




<u>DEPARTMENT NAME</u> Utilization Management		
<u>SUBJECT</u> Service Authorization Request		<u>POLICY NUMBER:</u> UM-003
<u>APPROVAL:</u> 	<u>EFFECTIVE DATE:</u> 2-16-2021	<u>REPLACES :</u> UM-003, dated 4/20/2017

I. **PURPOSE:** To ensure accountability, proper compliance and proper utilization of contracted services paid by the Children's Network of Southwest Florida for clients in need, as well as maximization of federal funding and proper utilization of allocated funds in the service contract. This policy is designed to ensure that referrals are made on a rotating basis as is practical and reasonable. This procedure does not cover Enhanced Placements.

II. **REVIEW HISTORY:** This policy was previously updated on 1/10/2006, and 4/20/2017.

III. **CONTACT:** Utilization Management Director.

IV. **PERSONS AFFECTED:** This policy applies to the Children's Network of Southwest Florida and its contracted providers.

V. **POLICY:** It is the responsibility of the Children's Network of Southwest Florida to ensure that the expenditure of financial resources is in compliance with the Department of Children and Families' contract for services.

VI. **RATIONALE:** Utilization Management is based upon pre-determined utilization targets which are financially based. The Federal Government subsidizes most, but by no means funds all of the services that families involved with the child welfare system require. Community Based Care Lead Agencies enter into a risk bearing contract. This type of contracting arrangement requires that financial resources be managed to ensure funding for the duration of the contract period.

VII. **CROSS REFERENCES:** F.S 409.166, Section 471,462,463,464,475 of the Social Security Act; United States Code 671, 672, 673,674, and 675.

VIII. **DEFINITIONS:**

A. **Case Management Organization:** CMO, an agency in which the Children's Network of Southwest Florida contracts with to provide case management services to dependent children and their families.

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- B. Child Welfare Case Manager (CWCM): A professional position responsible for case management for dependent children.
- C. Exhibit: A document or material object added to the Program Specific Model Attachment I, or any other region specific attachment I.
- D. Service Authorization Request: A form submitted in writing or electronically through the JOS System by case managers to request services.
- E. Service Authorization: The written approval of service prepared by the Utilization Management Unit.
- F. Utilization Management (UM) Liaison: Staff member of the Children's Network of Southwest Florida who acts as a liaison between the Case Management Organizations, the Behavioral Health Specialist, the Managing Entity, and specialty and community providers. Primarily, UM Liaisons prepare initial authorizations of Medicaid funded services and services funded by the Children's Network of Southwest Florida.
- G. ITR Specialist: Staff member of the Children's Network of Southwest Florida who coordinates, schedules and attends region wide staffings between the Department of Children and Families and the CMOs, specifically to transfer cases from the child protective investigative units to the Case Management Organizations.

IX. PROCEDURES:

- A. If the CWCM or DCF Child Protective Investigator (CPI) identifies a family in need of services, it must be determined by the staff member that a request for services will address one of the following issues:
 - stabilize the current placement
 - prevent the removal of the child or provide immediate remedy to the circumstance for which the funds are sought
 - identified in the case plan
 - Court ordered and/or enhances the move to permanency.
- B. The CWCM, CPI if the case has not yet been transferred for services, or CNSWFL Family Resource Specialist is responsible for initiation of a Service Authorization Request. In some circumstances the UM Liaison will initiate the request based upon a verbal request.
- C. The Child Welfare Case Manager will enter the Service Authorization Request in the JOS system. The request for service may be diverted by the UM Liaison based upon established protocols.

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- D. UM approves or denies the Service Authorization Request.
- E. If approved by the UM unit, the approved Service Authorization is sent to the requester and the Specialty Provider within 1 business day of the approval. The provider is selected on a rotating basis, assuring the best interests of the clients are served.
- F. The requester is responsible for arrangement of the requested services with the provider upon receiving the approved Service Authorization.
- G. If denied by the UM unit, UM faxes the denial to the initiator within 1 business day of the denial and enters the reason for denial in the JOS system. Reasons for denial may include:
 - 1. Funded by another source or contract available to dependent families
 - 2. Not enough appropriate alternative resources have been attempted
 - 3. Request is not appropriate for needs of family.
 - 4. Other resources must be attempted before approval.
 - 5. There are other non-contracted services that could benefit the family and are more appropriate
 - 6. Circumstance does not meet the criteria for use of these funds
 - 7. Service is not specified by an assessment, in the case plan or court order
 - 8. Consultation with Child Welfare Legal Services is needed
 - 9. Relative placements and kinship care options have not been exhausted
- H. If the Service Authorization Request is denied, the established conflict resolution process will be implemented. The JOS system will be updated placing the request on a pending status until resolution.