I. Case Initiation and Record Maintenance

A. What you will learn:

1. How to open and enter a new case into Optima,
2. The different types of data: Required, Critical, Important and "Nice to Know" and examples of each,
3. How to upload documents to a case file
4. How to add new hearings and result out hearings that have been completed

B. Steps for entering a Case

1. Select "Add" – This is in the CASES Button
2. Enter the Case Number and Case Name.
    i. Check with your program about your specific Numbering convention.
    ii. Try to remember that you want to group children by advocacy
        1. So, if your numbering is just one number per child, you may want to have all the numbers together so the advocate Has just one "case" and not multiple places to go to do work,
3. Choose the County and/or Jurisdiction, if appropriate, from the drop down list.
4. Enter starting Notes about the case.
5. Select "Create". You are now ready to enter the rest of the case and child information.

Always enter information by first doing all the **PEOPLE**, then the **PLACES** and then finally **THINGS**.

Do **<u>not</u>** deviate from this order! Do not add a child and then go try to put in that child's placement. You will not have what you need, you will miss important information and worse, you will continually have to back track!

As you enter information, go from most important to least important.
This means:

People: 1-Children, 2-Family Members, 3- Associated Parties (Interested Parties, Caseworkers, then Attorneys), CASA Supervisor, CASA.

Places: Child(ren)'s placements

Things: Petitions and Allegations, Future Hearings, Past Hearings, Documents, To Dos

Adding Children to the Case

Children in Case section:

1. Select "Add".
2. When adding the children, remember to add Required information, then Critical Information, then important, then, "Nice to know"!
3. Required Information is the First Name and Last Name
4. Critical information is Assigned to Program Date, Birthdate, Gender, Ethnicity, and Race.
    1. Ask your Program Director which date they used for Assigned to Program.
    2. Also check to see if the Child Status and Date are Critical.
5. Select "Create". This creates the child's detail. At the bottom of the page is more information to add.
    1. Action Tabs – Tabs in which you Add information
        a. Eligibility (Critical) – You record which Grants and Program a child is eligible to be counted towards. Especially VOCA!
        b. School
        c. Disabilities
        d. Languages

Adding Family Members to the Case

Family Members section:

1. Select "Add".
2. Fill in each field as appropriate, being sure to add First and Last Name.
3. Select "Create".

Relationship tab:

a. Select "Add" to enter the person's relationship with the child(ren) in the case.
b. Check the box next to the related child(ren).
c. Select the Relationship Type from the drop down list.
d. Select "Create".

Languages, Disabilities, Concerns and Employment tabs:

a. Select the appropriate tab.
b. Select "Add".
c. Select a value from the drop down list.
d. Select "Create".

Adding Associated Parties to the Case

Associated Parties tab (located at bottom of the Case Details):

1. Select "Add".
2. Choose the type of person you want to add: Attorney, Caseworker or Interested Party.
3. Select the name of the associated party from the drop down list**.
4. Select "Save".
5. Fill in each field as appropriate, being sure to add First and Last Name.
6. Select "Create" (which will display Child and Family Member sections).
7. In most programs **NON-RELATIVE FOSTER PARENTS** will be Interested Parties. It works best to add them as a single entry with both parents names in the First Name field.

Child section:

a. Select "Add" to enter the start date of the person's assignment/relationship with the child(ren) in the case.
b. Check the box next to the appropriate child(ren).
c. Enter the Assigned Date.
d. Select "Create".

Family section:

a. Select "Add" to enter the start date of the person's assignment/relationship with the family member(s) in the case.
b. Check the box next to the appropriate family member(s).
c. Enter the Assigned Date.
d. Select "Create".

** If the associated party name is not in the drop down list above:

1. Select "NEW".
2. Select the person's type: Attorney, Caseworker or Interested Party.
3. If it is an Interested Party, select the "Interested Party Type" from the drop down. There will be no "Interested Party Type" for Attorney or Caseworker.
4. Fill in the appropriate fields.
5. Select "Create".
6. Continue with Associated Parties tab, step #3, above. The newly added person will now appear in the drop down list.

Adding Assignments to the Case

Case Assignments section – Add a Supervisor:

1. Select "Add".
2. Select the Supervisor name from the drop down list on the left.
3. Enter the Assigned Date.
4. If someone will approve the Supervisor's Contact Logs, select the person's name from the Contact Log Approval list, otherwise select "None Required".
5. Select "Create", which will display a Child Assignment section.
6. Select the appropriate child(ren) who are assigned to the Supervisor.
7. Enter the assignment Date.
8. Select "Create".

Case Assignments section – Add a Volunteer:

1. Select "Add".
2. Select the Volunteer name from the drop down list on the right.
3. Enter the Assigned Date.
4. Check the Remain Available box, if the Volunteer will be assigned additional cases while on this case.
5. Select the appropriate person for Contact Log Approval.
6. Select "Create", which will display a Child Assignment section.
7. Select the appropriate child(ren) who are assigned to the Volunteer.
8. Enter the assignment Date.
9. Select "Create".

Adding a Placement to the Case

Current Placements section:

1. Select "Add".

Children Placed section:

a. Select the appropriate child(ren) who were placed.

Placed With section:

a. Select where the child was placed: at a Placement Facility, with a Family Member or Interested Party (includes Foster Parents).

Placement Details section:

a. If placement was determined during in a hearing, select the correct Hearing from the drop down list.
b. Enter the Placement "From" date. An open "To" date signifies the current placement for the child.
c. Select "With Siblings" and the "Placement Type", which are required.
d. Enter other Placement information, as known.

2. Select "Create".

Adding Petitions and Allegations to the Case

Petitions and Allegations tab (located at bottom of the Case Details):

1. Select "Add".
2. Enter the Petition Number, Petition Date and Petition Type.
3. Select "Create".

Petition Children section:

a. Select "Add" to select children on the petition.
b. Select "Create".
c. For each child, select "View Allegations" action icon. This is the Magnifying Glass Icon to the right of the child's name.

Allegation Details section:

i. Select "Add" to enter Allegation details. Ask you Program Director for the level of detail necessary.
ii. Select "Create".
iii. Continue for each allegation against each person for each child.

Adding a Hearing to the Case

Hearing tab (located at bottom of the Case Details):

1. Select "Add".
2. Enter the appropriate fields. Date and Time are required.
3. Select "Create" (which will display additional tabs and sections):

Hearing Types tab:

a. Select "Add".
b. Select a value from the drop down list.
c. Select "Create".

Hearing Outcomes tab:

a. Select "Add" to enter Outcomes if the hearing has concluded.
b. Select a value from the drop down list.
c. Select "Create".

Hearing Participants section: (Remember in a future hearing this is capture **About Whom** the hearing is being held, not **Who** is in the

Children tab:

a. Select "Add" to enter the Child(ren) discussed in this hearing.
b. Select a value from the drop down list.
c. Select "Create".

Family Members tab:

a. Select "Add" to enter the Family Members discussed in this hearing.
b. Select a value from the drop down list.
c. Select "Create".

When resulting out a Hearing, update the following information when appropriate.

Volunteer Input, Court Order Services, Visitation and Permanent Plan sections:

a. Select the appropriate tab.
b. Select "Add".
c. Select a value from the drop down list.
d. Select "Create".

Uploading Documents to the Case

Documents tab (located at bottom of the Case Details):

1. Select "Add".
2. Choose the file to be uploaded.
3. Select the Document Type from the drop down list.
4. Update the Upload Date is necessary.

The Documents Tab is set to allow documents that are 7MB (7000kb) or smaller. Documents larger than this cannot be uploaded. If you have a document too large to be uploaded there are two (2) main options:

1. A document can be split into two separate documents and upload as "part 1" and "part 2". Some programs prefer to do this to make it easier to scroll through a document. It is easier to look through 10 pages than 20 pages.
2. Many times, documents are scanned and sent in their largest resolution. While this is great for images, it is hardly necessary for a document. Try setting your scanner

resolution to a lower setting. For best results, and faster uploads, please scan your documents using the B&W setting on your scanner (no color), and a lower resolution setting (200dpi is ideal).