

**PART IV  
FAMILY BUILDERS PROGRAM**

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**39.311 Establishment of Family Builders Program.--**

(1) Any Family Builders Program that is established by the department shall provide family preservation services:

- (a) To families whose children are at risk of imminent out-of-home placement because they are dependent;
- (b) To reunite families whose children have been removed and placed in foster care; and
- (c) To maintain adoptive families intact who are at risk of fragmentation.

The Family Builders Program shall provide programs to achieve long-term changes within families that will allow children to remain with their families.

(2) The department may adopt rules to implement the Family Builders Program.

**History.**--s. 3, ch. 90-182; s. 66, ch. 90-306; s. 5, ch. 91-183; s. 66, ch. 94-164; s. 27, ch. 95-267; s. 136, ch. 97-101; s. 47, ch. 98-403; s. 18, ch. 99-193.  
**Note.**--Former s. 415.515.

**39.312 Goals.--**The goals of any Family Builders Program shall be to:

- (1) Ensure the protection of the child's health and safety while working with the family.
- (2) Help parents to improve their relationships with their children and to provide better care, nutrition, hygiene, discipline, protection, instruction, and supervision.
- (3) Help parents to provide a better household environment for their children by improving household maintenance, budgeting, and purchasing.
- (4) Provide part-time child care when parents are unable to do so or need temporary relief.
- (5) Assist and educate parents in household maintenance, budgeting, and purchasing when parents are unable to do so on their own or need temporary relief.
- (6) Assist parents and children to manage and resolve conflicts.
- (7) Assist parents to meet the special physical, mental, or emotional needs of their children and help parents to deal with their own special physical, mental, or emotional needs that interfere with their ability to care for their children and to manage their households.

(8) Help families to discover and gain access to community resources to which the family or children might be entitled and which would assist the family in meeting its needs and the needs of the children, including the needs for food, clothing, housing, utilities, transportation, appropriate educational opportunities, employment, respite care, and recreational and social activities.

(9) Help families by providing cash or in-kind assistance to meet their needs for food, clothing, housing, or transportation when such needs prevent or threaten to prevent parents from caring for their children, and when such needs are not met by other sources in the community in a timely fashion.

(10) Provide such additional reasonable services for the prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect as may be needed in order to strengthen a family at risk.

**History.**--s. 4, ch. 90-182; s. 67, ch. 90-306; s. 6, ch. 91-183; s. 125, ch. 94-209; s. 48, ch. 98-403; s. 19, ch. 99-193.

**Note.**--Former s. 415.516.

**39.313 Contracting of services.**--The department may contract for the delivery of Family Builders Program services by professionally qualified persons or local governments when it determines that it is in the child's best interest. The service provider or program operator must submit to the department monthly activity reports covering any services rendered. These activity reports must include project evaluation in relation to individual families being served, as well as statistical data concerning families referred for services who are not served due to the unavailability of resources. The costs of program evaluation are an allowable cost consideration in any service contract negotiated in accordance with this section.

**History.**--s. 5, ch. 90-182; s. 68, ch. 90-306; s. 49, ch. 98-403; s. 20, ch. 99-193.

**Note.**--Former s. 415.517.

**39.314 Eligibility for Family Builders Program services.**--Family Builders Program services must be made available to a family at risk on a voluntary basis, provided the family meets the eligibility requirements as established by rule and there is space available in the program. All members of the families who accept such services are responsible for cooperating fully with the family preservation plan developed for each family under s. 39.315. Families in which children are at imminent risk of sexual abuse or physical endangerment perpetrated by a member of their immediate household are not eligible to receive family preservation services unless the perpetrator is in, or has agreed to enter, a program for treatment and the safety of the children may be enhanced through participation in the Family Builders Program.

**History.**--s. 6, ch. 90-182; s. 69, ch. 90-306; s. 7, ch. 91-183; s. 50, ch. 98-403.

**Note.**--Former s. 415.518.

**39.315 Delivery of Family Builders Program services.**--Family Builders Program services delivered to eligible families must be provided in accordance with the following requirements:

(1) Each Family Builders Program caseworker, whether employed by the department or a contractor providing family preservation services, may provide intensive services to a maximum of six families.

(2) Each family will receive intensive family preservation services for up to 4 months. Upon termination of family preservation services, the caseworker shall close the case for further action or refer the family for other appropriate services.

(3) Family Builders Program services will normally be provided in the family's own home and community consistent with the needs of family members. Caseworkers shall be available by telephone and on call for visits to families at all times including evenings and weekends during the period of service to each family.

(4) Within the first week of initiating family preservation services, and after thorough consultation with the family receiving such services, the family preservation caseworker shall develop a family preservation plan which shall clearly state the specific goals and priorities, tasks, and approaches to be used to reach these goals, and the estimated timeframes for when these goals will be reached.

**History.**--s. 7, ch. 90-182; s. 70, ch. 90-306; s. 8, ch. 91-183; s. 51, ch. 98-403.

**Note.**--Former s. 415.519.

### **39.316 Qualifications of Family Builders Program workers.--**

(1) A public or private agency staff member who provides direct service to an eligible family must possess a bachelor's degree in a human-service-related field and 2 years' experience providing direct services to children, youth, or their families or possess a master's degree in a human-service-related field with 1 year of experience. A person who supervises caseworkers who provide direct services to eligible families must possess a master's degree in a human-service-related field and have at least 2 years of experience in social work or counseling or must possess a bachelor's degree in a human-service-related field and have at least 3 years' experience in social work or counseling.

(2) A person who provides paraprofessional aide services to families must possess a valid high school diploma or a Graduate Equivalency Diploma and must have a minimum of 2 years' experience in working with families with children. Experience in a volunteer capacity while working with families may be included in the 2 years of required experience.

(3) Caseworkers must successfully complete at least 40 hours of intensive training prior to providing direct services under this program. Paraprofessional aides and supervisors must, within 90 days after hiring, complete a training program prescribed by the department on child abuse, abandonment, and neglect and an overview of the children, youth, and families program components and service delivery system. Program supervisors and caseworkers must thereafter complete at least 40 hours of additional training each year in accordance with standards established by the department.

**History.**--s. 8, ch. 90-182; s. 71, ch. 90-306; s. 9, ch. 91-183; s. 52, ch. 98-403.

**Note.**--Former s. 415.520.

**39.317 Outcome evaluation.**--The outcome evaluation report of the department shall include, but is not limited to, the following information, which the contract providers must maintain and provide:

(1) The number of families receiving services.

(2) The number of children placed in emergency shelters, foster care, group homes, or other facilities outside their homes and families.

(3) The average cost of the services provided to families receiving services.

(4) An overall statement of the progress of the program along with recommendations for improvements.

**History.**--s. 9, ch. 90-182; s. 72, ch. 90-306; s. 10, ch. 91-183; s. 53, ch. 98-403.

**Note.**--Former s. 415.521.

**39.318 Funding.**--The department is authorized to use appropriate state, federal, and private funds within its budget for operating the Family Builders Program. For each child served, the cost of providing home-based services described in this part must not exceed the costs of out-of-home care which otherwise would be incurred.

**History.**--s. 10, ch. 90-182; s. 73, ch. 90-306; s. 11, ch. 91-183; s. 54, ch. 98-403.

**Note.**--Former s. 415.522.