DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY

April 13, 2026

Arizona Families FIRST

DCS Specialist Roles:

- **Provide information about services to the client and family, and encourage participation.**
- **Help the client and provider to identify family and supportive people to participate in education, treatment, and recovery services with the client.**
- **Invite the AFF provider to the TDM meetings, Service Planning meetings, and Case Plan Staffings.**
- **Review the AFF provider's monthly progress report and problem-solve with the provider any barriers to service delivery.**

Service Plan:

Clients assessed for services will have a Service Plan with:

- **mental health diagnosis;**
- **level of treatment recommended;**
- **family strengths;**
- **barriers to treatment;**
- **recovery/family vision;**
- **client's stage of change;**
- **case coordination plan;**
- **drug testing plan;**
- **relapse prevention plan;**
- **therapeutic objectives, goals and tasks;**
- **service frequency and modality.**

Description of Service

Arizona Families FIRST (Families In Recovery Succeeding Together; AFF) provides specialized substance use treatment services to parents, caregivers, youth and families to promote family stability and self-sufficiency, and child safety and permanency, with a preference for reunification with a child's birth family.

Service Eligibility

The following individuals served by DCS are eligible for AFF services as the primary client:

- A parent, guardian or custodian of a child named in a DCS Hotline report as a victim of abuse or neglect; or the parent, guardian or custodian of another child residing in the household of alleged maltreatment; whose substance use is a significant barrier to maintaining, preserving or reunifying the family.
- Other adults in the home of the parent, guardian, or custodian whose substance use is a significant barrier to maintaining, preserving, or reunifying the family;
- A child in out-of-home care who is in the temporary custody of the Department, adjudicated dependent, or the subject of a Voluntary Placement Agreement, and whose behavior indicates a need for substance use assessment, treatment, or recovery.
- Young adults participating in Extended Foster Care whose behavior indicates a need for a substance abuse assessment, treatment or recovery.
- A child in a family that is receiving in-home case management services from DCS, and whose behavior indicates a need for substance use assessment, treatment, or recovery to prevent entry or re-entry into out-of-home care.

Family members and significant people in the client's life shall be involved in substance use awareness, treatment, case coordination, and recovery maintenance services as indicated in the client's service plan.

Screening

If the Family Functioning Assessment indicates that an adult's or child's substance use may be a danger in the home or is diminishing a caregiver's protective capacity, the DCS Specialist or OCWI Investigator shall consult with their supervisor to determine if the adult or child should be referred to the AFF Program for initial outreach and comprehensive assessment.

When a DCS Specialist refers a child for a Rapid Response assessment, the DCS Specialist shall indicate on the referral form if substance use by a parent or other adult in the home is a reason for DCS involvement. The Rapid Response assessment shall determine if the child should be referred to the AFF Program as a client, or for other related services as a family member of a client.

Peer Parents & Recovery Coaches have:

- **been a parent, guardian, or caretaker in a DCS case that has been closed for at least one year;**
- **remained substance-free for a minimum of one year following treatment;**
- **and completed all goals and objectives related to substance abuse treatment and recovery maintenance resulting in AFF service closure;**
- **has required training or certification.**

Timeframes:

- **Initial outreach: In-person contact with the client, preferably at the client's residence, within 24 hours of referral receipt, excluding weekends and State legal holidays.**
- **Comprehensive Assessment and Service Plan: Comprehensive assessment within 7 days of the client signing the ROI; service plan within 15 days of the assessment and provided to the specialist within five days of completion.**
- **Substance abuse education or treatment: Starts within three days of the comprehensive assessment.**
- **Treatment: Following development of the Service Plan.**
- **Recovery Maintenance: Immediately after completing treatment and for six to twelve months.**

Service Referral Process

Submit a service request through Guardian, selecting the county in which services will take place. The Centralized Referral Unit will submit the service request to the provider. Include the following documents in the Service Request:

- Family Functioning Assessment (with no confidential criminal history information);
- current court report (if applicable);
- current case plan (if applicable);
- TDM Action Plan (if applicable);
- any recent psychological/psychiatric evaluations (if available);
- any drug test results; and
- any supporting information related to substance use/abuse.

Send questions regarding AFF service refferals to the Resource Team mailbox.

Region	Counties	Mailbox
Maricopa East / West	Maricopa	ServiceReferralsMEMW@azdcs.gov
South	Cochise, Pima, Santa Cruz, Yuma	ServiceReferralsSouth@azdcs.gov
Northeast / Northwest	Apache, Coconino, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Mohave, Navajo, Pinal, Yavapai	ServiceReferralsNENW@azdcs.gov

Services include the following

- **Comprehensive Assessment and Level of Care Assessment**
  Assessment is provided to determine appropriate interventions and treatment. If a substance use concern is identified, the client will be referred for one of the following levels of care:
  - **Stabilization:** If it is determined, through the assessments, that a client is in need of stabilization (medical detoxification), the contractor will refer the client to the appropriate facility, which may be a hospital emergency department. The contractor will maintain contact with the client and connect the client to substance abuse services through AFF within 24 hours after discharge from stabilization services.
  - **Level 0.5 - Early Intervention Services:** This level of care provides education and awareness for individuals who are at risk of developing substance-related problems, clients who decline to engage in the comprehensive assessment or treatment services but are willing to attend substance use awareness sessions, clients whose assessment isn't scheduled for at least a week, and the client's family members.
  - **Level 1 - Outpatient Services (OP):** This level provides at least three hours of service per week, and less than nine hours per week for adults or less than six hours per week for adolescents. This level addresses lifestyle, attitudinal, and behavioral issues that have the potential to undermine the goals of treatment or impair the client's ability to cope with major life tasks without addictive substances.
  - **Level 2 - Intensive Outpatient Services (IOP):** This level provides at least nine hours of service per week for at least eight weeks. This level provides counseling and education about addiction-related and mental health problems.

- **Level 2.5:** Partial Hospitalization (PHP): This level includes 20 or more hours of service per week for multidimensional instability not requiring 24-hour care. Services are similar to intensive outpatient, with psychiatric and other medical consultation services available.
- **Level 3.1/3.3/3.5:** Residential Treatment: Low intensity provides a 24-hour living support and structure with at least five hours of clinical service per week. Moderate intensity provides 24-hour structure with trained counselors. High intensity provides 24-hour care with trained counselors to address the client's negative behaviors and stabilization, current severity, and preparation for continued treatment in less intensive levels of care.

- **Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)**
  - Medications treat withdrawal symptoms and psychological cravings. MAT is used in conjunction with counseling and other behavioral therapies. Services can be provided for up to six months following reunification, or up to termination of parental rights.
- **Auxiliary Services & Case Coordination**
  - Services may include concrete services, such as child care, housing, nutrition, transportation, psychiatric services, physical health services, STD and HIV testing, parenting education, domestic violence interventions and/or education, legal services, vocational training, job seeking groups/sessions, and any other services needed by the client to accomplish the goals within the Service Plan. These services are provided throughout substance abuse treatment and enhance the success of participants.
- **Drug Testing**
  - Drug testing begins at assessment and continues during treatment participation to detect and respond to relapse. The drug testing plan is part of the Service Plan and is tailored to the individualized needs of the client. The Provider will communicate via e-mail to the assigned DCS Specialist when the drug testing should begin for the client, and the planned frequency of drug tests. The DCS Specialist will submit the service request for drug testing through Guardian. The provider will discuss any proposed changes in frequency of drug testing with the client, DCSS, and CFT or ART members.
- **Recovery Maintenance Services**
  - Recovery Maintenance services assist the participant in establishing community supports for sobriety and includes relapse prevention planning. All clients who complete their treatment services are referred to Recovery Maintenance following treatment.