

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES  
STANDARDS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

**STANDARDS FOR INTENSIVE FAMILY-BASED SERVICES**

**4.3 CONTRACT AGREEMENTS**

**Council on Accreditation Standard**

The Council on Accreditation Standard S20.4 (Service Elements: Service Components) links to and supports Standard 4.3 *Contract Agreements*.

**Administrative Code**

There are no Ohio Administrative Code Rules that directly address Standard 4.3 *Contract Agreements*.

**I. Philosophy**

The Intensive Family-Based Services (IFBS) program is voluntary. The IFBS program requires all involved parties to fully participate in assuring child safety while striving for family stabilization. A contract agreement is established between each family and staff in the program to assure a full understanding of roles and responsibilities. The contract:

- establishes ground rules and expectations of all parties;
- provides written acknowledgement that there is a willingness and commitment to work together for the accomplishment of child and family goals and outcomes;
- provides an opportunity for the family to acknowledge the past, while agreeing to take positive action to provide a safer and more stable future for their children.

The contract process is a first step in establishing the family/staff relationship. This assists in reducing the length of agency involvement because it immediately defines expectations, parameters for interacting, and the work that must be accomplished.

**II. Outcome**

Contract agreements are entered into by the family and IFBS staff indicating a willingness to participate in program services.

**III. Evaluation**

FACSIS events, CPOE and the Federal Health and Human Services outcomes may be considered when evaluating this standard. In addition, the CFSA may consider the following:

- timeliness of contract execution (based on agency standards);
- percentage of executed contracts to total population of families agreeing to services.

**IV. Standards for Implementation**

- 1) The IFBS assigned staff and family should enter into the contract agreement following acceptance of the family into the program.

- 2) To assure the family understands the obligations and responsibilities of the program, the assigned staff should read the agreement to the family prior to signature.
- 3) Program activities should begin when the contract has been signed and copies are provided to the family.
- 4) The following items should be considered for inclusion in the IFBS contract:
  - a. the family's name;
  - b. the start date;
  - c. the assigned staff name, phone numbers, pager number, etc.;
  - d. the name of the alternate staff member, phone number, pager number, etc.;
  - e. the program philosophy and length of the program (6 to 8 weeks);
  - f. a statement regarding the unacceptability of physical violence or threatening behavior of any type while in the program;
  - g. the expected/anticipated face-to-face contacts per week (see Standard 3.3, *Face-to-Face Contact*);
  - h. the staff responsibilities and obligations to the program and family;
  - i. a statement regarding family's willingness to voluntarily participate in the program;
  - j. a statement regarding the need for prior notice when family members and staff need to cancel meetings, appointments, etc.;
  - k. a statement regarding the need for prior family consent when making contact with family members, significant others, family friends, etc.;
  - l. a statement regarding family's responsibility to contact assigned staff in times of crisis;
  - m. a statement regarding family approval to tape family sessions;
  - n. a statement regarding how the agency shares confidential information and under what circumstances;
  - o. a statement regarding consequences which may result due to a lack of participation in the program (e.g., re-evaluation, staffing, alternative services, removal of child from the home); and
  - p. a signature line and date line for family and staff.

## V. Financial Implications

The cost associated with the participant contract agreement is as follows:

Contract development and negotiation: 3 hours @ \$71/hour = \$213 per family