

## SAMPLE SCREENING QUESTIONS FOR TDM TELEPHONE SCHEDULER

In addition to basic demographic issues – SW and family names, case numbers, etc. the following questions are some suggestions. The skill level of the scheduler should be taken into account in determining an appropriate “script” for the telephone interaction, but the goal is to obtain as much of the following types of information as possible:

1. What kind of meeting are you asking for? (Scheduler should know the “menu” – e.g., initial placement, change of placement, reunification/other permanency planning.) Refer to the SW’s ‘recommendations’ rather than his/her ‘plans’ for the family, in order to underscore that the team will ultimately determine what happens next.
  - If the SW is unsure, scheduler should ask, “What is the decision you need to make about the children? Or possibly “Where are the children now?”
    - a) If the children were already removed on an emergency basis, the SW needs an emergency TDM, before the initial court hearing.
    - b) If the children are still at home, ask “are you considering removal due to high risk or serious safety issues?” If so, a ‘considered removal’ TDM is needed. Some agencies inquire if the safety/risk assessment tool information supports the recommendation of considered removal to ensure that a safety and risk assessment has been utilized to determine the need for a considered removal meeting.
    - c) If the children are presently in out-of-home care, “Are you considering moving the children to a new placement?”
    - d) Or, if they are already in care and the SW needs to make a reunification/other permanency decision (hopefully due to changes in risk and not just due to AFSA timelines!), the scheduler should arrange a “Permanency Planning TDM.”

**NOTE:** If the answers to any of the above are confusing or appear to relate to a situation that doesn’t fit TDM, the scheduler should stop and have a supervisor or facilitator call the SW back.

2. Has this family had a TDM before? This is asked to ensure assignment of the same facilitator if there have been previous TDMs.
3. When do you need this meeting? **All** children placed in the agency’s care on an emergency basis must have a TDM meeting before release from agency care or a court hearing. As an initial removal TDM is due to the risk and safety issues, it must be scheduled quickly and given priority status. Change of placement meetings may or may not be an emergency depending upon circumstances surrounding the request for removal. Permanency planning meetings normally can be scheduled within a week or two timeframe.
4. How many people are you expecting to attend this meeting? (If a large number, special arrangements may need to be made for a larger room.)

5. May I help you invite other agency staff, GAL (change of placement and permanency planning meetings), and/or a neighborhood representative for this family? (These will depend on what the agency's expectations are regarding who attends and who invites.)
6. Do any of the meeting participants have any special needs, such as foreign language translation, deaf interpreter, wheelchair access, etc.?
7. Are you aware of any domestic violence history or safety concerns regarding this family? Have there been any threats, violence or security concerns? Do any of the anticipated participants have a history of serious mental illness? If yes is answered to any of these questions, suggest that the facilitator and SW should discuss strategies and interventions necessary to provide safety and manage the TDM process in advance of the meeting.
8. Do you anticipate that any of the meeting participants will bring young children who may require child care during the meeting?