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To: County Department of Human Services Directors
County Department of Social Services Directors
County Department of Community Programs Directors
Long-Term Support Supervisors and Leads
Long-Term Support and Service Coordinators
Area Administrators

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Bureau of Children's Services

Release of Deciding Together Guidance

Background

The Bureau of Children's Services is pleased to release [Deciding Together Guide \(P-02246\)](#) and [Instructions \(P-02246i\)](#) to use when developing individual service plans in the Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Waiver Program.

Deciding Together was developed to establish a consistent and transparent methodology so that service coordinators and families can work together with a shared framework when developing and reviewing service plans.

Purpose

This memo describes the Deciding Together Guide and outlines the statewide implementation steps and timeline.

Key Features of Using Deciding Together

Deciding Together is a five-step guided decision-making framework that focuses on:

- Creative, collaborative, and transparent decision-making.
- A team approach that includes the family's chosen support people.
- Child and family voice: Acknowledges that families are the experts of their own lives, their culture and preferences matter, and they drive the service planning process.
- A strengths-based approach that builds on child and family resiliencies and positive risk-taking.
- Flexibility to address multiple concerns; short- and long-term goals; immediate, intense, or intermittent needs; and preventive and maintenance planning.
- Consideration of cost-effectiveness and regulatory guidance review.
- Fully informing families of their options to resolve differences, including an ability to appeal.
- Monitoring progress and revising as often as needed.

Implementation Planning

2018–Develop and disseminate guidance and tool, including training and instructions.

2019–Service coordinators and families begin using the process and tools in service planning.

2020–Deciding Together will be used with all families for service planning.

2021–Record review protocol will monitor county waiver agencies' files for compliance–2020 files.