of home placement caregivers while promoting joint planning and delivery of services for the children in care.*

- Exemplary** is represented as: Understands and consistently fosters an effective collaborative relationship between birth and out of home placement caregivers. Facilitates a beneficial relationship that positively impacts the development of joint planning with the family. Promotes and mentors the benefits with other workers of collaborative relationships between birth and out of home placement caregivers.
- Proficient** is represented as: Develops collaborative relationships, shared parenting with birth and out of home placement caregivers and promotes joint planning of services. Has positive experience with facilitating beneficial relationships between birth and out of home placement caregivers.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs mentoring in fully understanding the concept of collaborative shared parenting with birth and out of home placement caregivers. Needs mentoring to fully integrate this concept into practice.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Family Interaction

39. *Understands the primary purpose of family interaction is to maintain relationships and connections for children who have been removed from the custody of their primary caregiver(s). Ensures family interactions occur with individuals identified in the family interaction plan, are responsive based on behavioral outcomes in determining the appropriate level of interaction, following developmentally appropriate guidelines by utilizing written family interaction plans.*

- Exemplary** is represented as: Consistently ensures frequent interaction with individuals identified in the family interaction plan. Competent in the family interaction philosophy, standards and supports these in the family interaction planning. Is responsive based on behavioral indicators in determining the appropriate level of interactions. Promotes parent-child attachment, sibling and other significant relationships with a full understanding of the importance of maintaining connections for the child (ren) and understands how this affects permanency for the child(ren). Mentors co-workers in all aspects of family interaction.

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Proficient is represented as: Understands the importance of frequent interaction with individuals identified in the family interaction plan. Understands the family interaction philosophy, standards and the importance of including in the family interaction planning. Begins to assess based on behavioral indicators to determine the appropriate level of interactions. Ensures and promotes frequent interactions. Promotes parent-child attachment and sibling relationships and other healthy connections to promote permanency for the child(ren).

- Emerging** is represented as: Needs mentoring to understand the importance of frequent interaction with individuals identified in the family interaction plan. Arranges interaction opportunities. Needs training and mentoring in understanding and promoting parent-child attachments, sibling relationships and other healthy connections and in understanding how these interactions affects permanency for the child(ren).
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Maintaining Connections

40. ***Demonstrates and utilizes best practice to meet federal and state requirements to support and maintain continuity of connections. Demonstrates concerted efforts for maintaining continuity of family relationships and for maintaining the child's connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family, tribe, school and friends.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Fully understands and consistently implements federal and state requirements, such as ICWA, Fostering Connections, and other agreements, to support and maintain the child's important connections. Promotes and maintains family relationships and the child's connections. Mentors co-workers in implementing legal mandates and best practice in building and maintaining family relationships and child connections.
- Proficient** is represented as: Understands and meets federal and state requirements, such as ICWA, Fostering Connections, and other agreements to support and maintain the child's important connections. Promotes maintaining family relationships and the child's connections.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs mentoring and training to understand and follow federal and state requirements, such as ICWA, Fostering Connections, and other agreements to support and maintain the child's important connections..
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Permanency

41. ***Assesses the permanency options of children and takes timely action to assure permanency, including meeting federal guidelines, and concurrent planning. Identifies the most appropriate relationships and permanent setting to meet the child's developmental and treatment needs. Meets both permanency and well-being.***

- Exemplary** is represented as: Consistently and appropriately identifies the relationships and permanency options of children and masterfully assesses and identifies the most appropriate home. Understands the importance of a sense of belonging to a family and the importance of timely permanency. Integrates this understanding into all facets in the life of the case. Recognizes the best option for the child and effectively advocates achieving permanency in an efficient and timely way. Mentors co-workers in all aspects of permanency options.

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- Proficient** is represented as: Assesses and identifies the relationships and permanency options of children and assesses and identifies timely permanency. Understands the importance of a sense of belonging to a family and the importance of timely actions in achieving permanency for a child.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring in assessing and identifying the relationships and timely permanency options of children. Needs mentoring to understand the importance of a sense of belonging to family and taking timely actions to meet permanency.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Youth Development

42. **Identifies, involves and works with youth to support an ongoing process to develop skills, resources, knowledge and attributes that the youth defines as necessary for survival and success including developing a transition plan and establishing and maintaining permanent connections.**

- Exemplary** is represented as: Fully involves and works with youth to support in developing a creative transition plan to meet the youth's definition of success. When appropriate seeks and promotes a Youth Transition Decision Making Meeting and fully engages the youth in their transition plan. Skillfully assists youth in establishing and maintaining a formal and an informal network of individuals of support and valuable connections as they transition out of care. Mentors this practice to other staff.
- Proficient** is represented as: Engages youth in developing a transition plan that meets the youth's definition of success and assists youth in building connections. Understands the philosophy of a Youth Transition Decision Making Meeting and engages the youth in their transition plan. Assist youth in developing a support network as they transition out of care.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to understand the philosophy of a Youth Transition Decision Making Meeting and to fully engage youth in developing a transition plan that meets the youth's definition of success and in building connections. Understands the importance of connections.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Safe Case Closure

43. **Demonstrates knowledge of the measurable conditions that define safe case closure and can accurately assess which current cases should be closed.**

- Exemplary** is represented as: Implements the concepts of long term planning with measurable goals and behaviorally based outcomes, Recognizes and adjusts strategies to assist the families. Is exceptional in accurately assessing which current cases should be closed. Consults supervisor regarding safe case closure. Mentors staff and educates other professionals in the concepts of safe case closure.
- Proficient** is represented as: Articulates behavior changes and attained goals necessary for safe case closure. Accurately assesses which current cases should be closed. Seeks supervisor to confirm safe case closure.
- Emerging** is represented as: Needs training and mentoring to apply concepts of long-term view and measurable goals/outcomes of safe case closure. Requires supervisory assistance in identifying and determining safe case closure.
- Not Applicable** is marked if this competency does not pertain to the worker's job duties.

Remember Mark only one oval per competency. As you are rating your level of competency, ask yourself "How do I know I have this competency? How do I know this is the correct rating? How have I demonstrated this knowledge, skill or ability?" Keep in mind the justification options: Individual case practice examples, validation from supervisor, other professionals, group supervision or clients; examples from case records; self evaluation; or other.



Iowa DHS Social Worker Competencies Individual Learning Plan

Name: _____ Date: _____

Service Area: _____ Position: _____

Length of time in current position _____

Please take time to review the results of your Individual Learning Needs Survey. On the chart below, the supervisor with the worker lists the **Top 4** Learning priorities. **Indicate the competency number. Provide a brief statement describing the learning content.** In the Suggested Learning Strategy, list learning opportunities and training needs. This Learning Plan information will be used in developing curriculum and enhancing your learning.

Please submit both the Individual Learning Plan and the Individual Learning Needs Survey electronically upon completion.

Learning Priority	#	Specific Content to be learned	Suggested Learning Strategy Note if Supervisory Unit Training or Statewide Training
Example	# 12	Resources/ info pertaining to substance abuse.	Develop own resource file of substance abuse info including info from SP 301 Impact of Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse Issues and review with supervisor and co-workers at next unit meeting.
1st most important			
2nd most important			
3rd most important			
4th most important			

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Social Worker Signature: _____ Date: _____

Remember Mark only one oval per competency. As you are rating your level of competency, ask yourself "How do I know I have this competency? How do I know this is the correct rating? How have I demonstrated this knowledge, skill or ability?" Keep in mind the justification options: Individual case practice examples, validation from supervisor, other professionals, group supervision or clients; examples from case records; self evaluation; or other.