

Department for Community Based Services

The Kentucky Child and Family Services Review Procedures Manual

Division of Protection and Permanency
Quality Assurance Branch
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Overview/Purpose of the Kentucky Child and Family Services Review

The Quality Assurance Branch (QA) is responsible for conducting the Kentucky Child and Family Services Reviews (KY CFSR) to assist the Department of Community Based Services (DCBS) in improving child welfare outcomes around safety, permanency, and well-being. The KY CFSR assists with identifying trends to inform practice change and inform continuous quality improvement (CQI) activities.

QA has 12 dedicated case review staff and three dedicated staff to conduct QA on reviewed cases. There is one rotating QA position utilized from the case review staff. These positions rotate among the 12 staff members every twelve months and are selected by the branch manager/designee. These are central office staff; however, many are in various areas of the state.

The KY CFSR evaluates the quality of practice through a review of case materials in The Worker's Information SysTem (TWIST) and interviews with key case participants. The QA Branch provides statewide data reports regarding findings to the QA lead group by email, during debrief meetings with each region, and at regularly scheduled meetings for state-wide dissemination. The QA lead group consists of central office leadership, CQI specialists, and regional leadership.

The KY CFSR identifies areas of practice that are strengths, as well as areas of practice that need improvement. The purpose of the KY CFSR is to:

- Measure 18 areas of practice identified in the CFSR Onsite Review Instrument (OSRI) including:
 - meeting the safety, permanency, and well-being needs of children;
 - assessing the needs of and providing services to parents and caregivers;
 - family engagement; and
 - caseworker visits with children and parents.
- Provide key data at the regional level for CQI activities. Regional office reports are utilized to develop action planning through CQI.

Reviewers will review a minimum of 180 (30 cases per month) cases in a six-month period. The state will be divided into 6 areas, with a different area being reviewed each month to total the 180 cases statewide over a 6-month period. Reviews will occur in six-month increments resulting in a statewide case record review being conducted twice a year.

Practice Improvement Activities

A guiding principle of the KY CFSR is that reviews are designed to support the professional development of caseworkers, supervisors, and managers by focusing on key practice areas to improve outcomes for children and families through the following:

- For each case reviewed, individual feedback forms are provided to the quality assurance leads group. Feedback forms are shared with the Service Region Administrators (SRA), who then distribute the feedback to the appropriate supervisor and caseworker.
- During monthly QA lead calls, results from the KY CFSR (feedback form and the online monitoring system (OMS) reports) are discussed to tell the story behind the data; strengths and areas needing improvement are identified; additional internal stakeholder feedback is shared;

improvement strategies are shared; regional and/or office successes are identified; and plans for improvement are developed.

- The PIP monitoring log is shared with the central office leadership and QA leads group upon completion of each month's case reviews.
- During regular monthly reviews, reviewers use a detailed feedback form to disseminate information from the reviews. As KY CFSR case reviewers complete a case review, this tool is completed and disseminated to the appropriate CQI specialists, QA leads, and back-ups for the region, and the Field Quality Branch manager. The tool includes all item justification summaries from the OSRI for the worker and regional management to understand assigned ratings for specific items. Review data is incorporated into existing CQI activities to ensure that findings and trends are reviewed at the local, regional, and state level and used to inform action planning.
- Kentucky utilizes data collected from the OSRI as part of the state's ongoing QA/CQI process to present at monthly debrief meetings. These debrief meetings are a product of the data/regional engagement CQI core team. They are held in each region twice a year and present an overview of each region's case reviews. The QA Branch provides case review feedback forms to each region prior to the debrief meeting, to allow time for review. The debrief meeting provides a broad overview of trends and data identified during the most recent case reviews and allows staff an opportunity to discuss casework with QA staff. A specialist from the QA Branch completes an in-depth review of the data and information identified through the OSRI, identifying both strengths and factors leading to ratings of areas needing improvement. This information is shared with the appropriate CQI specialist for collaboration and preparation for the meeting. The presentation and information are shared during the debrief meeting. Regions are encouraged to invite all staff who have had a case reviewed during the recent review and other interested staff that leadership would like to invite. The debriefs provide opportunities to discuss strengths and challenges with the region, based on data obtained from case reviews. The debriefs are scheduled around what works best for the specific region. Review data is then incorporated into existing CQI activities to ensure that findings and trends are reviewed at the local, regional, and state level and used to inform action planning.
- The QA branch provides feedback to the Training Branch to address the training needs identified from the reviews. This ensures everyone is receiving the same information and provides the Training Branch the opportunity to create strategies in the curriculum to move case workers forward and to provide best practice for the case workers.

Training

New Reviewer Training

Formal training for the KY CFSR case reviewers includes completion of the federal web-based training modules, manual and review instrument review, and individual practice. Timeframe for completion is dependent upon the case reviewer. Case reviewers complete the sections below sequentially. A tracking spreadsheet is used to ensure all new staff participate in each level of training. All review staff must successfully complete training to review cases without assistance.

Self-Guided Orientation to the KY CFSR Process and Review Criteria

After the branch manager grants access, case reviewers will access the [Child and Family Services Reviews \(CFSR\) Information Portal](#) and familiarize self with review site features.

- Case reviewers will receive the digital KY CFSR manual from their supervisor and trainer which includes the following:
 - Procedures Manual
 - [CFSR General Fact Sheet](#)
 - [Onsite review instrument \(OSRI\) and instructions](#)
 - [Technical and Security Requirements for CFSR OMS](#)
 - [Quick Reference Items List](#)
 - [Reviewer Briefs](#)
 - [OSRI quality assurance guide](#)
 - [Complete OSRI instruction manual](#)
- Case reviewers use cases the trainer is currently reviewing as their practice cases. This allows the trainee to participate in the complete case review process, including interviews. Practice cases should include at least one in-home case and one out-of-home care (OOHC) case.
- Case reviewers are assigned to a senior reviewer who will serve as a trainer throughout the training process. The trainer will be responsible for overseeing and executing the training as described in this manual.
- Case reviewers will connect with a second reviewer who will serve as a mentor throughout the training process. The mentor will be assigned to the case reviewer by the Branch Manager or designee. This mentor will provide additional guidance on the case review process, consult on questions, shadow case review process, and provide any additional support to supplement the training process. Progress will be monitored through supervision consults with the case reviewer, section supervisor, and mentor.
- Complete Adobe 101: Managing in Adobe Learning Manager located in the OSRI E-Learning Round 4
- Case reviewers will complete Learning in Adobe Learning Manager located in the OSRI E-Learning Round 4
- Case reviewers will meet with designated trainer to review the following:
 - Overview of training guide and expectations;
 - Overview of conflict of interest and reporting safety concerns;
 - Overview of the case elimination process;
 - Overview of the review and QA process;
 - Overview of the process for addressing safety threats identified in a case under review;
 - Expectations regarding how to write high-quality rating rationale statements;
 - Instructions on the use of the OSRI and all related Children’s Bureau-issued guidance;
 - Review of policy addressing the relevant items of the OSRI, including child abuse allegation assignment and response timeframes—timeframes for initiation of reports and face-to-face contact, the use of differential/alternative response and concurrent planning, the use of contracted case management, medication management policies/protocol, and well-child and dental exam policies

Moving Forward – Completing OSRI Parts 1, 2, and 3 and OSRI Mock Case

Case reviewer will begin shadowing the trainer in all case related activities.

- In Round 4 E-Learning Academy, the case reviewer will complete all trainings under “My Learning List” including but not limited to OSRI Parts 1, 2, and 3, OSRI Virtual Training Item 2, OSRI Virtual Training Item 3, OSRI Virtual Training Item 5, and Layla Morgan Mock Case.

Completing a Kentucky Practice Case

Case reviewers will complete a case review utilizing one of the trainer's cases. Case reviewers should consult with the assigned trainer as necessary during the review.

- Case reviewers will read the case summary and case file. After reading the case, the case reviewer will determine:
 - Which case participants should be interviewed to gain a better understanding of the case?
- What questions need to be asked of each case participant to gain a better understanding of what occurred in the case? Case reviewers will enter the case review into the OMS training site and submit to assigned trainer for QA review.
- The trainer and mentor will conduct QA on the case and pend back to case reviewers.
- Case reviewers will make corrections based on the feedback from QA.
- Case reviewers will compare finalized review in training site to the review approved and finalized. Case reviewers should document any questions on discrepancies to discuss with the trainer.
- Continue to assist with eliminations.
- Case reviewer will continue to participate in all case related activities with their assigned trainer.

Shadowing the Trainer

- Case reviewers will shadow the trainer during their assigned monthly reviews, to complete the following expected progression:
 - First and second cases - Case reviewer completes a case review on one in-home and one OOHC case along with the trainer, identifies key participants to interview, and develops a list of questions with the trainer to ask during key case participant interviews. A discussion occurs regarding the reason for and importance of the questions.
 - Third and fourth case (one in-home and one OOHC) - Case reviewer conducts key case participant interviews with trainer present for assistance.
 - Expected outcomes:
 - Case reviewers show emerging skill of understanding the OSRI and can discuss/justify ratings based upon facts documented in the electronic file, and key case participant interviews.
 - Case reviewers show emerging skill in presenting results of the review in positive and constructive terms.
- Case reviewers will shadow other senior case reviewers when time allows to see a variety of interviewing styles and written case reviews to inform their own style.

Lead The Charge

- Case reviewers will review one case from the current case listing with close supervision from the assigned trainer.
 - Case reviewers will meet with those who completed QA on the case and discuss the following:

- Case ratings and discrepancies between case reviewers' ratings and QAs suggestions.
- According to ASFA criteria and review protocols, case reviewers will be able to articulate and justify rationale of items identified as strengths or areas needing improvement.

QA Training

All QA staff will complete the new case reviewer training, as outlined in the New Reviewer Training section above. New QA staff will shadow senior QA staff to learn the intricacies of the process through the QA of, at a minimum, three cases. Technical assistance is available from the Children's Bureau through secondary oversight and phone calls to assist in capacity building for QA within the state.

Ongoing Training

Formal ongoing training will occur when there are updates to the OSRI. Ongoing informal coaching and training will occur through discussions on specific cases or when a refresher is needed. Training can be repeated at any time at the request of the reviewer or at the discretion of the section supervisor or branch manager.

Case reviewers will access the CFSR portal for resources during reviews to increase competencies and provide clarification. Reviewers will document questions/concerns that arise during reviews and submit to the branch manager, via email. Additionally, these questions/concerns will be discussed during monthly staff meetings; these discussions will also be utilized as a training tool for the entire team. When additional clarification is needed beyond what the branch manager can provide, the Children's Bureau will be contacted for consultation. All questions are documented in the Excel database, Case Reviewer Questions and Clarifications, located on the QA public drive.

Case reviewers meet monthly with QA staff to discuss any changes made to the OSRI. Discussions also include any trends or changes in state agency policy, including temporary changes made to current practice due to an emergency or to meet agency needs (example: the COVID-19 pandemic) and how to incorporate those changes into the case reviews. Training and mentoring is also offered as needed on an ongoing basis.

Case Review Sample

A rolling statewide random sample will be utilized for both in-home and OOHC. Samples will be pulled monthly (two months prior to the date of the review) by the CCWIS team and assignment of randomly selected cases will be made by a branch staff member who is neither a case reviewer nor a staff who will complete QA on reviews.

Reviewers will review a minimum of 180 (30 per month) cases, which results in three cases per reviewer, per month. The state will be divided into 6 areas, with a different area being reviewed each month to total the 180 cases statewide over a 6-month period. Each month, 15 in-home and 15 OOHC cases will be reviewed. This ratio was calculated based on the average state ratio of workload in regards to in-home and OOHC cases (49.01% and 50.99%, respectively). Reviews will occur in six-month increments. A statewide case record review will be conducted twice per year. A breakout of review areas based on

workload has been provided below. One area will be reviewed per month, with each area being reviewed every six months.

Case Review Areas



Geographical Areas	Kentucky Counties
Area 1	Bath, Boyd, Carter, Elliott, Lawrence, Magoffin, Martin, Morgan, Rowan
	Bracken, Campbell, Greenup, Lewis, Fleming, Mason, Robertson, Pendleton
	Boone, Kenton
Area 2	Jefferson
Area 3	Carroll, Gallatin, Grant, Henry, Oldham, Owen, Shelby, Spencer, Trimble
	Breckinridge, Bullitt, LaRue, Marion, Meade, Nelson, Washington
	Daviess, Hancock, Grayson, Hardin, Edmonson
Area 4	Anderson, Boyle, Casey, Garrard, Jessamine, Lincoln, Madison, Mercer, Woodford
	Fayette
	Bourbon, Clark, Estill, Franklin, Harrison, Menifee, Montgomery, Nicholas, Powell

Area 5	Breathitt, Floyd, Harlan, Johnson, Knott, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Wolfe
	Bell, Clay, Jackson, Knox, Laurel, Rockcastle, Whitley
	Adair, Clinton, Cumberland, Green, Hart, Metcalfe, McCreary, Pulaski, Russell, Taylor, Wayne
Area 6	Caldwell, Christian, Crittenden, Henderson, Hopkins, Lyon, McLean, Muhlenberg, Ohio, Trigg, Union, Webster
	Ballard, Calloway, Carlisle, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, Livingston, McCracken, Marshall
	Allen, Barren, Butler, Logan, Monroe, Simpson, Todd, Warren

In-Home Sample

An in-home case universe will be created utilizing the logic previously approved for CFSR, as well as additional logic based on the needs of a statewide sample. The parameters for the in-home case universe that were approved and are still appropriate are as follows:

- Unduplicated list of cases by family (family ID/TWIST case number).
- No cases have a child with an out-of-home episode during the sample period.
- Case was open for services at least 45 consecutive days during the sample period. Past due investigations are not included in this calculation and will be eliminated from the review.
 - The most recent open date for the case that is within the reporting (sample) period or before the reporting (sample) period based on the 45 consecutive day logic.
- An in-home services case in which a child was on a THV (placement at home) at the start of the sampling period and the THV was 45 consecutive days or longer.

Additional logic needed for a statewide sample includes:

- In-home sample frame will be pulled by designated geographical areas (as outlined in the table above) two months prior to the review.
- In-home sample period will be a rolling six months plus 45 days, with the first month dropping off each consecutive rolling sample period.
- Only cases with a CPS component will be included in the sample, i.e., the sample will filter out adult protective services (APS), Non-Agency, and Provide cases.
 - APS investigates all known or suspected incidents of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of adults and provides both preventative and protective services to adults.
 - Non-agency cases are those in which a party other than DCBS is responsible for the management of the child’s permanency, (e.g., step-parent adoptions). The children in non-agency cases are not reported in the AFCARS population and are not in agency custody.
 - Provide cases are foster parent cases, (i.e., the foster home case, which includes home studies, background checks, etc.).

OOHC Sample

The OOHC case sample will be pulled utilizing the AFCARS defined case population. This will be a rolling six months, with the first month dropping off each consecutive rolling sample period. The OOHC sample will be pulled by designated geographical areas two months prior to the review.

Period Under Review (PUR)

The period under review (PUR) starts at the beginning of the sampling period and ends when the case is reviewed. This includes all information gathered through the last day of the case file review and key case participant interviews.

The sampling period for an area is identified as the six-month period the year prior to the review for foster care cases and allows for an additional 45 days for in-home service cases. For example, cases reviewed in October 2024 will be pulled from October 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024 for OOHC cases and from October 1, 2023 – October 1, 2024 for in-home cases. The PUR would be from October 1, 2023 until the date of the review in October of 2024.

Case Elimination

Initial Case Elimination

The following federal guidelines will be utilized for case elimination determination:

- An in-home services case open for fewer than 45 consecutive days during the period under review.
- An in-home services case in which any child in the family was in foster care for more than 24 hours during the period under review.
- A case that was discharged or closed according to agency policy before the sample period.
- A foster care case open fewer than 24 hours during the period under review, which starts at the beginning of the sampling period and ends when the case is reviewed.
- An in-home services case in which a child was on a THV (placement at home) at the start of the sampling period and the THV was fewer than 45 consecutive days.
- A foster care case that was closed according to agency policy before the sample period begins, resulting in no state responsibility for the case.
- A case open for subsidized adoption or guardianship payment only and not otherwise inclusive of a child in foster care or open for in-home services during the period under review.
- A case in which the target child reached the age of majority as defined by state law (18 years old in most states) before the period under review.
- A case in which the child is or was in the placement and care responsibility of another state, and the state being reviewed is providing supervision through an Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) agreement.
- A case appearing multiple times in the sample, such as a case that involves siblings in foster care in separate cases or an in-home services case that was opened more than one time during a sampling period.
- A case reviewed in the past 12 months.

- A foster care case in which the child’s adoption or guardianship was finalized before the period under review and the child is no longer in foster care.
- A case in which the child was placed for the entire period under review in a locked juvenile facility or other placement that does not meet the federal definition of foster care at 45 CFR 1355.20.

The following cases are subject to review unless circumstances warrant exclusion as agreed to by the Children’s Bureau:

- Cases involving administrative, civil, or criminal litigation.
- Cases involving current or former employees of the child welfare agency and contracted provider agencies.

The following additional state specific guidelines modified to accommodate a statewide sample, will be utilized for case elimination determination:

- Situations in which case selection would result in an overrepresentation of agency staff, which is when more than two cases in one section are from the caseload of a single caseworker.
- Situations when the minimum number of case-specific interviews cannot be completed despite diligent efforts (diligent efforts must be documented on the case elimination sheet. Requirements for reasonable efforts are outlined under the *Interviews* section). Extenuating circumstances for not interviewing family members must be approved by the branch manager.

When a reviewer determines that a case is eligible for elimination, the reviewer must discuss with the section supervisors. If the case meets the requirements for case elimination, it will be documented on the case elimination worksheet, along with appropriate justification for elimination. Eliminated cases will be replaced by a case from the same program from the over sampling list. The next case available for review will be selected. The section supervisors will send a list of cases eliminated and reasons for elimination to the Children’s Bureau, upon conclusion of each month’s case reviews.

Eliminations During the Review Process

During the review process, it may be determined that additional cases will need to be eliminated. Reasons for elimination during the review process include:

- Lack of available interviews due to “no shows.”
- Conflicts of interest that are identified once the case interviews have started.
- If a required key case participant interview with a parent, child, or caregiver could not be completed or was cancelled at the last minute with no added interview to ensure sufficient information on family’s/child’s perspective.

All final case elimination decisions will be made through consultation with the section supervisors and will be documented on case elimination worksheet. Back-up cases selected from the over-sample will be prepared for each area using the same process as described above. If the section supervisors determine that an adequate number of over-sample cases are not available, a second round of random cases will be pulled and eliminations completed using the same process above. This process will repeat until an adequate number of oversample cases are obtained.

Ongoing Case Review Process

Once cases have been identified and approved for review, the branch manager or designee will provide a list of the cases to be reviewed to regional leadership to ensure that case materials are available for review. Case reviews will consist of a TWIST review of the case, utilizing the OSRI, as well as key case participant interviews. After the file review, case reviewers will contact the current/most recent case manager to obtain contact information for all case participants requiring an interview, if not available in TWIST.

Each reviewer will review approximately three cases per calendar month. On average, each reviewer will have approximately four days to complete one review (this includes first and second level QA). Case reviewers will have three weeks to complete all case reviews for the month, with finalization of cases occurring by the end of each calendar month. Time has been built into the month to ensure flexibility when attempting to schedule interviews, eliminating cases, and other unexpected situations. Review areas will be made aware of the identified cases that will be reviewed for that month approximately one month prior to review. Case reviewers will have approximately two and half days to review the case, when possible, to include continuous first level QA during the review process.

First level QA will occur continuously during the case review. Upon initial review of the TWIST record, reviewers will discuss the case with designated first level QA staff. Conversations regarding the quality of the review will occur utilizing face to face meetings, OMS QA notes, virtual meeting platforms (Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc.), and/or conference calls. When an issue arises that a case reviewer and QA staff cannot resolve, this will be brought to the branch manager or designee for a final decision. Upon completion of the case review in OMS, the case will be submitted to the second level QA staff member to complete final QA. Second level QA must be completed within one business day (when possible).

Case reviewers will make any needed corrections as determined through the second level QA process within one business day. Second level QA staff will confirm that corrections were made and approve for finalization or submit to Secondary Oversight for QA. Case reviewers will make any needed corrections as determined through Secondary Oversight and approved through second level QA within one business day. A case must go through second level QA to be finalized. Additional details on the case review process is outlined below.

QA staff will track trends that arise during the QA of cases, as well as any additional feedback received from the Children's Bureau during technical assistance discussions. This will assist in monitoring trends of corrections based on items, as well as training opportunities for review staff. Feedback provided by the Children's Bureau will be documented on an Excel sheet, accessible in the drive to all QA Branch members.

Safety Threats

Case reviewers are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse, neglect, and dependency. If the reviewer identifies potential allegations of child abuse and/or neglect during the case review process that have not been previously reported, the reviewer will immediately report those concerns to their section supervisor, who will report to the branch manager. The case reviewer will report all allegations to central intake via web or phone. Reviewers will request notification regarding the intake

determination. The branch manager will notify the SRA of the region and the Division of Service Regions (DSR) that a report has been made to central intake. Reviewers who identify risk factors that do not rise to the level of an abuse and/or neglect referral will share those concerns in writing with their section supervisor, who will share with the branch manager. The branch manager will notify the SRA and DSR of the concerns via email. DSR request a report out from regional management on the actions taken to remedy the situation. Section supervisors will maintain a log of reported concerns and actions taken.

Conflict of Interest

All reviewers will be subject to the conflict-of-interest guidelines. While reviewing cases, the following shall apply: reviewers will not review a case in which they have professional or personal knowledge of the family or case; reviewers will not review a case in which a relative or friend is involved; reviewers/QA leads who had direct contact, supervision, oversight, or consultation for the case being reviewed will not complete the case review or conduct quality assurance on the case; new reviewers will not be involved in the review of any cases that are from the office/team in which they were previously employed for at least one year; upon assignment of cases, if a reviewer has a conflict or is concerned that there could be a conflict, the reviewer will contact the section supervisor and branch manager immediately for reassignment, and; if a reviewer discovers a conflict once the review has begun they will stop the review and contact the section supervisor and branch manager immediately. Any individuals having a conflict of interest will not participate in any team or reviewer debriefing of cases that affects ratings of cases.

If it is determined that a conflict of interest exists prior to the beginning of the case review, the case will be exchanged for a case from another reviewer. If it is determined that a conflict of interest exists after the review process has begun, the case will be substituted with a case from the over-sample.

Consistency and Inter-Rater Reliability

KY CFSR case reviewers will sustain consistent and reliable ratings through the following methods: initial and ongoing trainings, utilization of the standardized KY CFSR manual, application of the OSRI, case reviews, comparison of full case review findings with the QA reviewer, and communication with the section supervisor. Reviewers will utilize and adhere to the KY CFSR manual and OSRI guidelines, in order to ensure understanding of the rating process. Trends and case review related issues will be discussed during team staff meetings. Additionally, QA will occur on every case review. The QA staff will engage in discussions around discrepancies with the reviewer. If the QA observes a pattern of continuous discrepancies with a reviewer, this will be reported to and addressed by the branch manager or designee and additional training or clarification may be provided.

Conducting Interviews

Key case participants requiring an interview will be those who can provide case specific information to provide a better view of the family's experience with the agency. Participants will be determined on a case by case basis; however, should include parents/caregivers, workers/supervisors, service providers/community partners, relatives, foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and school-aged children, as well as any other pertinent case participants. Case reviewers will contact the current/most recent case manager to obtain contact information for all case participants requiring an interview if the information is not available in TWIST. Interviews will be completed via telephone or virtual platforms to ensure timely and efficient completion of case reviews. If a key case participant fails to keep their

scheduled interview, case review staff will make all reasonable efforts to locate the participant, including but not limited to additional telephone contact, letters, e-mails, contact with collaterals to locate the participant, attempted face-to-face contact, etc. prior to eliminating the case. Case sampling areas have been created geographically so that if case participants cannot be interviewed via phone, other arrangements can be made that are the most efficient for case review/local staff, as well as key case participants. Case reviewers will work with participants who are unable to participate by phone to determine a more appropriate avenue for interview, considering the best interest of the case participant, including but not limited to the reviewer traveling to the review site and conducting the interview in person, the reviewer traveling to the physical location of the key case participant and conducting the interview in person, and partnering with review staff who are close in proximity to the identified key case participant to make a phone available.

At times, information obtained during an interview may conflict with the documentation contained within the case record or obtained from another interview. When this occurs, reviewers have the responsibility to pursue the issue across multiple key case participant interviews until they can determine the most accurate response to the relevant item questions.

Exceptions to conducting key case participant interviews include:

- Child is not age appropriate (pre-school age or younger) or developmentally capable of participation.
- Parent living outside of the United States for whom, despite the agency's demonstrated efforts, it is determined that the parent is not accessible by phone or video.
- The parents cannot be located despite multiple attempts by the reviewer. Multiple attempts include, but are not limited to:
 - Telephone call;
 - Letter to last known address;
 - E-mail;
 - Contacting other key case participants to obtain additional contact information;
 - Contacting the most recent worker/supervisor for assistance in engaging; and
 - Attempting at least two face-to-face contacts at the last known address.
- There is a safety threat regarding contacting the key case participant for an interview.
- A key case participant is unable to consent to an interview due to physical or mental health incapacity.
- A key case participant refuses to participate in an interview despite the agency's attempts to engage them in the process.
- Any party involved in a pending criminal or civil matter before a court or agency, or their legal representative, who believes they could be negatively affected by participation.
- The target child is missing from care and/or unable to be located for an interview.

Unacceptable exceptions to conducting an interview:

- An age cut-off that does not consider a child's developmental capacity, e.g., a policy of not interviewing children under age 12.
- A key case participant refuses to participate in an interview and the agency did not attempt to engage them beyond a letter or telephone call.
- The agency has not made attempts to locate a party for an interview.
- A key case participant requires an interpreter.

Quality assurance process

The QA structure ensures consistent ratings by providing training for all staff conducting the KY CFSR, providing a written process for consistency of ratings, providing a written policy, and having staff to participate in monthly case discussions during staff meetings. The QA staff are designated by the branch manager and will not participate in the direct review of cases. In an effort to build capacity, QA staff and reviewers are cross-trained and one designated case reviewer will serve as a rotating QA staff member. Staff will rotate every twelve months. This will ensure that the case review team is well trained and inter-changeable to ensure proper coverage during times of turnover, expected and unexpected leave, or if staff are asked to complete special assignments.

First level

First level QA will occur continuously during the case review. The QA staff conducting first level QA will communicate via virtual meeting platforms such as Microsoft Teams, etc. with each reviewer after the reviewer's initial review of the file to receive an overview of the case. The QA staff will maintain notes on each case to refer to during ongoing discussions. Additionally, QA staff completing first level QA will track interview status and alert the section supervisor about any case elimination concerns. Ongoing discussions to provide updates regarding pertinent issues of the cases will occur through virtual meetings and quality assurance case review notes. The conversations during the first level QA process allow the team to discuss the nuances of item ratings, known case details, potential key case participant interview questions, and provide immediate feedback on initial item assessment. If the QA staff and reviewer cannot come to a consensus regarding a requested edit, the branch manager will be consulted and will make a final determination. Upon completion of the review and first level QA, the case will be submitted in OMS for second level QA within 24 hours.

Second level

Second level QA is conducted as a second look at the case review to ensure no rating errors exist. Second level QA will be conducted by a different QA staff than who completed the first level QA. Second level QA will be conducted as staff complete their monthly case reviews and have made all requested edits from first level QA. Discussions and requested edits will be communicated by the QA staff to the reviewer via virtual meeting platforms such as Microsoft Teams, etc. Second level QA staff will also look at how documentation is written and if the narrative conforms to the instructions, OSRI QA Guide, FAQ guidelines, and reflects input from key case participant interviews. If the QA staff and reviewer cannot come to a consensus regarding a requested edit, the branch manager will be consulted and will make a final determination. Second level QA must be completed by the end of the third review day when possible. Case reviewers will make any needed corrections as determined through the second level QA process within 24 hours. Second level QA staff will confirm that corrections were made and approve for finalization. A case must go through second level QA to be finalized.

Feedback loop

Purpose of feedback

The purpose of case review feedback is to provide staff with case review findings, to improve outcomes for the children and families served by the agency. The focus is to improve the safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes of all children served by the agency. The case review feedback will serve as data to assist in improving outcomes at both the local and systemic levels.

Case Review Feedback Form

Utilizing the completed OSRI, the case reviewer will complete the case review feedback form within three business days of the finalization of the OSRI. The form will include the rating outcomes for each of the seven outcomes and information related to strengths and areas needing improvement. The areas rated as areas needing improvement will be identified to the specific item from the OSRI and documented on the feedback form.

Regional and Local Level Feedback

Reviewers will provide the case review feedback form via email within three business days of completing the review to the designated QA Branch staff member. Upon completion of all 30 cases in a calendar month, the feedback tool is disseminated to the appropriate CQI specialists, QA leads and back-ups for the region, and Field Quality Branch Manager. The tool includes all item justification summaries from the OSRI for the worker and regional management to understand assigned ratings for specific items. Review data will be incorporated into existing CQI activities to ensure that findings and trends are reviewed at the local, regional, and state level and used to inform action planning.

Regional and local staff will utilize data from case review feedback to discuss in regional and local CQI meetings. Regional and local staff may seek feedback and input from stakeholders within the community. The feedback will be used to develop strategies to improve practice within areas identified as needing improvement.

The policies outlined in the practice improvement activities regarding QA lead meetings and debrief meetings will be utilized as part of the feedback process.

Systems Mapping

The QA systems mapping teams are multi-disciplinary teams comprised of representatives from different levels and disciplines within DCBS and community partners. The QA systems mapping teams will be utilized to analyze factors contributing to identified trends found during the KY CFSR case review process. The focus will be upon identifying systemic challenges or vulnerabilities that impact work and identify any other concerns.

In preparation of the mapping process, the QA Branch will analyze data upon the completion of the KY CFSR case reviews in each area prior to the debrief meeting. The analysis will identify specific trends that contributed to area needing improvement ratings. Trends identified will be presented to the regional mapping team. The mapping teams will work to identify systemic issues influencing practice using the System Safety Mapping Tool, which encourages analysis across multiple levels. Factors identified during mapping will be presented to the multi-disciplinary team (MDT) for consideration of advancement to DCBS leadership. Agency leadership will be accountable for making improvements to create a more resilient and reliable system which improves its capacity to provide safe outcomes for children, families, and employees.