

Rapides Parish

Families in Need of Services (FINS) Program

Process Flow and

Policy and Procedures Manual

In July 2009, Rapides Parish received funding from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's, Models for Change Initiative to build more effective responses for status offenders also referred to as Family in Need of Services (FINS) youth and are either involved at the informal FINS stage, have had contact with law enforcement or have to been subjected to formal processing. As a result of that work, FINS process flow and accompanying policy and procedure manual are in development to illustrate the process that was refined in Rapides Parish during the grant period. The following pages are excerpts from these documents focusing due diligence when working with the school system.

Referral Criteria for School-Referred Youth

In addition to meeting the inclusion criteria drawn from the Louisiana Children's Code (below), the Rapides Parish school system must make two attempts at intervention before the youth is eligible for referral to the FINS Office:

(1) The parents must be notified of the problem verbally and made aware that the youth is at risk of being referred to the FINS Office. Written documentation of this conversation must be maintained.

(2) The youth must be referred to one of the following:

1. Behavior Strategist, if classified Special Ed.
2. Designated Disciplinarian, if in regular education classes

If the status offending behavior persists after these steps are taken, and after speaking with the youth, authorized school personnel can make a referral to the FINS Office via the completion of the school exhaustion form. See exhaustion form in Appendix 3.

If all of the above criteria ARE MET, the youth will move on to the **Eligibility Determination** process.

If all of the above criteria ARE NOT MET, the school is notified of rejection of the FINS referral. See Appendix 15.

STATUTORY ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

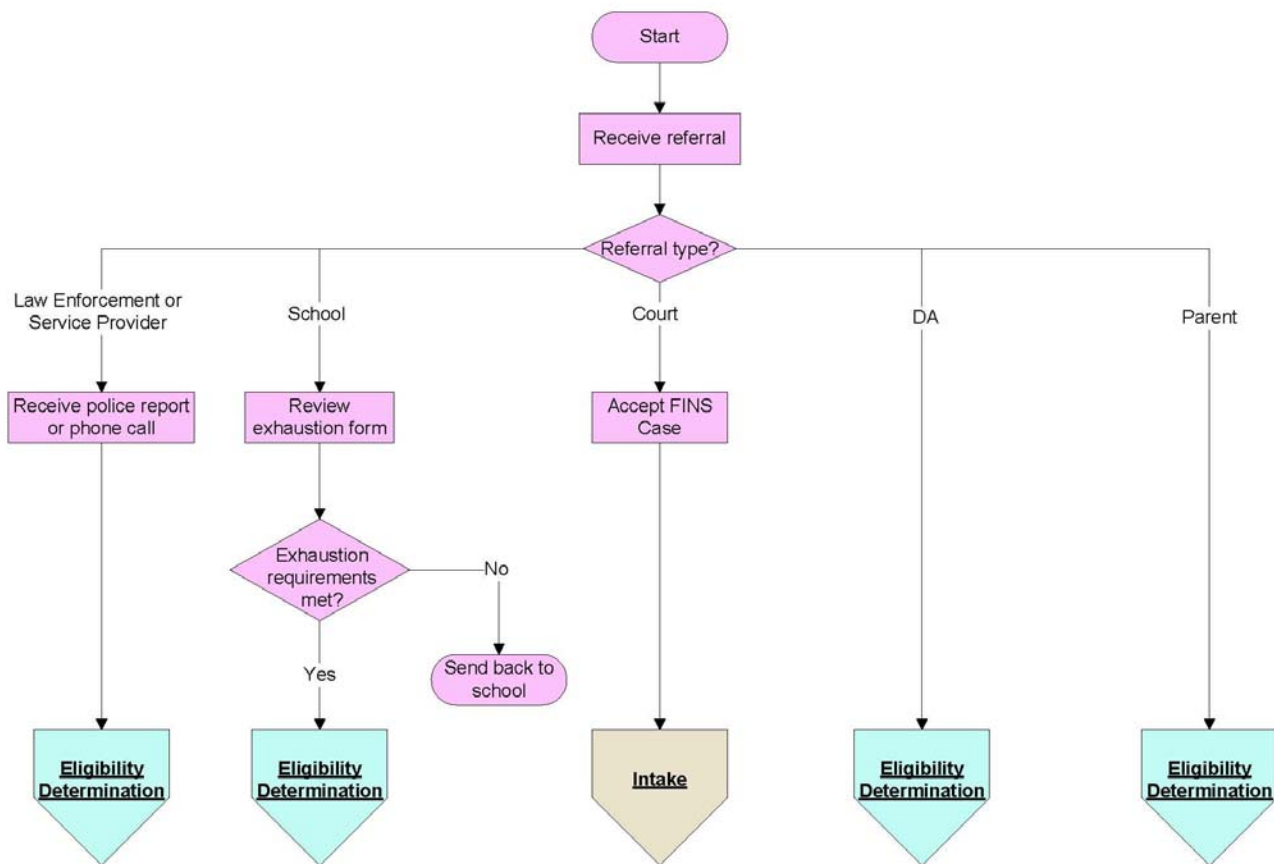
General Criteria to Determine Statutory Eligibility

To be eligible for informal FINS services, a youth and family must meet the following “inclusion criteria:”

- The youth must have been referred to informal FINS for one or more of the following grounds as defined in Article 30 within Title VII of the Children’s Code:
 - Running away or threatening to run away from parents or legal guardian or custodian;
 - Ungovernable or being beyond their control of parent/ guardian;
 - Truancy;
 - Repeatedly violating school rules;
 - Having a caretaker that caused, encouraged, or contributed to the youth’s behavior; or
 - Having a caretaker who has, after notice, willfully failed to attend a meeting with the youth’s teacher, school principal, or appropriate school employee to discuss the youth’s truancy, repeated violation of school rules, or other serious educational problems.
- The youth must be 17 years of age or younger.
- The referral must be best handled by FINS rather than another agency
- The complaint is not eligible to be referred to FINS Formal Process or other formal court process
- The youth must live within the jurisdiction
- FINS must be able to contact and obtain guardian consent to participate in FINS
- Some youth may be inappropriate for certain FINS services due to behaviors that may create a danger for themselves and others. These youth will be provided with screening and appropriate referrals to further assessment and services.

An intake officer shall complete the Intake Eligibility Form (see Appendix 4) to determine eligibility for each family. This form determines statutory eligibility for FINS services and outlines the presenting problems of the families seeking assistance and provides staff with insight into the family dynamics.

Referral to FINS



APPENDIX 3. SCHOOL EXHAUSTION FORM

Families in Need of Service School Exhaustion Form
726 Washington St. Alexandria, La 71301 Suite 200

318-445-8084 ----- **Fax: 318-445-7297**

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Age: ____

Sex: ____ Race: Caucasian, African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native America Other: ____

Child's SS#: ____-____-____ School Attending: _____ Grade: _____

Special Education: (Y) or (N) Classification / Comments: _____

Legal Guardian(s) : _____ Relationship: _____ Contact Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Students Physical Address: _____ City: _____

Place of Employment: _____ Work Number: _____ Cell Number: _____

Article 730 Grounds from the Louisiana Children's Code: Allegations that a family is in need of services **must** fall in one or more of these following categories: Be specific as possible. School officials must use articles 730.1 or 730.8.

DATE: ____/____/____

____ 730.1 Minor child violate school rules and/or Minor is Truant.

Total Absent ____ Days Excused ____ (Please note: Suspensions are not excused absences / Letters from home do not excuse attendance)

____ 730.2 Minor child is ungovernable.

____ 730.3 Minor child is a runaway.

____ 730.4 Minor has repeatedly possessed or consumed intoxicating beverages, misrepresented age to purchase such beverages or repeatedly loitered around a place that sells such beverages.

____ 730.5 Minor child has committed an offense applicable only to children. (ex. Curfew, under age drinking)

____ 730.6 Minor child under 10 years of age committed an act that would be a crime if committed by an adult.

____ 730.7 The Caretaker causes, encouraged or contributed to the minor child's behavior.

____ 730.8 The Caretaker refused to attend a meeting with the child's teacher, school principal, or other employee regarding truancy, violation of school rules or other educational problems.

____ 730.9 Child incompetent to proceed with a delinquency matter under Article 832

____ 730.10 Child found to be in possession of a handgun

Additional Information: (Please describe behavior and tell us what services you think the child needs.)

Completed by: _____ Your Title: _____ Phone: _____

Possible Measures Taken: (at least 3 of these must be checked with 2 being behavior strategist/counselor and talked to parent)

____ Administrator/s talked with student (Date: ____/____/____)	Number of ISS/Out Suspensions: ____
____ Called and talked with guardian (Date: ____/____/____)	1. _____
____ Sent letter (Date: ____/____/____)	2. _____
____ Home visit (Date: ____/____/____)	3. _____
____ Had meeting with guardian (Date: ____/____/____)	____ Child was expelled:
____ Child talked to SRO (Date: ____/____/____)	Notes: _____
____ Turned in to Child Welfare Attendance Office (Date: ____/____/____)	_____
____ Counseled by School Counselor (Name: _____)	_____
____ Referred to Behavior Strategist (Special Ed.)	_____
____ Referred to School-Based Health	
____ Referred to _____ (Date: ____/____/____)	

++ Must attach: Discipline, Demographic and Attendance records ++ 8/11/2010ck

Families In Need of Services Complaint Criteria

In addition to completion of the check list of Louisiana Children's Codes, two additional attempts must be made by the Rapides Parish School System before the youth is eligible for referral to the FINS Office:

(1) The parents must be notified of the problem verbally and made aware that the youth is at risk of being turned over to the FINS Office.

(2) The youth must have been referred to one of the following:

1. Behavior Strategist, if classified Special Ed.
2. School Counselor, if in regular education classes

The school counselor and/or behavior strategist, after speaking with the youth, can make the recommendation to the FINS Office.

Below is our contact information:

Families In Need of Services
201 Johnston St
Alexandria, La 71301

Shannon Reyes
318.445.8084 ext 217
Title: FINS Officer (full time)

Derrick Kirk
318.445.8084 ext 216
Title: FINS Officer (full time)

APPENDIX 15. FINS REJECTION LETTER

Rapides Parish FINS Manual – DRAFT

<<Date>>

«FAM1»

«ADRSS»

«CTYSTE»

RE: «SNAME»

****Criteria Not Met****

The Families In Need of Services office regrettably must inform your office that the below listed minor child does not meet the criteria of FINS. Below you will find the reason for rejection. If you have questions regarding this matter feel free to contact us back at 318-445-8084.

Child's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security #: _____

The following reason caused the case to be rejected:

☐ Criteria was not met (lack of 2 or more interventions prior to sending the child to our office).

☐ The child is in the custody of the State of Louisiana.

☐ Child must be reported to the local policing agency as a runaway.

☐ The child has been adjudicated.

☐ The child is 17 years of age or older.

☐ The family refused services through our office. (We are a voluntary program.)

☐ Other: _____

Sincerely,

Derrick Kirk

FINS Officer

Ninth Judicial District Court