

SPECIALIZED CASEWORKER COMPETENCIES

Table of Contents

[Clicking on an item in the Table of Contents jumps you to that page](#)

[Note: You can click on “Return to Table of Contents” at the top of any page](#)

Topic 200, PREVENTIVE AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	<i>Page 5</i>
200-01: Ability to participate in prevention programs and services targeted to the general public, at-risk children and families, and families involved with the children services agency	<i>Page 5</i>
200-02: Ability to work collaboratively in school-based prevention programs to enhance children's adjustment in school, prevent academic failure and dropping out, and increase social interaction	<i>Page 6</i>
200-03: Ability to work collaboratively with supportive services to children and families and supplemental casework functions that are provided by agency staff and community providers	<i>Page 7</i>
Topic 201, ADOPTION, FOSTER AND KINSHIP CARE	<i>Page 8</i>
201-01: Ability to recruit foster and adoptive parents	<i>Page 8</i>
201-02: Ability to conduct foster and adoptive family assessments	<i>Page 9</i>
201-03: Ability to conduct and coordinate training for foster and adoptive parents	<i>Page 10</i>
201-04: Ability to choose appropriate placements for children and prepare children and resource and birth families for foster and adoptive placement	<i>Page 11</i>
201-05: Ability to support foster, kinship, and adoptive parents in providing care for children in their homes	<i>Page 12</i>
201-06: Ability to provide direct services, case planning, and service coordination for children in placement	<i>Page 14</i>
201-07: Ability to provide post adoption services and to support adoptive parents and children to promote placement stability and prevent adoption disruption	<i>Page 16</i>
201-08: Ability to support birth parents whose parental rights have been terminated and maintain their cooperation with the agency throughout the adoption process	<i>Page 18</i>
201-09: Ability to arrange for openness in adoptive family – birth family relationships	<i>Page 19</i>

201-10: Ability to conduct foster and adoption services in a culturally responsive manner	Page 19
201-11: Ability to conduct placement services within the applicable legal framework	Page 20
Topic 202, ADOLESCENT SERVICES	Page 22
202-01: Ability to provide developmentally appropriate casework services to adolescents	Page 22
202-02: Ability to prepare adolescents for placement	Page 23
202-03: Ability to identify and assess the individual, family and social factors that contribute to problems experienced by adolescents, and to develop appropriate case plans to resolve those problems	Page 23
202-04: Ability to provide casework services to unruly youth	Page 24
202-05: Ability to assess readiness for independent living and develop, coordinate, and implement independent living plans for teens	Page 24
202-06: Ability to provide services to pregnant and parenting teens	Page 25
Topic 203, SEXUAL ABUSE	Page 26
203-01: Ability to identify children who have been sexually abused and to assess risk of future abuse	Page 26
203-02: Ability to plan, conduct and document investigations in sexual abuse cases in a manner that will protect the child from further abuse, and support fair and accurate decision-making in the child welfare and criminal justice systems	Page 27
203-03: Ability to assess common dynamics of children who have been sexually abused, their siblings; and their offending and non-offending parents to develop case plans and select services	Page 29
203-04: Ability to assess common dynamics of children and adolescents who have sexually abused others to coordinate planning and delivery of placement and treatment services for them and their families	Page 30
203-05: Ability to make appropriate placements for children at risk of further sexual abuse when needed; to implement and coordinate services to parents and substitute caregivers providing out-of-home care to children who have been sexually abused or to children and adolescents who have sexually offended others	Page 31

203-06: Ability to properly sequence and implement case closure or reunification for children who have been sexually abused	<i>Page 32</i>
Topic 204, ASSESSMENT	<i>Page 33</i>
204-01: Ability to engage families to elicit, gather, evaluate, analyze, and integrate pertinent information and form assessment conclusions in the assessment process	<i>Page 33</i>
204-02: Ability to gather assessment information and develop assessment conclusions	<i>Page 34</i>
204-03: Ability to develop comprehensive assessments in collaboration with social service providers and education, mental health, medical, and law enforcement personnel	<i>Page 35</i>
Topic 205, LEGAL ISSUES IN CHILD WELFARE	<i>Page 36</i>
205-01: Ability to collaborate with other service providers and legal and court personnel in conducting court related activities	<i>Page 36</i>
205-02: Ability to prepare children and family members for court hearings	<i>Page 37</i>
205-03: Ability to document and provide factual information and testimony to the court	<i>Page 37</i>
205-04: Ability to perform casework activities in a manner that legally protects the rights of the family and protects the agency, the caseworker, and other staff from litigation	<i>Page 38</i>
205-05: Ability to collaborate with court personnel in mediation processes	<i>Page 38</i>
Topic 206, SCREENING, INTAKE & INVESTIGATION	<i>Page 39</i>
206-01: Ability to conduct screening activities to gather full information needed to determine whether the referral should be accepted as a report of abuse or neglect; to determine whether the situation is an emergency; and to advise referents of other resources	<i>Page 39</i>
206-02: Ability to plan, conduct, and coordinate investigations that gather complete information and evidence needed to protect children and submit as evidence in court hearings while protecting the alleged child victim(s)	<i>Page 40</i>
206-03: Ability to conduct investigation interviews with alleged child victims and siblings to gather full information and to provide evidence for court hearings	<i>Page 41</i>

206-04: Ability to conduct investigative interviews with non-offending parents to gather full information and to provide evidence for court hearings	<i>Page 42</i>
206-05: Ability to conduct investigative interviews with alleged perpetrators to gather full information and to provide evidence for court hearings	<i>Page 42</i>
206-06: Ability to determine whether parent's/caretaker's history of the child's injuries is plausible and to develop an hypothesis regarding how the child was maltreated	<i>Page 42</i>
Topic 207, FAMILY-CENTERED NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED SERVICES	<i>Page 44</i>
207-01: Ability to plan and deliver family-centered, neighborhood-based and strength-based services to children and families	<i>Page 44</i>
207-02: Ability to engage families in family group meetings regarding children at risk of abuse and neglect	<i>Page 45</i>
Topic 208, CASEWORK WITH ABUSED CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES	<i>Page 46</i>
208-01: Ability to overcome anger, resistance, manipulation, and denial to engage families in cooperative casework relationships	<i>Page 46</i>
208-02: Ability to coordinate a comprehensive approach to the delivery of community-based services to remediate problems that contributed to abuse and to help children recover from the effects of abuse	<i>Page 46</i>
Topic 209, CASEWORK WITH NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES	<i>Page 49</i>
209-01: Ability to develop and utilize helping relationships with family members of neglected children to help resolve neglectful parenting	<i>Page 49</i>
209-02: Ability to coordinate a comprehensive team approach for the delivery of in-home and community-based services to remediate neglect and provide long-term support to families	<i>Page 49</i>

SPECIALIZED CASEWORKER COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 200 PREVENTIVE AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Skill Sets

200-01: Ability to participate in prevention programs and services targeted to the general public, at-risk children and families, and families involved with the children services agency

200-02: Ability to work collaboratively in school-based prevention programs to enhance children's adjustment in school, prevent academic failure and dropping out, and increase social interaction

200-03: Ability to work collaboratively with supportive services to children and families and supplemental casework functions that are provided by agency staff and community providers

Skill Set 200-01: Ability to participate in prevention programs and services targeted to the general public, at-risk children and families, and families involved with the children services agency	
--	--

Comp. No.	Competency Description
200-01-001	Knows the knowledge, skills, and resources that parents need to provide adequate care for their children
200-01-002	Knows the philosophy and purpose of prevention programs, and the differences in types of services, target populations, and community involvement among primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention
200-01-003	Knows the purpose and activities of a variety of primary prevention programs targeted to the general population (i.e., public awareness campaigns, parent education and support groups, family-strengthening activities, child development screening, information and referral, etc.); knows the roles of the caseworker and the community in these programs
200-01-004	Knows the purpose and activities of a variety of secondary prevention programs targeted to families at risk of child maltreatment (i.e., school-based prevention, teen parents, programs for at-risk parents, respite care for children with special needs, early health intervention, family resource centers in at-risk neighborhoods, etc.); knows the roles of the caseworker and the community in these programs

200-01-005	Knows the purpose and activities of a variety of tertiary prevention programs designed to mitigate the negative effects for children who have been maltreated and to support families in preventing the occurrence of further maltreatment (i.e., intensive home-based family preservation, protective day care, parent mentors, parent education and support, family life education and youth mentoring programs); knows the roles of the caseworker and the community in these programs
200-01-006	Understands the importance of designing strength-based, family-centered, and neighborhood-based prevention programs responsive to the diversity of individuals and families and their communities
200-01-007	Understands the prevention worker's role in promoting the public children services agency (PCSA) as a community resource, and in developing collaborative relationships with community service providers and prevention programs

Skill Set 200-02: Ability to work collaboratively in school-based prevention programs to enhance children's adjustment in school, prevent academic failure and dropping out, and increase social interaction

Comp. No.	Competency Description
200-02-001	Knows roles and activities of the child welfare caseworker in school-based prevention programs to enhance children's adjustment in school, prevent academic failure and dropping out, and prevent maltreatment
200-02-002	Understands applicable federal, state, and school-based regulations, and relevant procedures of school systems involved with the county's school-based prevention program
200-02-003	Understands factors that may prevent children in neglectful, financially-depressed or abusive family environments from achieving their potential in academic performance and in school social interaction
200-02-004	Understands the value of home visits in developing a non-authoritarian, collaborative relationship with children and their parents that can lead to the family's increased involvement with school activities
200-02-005	Understands schools' issues and policies regarding truancy; and understands how social, emotional, educational and family problems may lead to poor or inconsistent school attendance
200-02-006	Can collaborate with teachers and other school personnel to identify contributors to children's low academic achievement, and can provide services and activities to children and their families to enhance their success in school
200-02-007	Can advocate with school personnel for children to access appropriate academic programming, to alleviate barriers to participation in school activities, and to solve school-related problems
200-02-008	Can collaborate with teachers and school personnel to resolve child protection issues involving students

Skill Set 200-03: Ability to work collaboratively with supportive services to children and families and supplemental casework functions that are provided by agency staff and community providers	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
200-03-001	Knows the purpose and activities of a variety of supportive services to children and families and supplemental casework functions (i.e., juvenile court liaisons, kinship coordinator, services ombudsman, custody investigator, parent aids, etc.); knows the role of the caseworker and the community in these activities
200-03-002	Knows how to coordinate referrals, assessments, and service delivery with in-house supportive services staff and with community service providers who are co-located; knows how to collaborate with staff from other service providers when services are provided in alternative settings
200-03-003	Can collaborate with in-agency and community-based services involved in supportive and supplemental case-related services to ensure coordinated services to children and families

SPECIALIZED CASEWORKER COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 201 ADOPTION, FOSTER AND KINSHIP CARE

Skill Sets

201-01: Ability to recruit foster and adoptive parents

201-02: Ability to conduct foster and adoptive family assessments

201-03: Ability to conduct and coordinate training for foster and adoptive parents

201-04: Ability to choose appropriate placements for children and prepare children and resource and birth families for foster and adoptive placement

201-05: Ability to support foster, kinship, and adoptive parents in providing care for children in their homes

201-06: Ability to provide direct services, case planning, and service coordination for children in placement

201-07: Ability to provide post adoption services and to support adoptive parents and children to promote placement stability and prevent adoption disruption

201-08: Ability to support birth parents whose parental rights have been terminated and maintain their cooperation with the agency throughout the adoption process

201-09: Ability to arrange for openness in adoptive family – birth family relationships

201-10: Ability to conduct foster and adoption services in a culturally responsive manner

201-11: Ability to conduct placement services within the applicable legal framework

Skill Set 201-01: Ability to recruit foster and adoptive parents	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
201-01-001	Understands the importance of conducting year-round recruitment efforts
201-01-002	Knows the personal and family characteristics and attributes that contribute to effective foster, kinship, and adoptive parenting and how to develop recruitment campaigns to attract appropriate foster caregiver and adoptive parent applicants
201-01-003	Understands the requirements of the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act, and implications for recruitment of foster caregivers and adoptive parents
201-01-004	Knows strategies for recruiting minority foster and adoptive families

201-01-005	Understands the importance of identifying potential foster and adoptive parents from the people who know and care about the child, and knows strategies for seeking out those people as possible resource families for the child
201-01-006	Knows how to target recruitment activities for specific children needing care in neighborhoods where children needing placement live
201-01-007	Knows how to use public relations, marketing, and community development strategies in recruitment efforts
201-01-008	Can develop and implement foster care and adoption recruitment strategies, including resource listings, adoption exchanges, community resources, and interagency collaboration

Skill Set 201-02: Ability to conduct foster and adoptive family assessments	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
201-02-001	Knows topics to be assessed during foster and adoptive family assessments and knows how to conduct assessment activities
201-02-002	Knows the social, emotional, and physical/medical characteristics of families that can successfully provide temporary or permanent homes for children
201-02-003	Knows the types of family expectations and needs that are counterproductive to successful caregiving, and understands the importance of counseling such families out of the caregiving process
201-02-004	Understands the family dynamics and characteristics that increase the likelihood of long-term placement success
201-02-005	Understands various factors that motivate prospective parents to pursue foster care or adoption, and how these motivations may impact the long term success of fostering or adoptive parenting
201-02-006	Knows the benefits of group assessment and self-selection methods for caregiving families and knows how to use these strategies appropriately
201-02-007	Understands the likely impact of chronic illness and emotional, mental, or behavioral disability on family life for the life span of the child; and can assist the potential resource family in realistically assessing their ability to cope with these challenges
201-02-008	Knows how to gather information about the applicant family's current functioning, history and background, and developmental needs, from a variety of sources, draw accurate conclusions, and make recommendations regarding their suitability for fostering or adopting
201-02-009	Knows how to educate family members during the family assessment process regarding realistic expectations for fostering or adopting children who have been maltreated
201-02-010	Knows how to develop clear and concise written assessment reports for foster parent licensure and adoptive parent approval

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

201-02-011	Knows how to use a variety of interviewing strategies and formats (such as individual, couple, children, family, or extended family group) to involve family members in gathering and considering pertinent assessment data and in assessing their own strengths and potential vulnerabilities in caregiving
201-02-012	Can recognize characteristics and dynamics in individuals and families that are consistent with foster caregiving and adoptive parenting, and those that are counterproductive to foster caregiving and adoptive parenting
201-02-013	Can inform the family about child welfare foster and adoptive services during the foster/adoptive assessment process
201-02-014	Can explore motivations to care for children and is able to identify inappropriate motivations such as the replacement of a lost child, desire for playmates for existing children, guilt, or a desire for appreciation/gratitude from the primary family or the child
201-02-015	Can conduct thorough, joint adoptive/ foster family assessments and can document the information in a written report

Skill Set 201-03: Ability to conduct and coordinate training for foster and adoptive parents	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
201-03-001	Understands the importance of pre-service and in-service training for foster caregivers and adoptive parents
201-03-002	Knows state regulations regarding required training for foster caregivers and adoptive parents
201-03-003	Understands principles of adult learning and the importance of transfer of learning, and how this applies to foster caregiver and adoptive parent training
201-03-004	Understands the importance of on-the-job training, coaching, and mentoring in building foster caregiver and adoptive parent skills
201-03-005	Understands how to identify training needs through the individualized training needs assessment, and knows how to use training needs data to develop training plans for foster caregivers and adoptive parents
201-03-006	Knows how to coordinate pre-service and in-service training that meets foster caregiver and adoptive parents' needs
201-03-007	Knows how to coordinate pre-service training with the foster/adoptive family assessment process
201-03-008	Knows how to conduct post-training follow-up to ensure resource foster caregivers and adoptive parents transfer learning from the workshop to the home
201-03-009	Can coordinate and implement foster, kinship and adoptive parent training programs

Skill Set 201-04: Ability to choose appropriate placements for children and prepare children resource and birth families for foster and adoptive placement	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
201-04-001	Understands the importance of gathering complete background information about foster and adopted children for placement and case planning, and of sharing with the child when appropriate
201-04-002	Knows possible sources of information regarding the birth parents and children, including medical, psychological, and educational records, court reports, extended family members and other service providers
201-04-003	Knows the agency's role in facilitating information-sharing among birth parents, foster caregivers, adoptive parents, and service providers, and understands the legal and ethical constraints involved
201-04-004	Knows strategies for engaging birth parents, foster caregivers, and adoptive parents in planning for the child's separation from one family and placement into another
201-04-005	Understands the various factors regarding the child's development, functioning, and special needs that should be considered when choosing a foster or adoptive placement for the child
201-04-006	Understands the importance of seeking out all possible family members for purposes of case planning, assessment, and placement planning; knows how to locate parents or extended family members when their whereabouts are unknown
201-04-007	Understands the importance of involving children's birth, kinship and foster parents in helping children adjust to placement in foster and adoptive homes
201-04-008	Understands the various factors regarding resource family's dynamics, experiences, parenting skills that should be considered when choosing a resource family for a child
201-04-009	Knows how to gather thorough assessment information about the child including current developmental level and functioning, medical and genetic history, primary family's background and history, and the nature of the child's attachments
201-04-010	Knows how to record information about birth family history and child assessment on appropriate forms in a clear, concise manner to ensure appropriate placement decisions are made and children will have access to complete information about their history when they reach adulthood
201-04-011	Understands the importance of sibling relationships in making placement decisions and knows how to maintain sibling ties whenever possible throughout the placement process
201-04-012	Understands the importance of providing resource families with thorough and accurate information about the child's history, special needs, daily routine, and fears, and knows strategies for locating such information as soon as possible
201-04-013	Knows the typical emotional conflicts, fears, and expectations resource families experience during the placement process and knows strategies for helping resolve issues that may impede the placement process

201-04-014	Knows how to use a variety of strategies including life books, stories, and play to prepare children for foster, adoptive, or kinship placement; to reduce placement-induced stress; and to help children understand their history, while maintaining their sense of identify and continuity (See 303: <i>Casework With Children</i> competencies)
201-04-015	Knows how to help children transition from one resource family to another through strategies such as pre-placement visits, minimizing the amount of change in the child's life, encouraging continuity of child-care routines, and good-bye messages
201-04-016	Understands the emotional conflict resource families experience when children leave their homes, and knows how to help these families assist children with the transition from one resource family to another
201-04-017	Can gather necessary and helpful background information about children placed in out-of-home care from a variety of sources, and can record that information in the case record
201-04-018	Can provide information about the child's background to the child or the resource parent to help the child understand his background, and reasons for placement
201-04-019	Can engage the birth parent in providing input as to the type of caregiving or adoptive family most suitable for the child and, when appropriate, in determining the type of future contact with the child and the caregiver or adoptive parent
201-04-020	Can develop and implement a placement plan that addresses the child's needs for security, meets the child's special needs, reduces anxiety, and promotes permanency
201-04-021	Can provide support, encouragement, and consultation to resource families to prepare them for children entering their homes
201-04-022	Can assess the needs of children requiring kinship, foster, or adoptive placement and can select the most appropriate, least restrictive, most home-like setting to meet the child's developmental and treatment needs
201-04-023	Can facilitate meetings between birth and resource parents to develop and implement plans to help children adjust to their placements and promote placement stability

Skill Set 201-05: Ability to support foster, kinship, and adoptive parents in providing care for children in their homes	
---	--

Comp. No.	Competency Description
201-05-001	Knows the worker's role and responsibilities in partnering with resource families and community service providers to ensure substitute families receive coordinated support in managing challenges associated with foster, kinship care, and adoptive parenting
201-05-002	Knows issues facing resource families when adjusting to the placement of a child in their home, and when responding to emotional and behavioral problems with children in care

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

201-05-003	Knows the potential disruptive impact of foster or kinship care on the caregiving family
201-05-004	Understands the range of emotional reactions experienced by resource families when children move out of their homes, and the worker's role in helping them resolve those issues
201-05-005	Understands the unique issues and challenges for resource families who are older, physically-challenged, gay/lesbian, single, and other non-traditional foster, kinship and adoptive parents
201-05-006	Understands the unique issues and challenges for children, primary parents, and kinship providers in kinship care placements
201-05-007	Understands the unique issues and challenges for children, and their resource families when caring for children with developmental and physical disabilities, mental illness/emotional disturbance, or chronic illness
201-05-008	Understands the unique issues and challenges for children, and their resource families when caring for children whose race, culture, or ethnicity is different from the substitute parent
201-05-009	Understands the unique issues and challenges for children and their resource families in caring for and parenting gay and lesbian youth
201-05-010	Understands the unique issues and challenges for children and their resource families in caring for children who are immigrants or refugees
201-05-011	Understands how the impact of grief and loss on resource families can impact their ability to support permanency plans for children
201-05-012	Understands the dynamics of placement disruption and the ways that poor agency programming can contribute to placement instability
201-05-013	Knows strategies for providing support and crisis intervention for resource families to help them cope with the changes in their family brought about by placement
201-05-014	Knows early signs of placement stress and typical stages of foster or adoptive placement disruption, and knows how to intervene early to prevent disruption and retain foster caregivers
201-05-015	Understands the importance of children attaching to their foster caregiver or adoptive parent, and how to obtain appropriate permission from the birth parent to enable the child to adjust and attach in the foster, kinship, or adoptive home
201-05-016	Knows how to use specialized agency programs and services to support and sustain resource families, including training, respite care, mentoring programs, support groups, and access to caseworker support
201-05-017	Knows how to inform resource parents about the child's family situation, development, functioning and special needs; help them use the information in planning for and caring for the child; and gather additional information, if needed
201-05-018	Knows how to engage community members, social service providers and other resource families in providing support for foster, kinship, and adoptive families
201-05-019	Knows how to support and develop the cultural, ethnic, or racial identity of children in care

201-05-020	Knows how to support foster parents' development of collaborative relationships with primary parents
201-05-021	Knows how to help foster/kinship caregivers and adoptive parents advocate for needed educational, social, and health care services for their foster/adopted child
201-05-022	Can partner individually or in team meetings with resource families and appropriate service providers, to facilitate placement and promote joint planning and delivery of services, in order to meet the needs of children in care and support the caregivers/parents (See competencies regarding family group meetings in <i>207: Family-Centered Neighborhood-Based Casework</i>)
201-05-023	Can help resource families identify stresses brought about by placement and help them identify potential solutions and helping resources to resolve problems and promote placement stability
201-05-024	Can help resource parents correctly assess and develop strategies to manage children's behavior problems; and to collaborate with teachers, therapists and others to implement behavior management strategies
201-05-025	Can help resource parents constructively manage and evaluate visits and other contact with families of children in care and, when appropriate, work directly with family members to achieve case goals
201-05-026	Can assist foster and kinship caregivers to manage conflicting feelings about supporting reunification while agreeing to adopt or assume legal guardianship
201-05-027	Can provide emotional support to children in care to assist with their adjustment to their foster, kinship, or adoptive home
201-05-028	Can support resource families after the children have returned to their primary home

Skill Set 201-06: Ability to provide direct services, case planning, and service coordination for children in placement	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
201-06-001	Understands the worker's role in promoting permanency for children; and developing, strengthening, and supporting families for all children in need of homes
201-06-002	Understands the importance of kinship relationships; and the "adoptability" of all children
201-06-003	Understands typical emotional conflicts children in placement experience throughout placement; knows strategies for helping children express their feelings, and resources for counseling for these children and their resource families
201-06-004	Understands common misperceptions foster or adoptive children may have regarding their backgrounds and reasons for their placement; knows developmentally appropriate methods for explaining that information to children of various developmental stages

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

201-06-005	Understands common myths associated with some foster and adoptive parents' intention to hide sensitive information from their foster or adopted children and the detrimental effect withholding information can have on a child
201-06-006	Understands the importance of developing and implementing community-based case-plans which include working with children, birth, resource families, and various child placing agencies
201-06-007	Understands the necessity of inter and intra-agency collaboration and the components of successful interagency collaboration in foster care and adoption cases to ensure children's needs are met and to promote placement stability and permanency for all children
201-06-008	Understands the roles and perspectives of both public and private child-placing agencies and how those roles and perspectives are similar and different from each other
201-06-009	Understands how differences in role expectations, culture, and value differences, issues regarding trust, power, and control; and interpersonal conflicts between public and private child-placing agencies can inhibit successful interagency collaboration
201-06-010	Understands administrative barriers to interagency placement collaboration, such as values regarding adoption subsidies or practices related to pre-placement visitation, and understands how these are developed and maintained
201-06-011	Knows strategies for promoting collaboration and reducing barriers to collaboration between PCSA staff and staff from other child-placing agencies
201-06-012	Knows the workers' role and responsibilities during investigations of alleged maltreatment of children in care, including ensuring children's safety, facilitating the investigation, and discerning instances of rules violations from child maltreatment
201-06-013	Knows how to collaborate with law enforcement officers or caseworkers who investigate allegations of abuse or neglect in foster care
201-06-014	Knows how to distinguish between abuse/neglect and foster care rules violations
201-06-015	Knows how to protect children in care while assessing the validity of allegations of abuse/neglect or rule violations
201-06-016	Knows how to arrange for foster caregivers to receive emotional support throughout the investigation
201-06-017	Knows how to educate families regarding preventing unwarranted allegations of child maltreatment
201-06-018	Knows when to terminate placements in situations where allegations of maltreatment have occurred
201-06-019	Knows criteria and processes for determining that reunification is not plausible, and knows how to develop supplemental (concurrent) planning to ensure timely permanency for children in foster or kinship care
201-06-020	Can assess potential alternative placement settings to determine whether they meet children's permanency needs

201-06-021	Can develop and maintain collaborative working relationships with staff from other child placing agencies to ensure successful placements and permanency for children
201-06-022	Can develop and manage child-specific teams for foster and adopted children to ensure those child's needs are met and services are coordinated, and to promote permanency for those children
201-06-023	Can reduce barriers to effective collaboration among child-placing agencies in his or her county
201-06-024	Can provide appropriate support to foster parents during third-party investigations of maltreatment, while collaborating with law enforcement and child protective services workers conducting the investigation
201-06-025	Can collaborate with foster children's caseworkers to determine appropriate placement options for children during investigations of maltreatment in the foster home
201-06-026	Can monitor the implementation of all case plan and supplemental case plan activities and, when necessary, can advocate for improved or more timely services to ensure timely permanency for children

Skill Set 201-07: Ability to provide post adoption services and to support adoptive parents and children to promote placement stability and prevent adoption disruption
--

Comp. No.	Competency Description
201-07-001	Understands predictable phases (i.e., placement, pre-finalization and post-finalization) in adjusting to adoption, the psycho-social tasks that need to be resolved during those phases, and the worker's role in supporting the child and family during each phase
201-07-002	Understands the typical emotional responses and ambivalence often experienced by children and adoptive family members prior to and after adoption finalization; knows when these issues are likely to emerge; knows how to help the family manage stress and conflict during these periods
201-07-003	Understands how adoption may affect adopted children and families throughout their lives, the potential need for post-adoption services throughout their lives, and how to help adoptive families accept those services
201-07-004	Understands the reasons adopted children, their siblings, or their birth parents may search for one another; the potential psychological risks of searching, and strategies to prepare participants for the various potential outcomes of a search
201-07-005	Understands the agency's role in facilitating information-sharing between adopted children and birth family members who are searching for each other, the pertinent legal and ethical constraints, and state laws and regulations regarding disclosing identifying and non-identifying information
201-07-006	Knows how to help adult adoptees search for their birth family members

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

201-07-007	Understands how factors such as children’s unique vulnerabilities, visits with birth families, specific developmental stages, changes in family structure and lifestyle, or adoption finalization could trigger emotional distress or crisis for children in placement and their adoptive families
201-07-008	Knows how to recognize emotional distress and crisis in adopted children and their families, and knows how to provide support and crisis intervention to reduce distress, and resolve the crisis
201-07-009	Understands how adoption-related related family crises may result in child-maltreatment or unruly behavior, and knows how to help agency staff understand, and respond appropriately when these cases are referred to the agency
201-07-010	Understands the complex and inter-related factors associated with the child, family, agency, and community that contribute to adoptive placement disruption, and how adoptive families typically progress through predictable stages prior to disruption
201-07-011	Understands how lack of financial resources to treat adopted children’s special needs can contribute to stress in the adoptive family, and adoptive placement disruption
201-07-012	Understands federal and state laws and regulations regarding adoption subsidy, eligibility criteria and benefits of various subsidies, and the caseworker’s role in informing adoptive parents of available subsidies and advocating for eligible adoption subsidies
201-07-013	Understands the social/emotional impact of adoptive placement disruption on the child and the adoptive family, and how to provide them with supportive services before, during, and after these events
201-07-014	Understands the typical emotional reactions he/she and others in the agency may experience following an adoptive placement disruption
201-07-015	Can prepare and support adopted children and their adoptive parents during placement and pre-finalization processes to ensure stability of the family and adequate planning for the child’s current and future needs
201-07-016	Can jointly develop and help adoptive families implement post-placement plans that include appropriate formal and informal support systems, networks of veteran adoptive families, health and mental health treatment, and developmental and enrichment activities to meet adoptive families’ needs
201-07-017	Can prepare families to recognize early indicators of serious problems in the adoptive relationships and to intervene to prevent escalation into crisis and adoptive placement disruption
201-07-018	Can recognize indicators of problems in adoptive families prior to finalization and help them resolve problems and crises to avoid adoptive placement disruption
201-07-019	Can maintain the resource adoptive family as a source of social/emotional support for the child after adoptive placement disruption and, when appropriate, can strengthen the family as a potential placement resource for other children

Skill Set 201-08: Ability to support birth parents whose parental rights have been terminated and maintain their cooperation with the agency throughout the adoption process	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
201-08-001	Understands common dilemmas workers face in facilitating termination of parental rights while simultaneously supporting birth parents through voluntary or involuntary termination of parental rights
201-08-002	Understands the life-long social and emotional issues for birth parents involved in voluntary and involuntary termination of parental rights
201-08-003	Understands the factors that impact the degree of grief experienced by birth parents whose children are adopted
201-08-004	Understands the importance of involving birth fathers and their extended families throughout the adoption process, and knows strategies for involving birth fathers
201-08-005	Understands the range of emotions birth parents may experience regarding termination of parental rights, and how this impacts the casework relationship with birth parents
201-08-006	Knows which information about birth families should be gathered, how to sensitively elicit and record that information even when the birth parents are hostile towards the agency; and how to explain the necessity of gathering that information
201-08-007	Understands the importance of birth families giving their children permission to be part of another family; knows how to help parents develop and deliver developmentally appropriate permission messages
201-08-008	Understands the caseworker's legally mandated requirement to inform birth parents of all parenting options available to them (i.e. adoption, foster care, kinship care, and parenting children themselves); the agency services associated with those options; and strategies for helping birth parents determine which option may be most appropriate for their situation
201-08-009	Understands the range of birth parent's responses to the caseworker and agency, and knows strategies for maintaining collaborative casework relationships with birth parents throughout the adoption process
201-08-010	Knows how to provide birth parents with information about parenting options for their children including adoption, foster care, kinship care, and parenting
201-08-011	Knows how to prepare birth parents for court processes involved in terminating parental rights
201-08-012	Knows how to help birth parents address issues related to grief over losing their children to adoption
201-08-013	Knows how to help birth families consider and select the most appropriate level of openness in adoption for their situation
201-08-014	Can provide emotional support to the primary family and help them maintain self-esteem and family integrity throughout the separation, placement, and permanency planning process
201-08-015	Can support birth parents in making responsible parenting decisions throughout the adoption (e.g. obtaining pre-natal care, participating in permanency planning, providing items for life books, etc.)

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

201-08-016	Can support and assist birth parents in saying good-bye to their children and give them permission to love the adoptive parents
201-08-017	Can provide birth parent with accurate information and resources for all parenting options including parenting, foster care, and open or closed adoption

Skill Set 201-09: Ability to arrange for openness in adoptive family – birth family relationships
--

Comp. No.	Competency Description
201-09-001	Knows the various options along the continuum of openness in adoption and the advantages and disadvantages of each, the possible impact of each on the child, birth and adoptive parents, and the types of situations appropriate for each option
201-09-002	Understands how cultural values and other factors may affect individuals' expectations regarding openness in adoption and their ability to plan for openness, and how differences in expectations may create tension in relationships between the child, birth parents and adoptive parents
201-09-003	Understands the possible emotional conflicts for the child and adoptive families following an open adoption
201-09-004	Understands the ethical dilemmas inherent in adoption practice involving openness between the birth and adoptive families
201-09-005	Understands how desire for contact between the child and birth parent may change throughout their lives, and how differences in their desire for contact can affect the relationship between all parties involved
201-09-006	Knows resources available to help birth and adoptive families resolve disputes regarding their relationship
201-09-007	Knows how to prepare adoptive parents to anticipate and manage the child's stress triggered by post adoption contacts with birth family members
201-09-008	Can assess the potential impact of various options along the openness continuum on the emotional, social, and psychological functioning of the child and adoptive parent, and can determine the most appropriate adoption strategy for the child and the adoptive parents
201-09-009	Can help birth and adoptive families devise a plan for mediation if conflicts arise between them in the future

Skill Set 201-10: Ability to conduct foster and adoption services in a culturally responsive manner
--

Comp. No.	Competency Description
201-10-001	Understands how families with diverse and nontraditional structures or lifestyles can effectively meet the needs of children in out-of-home placement
201-10-002	Understands how cultural differences may complicate issues of separation, attachment, and long-term adjustment in transracial/transcultural placements

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

201-10-003	Understands how cultural differences in communication, perception, and social interactions between foster and adoption Assessors and applicant families can complicate the assessment process and result in errors in the assessment
201-10-004	Understands how agency policies and practices may present obstacles to recruiting minority families, and knows strategies to identify, engage, and assess prospective families within their cultural context
201-10-005	Knows how to conduct a foster/adoptive assessment in a culturally informed manner in order to ensure accuracy of information gathered
201-10-006	Understands the importance of cultural continuity and preservation of children's cultural identity and knows strategies for maintaining a child's cultural heritage throughout the placement and adoption process
201-10-007	Knows how to make placement decisions that are both beneficial to the child's adjustment and in compliance with the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act and the Indian Child Welfare Act
201-10-008	Can identify and consider the advantages and disadvantages of placement of a child with a family to whom he or she is significantly attached, but who is of a different cultural background than the child
201-10-009	Can assist resource families who ask for help in assessing their ability to respond to the special issues encountered in transcultural placement and their ability to make necessary changes in parenting and social affiliations needed to support and maintain the child's cultural identification
201-10-010	Can assist resource families who ask for help in developing and implementing strategies to ensure cultural continuity and positive racial identity formation for children in their care

Skill Set 201-11: Ability to conduct placement services within the applicable legal framework	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
201-11-001	Understands the requirements of the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act and how it impacts foster care and adoption services
201-11-002	Understands the Indian Child Welfare Act and how it impacts foster care and adoption services
201-11-003	Understands the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and their requirements for providing special educational services for all children, and knows how this applies to children in foster, kinship, and adoptive homes
201-11-004	Understands the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) requirement to not discriminate on the basis of geography when seeking adoptive homes for children
201-11-005	Knows appropriate legal actions and preparation of case plan, case record, court testimony, and semi-annual review documentation needed to obtain Termination of Parental Rights, (See 205: <i>Legal Issues in Child Welfare</i> competencies)

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

201-11-006	Understands legal processes involved in terminating an adoption, i.e., adoption dissolution
201-11-007	Understands adoption law regulating voluntary relinquishment, involuntary termination of parental rights, which grounds should be used for involuntary termination of parental rights, and the appropriate legal processes for terminating parental rights
201-11-008	Understands state laws and regulations regarding disclosing identifying and non-identifying information to birth parents, adoptive parents, and adult and minor adoptees
201-11-009	Understands state statute requirements regarding notification to both birth parents and their extended family members regarding court actions, understands the requirements and processes of the putative father registry, and knows strategies for providing notice to parents whose addresses are “unknown”
201-11-010	Knows how to help foster caregivers and adoptive parents advocate for legally required special services for children in their care
201-11-011	Can ensure that all necessary documentation service is complete, and can prepare case records and testimony for termination of parental rights hearings
201-11-012	Can ensure that children in foster and adoptive care receive all legally required services from school systems and other service providers

SPECIALIZED CASEWORKER COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 202 ADOLESCENT SERVICES

Skill Sets

202-01: Ability to provide developmentally appropriate casework services to adolescents

202-02: Ability to prepare adolescents for placement

202-03: Ability to identify and assess the individual, family and social factors that contribute to problems experienced by adolescents, and to develop appropriate case plans to resolve those problems

202-04: Ability to provide casework services to unruly youth

202-05: Ability to assess readiness for independent living and develop, coordinate, and implement independent living plans for teens

202-06: Ability to provide services to pregnant and parenting teens

Skill Set 202-01: Ability to provide developmentally appropriate casework services to adolescents	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
202-01-001	Aware of how teens' social, emotional and cognitive development may affect the casework processes such as investigative interviewing, casework counseling, and case planning
202-01-002	Knows developmentally and culturally appropriate, culturally-competent strategies for engaging youth in the development of a trusting casework relationship
202-01-003	Knows developmentally appropriate strategies for conducting investigative interviews and caseworker counseling with adolescents
202-01-004	Knows how to apply developmentally appropriate interviewing and counseling strategies in a variety of situations, such as investigative interviews, problem solving, supportive counseling and crisis intervention
202-01-005	Can use a variety of skills to overcome adolescent's resistance and engage them in casework services in a developmentally appropriate manner
202-01-006	Can conduct developmentally appropriate interview and counseling sessions with teens

Skill Set 202-02: Ability to prepare adolescents for placement	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
202-02-001	Knows the developmental implications of preparing adolescents for foster, kinship, group home, residential treatment, and adoptive placements
202-02-002	Knows how to use interviewing and counseling strategies to help teens discuss their concerns and resistance regarding foster, kinship, group home, residential, and adoptive placement
202-02-003	Can prepare teens for substitute placement and help substitute caregivers understand youth's specific needs and concerns

Skill Set 202-03: Ability to identify and assess the individual, family and social factors that contribute to problems experienced by adolescents, and to develop appropriate case plans to resolve those problems	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
202-03-001	Knows how physical, emotional, social, cognitive and sexual development affects adolescent behavior and adjustment, and knows how to distinguish normal adolescent behavior from behavior that indicates emotional disturbance or substance abuse
202-03-002	Knows the behavioral indicators and dynamics of adolescent depression, suicide, and other emotional disturbance and knows how to make appropriate referrals for further assessment and in-patient/out-patient services
202-03-003	Understands the factors contributing to substance abuse among teens, the unique aspects of progression from substance use to abuse, and the impact of substance abuse on adolescent development and behavior
202-03-004	Understands the issues involved in differential diagnosis of substance abuse and emotional disturbance and in treating teens who have both problems
202-03-005	Knows appropriate treatment interventions for teens who have substance abuse problems
202-03-006	Knows appropriate treatment interventions for teens who have emotional disturbance
202-03-007	Knows familial, emotional, social, and developmental factors that may create crisis for teens; and knows how to utilize community supportive services, crisis placements, and mental health services to ensure safety and permanency for adolescents in crisis
202-03-008	Can recognize the indicators of emotional disturbance and crisis in teens, can develop case plans for further assessment and treatment, and can engage youth in appropriate community services
202-03-009	Can recognize the indicators of substance abuse in teens, can develop case plans for further assessment and treatment, and can engage youth in appropriate community services

202-03-010	Can recognize the indicators of suicidal thoughts in teens; can engage the teen in immediate assessment, develop a plan for treatment, and engage the teen in those services
-------------------	--

Skill Set 202-04: Ability to provide casework services to unruly youth	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
202-04-001	Understands social, emotional, and familial factors that may contribute to the development of unruly and delinquent behavior
202-04-002	Understands the dynamics of youth gang membership and activities, how youth become involved in gangs, indicators that a youth is involved in a gang, and the caseworker's role in working with youth involved in gangs
202-04-003	Understands court processes related to unruly and delinquent offenses, and knows how to coordinate services with the juvenile court system
202-04-004	Can assess individual, family, and social dynamics and crises that contribute to unruly/delinquent adolescents' behavior problems
202-04-005	Can develop case plans to address the unruly/delinquent adolescents' emotional, educational, social, and developmental needs, and the family and environmental factors contributing to unruly or delinquent behavior
202-04-006	Can help parents/caregivers understand their youth's behavior, can collaborate with parents/caregivers to manage treatment interventions, and can advise them on appropriate behavior management methods (See 305: <i>Parenting Skills</i> and 322: <i>Behavior Management and Discipline</i> competencies)

Skill Set 202-05: Ability to assess readiness for independent living and develop, coordinate and implement independent living plans for teens	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
202-05-001	Knows the range of skills necessary for independent living (such as financial management, household management, obtaining a job, etc.) and knows resources for training adolescents in these skills
202-05-002	Knows how to collaborate with substitute caregivers to help adolescents develop and practice independent living skills
202-05-003	Knows how to engage primary parents and caregivers, mentors, community businesses, and religious and civic organizations in helping teens prepare for independent living
202-05-004	Can assess the adolescent's level of ability in critical skills needed for independent living, including developmental delays that may interfere with emancipation; can involve the youth in the development of a comprehensive independence plan
202-05-005	Can plan, provide, and coordinate a range of independent living training and services for adolescents with foster or kinship providers, community service providers, and mentors

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

202-05-006	Can help teens obtain independent housing and help teens with developmental, mental, or emotional disabilities obtain supervised living arrangements
202-05-007	Can determine when it is appropriate to close cases of emancipating youth and can develop independent living plans for young adults who return to the agency for assistance with independent living preparation

Skill Set 202-06: Ability to provide services to pregnant and parenting teens	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
202-06-001	Understands the specific social, emotional, educational, health, and legal issues for pregnant or parenting teens in managing family relationships, continuing education, and preparing for independent living
202-06-002	Knows community social, medical and legal resources for teens who are pregnant or parenting
202-06-003	Knows how to advocate with school personnel for special needs of pregnant students and new mothers returning to school
202-06-004	Knows how to mediate family disagreements between the minor parent and his/her parents
202-06-005	Knows how to help teen parents establish paternity, obtain child support, and negotiate the involvement of the non-custodial parent
202-06-006	Knows how to access adoption services for teen parents
202-06-007	Can help pregnant and parent teens obtain the financial, social, and health care resources they need for their baby
202-06-008	Can help parenting teens and their parents resolve issues related to the care and support of their baby
202-06-009	Can help parenting teens prepare for independent living

SPECIALIZED CASEWORKER COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 203 SEXUAL ABUSE

Skill Sets

203-01: Ability to identify children who have been sexually abused and to assess risk of future abuse

203-02: Ability to plan, conduct and document investigations in sexual abuse cases in a manner that will protect the child from further abuse, and support fair and accurate decision-making in the child welfare and criminal justice systems

203-03: Ability to assess common dynamics of children who have been sexually abused, their siblings; and their offending and non-offending parents to develop case plans and select services

203-04: Ability to assess common dynamics of children and adolescents who have sexually abused others to coordinate planning and delivery of placement and treatment services for them and their families

203-05: Ability to make appropriate placements for children at risk of further sexual abuse when needed; to implement and coordinate services to parents and substitute caregivers providing out-of-home care to children who have been sexually abused or to children and adolescents who have sexually offended others

203-06: Ability to properly sequence and implement case closure or reunification for children who have been sexually abused

Skill Set 203-01: Ability to identify children who have been sexually abused and to assess risk of future abuse

Comp. No.	Competency Description
203-01-001	Knows the legal and social work definitions of child sexual abuse and the range of behaviors and activities that may constitute child sexual abuse
203-01-002	Knows the common physical, behavioral, and environmental indicators associated with child sexual abuse
203-01-003	Understands factors to consider when determining whether a child's sexual behavior is normal and expected-or cause for concern
203-01-004	Understands the characteristics, interpersonal dynamics, and emotional/social functioning of offenders, non-offending parents, and siblings in families where sexual abuse occurs
203-01-005	Understands how the dynamics of sexual abuse commonly affect children's behavior and their ability to disclose abuse

203-01-006	Knows a variety of methods for observing individual and family dynamics, and talking with and questioning children and their families to recognize indicators of sexual abuse
203-01-007	Knows a variety of methods for observing children and gathering information from parents or caregivers to determine whether children's sexual behavior is normal and expected
203-01-008	Understands factors to be assessed that may impact risk of immediate and future sexual abuse and knows how to gather and evaluate information regarding those factors
203-01-009	Can assess a child's sexual behavior and identify children who should be further assessed for possible indicators of child sexual abuse
203-01-010	Can recognize possible indicators of intra-familial sexual abuse
203-01-011	Can assess likelihood of further sexual abuse

Skill Set 203-02: Ability to plan, conduct and document investigations in sexual abuse cases in a manner that will protect the child from further abuse, and support fair and accurate decision-making in the child welfare and criminal justice systems

Comp. No.	Competency Description
203-02-001	Understands the importance of developing an investigative plan in child sexual abuse cases
203-02-002	Knows types of investigative interview questions to be used when interviewing alleged child victim of sexual abuse, siblings, alleged perpetrator, and non-offending parent and understands the benefits and liabilities of each type
203-02-003	Knows topics that must be addressed in interviewing alleged child victims of sexual abuse, non-offending parents, alleged perpetrators, and collaborative witnesses
203-02-004	Understands how personal reactions, biases, and values regarding sexual abuse can impact sexual abuse investigations; knows how to manage common emotional reactions when conducting sexual abuse investigations
203-02-005	Understands how cultural factors may affect the investigation and assessment of child sexual abuse cases
203-02-006	Understands the necessity of multidisciplinary involvement in investigation of child sexual abuse (including multidisciplinary teams and Child Advocacy Centers), the roles and responsibilities of participating agencies, and the PSCA's policies and procedures regarding multidisciplinary involvement
203-02-007	Understands the emotional, social, and cultural factors that may influence a child sexual abuse victim's disclosure, or cause the child to recant, and knows how to conduct the investigation in a manner that protects the child from pressure to withhold information or recant
203-02-008	Understands the importance of corroborating children's disclosure of sexual abuse and knows how to corroborate their statements with additional evidence

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

203-02-009	Understands how investigative tools (such as dolls, toys, video and audio tapes) can be used during child sexual abuse investigations; the benefits and liabilities of each, and agency policy and procedures regarding using use of these tools
203-02-010	Understands the importance of physical evidence in the investigation and prosecution of sexual abuse cases, and knows agency policies and procedures regarding coordinating with law enforcement to identify, gather, and protect physical evidence
203-02-011	Understands special considerations involved in investigations of children or adolescents who have sexually abused other children
203-02-012	Understands dynamics of sexual offending and how it impacts the investigation of child sexual abuse
203-02-013	Knows when and how to include law enforcement and the prosecutor in investigations of child sexual abuse cases
203-02-014	Knows criteria for determining the credibility of a child's disclosure and how to evaluate the child's disclosure during the investigation
203-02-015	Knows strategies for reducing resistance during sexual abuse investigative interviews with the alleged child victim, siblings, alleged perpetrator, and non-offending parent
203-02-016	Knows how to obtain legal, medical, therapeutic, and financial services that protect the alleged child victim of sexual abuse and support the family during an investigation
203-02-017	Knows how to determine who should be interviewed, and in what order, in all types of child sexual abuse cases
203-02-018	Can coordinate the investigation of child sexual abuse with law enforcement, prosecutor, medical providers, and Child Advocacy Center staff
203-02-019	Can evaluate the benefits and liabilities of various interviewing tools in child sexual abuse cases and can follow agency policy in using interviewing tools
203-02-020	Can employ developmentally and culturally appropriate interviewing techniques in child sexual abuse cases to gather full and accurate information that is admissible in court, and evaluate the credibility of statements, when interviewing victims, siblings, alleged perpetrators, non-offending parents, and collateral sources
203-02-021	Can conduct joint interviews in sexual abuse cases with law enforcement officers, Child Advocacy Center staff, and prosecutors to gather full information to ensure the child's protection and criminal prosecution, when necessary
203-02-022	Can recognize pertinent evidence needed for the prosecution of sexual abuse cases, coordinate with law enforcement regarding gathering evidence, and protect evidence to ensure it can be admitted into court hearings
203-02-023	Can conduct investigations in a manner that protects the child(ren) from further sexual abuse, prevents the child from recanting, and supports and assists the non-offending parent in protecting his or her children

Skill Set 203-03: Ability to assess common dynamics of children who have been sexually abused, their siblings, and their offending and non-offending parents to develop case plans and select services	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
203-03-001	Understands how cultural factors may affect case planning and implementation in child sexual abuse cases
203-03-002	Understands the potential short-term and long-term physical, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive impact of sexual abuse on children and their families
203-03-003	Understands the characteristics of children and siblings that increase vulnerability to sexual abuse and characteristics associated with greater trauma for child victims
203-03-004	Understands the characteristics of non-offending parents in sexual abuse cases and their pivotal role in child safety
203-03-005	Understands the importance of therapeutic intervention to resolve thinking and behavioral patterns that perpetuate sexual offending
203-03-006	Understands common patterns of organization, communication, codes of conduct, boundaries, and support found in families of children who have been sexually abused
203-03-007	Understands how personal reactions, biases, and values regarding sexual abuse can impact child welfare practice; knows how to manage common emotional reactions when working with sexual abuse cases
203-03-008	Understands the roles and responsibilities of the PCSA, juvenile court, prosecutors, mental health and other treatment providers in coordinating treatment interventions in sexual abuse cases
203-03-009	Understands goals, milestones, and appropriate sequencing of treatment interventions for sexually abused children and their families
203-03-010	Knows how to include critical elements in safety and case plans for children who have been sexually abused and their families
203-03-011	Can engage the family in designing and implementing safety and case plans that address factors contributing to sexual abuse and provide needed treatment and supportive services
203-03-012	Can plan and implement services to strengthen parents' and foster/kinship caregivers' ability to provide safe, nurturing care to children who have been sexually abused
203-03-013	Can coordinate and monitor therapeutic interventions for children who have been sexually abused and their families

Skill Set 203-04: Ability to assess common dynamics of children and adolescents who have sexually abused others to coordinate planning and delivery of placement and treatment services for them and their families	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
203-04-001	Understands workers' responsibility to protect victim(s) from further abuse, to prevent adolescents with illegal sexual behaviors from re-offending, and to hold them accountable for their behaviors
203-04-002	Understands the dynamics of sexual offending by youth
203-04-003	Understands the dynamics and indicators of usual and expected sexual exploration between children, and how they differ from dynamics and indicators of sexually-reactive behavior and sexually abusive behavior
203-04-004	Understands differences in dynamics of male and female adolescents with illegal sexual behaviors and between pre-pubescent and adolescent offenders
203-04-005	Understands treatment goals and milestones for children and adolescents who have sexually abused other children and the complex issues involved in service termination and case closure
203-04-006	Knows how to evaluate and choose appropriate placement and treatment services for adolescents with illegal sexual behaviors
203-04-007	Knows the components of a comprehensive assessment that is specific for adolescents with illegal sexual behaviors and how to obtain such an assessment
203-04-008	Knows how to involve law enforcement and the court system in holding adolescents with illegal sexual behaviors accountable and in motivating him/her to pursue treatment
203-04-009	Knows how to evaluate whether treatment has progressed adequately to terminate treatment or close the case
203-04-010	Can differentiate usual and expected sexual exploration, sexually-reactive, and sexually abusive behavior
203-04-011	Can use assessment information to plan services for the adolescents with illegal sexual behaviors
203-04-012	Can develop a case plan appropriate for the age, gender, and circumstances of adolescents with illegal sexual behaviors
203-04-013	Can identify and coordinate services to child victims, adolescents with illegal sexual behaviors, and the parents or caregivers, and siblings of adolescents with illegal sexual behaviors
203-04-014	Can implement a safe process for closing cases as well as for reunification in cases involving adolescents with illegal sexual behaviors

Skill Set 203-05: Ability to make appropriate placements for children at risk of further sexual abuse when needed; and to implement and coordinate services to parents and substitute caregivers providing out-of-home care to children who have been sexually abused, or to children and adolescents who have sexually abused others	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
203-05-001	Knows the importance of caseworkers notifying foster or kinship caregivers and adoptive parents if a child placed in their home has been sexually abused or has sexually abused other children
203-05-002	Knows the importance of foster and kinship caregivers and adoptive parents understanding common dynamics in families in which sexual abuse has occurred and the typical characteristics and behaviors of children and adolescents who have sexually abused others
203-05-003	Knows how children who have been sexually abused remain at risk for further abuse or may initiate sexual activity with other children; knows how this may affect family dynamics in foster, kinship, or adoptive homes; knows when and how to seek appropriate treatment for the child and other family members to resolve these issues
203-05-004	Knows the skills and qualities in foster, adoptive, and kinship families that promote success in caring for children and adolescents who have sexually abused others
203-05-005	Knows the process of reporting and investigating in third-party investigations, understands the social and emotional trauma inherent in such investigations, and understands the worker's role in providing emotional support to the family during the investigation
203-05-006	Knows the importance of foster and kinship caregivers and adoptive parents using accurate, developmentally appropriate sexual information and terminology; setting limits on sexually provocative behavior; and providing emotional support to foster children who have been sexually abused
203-05-007	Understands how indicators of sexual abuse may become evident only after a child is placed in a foster, kinship, or adoptive home and how placement may exacerbate these behaviors
203-05-008	Understands how sexually reactive behaviors may affect individual and family dynamics in foster, kinship, and adoptive families
203-05-009	Understands the value and potential need for counseling and/or consultation in families caring for children who have been sexually abused and for children and adolescents who have sexually abused others
203-05-010	Knows how to help foster and kinship caregivers and adoptive parents discuss topics related to sexuality and sexual abuse with foster children and to manage common sexually reactive behaviors in children and youth
203-05-011	Knows strategies for evaluating whether foster and kinship caregivers and potential adoptive parents would be appropriate for children who have been sexually abused and can identify families who would be appropriate for these children

203-05-012	Knows how to help foster, kinship and adoptive family members create a home environment that promotes safety from sexual abuse for all members and reduces the vulnerability of family members to allegations of sexual abuse
203-05-013	Knows how to participate appropriately in third-party investigations; knows strategies to help foster or kinship caregivers and adoptive parents manage social and emotional trauma inherent in such investigations
203-05-014	Can help foster, kinship, and adoptive parents support foster children's efforts to resolve emotional, social, and behavioral issues related to their sexual abuse
203-05-015	Can coordinate therapeutic intervention and crisis intervention for sexually abused children and family members in their foster, kinship, and adoptive homes
203-05-016	Can support foster and kinship caregivers and adoptive parents in caring for children who have been sexually abused

Skill Set 203-06: Ability to properly sequence and implement case closure or reunification for children who have been sexually abused
--

Comp. No.	Competency Description
203-06-001	Knows the treatment stages and milestones that must be met by family members before reunification or case closure can be planned or case terminated
203-06-002	Knows the critical issues related to family reunification in sexual abuse situations and knows how to properly sequence and implement activities toward reunification
203-06-003	Understands factors that may prevent the child from disclosing further sexual abuse and the importance of developing plans to prevent further abuse following reunification
203-06-004	Understands special factors to be considered in planning case closure or reunification with female, juvenile, or incarcerated offenders
203-06-005	Knows how to collaborate with mental health providers, family physicians, Guardians ad Litem, school personnel, and members of the child's family in assessing likelihood of re-abuse, implementing services toward reunification, and case closure
203-06-006	Knows how to use risk assessment information to determine whether and when to reunify a family and/or to close a case, and can determine if reunification or case closure is appropriate
203-06-007	Can educate family members to recognize patterns of secrecy, conditioning, and grooming in the family and can help families implement plans to prevent reoccurrence of these patterns after reunification
203-06-008	Can identify when family members have not sufficiently progressed in treatment to assure safety for the child victim in the family and can develop alternative plans for permanency for the child
203-06-009	Can plan for case closure or reunification in sexual abuse cases to prevent recidivism, and to ensure ongoing support, safety, and services for the children and families

SPECIALIZED CASEWORKER COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 204 ASSESSMENT

Skill Sets

204-01: Ability to engage families to elicit, gather, evaluate, analyze, and integrate pertinent information and form assessment conclusions in the assessment process

204-02: Ability to gather assessment information and develop assessment conclusions

204-03: Ability to develop comprehensive assessments in collaboration with social service providers and education, mental health, medical, and law enforcement personnel

Skill Set 204-01: Ability to engage families to elicit, gather, evaluate, analyze, and integrate pertinent information, and form assessment conclusions	
--	--

Comp. No.	Competency Description
204-01-001	Understands the importance of gathering current and historical information from a variety of sources, such as interviews with clients, extended family members and referents, observations of children and parents, and reports from collateral sources
204-01-002	Knows how to adjust the caseworker's learning and communication style as needed during assessment process
204-01-003	Understands how family or cultural expectations regarding disclosing personal information and trusting children services workers and previous history with the child welfare agency and other social service providers can affect client's willingness to cooperate with the assessment process
204-01-004	Understands how disclosure of family problems during an assessment can result in hostility, resentment, and risk of retribution by the alleged perpetrator or other family members and recanting by the victim
204-01-005	Knows how to interpret patterns of verbal and non-verbal communication, discrepancies between verbal and non-verbal communications, interpersonal interactions, and specific behaviors to gather accurate information about family dynamics and specific problems
204-01-006	Knows how to manage resistance and de-escalate hostility during the assessment process and knows how to assess safety risks to the worker (See <i>Core Module II: Engaging Families in Family-Centered Child Protective Services</i> ; 324: <i>Conflict, Hostility and Resistance for Caseworkers</i> , and 317: <i>Staff Safety</i> competencies)

204-01-007	Knows how to adjust the assessment process (including pacing, timing, and the types of assessment strategies) to the characteristics of the family and the purpose of the assessment
-------------------	--

Skill Set 204-02: Ability to gather assessment information and develop assessment conclusions	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
204-02-001	Knows factors that must be considered in conducting assessments of potential foster, kinship, and adoptive families (See <i>201: Adoption, Foster and Kinship Care</i> competencies)
204-02-002	Knows factors that must be considered in conducting assessments of youth readiness for independent living (See <i>202: Adolescent Services</i> competencies)
204-02-003	Understands how cultural factors and differences in parenting practices can confound a family assessment and promote inaccurate conclusions about families
204-02-004	Understands how family resilience and resourcefulness, constructive coping skills, intra-familial support, and community-based support networks can mitigate maltreatment and help families protect their children
204-02-005	Knows how to recognize behaviors and interpersonal interactions that indicate individual problems in children including substance abuse, mental illness, and developmental disabilities (See <i>304: Developmental Disabilities and Psychopathology of Children</i> and <i>309: Substance Abuse</i>)
204-02-006	Knows how to recognize behaviors and interpersonal interactions that indicate individual problems in adults including substance abuse, mental illness, and developmental disabilities (See <i>309: Substance Abuse, 308: Developmental Disabilities and Psychopathology of Adults, and 324: Conflict, Hostility and Resistance for Caseworkers</i> competencies)
204-02-007	Knows how to recognize behaviors and interpersonal interactions that indicate dysfunctional, intimidating, or abusive interpersonal relationships in families (See <i>302: Family Systems Theory and Family Therapy</i> competencies)
204-02-008	Knows how to recognize behaviors and interpersonal interactions that indicate children's level of development (See <i>Core Mod VII: Child Development: Implications for Family-Centered Child Protective Services</i> and <i>304: Developmental Disabilities and Psychopathology of Children</i> competencies)
204-02-009	Knows how to recognize behaviors and interpersonal interactions that indicate resistance and hostility in parents or caregivers (See <i>317: Staff Safety</i> and <i>324: Conflict, Hostility and Resistance for Caseworkers</i> competencies)
204-02-010	Knows how to gather information about client strengths and deficits from a variety of current and historical sources and knows how to discern pertinent from irrelevant information
204-02-011	Can use assessment conclusions to inform how the worker interacts with the client and for service planning with the client

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

204-02-012	Can document assessment findings in appropriate case record documents and forms
204-02-013	Can analyze and synthesize assessment information from a variety of sources to form assessment conclusions

Skill Set 204-03: Ability to develop comprehensive assessments in collaboration with social service providers and education, mental health, medical, and law enforcement personnel

Comp. No.	Competency Description
204-03-001	Knows the PCSA's protocol for obtaining assessments from community providers
204-03-002	Knows how to ensure protection and emotional, financial, and social services support for any family member at risk of harm throughout the assessment process (See 206: Investigation competencies)
204-03-003	Knows when and how to refer individuals and families for further assessments
204-03-004	Can collaborate with service providers to gather, evaluate, and integrate information from a variety of sources to draw accurate assessment conclusions, develop recommendations, and provide support for any family members at risk of harm throughout the assessment process

SPECIALIZED CASEWORKER COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 205 LEGAL ISSUES IN CHILD WELFARE

Skill Sets

205-01: Ability to collaborate with other service providers and legal and court personnel in conducting court related activities

205-02: Ability to prepare children and family members for court hearings

205-03: Ability to document and provide factual information and testimony to the court

205-04: Ability to perform casework activities in a manner that legally protects the rights of the family and protects the agency, the caseworker, and other staff from litigation

205-05: Ability to collaborate with court personnel in mediation processes

Skill Set 205-01: Ability to collaborate with other service providers and legal and court personnel in conducting court related activities

Comp. No.	Competency Description
205-01-001	Knows elements of the county's Memorandum of Understanding and county-specific processes and protocols that guide the agency's collaboration with law enforcement and juvenile court
205-01-002	Understands the specific functions, processes, and terminology of probate, common pleas, domestic, and drug courts as they relate to children services cases
205-01-003	Understands the functions and legal processes of the county Child Support Enforcement Agency as it relates to child welfare cases
205-01-004	Knows the caseworker's role and responsibilities in each county court and with the legal aspects of the Child Support Enforcement Agency
205-01-005	Knows the kinds of case-related information that can or must be shared with prosecuting attorneys, defense attorneys, Guardians ad Litem and understands when releases of information must be obtained to share the information
205-01-006	Knows strategies for collaborating with prosecuting attorneys, defense attorneys, Guardians ad Litem, and victim-assistance staff
205-01-007	Can collaborate with law enforcement officers, prosecuting attorneys, Guardians ad Litem, and other court personnel to protect and promote permanency for children

Skill Set 205-02: Ability to prepare children and family members for court hearings	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
205-02-001	Understands factors that contribute to children and family member's anxiety and reluctance regarding testifying in court
205-02-002	Understands how children's social, emotional, cognitive, and language development may affect their ability to testify in court
205-02-003	Knows developmentally appropriate strategies to reduce children and family members' anxiety regarding legal and courtroom processes
205-02-004	Knows how to collaborate with prosecutors to determine whether the child should testify in court, and to advocate to prevent children from testifying in court, when necessary
205-02-005	Can collaborate with prosecutors, agency attorneys, and victim witness personnel to prepare children and family members to participate in court hearings

Skill Set 205-03: Ability to document and provide factual information and testimony to the court	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
205-03-001	Understands critical issues in testifying in court including the differences in lay and expert testimony, hearsay and exceptions to hearsay, supposition, rules for admission of evidence, using case notes, and establishing the credibility of a witness
205-03-002	Knows strategies for providing accurate information when testifying and remaining composed during cross examination
205-03-003	Knows the benefits and liabilities of using anatomically detailed dolls and other projective investigative techniques as evidence in court
205-03-004	Knows how to prepare for court hearings including preparing testimony and case records, coordinating with the prosecuting or agency attorney, and ensuring a respectful, professional demeanor
205-03-005	Knows how to determine specific information needed to prove the complaint in court and how to gather documentation and select witnesses to ensure the evidence is admissible in court (See 206: <i>Investigations</i> competencies)
205-03-006	Knows how to protect the integrity of medical evidence, photographs, video and audio tape recordings, and e-mail and voice mail evidence for presentation in court
205-03-007	Can provide court testimony that builds an organized history of the case, provides substantiation of the agency's hypothesis of the maltreatment, and rationale for the agency's recommendations
205-03-008	Can write correspondence and case documentation that is clear, appropriate, and will withstand court scrutiny

Skill Set 205-04: Ability to perform casework activities in a manner that legally protects the rights of the family and protects the agency the caseworker and other staff from litigation	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
205-04-001	Knows legal rights of parents, children, non-custodial parents, incarcerated parents, grandparents, and substitute caregivers as they relate to child welfare casework
205-04-002	Knows how deficiencies in specific case processes can result in liability for the caseworker and the agency if legal processes are not met; knows strategies to avoid or correct the deficiencies
205-04-003	Knows how inappropriate language in verbal and written communication and documents could be subpoenaed into court and can result in litigation against the agency and negative case outcomes
205-04-004	Knows how to explain the agency's case involvement with family members, defense attorneys, and other community agencies in a manner that preserves family members' rights while protecting the agency and worker from liability
205-04-005	Can meet legal requirements and avoid personal or agency liability by following policies and procedures in all casework activities and using supervision to check accuracy and thoroughness of work processes

Skill Set 205-05: Ability to collaborate with court personnel in mediation processes	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
205-05-001	Knows the philosophy, purpose, processes, and typical outcomes in mediation of child welfare cases in juvenile court
205-05-002	Knows the types of case situations appropriate for mediation
205-05-003	Knows the caseworker's role and responsibility in preparing families for mediations proceedings
205-05-004	Knows the caseworker's role in collaborating with court personnel to conduct mediation proceedings
205-05-005	Knows how to use specific mediation strategies to help opposing parties calmly express their needs, find common areas of agreements, and develop a problem solution that both parties can agree to
205-05-006	Can collaborate with the family and court mediators to reach a non-adversarial result for the child and family

SPECIALIZED CASEWORKER COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 206

SCREENING, INTAKE & INVESTIGATION

Skill Sets

206-01: Ability to conduct screening activities to gather full information needed to determine whether the referral should be accepted as a report of abuse or neglect; to determine whether the situation is an emergency; and to advise referents of other resources

206-02: Ability to plan, conduct, and coordinate investigations that gather complete information and evidence needed to protect children and submit as evidence in court hearings while protecting the alleged child victim(s)

206-03: Ability to conduct investigation interviews with alleged child victims and siblings to gather full information and to provide evidence for court hearings

206-04: Ability to conduct investigative interviews with non-offending parents to gather full information and to provide evidence for court hearings

206-05: Ability to conduct investigative interviews with alleged perpetrators to gather full information and to provide evidence for court hearings

206-06: Ability to determine whether parent's/caretaker's history of the child's injuries is plausible and to develop an hypothesis regarding how the child was maltreated

Skill Set 206-01: Ability to conduct screening activities to gather full information needed to determine whether the referral should be accepted as a report of abuse or neglect; to determine whether the situation is an emergency; and to advise referents of other resources

Comp. No.	Competency Description
206-01-001	Knows the types of screening categories and the types of child abuse and neglect situations that constitute emergencies
206-01-002	Knows agency procedures for taking referrals, assigning a screening category, determining whether the situation constitutes an emergency, distributing information to appropriate staff members, and referring callers to other service providers
206-01-003	Knows the types of information to gather during screening phone calls including information about the allegation and potential safety issues for investigators
206-01-004	Understands factors that contribute to referents' hesitance to providing full information and the importance of encouraging the caller to provide full and accurate information

206-01-005	Understands factors that contribute to callers making false allegations
206-01-006	Knows how to conduct phone interviews to encourage referents to provide full and accurate information
206-01-007	Knows when to consult with the unit supervisor regarding screening issues
206-01-008	Can gather full information needed to determine the nature of the allegation and can help determine whether the situation constitutes an emergency
206-01-009	Can refer callers to other service providers as needed

Skill Set 206-02: Ability to plan, conduct, and coordinate investigations that gather complete information and evidence needed to protect children and submit as evidence in court hearings while protecting the alleged child victim(s)

Comp. No.	Competency Description
206-02-001	Knows how to plan proper sequencing, timing, and location of investigative/assessment interviews and activities
206-02-002	Knows procedures for coordinating investigative activities with law enforcement, hospital staff, and the county prosecutor
206-02-003	Knows the rights of alleged perpetrators and non-offending parents during the investigation and knows how to conduct the investigation in a manner that protects these rights
206-02-004	Understands the caseworker's responsibility to consider multiple hypotheses of how alleged maltreatment or exploitation occurred and to not influence disclosures during investigations
206-02-005	Understands the emotional, social, and financial impact of investigations on families and how these dynamics can increase risk of further maltreatment or pressure a child to recant
206-02-006	Knows the purpose of Child Advocacy Centers, and the specific roles and responsibilities of professionals participating in Child Advocacy Center interviews and knows how to coordinate interviews with them
206-02-007	Knows how to manage the investigative process to reduce the possibility of the child recanting
206-02-008	Knows how and when to appropriately disrobe a child and take photographs of injuries
206-02-009	Knows how to gather and protect evidence, document interviews and other investigative activities, and prepare testimony for court hearings
206-02-010	Knows strategies and procedures for conducting investigations in out-of-home care settings, day care centers, open children services cases, and investigations that were initiated in another public children services agency
206-02-011	Can utilize extended family, legal, and social service interventions to protect victims, siblings, and non-offending parents/caretakers throughout the investigation and to decrease the likelihood of recantation
206-02-012	Can gather thorough investigative information from all appropriate sources needed to protect the alleged child victims and to submit as evidence in juvenile and criminal court proceedings

206-02-013	Can explain to children and families the investigation/assessment findings, and activities that must occur as a result of the investigation
-------------------	---

Skill Set 206-03: Ability to conduct investigative interviews with alleged child victims and siblings to gather full information and to provide evidence for court hearings
--

Comp. No.	Competency Description
206-03-001	Understands specific goals and phases of interviewing alleged child victims and siblings and knows developmentally appropriate interview strategies for obtaining thorough information needed to protect children and present court testimony
206-03-002	Understands specific goals and phases of interviewing non-offending parents and collateral contacts and knows interview strategies for obtaining thorough information needed to protect children and present court testimony
206-03-003	Understands developmental, practical, and cultural issues involved in choosing interview locations for children
206-03-004	Understands how children’s developmental level can affect the interview process, the child’s memory and suggestibility, and their ability to testify in court
206-03-005	Understands cultural issues involved in conducting investigative interviews with children and knows how to conduct interviews in a culturally competent manner
206-03-006	Understands the purpose, benefits, and liabilities, procedure and agency policy for using a variety of interview aids (e.g. dolls, drawings, toys, audio and video tapes) with children; and knows how to determine which interview aids (if any) to use
206-03-007	Knows how to assess the children’s developmental level during investigative interviews
206-03-008	Knows how to adjust the interview to the child’s social, emotional, and cognitive development
206-03-009	Knows how to help children feel safe and comfortable during investigative interviews
206-03-010	Knows when to involve caregivers in interviews with young children and how to encourage the caregiver to support the child’s participation in the interview
206-03-011	Knows how to evaluate the credibility of a child’s disclosure
206-03-012	Can choose the most appropriate interview location for children and can set up the interview room to minimize distractions and engage the child in the interview
206-03-013	Can use a variety of developmentally and culturally appropriate methods to assess the child’s level of development, communicate the purpose of the interview, orient the child to the interview process and guide the direction and process of the interview
206-03-014	Can choose and implement developmentally appropriate interview questions, processes, and aids to gather complete information that will be admissible in court; and can explain their use in court, when necessary

Skill Set 206-04: Ability to conduct investigative interviews with non-offending parents to gather full information and to provide evidence for court hearings	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
206-04-001	Understands the social, emotional, cultural, and economic dynamics which contribute to non-offending parents' capacity to believe and support their abused or neglected children
206-04-002	Understands cultural issues involved in conducting investigative interviews with non-offending parents and knows how to conduct interviews in a culturally competent manner
206-04-003	Knows how to use specific interview strategies for obtaining information from non-offending parents and assessing their ability to support and protect their children
206-04-004	Can conduct interviews with non-offending parents that gather full information needed to protect the alleged child victim and that is admissible in court hearings

Skill Set 206-05: Ability to conduct investigative interviews with alleged perpetrators to gather full information and to provide evidence for court hearings	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
206-05-001	Knows factors that may inhibit alleged perpetrators from admitting their abuse or neglect of children
206-05-002	Understands cultural issues involved in conducting investigative interviews with alleged perpetrators and knows how to conduct interviews in a culturally competent manner
206-05-003	Knows specific strategies for encouraging alleged perpetrators to tell the truth about the alleged maltreatment
206-05-004	Can conduct investigative interviews with alleged perpetrators to gather complete information regarding the alleged perpetrator's responsibility for the maltreatment
206-05-005	Can conduct joint interviews of perpetrators with law enforcement officers to gather information and encourage the perpetrator to admit the maltreatment

Skill Set 206-06: Ability to determine whether parent's/caretaker's history of the child's injuries is plausible and to develop an hypothesis regarding how the child was maltreated	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
206-06-001	Knows commonly used instruments that cause abusive injuries, the injury patterns caused by those instruments, and common false histories given by parents and caretakers regarding the injuries
206-06-002	Knows physical conditions, medical problems, and cultural healing practices that may confound the determination of abuse
206-06-003	Knows the location and appearance of common accidental injuries
206-06-004	Knows how to use information from medical examinations, history, and medical tests to determine if injuries establish a pattern of abuse

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

206-06-005	Knows how to recreate the parent/caretakers' history of the injury to determine whether the history is consistent with the medical and physical evidence
206-06-006	Can distinguish between accidental and non-accidental injuries to children and can develop hypotheses about the likely cause of abusive injuries

SPECIALIZED CASEWORKER COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 207

FAMILY-CENTERED NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED SERVICES

Skill Sets

207-01: Ability to plan and deliver family-centered, neighborhood-based and strength-based services to children and families

207-02: Ability to engage families in family group meetings regarding children at risk of abuse and neglect

Skill Set 207-01: Ability to plan and deliver strength-based, family-centered, and neighborhood-based services to children and families	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
207-01-001	Understands the historical, philosophical, and legal basis of the family-centered practice movement and its impact on the field of child welfare
207-01-002	Understands the philosophy, values and principles that underlie a family-centered approach to child welfare, in providing services to improve individual and family functioning within the context of the family's culture and community
207-01-003	Understands how principles of strength-based, family-centered neighborhood-based practice are implemented in all phases of child welfare work, including intake and investigations, family assessment, case planning, and preparing and placing children in substitute care all phases of child welfare practice
207-01-004	Knows the range of in-home services provided by parent aides and knows how these services can be used to strengthen family function and prevent placement
207-01-005	Knows the characteristics and program components of intensive home-based models of service delivery and how intensive home-based services can be used to ensure child safety and promote family stabilization
207-01-006	Understands the pervasive problems experienced by families who live in chronic poverty and knows how families may develop strengths and resourcefulness to cope with chronic poverty
207-01-007	Understands how the stress of chronic poverty can contribute to child abuse and compound the effects of child neglect
207-01-008	Can provide family-centered supportive, educational, and treatment interventions to families to promote growth and change
207-01-009	Can help families access needed neighborhood and faith-based services and can advocate and coordinate with service providers to ensure families receive cohesive supportive services

Skill Set 207-02: Ability to engage families in family group meetings regarding children at risk of abuse and neglect	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
207-02-001	Understands the processes used in a variety of models for family group meetings to promote family involvement in case planning and decision making
207-02-002	Understands how a family's expectations regarding rules about family roles and responsibilities, discussion of family problems, and patterns of communication may impact their participation in family group meetings
207-02-003	Understands the roles of the caseworker and meeting leader in convening and facilitating family group meetings; knows how to plan agendas and convene the meetings, determine the types of decisions and planning appropriate for the family group meetings, and prepare participants for the meetings
207-02-004	Understands the role of the caseworker and meeting leader in following up with meeting participants to ensure that tasks assigned during the meeting are completed
207-02-005	Can prepare all meeting participants to ensure they are fully informed and prepared for the meeting
207-02-006	Can manage the family meeting, including ensuring an emotionally and physically safe environment, encouraging all members to participate, and balancing decision-making authority between the family and the agency, and ensuring that appropriate plans are developed and tasks assigned

SPECIALIZED CASEWORKER COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 208

CASEWORK WITH ABUSED CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Skill Sets

208-01: Ability to overcome anger, resistance, manipulation, and denial to engage families in cooperative casework relationships

208-02: Ability to coordinate a comprehensive approach to the delivery of community-based services to remediate problems that contributed to abuse and to help children recover from the effects of abuse

Skill Set 208-01: Ability to overcome family members' or clients' anger, resistance, manipulation, and denial to engage families in cooperative casework relationships	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
208-01-001	Understands emotional, social, and other reasons perpetrators, non-offending parents, and child victims may be unwilling to cooperate with the caseworker or service providers
208-01-002	Understands the unique characteristics of the casework relationship needed to overcome resistance, and engage and maintain collaborative casework relationships with victims, perpetrators, and non-offending parents
208-01-003	Knows how to engage and maintain cooperative casework relationships with perpetrators, non-offending parents, and child victims
208-01-004	Can use strategies to overcome abusive family members' resistance, anger, manipulation and distrust to engage them in empathic and nurturing helping alliances

Skill Set 208-02: Ability to coordinate a comprehensive approach to the delivery of community-based services to remediate problems that contributed to abuse and to help children recover from the effects of abuse	
Comp. No.	Competency Description
208-02-001	Understands the short- and long-term consequences of physical and emotional abuse and trauma related to abuse on the child's health, development, and functioning
208-02-002	Understands the differences between acute (short-term) and chronic (long-term) abuse, their contributing factors, family dynamics, and impact on children's development

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

208-02-003	Understands how to provide or coordinate emotional, social, financial, and legal support to assist non-offending parents to protect abused children
208-02-004	Knows the goals, processes, and appropriate use of various treatment and casework interventions to help the perpetrator resolve issues that contributed to abuse and develop non-abusive methods of interacting with children
208-02-005	Knows the goals, processes, and appropriate use of various treatment and casework interventions to help a non-protecting, non-offending parent resolve issues that compromised his/her ability to protect
208-02-006	Knows the goals, processes and appropriate use of various treatment and casework interventions to help child victims and siblings resolve emotional/behavioral/social problems that resulted from abuse
208-02-007	Knows how to help substitute caregivers understand social and emotional problems resulting from abuse and how to adjust parenting methods to meet the child's needs and resolve those problems
208-02-008	Knows how to help school personnel understand social and emotional problems resulting from abuse and how to adjust their teaching methods to meet the child's needs and resolve those problems
208-02-009	Knows the goals, processes and appropriate use of various treatment and casework interventions to help families develop healthy relationships and interactions with their children and to meet the medical, educational, social and emotional needs of their children
208-02-010	Understands issues that should be considered in timing, coordinating, and sequencing multiple treatment interventions for the perpetrator, non-offending parent, child victim, siblings, and the family
208-02-011	Knows how to develop comprehensive case plans with the child, parents, and other appropriate family members to resolve problems and conditions contributing to abuse and address children's emotional, social, behavioral, and family problems that have resulted from abuse
208-02-012	Can utilize community and extended family resources to ensure children's safety in their own homes
208-02-013	Can coordinate, monitor, and evaluate direct casework interventions (including in-home and placement services), extended family support, and multiple treatment interventions to ensure consistency of approach and completion of case goals and objectives
208-02-014	Can work with parents to help them use information and insights from treatment and casework intervention to strengthen their ability to provide safe, nurturing care of their children
208-02-015	Can determine when the only means of protecting children from chronic or serious abuse is termination of parental rights and placement in a permanent alternative placement and can collaborate with the supervisor, prosecuting attorney, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) and Guardians ad Litem (GAL), social service providers, and other agency staff to make this determination
208-02-016	Can develop recidivism prevention plans in preparation for case closing

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

208-02-017	Can work with treatment providers to ensure that needed treatment services continue after case closure and that providers will re-refer the family to the PCSA, if needed
-------------------	---

SPECIALIZED CASEWORKER COMPETENCIES

TOPIC: 209

CASEWORK WITH NEGLECTED CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Skill Sets

209-01: Ability to develop and utilize helping relationships with family members of neglected children to help resolve neglectful parenting

209-02: Ability to coordinate a comprehensive team approach for the delivery of in-home and community-based services to remediate neglect and provide long-term support to families

Skill Set 209-01: Ability to develop and utilize helping relationships with family members of neglected children to help resolve neglectful parenting

Comp. No.	Competency Description
209-01-001	Understands possible social, emotional, and other reasons for children's and parent's resistance to the casework relationship and to the change process
209-01-002	Understands the unique attributes of the helping relationship necessary to engage neglecting parents in a change process
209-01-003	Can use strategies to overcome neglecting family members' resistance, apathy, and distrust to engage them in empathic and nurturing helping alliances

Skill Set 209-02: Ability to coordinate a comprehensive, team approach for the delivery of in-home and community-based services to remediate neglect and provide long-term support to families

Comp. No.	Competency Description
209-02-001	Understands the impact of specific types of neglect (emotional and physical neglect, failure to supervise, educational and medical neglect) on children's social, emotional, cognitive, and school functioning
209-02-002	Understands the caseworker's role in helping neglected children address social and emotional issues that result from neglect
209-02-003	Understands how some cultural patterns of child care may be misconstrued as neglect
209-02-004	Understands the possible long-term consequences of various types of neglect on children's emotional well-being and social functioning
209-02-005	Understands how a variety of parental conditions (such as mental illness, substance abuse, cognitive challenges, inadequate attachment, social isolation, etc.) contribute to neglect of children

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

209-02-006	Understands the differences between acute (short-term) and chronic (long-term) neglect, their contributing factors, and their impact on children's growth and development
209-02-007	Understands the typical parental and family dynamics associated with failure-to-thrive in infants
209-02-008	Understands the unique components of medical, mental health, and family support services needed for failure-to-thrive infants and knows how to coordinate provision of these services
209-02-009	Understands the components of comprehensive, long-term and intensive services needed to sustain neglectful families' ability to adequately care for their children over time and the importance of coordinating these services
209-02-010	Understands the importance of supplemental planning in cases of chronic neglect
209-02-011	Understands how to differentiate between poverty, homelessness, substandard living conditions and neglect, and how poverty confounds neglect
209-02-012	Knows how to use behavioral and educational strategies to model, coach, encourage, and reinforce parents to utilize successful parenting and home management skills
209-02-013	Knows how to implement a team approach (including caseworker, family support workers, and community service providers) for families who neglect their children
209-02-014	Can recognize parenting behaviors that put children at risk of further neglect
209-02-015	Can develop and implement a case plan that specifically addresses all of the factors contributing to neglect and that builds upon the family's strengths
209-02-016	Can involve extended family members, local service providers, family friends and other involved persons to form a permanent support network for neglecting families
209-02-017	Can prepare families for case closing and prepare the family's support network to ensure continued support, monitoring, and re-referral to services, when needed
209-02-018	Can recognize when the only means of protecting children from chronic neglect is permanent alternative placement and can collaborate with the prosecuting attorney, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), Guardian's ad-Litem (GAL), social service providers, and other agency staff to make this determination and to begin procedures for terminating parental rights