

Parenting Capacity Evaluations

State Forensic Service

A quick guide for the Judicial Branch



Title 22 M.R.S. 4007(3) & M.R. Civ. P. 35 authorizes an examination of a parent involved in the family court. The only family court evaluations that SFS conducts are parenting capacity as authorized under this statute.

What is a parenting capacity evaluation?

- A narrow and objective evaluation that assesses:
 - Parent or caregiver capacity to provide safety to their child
 - Risk and protective factors that may or may not influence child maltreatment
- Provides tailored recommendations for interventions and services

What referral questions will be answered?

1. What factors may increase or decrease the risk of future child abuse or neglect?
2. What are the appropriate interventions that may reduce the risk and facilitate safety?
3. What is the parent or caregiver's capacity to safely care for the child/ren?

When is it appropriate to refer to SFS?

Cases that are considered complex which can include (but not limited to):

- Multiple failed attempts at intervention
- Lack of effective progress in the child protection case
- Significant history of involvement in the child welfare system

What does SFS need to know and have?

- A court order for a parenting capacity evaluation
 - Scan the QR code below to review the specially drafted court order form with SFS-specific program needs & requirements
- A copy of the Finding of Jeopardy
- A copy of the Docket Record



In order to make a referral:

Email the court order, Finding of Jeopardy, and Docket Record to state-forensic-service.DHHS@maine.gov

- Please add "Parenting Capacity Evaluation Order" to the subject line

For further assistance or consultation, please contact:

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