



Texas Children's[®]
Health Plan

PLAN OF SAFE CARE



PLAN OF SAFE CARE PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW

Your Plan of Safe Care Portfolio is a tool to help you organize your documents and notes. It should be updated over time to keep track of all your appointments, activities, and accomplishments. This will help you communicate the preparations you have made to keep you, your baby, and your family safe and healthy.

Below is a description of each tab in your portfolio and the resources included. Remember, this is YOUR portfolio, and you can customize it to best fit your needs.

TAB 1: PLAN OF SAFE CARE

Plan of Safe Care Document

This is the main form and resource in this tool. There is a wide range of information requested on this form and many providers can help you complete this form.

Completed by:

Section	Service Provider	Mom
Demographics		•
Medical History	OB/GYN, Primary Care Provider	•
Psychiatric History	Mental Health Provider, Primary Care Provider	•
Substance Use History	Treatment Case Manager, Recovery Coach	•
Services for Substance Use	MAT Provider	•
Drug Screening Results	Provider Ordering Test, Recovery Coach	•
Family Supports	Recovery Coach, Social Worker, Case Manager	•
Infant Information	Pediatrician	•
Referrals & Services	Recovery Coach, Social Worker, Case Manager	•
Relapse Prevention Plan	Recovery Coach, Social Worker, Case Manager	•

Additional Children

This form should be completed for each of your children. This will help your providers identify additional supports your child(ren) might need.

Completed by: Mom and pediatrician or case manager

How to Introduce Your Plan of Safe Care to a Provider

This document provides language to use and answers to frequently asked questions to help you when introducing the Plan of Safe Care to a new provider.

TAB 2: CONTACTS

Communication Log, Contact List & Business Card Sleeve

In this tab you can keep track of who you talk to and keep a list of your providers and their contact information. There is also a place for you to keep their business cards.

Completed by: Service providers and Mom

TAB 3: CONSENTS & RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Consent Log

This log will help you keep track of where you have signed a consent or release of information form. You can place copies of all signed forms in this tab.

Consent and Release of Information FAQs

This resource answers common questions about consent and release of information forms, including what they are used for and questions you may want to ask.

Completed by: Service providers and Mom

TAB 4: CHILD RESOURCES

Choosing a Pediatrician Interview Guide

This interview guide is intended to help you choose a pediatrician that is in sync with your parenting style and needs. You can use this guide to help you interview and select the pediatrician right for you, your child, and your family.

Completed by: Mom

Parenting Action Plan (if provided)

The Parenting Action Plan booklet provides helpful resources and parenting tips.

TAB 5: APPOINTMENT AND VISIT SUMMARIES

Appointment Log

This log will help you keep track of appointments for you and your child(ren). This tab is where you can put all of your after-visit summaries and appointment documents.

Completed by: Mom

TAB 6: CERTIFICATES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Certificates and Accomplishments Log

This log is a great way to track your accomplishments. List activities you feel proud of and place program certificates here.

Completed by: Mom

TIPS & TRICKS

- Update your portfolio on a routine basis.
- Take your portfolio binder with you to all appointments, relevant meetings, hearings, and to the hospital when you deliver your baby.
- Do not leave your portfolio or any of the documents with your providers. Ask that they make a copy.
- Remember that it is OK not to answer all questions or share this with people you do not trust.

PLAN OF SAFE CARE

Plans of Safe Care address the physical health, mental health, substance use disorder treatment, and social needs of families. These plans are intended to be completed with the mother and family in coordination with all providers the mom and family are working with, including but not limited to: OB/GYN, pediatrician, mental health provider, social worker, case manager, recovery coach, parenting coach, etc.

MATERNAL DEMOGRAPHICS			
Name:		Date of Birth:	
Current Living Arrangement: <input type="checkbox"/> Rent/Own a Home <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless <input type="checkbox"/> Living with Relatives or Friends <input type="checkbox"/> Residential Treatment Center <input type="checkbox"/> Correctional Facility <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____			
Street Address:			
City:	State:	Zip Code:	County:
Primary Phone Numbers:			
Emergency Contact:		Phone Number:	Relationship:
Marital Status/ Estado Civil: <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> Separated			
Insurance Plan:		Effective Date:	
Subscriber ID:		Group ID:	
MATERNAL MEDICAL HISTORY			
PRENATAL CARE (FOR CURRENT OR MOST RECENT PREGNANCY)			Complete with: OB/GYN
Gestational Age at Entry of Care:		Due Date:	Delivery Date:
Planned Mode of Delivery: <input type="checkbox"/> Vaginal <input type="checkbox"/> Cesarean		Actual Mode of Delivery: <input type="checkbox"/> Vaginal <input type="checkbox"/> Cesarean	
Attended Postpartum Visit: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
If so, Location:		Date Completed:	
OBSTETRIC HISTORY		Describe Any Complications During Prior Pregnancies:	
Total Number of Pregnancies:			
Number of Live Births:			
Number of Children Currently Living with Mother:			
MEDICAL PROBLEMS REQUIRING ONGOING CARE			Complete with: OB/GYN or Primary Care Provider
Diagnoses:			

PLAN OF SAFE CARE

CURRENT MEDICATION LIST

Complete with: OB/GYN or Primary Care Provider

Medications	Dose	Prescriber	Notes

Notes:

PSYCHIATRIC HISTORY

Complete with: OB/GYN, Primary Care Provider,
or Mental Health Provider

Provider	Phone Number	Diagnosis	Date of Diagnosis

Are you currently taking any medications for these diagnoses? Yes No
Please, describe:

Notes:

PLAN OF SAFE CARE

SUBSTANCE USE HISTORY		Complete with: Treatment Case Manager, Recovery Coach		
	Ever Used	Used During Pregnancy	Date Last Used	
Alcohol	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Amphetamines (ex. Adderall, "meth")	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Benzodiazepines (ex. Xanax)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Cannabis ("marijuana")	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Cocaine	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Heroin	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Kush (synthetic marijuana)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Prescription Drugs (ex. pain medications)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Tobacco	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
Notes:				
MEDICAL SERVICES FOR SUBSTANCE USE		Complete with: MAT Provider		
Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Engaged: <input type="checkbox"/> Never <input type="checkbox"/> Currently <input type="checkbox"/> Prior MAT use Date of Last use:				
Medication(s), Dose(s), and Date(s):	Name and Contact Information for MAT Clinic:			
Addiction Medicine Services: <input type="checkbox"/> Never <input type="checkbox"/> Currently <input type="checkbox"/> Prior, Date of Last Appointment:				
Name and Contact Information for Addiction Medicine Clinic:				
Notes				

PLAN OF SAFE CARE

INFANT INFORMATION		Complete with: Pediatrician		
Child's Name:				
Date of Birth:		Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		
Birth Weight:	Gestational Age at Birth:	NICU <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Length of stay:		
Pediatrician Name and Contact Info:				
Infant Urine Drug Screening at Birth: <input type="checkbox"/> Not Completed <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Positive <i>Specify:</i>				
Meconium Results: <input type="checkbox"/> Not Completed <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Pending <input type="checkbox"/> Positive <i>Specify:</i>				
Neonatal Opioid Withdraw/Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Treatment Method:				
Diagnoses, Problems, and Additional Information:				
INFANT CARE NEEDS				
Item	Yes	No	Pending	Notes
Breast Pump	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Breastfeeding Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Car Seat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Childcare	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Crib	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Diapers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Infant Formula	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Infant Stroller	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Where Will Baby Sleep: <input type="checkbox"/> Crib or Bassinet <input type="checkbox"/> Sharing a Bed with Others <input type="checkbox"/> Other, <i>specify:</i> _____				
Notes:				

*You can use the Additional Children's Form to record information on other children.

PLAN OF SAFE CARE

INFANT'S MEDICATIONS

Medication	Dose	Prescriber	Notes

Notes:

INFANT'S FATHER DEMOGRAPHICS

Name:		Date of Birth:
Street Address:		
City:	State:	Zip Code:
Primary Phone Numbers:		
Will be/Is involved in baby's life? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure Comments:		

Notes:

PLAN OF SAFE CARE

REFERRALS AND SERVICES

Check box(es) for all applicable services currently engaged and new referrals needed for infant, mother, and family.

Complete with: Recovery Coach, Social Worker, Case Manager, etc.

Service or Program	Discussed	Needed	Referred	Participating	Completed	N/A	Organization and Contact Information
SUPPORT SERVICES							
Parenting Classes							
Transportation Services							
SSI or Disability							
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)							
Personal Safety							
Home Visitation Program							
Housing Assistance							
Healthy Start Program							
Other:							
Other:							
FOOD & NUTRITION							
Breastfeeding Support							
Local Food Pantries							
SNAP							
Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)							
Other:							
Other:							
HEALTHCARE							
Health Insurance Enrollment							
Prenatal Healthcare							
Family Planning							
Primary Care							
Mental Health or Counseling							
Smoking Cessation							
Other:							
Other:							
SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES							
Residential							
Outpatient							
Caring for Two Program							
The Cradles Project							
Recovery Support Services							
Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)							
Other:							
Other:							

PLAN OF SAFE CARE

Service or Program	Discussed	Needed	Referred	Participating	Completed	N/A	Organization and Contact Information
CHILD RELATED							
Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)							
Early Head Start							
NCI (Childcare Subsidy)							
Pediatrician or Primary Care							
Safe Sleep Education							
Other:							
Other:							
LEGAL ASSISTANCE							
Child Protective Service							
Legal Aid							
Specialty Court, specify:							
Other:							
Other:							
Notes:							

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RELAPSE PREVENTION PLAN

Complete with: Recovery Coach, Social Worker, Case Manager, etc.

List 3 things that you know trigger your desire to use

List 3 skills or things you enjoy doing that can help get your mind off using

List 3 people you can talk to if you are thinking about using

In the case I relapse, my safe caregivers will be: A safe caregiver is a person you choose to leave your baby within case of a relapse. Ensure the safe caregiver you choose has patience with your baby and a safe place for your baby to sleep. Also, they should not have a history of violence or drug/alcohol abuse. I have spoken to these people and they support me:

SAFE CAREGIVERS

Name:

Name:

Contact Number:

Contact Number:

Relationship:

Relationship:

NALOXONE (OPIOID REVERSAL MEDICATION)

Please check the box that applies for each statement

I have Naloxone (opioid overdose reversal drug), and I know how to use it.

Yes

No

I have a support person who has Naloxone (opioid overdose drug) and knows how to use it.

Yes

No

Comments:

--

ADDITIONAL CHILDREN

Complete this form for each of your children to provide information about them to your providers. Update as needed.

Date Created: _____

CHILD DEMOGRAPHICS			
Child's Name:			
Date of Birth	Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male		
Current Address:		Phone Number:	
City:	State:	Zip Code	
Who is the child currently living with? Select all that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Father/ Padre <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparents <input type="checkbox"/> Sibling(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Family <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____			
Fathers Name:		Is the father involved in the child's life? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Address:		Phone Number:	
Insurance Plan:		Effective Date:	
Subscriber ID:		Group ID:	
MEDICAL HISTORY			
Primary Care Provider:		Organization:	
Address:			
Phone Number:			
EXISTING MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND MEDICATIONS			
Medical History (<i>medical conditions, medications, surgeries, etc.</i>)			
Do you have any concerns about your child's <u>physical, mental or behavioral</u> health?			
EDUCATION HISTORY AND COMMUNITY LINKAGE			
What school does your child attend			Current Grade:
List any difficulties or services your child has received (speech therapy, reading difficulties, dyslexia, special education, etc.)			
Does your child have a relationship with his/her school counselor/social worker/psychologist? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Is your child involved with the court/legal system? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Has your child had any involvement with Child Protective Service (CPS) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, <u>Currently</u> Involved with CPS <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, <u>Previously</u> Involved with CPS <input type="checkbox"/> No, Never			
Caseworker:		Phone Number:	
Is there any other information about your child you would like us to be aware of?			

INTRODUCING YOUR PLAN OF SAFE CARE TO A PROVIDER

It can be hard to openly share personal challenges with doctors, nurses, case managers, and other service providers. We encourage you to share your Plan of Safe Care with all of your health and service providers. Knowing your difficulties and family's challenges can help them best support you and your family. However, you may not feel comfortable (yet) disclosing all of your history or even why you chose to start a Plan of Safe Care. This is ok. Remember, this is your plan and you get to choose who you share it with, when, and how much you share.

We encourage you to prepare for your first visit by identifying essential information you would like to disclose to help your providers better care for you and your baby. **To help you start the conversation, we developed a few prompts.** Use the one you feel most comfortable with or best describes your situation.

Generic introduction for those you don't feel comfortable sharing too much information with:

My family has a lot going on right now. To help me keep track of everything we are doing, I am using this tool called the Plan of Safe Care. I keep everything here in this binder. Would you be willing to help me complete this section [show the provider the section(s) they can help you with] and give me your business card?

If you have a substance use issue and are willing to share that information:

You may or may not know but I have a history of substance use, and I am actively working towards my recovery. To help me, I have decided to build a Plan of Safe Care to help me organize and keep track of everything I am doing as part of my recovery. This tool can also help those I am working with know more about my history, my strengths and goals, and what services I have complete and those I still need help with. As part of our visit today, I would like to share my plan with you and have you help me complete some questions. I would also like to put your business card in my binder so I can always know how to reach your office.

If you have an open child welfare (CPS) case and are willing to share that information:

My family has a lot going on right now. I am working with the Department of Family and Protective Services to ensure my children and family are safe and healthy. As part of this work, I am using a tool called the Plan of Safe Care to help me organize and keep track of everything I am doing. This tool can also help those I am working with know more about my history, my strengths and goals, and what services I have complete and those I still need help with. As part of our visit today, I would like to share my plan with you and have you help me complete some questions. I would also like to put your business card in my binder so I can always know how to reach your office.

Consent/Permission to Share Information – If you think your CPS caseworker or another service provider would want to contact this provider, you may ask if they have a form for you to sign to give them permission to do this.

I think my [CPS caseworker, lawyer, recovery coach, insert name of provider] will want to talk with you about my care here. Do you have a specific form I need to sign to give you permission to talk with them? I would also like a copy of that form to keep in my Plan of Safe Care.

What if they ask me more about the Plan of Safe Care and what is its purpose?

A Plan of Safe Care is a tool designed to help me demonstrate my progress and easily communicate what I have done and what I need from the people I am working with. My Plan of Safe Care will focus on my baby's health, development, and safety, as well as my family's physical and emotional health, substance use disorder treatment, parenting ability, and readiness to care for my baby. My portfolio can also be seen as a "recovery resume" and will help me communicate all of the work and preparations I have made for myself and my baby.

COMMUNICATIONS LOG

It may be helpful to you to keep notes on important conversations and communications you have had regarding your pregnancy, your recovery, your health or the health of your child(ren), services you are trying to receive, etc. Keep notes here and add extra pages if needed.

Date/Time	Method	Organization or Person	Purpose	Notes	Follow Up Needed
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

COMMUNICATIONS LOG

Date/Time	Method	Organization or Person	Purpose	Notes	Follow Up Needed
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
__/__/__ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email/letter <input type="checkbox"/> In Person <input type="checkbox"/> Video call <input type="checkbox"/> Other				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

CONTACT LIST

The goal of the Plan of Safe Care Contact List is to ensure coordination among the providers caring for you and your newborn. Please fill in provider and program name(s) plus contact information.

PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN

Provider:

Organization:

Address:

Phone Number:

Notes:

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER TREATMENT PROVIDER

Provider:

Organization:

Address:

Phone Number:

Notes:

PRENATAL CARE PROVIDER (OB/GYN)

Provider:

Organization:

Address:

Phone Number:

Notes:

MEDICATION ASSISTED TREATMENT (MAT)

Provider:

Organization:

Address:

Phone Number:

Notes:

PEDIATRICIAN

Provider:

Organization:

Address:

Phone Number:

Notes:

ADDITIONAL RECOVERY SUPPORT

Provider:

Organization:

Address:

Phone Number:

Notes:

CHILD WELFARE ("CPS") CASEWORKER

Provider:

Organization:

Address:

Phone Number:

Notes:

MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER

Provider:

Organization:

Address:

Phone Number:

Notes:

OTHER

Provider:

Organization:

Address:

Phone Number:

Notes:

OTHER

Provider:

Organization:

Address:

Phone Number:

Notes:

CONTACT LIST

OTHER

Provider:

Organization:

Address:

Phone Number:

Notes:

CONSENT AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION FAQs

Release of information and consent forms can sometimes be confusing. Understanding what they are used for and what your rights are is very important in helping you decide which form(s) you may or may not want to sign.

What is a release of information form?

A release of information form is a form you sign to allow one provider to release information to another provider. Usually, there is a place on the form to indicate what information can and cannot be shared. For example, you may sign a release of information form allowing your OB/GYN to share the results of your annual exam with your primary care provider.

What is a consent form?

A consent form is a form a doctor or community service provider might ask you to sign to give them permission to: collect information from you, use information you provide, provide a specific service to you, or explain the risks of a certain procedure.

What does it mean if I sign a release of information or consent form?

Signing a release of information form gives a doctor or service provider permission to share specific information with another provider. The form should include the specific information to be shared. Signing a consent form gives a doctor or service provider permission to do something (a procedure, collect or share information, etc.), and/or indicates you understand the risk(s) involved in a procedure. Your signature on a consent form means you understand what is being asked and any possible risks.

When (or where) might I be asked to sign a release of information or consent form?

Your doctor or community service provider might ask you to sign one of these forms when you are a new patient/client, a new service is offered, a new procedure needs to be done, or you ask them to share your information with someone for you.

Why would I want to sign a release of information or consent form?

Doctors and other providers usually cannot share your information without your permission. For example, if you change doctors you will need to sign a release of information form for your old doctor to share your records with your new doctor.

Do I have to sign a release of information or consent forms?

You do not have to sign a release of information or consent form if you do not want to. However, signing these forms can benefit you. It may be helpful to ask what the form is for and why it is needed.

Can I change my mind after I sign a release of information or consent form?

Yes, you can let the provider know you want to remove or revoke your permission.

Can I ask questions?

YES! If you do not understand what information will be shared, who it will be shared with, and why it is needed—ASK these questions. You have every right to know before making a decision.

When should I start looking for a Pediatrician?

It is never too early to look for a pediatrician and pediatric clinic that is right for you. Choosing a pediatrician before your baby is born will help you feel confident about your baby's care. Plus, knowing you have chosen the right doctor will help you feel calmer and more in control. A little advance planning now will reduce future stress so you can enjoy your pregnancy as your due date approaches.

Choosing a Pediatrician who meets your needs

We recommend scheduling an interview to meet the pediatricians you are considering before your baby's birth. This will help you determine whether the pediatrician is in sync with your parenting style and principles. These "meet and greets" are a great opportunity to be honest about topics that are important to you.

The goal of your interview is to decide whether the pediatrician is the right match for you and your baby.

Questions for the office staff

- Do you accept my health insurance and are you "in-network?"
- What are the office hours? Are there evening or weekend hours to accommodate working parents?
- Does the pediatrician speak multiple languages?
- Does the practice have an after-hours answering service? Or emergency coverage?
- Do you offer same day appointments?
- On average, how long is the wait time in the waiting room?
- What services do you provide for postpartum depression and other maternal health issues?
- How close is the office to public transportation?

Decide what is important to you and do your research

Think about what things are most important to you and that are "must haves" for your pediatric office. Write these down and be sure to ask about them specifically. Ask family members, friends, and coworkers for recommendations.

It's a good idea to make sure the pediatricians you would like to interview are board-certified. Board-certified pediatricians have completed not only medical school and residency programs in pediatrics, they've also passed a rigorous exam given by the American Board of Pediatrics. To remain board-certified, pediatricians must continue their education through classes and workshops, demonstrate quality patient care and maintain a valid medical license to demonstrate they are up-to-date on the most current medical practices, knowledge, and skills for children of all ages. To check to see if the pediatrician you like is board-certified, go to <https://www.abp.org/content/verification-certification>.

CHOOSING A PEDIATRICIAN

The following is a list of interview questions to help you narrow down your search for a pediatrician. Use this as a guide to make sure you make a good, informed decision.

There are no “right” or “wrong” answers, as every family’s priorities and preferences are different. This tool is to ensure you pick a doctor who meets your needs.

How long have you been in practice? Are you a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics?

Why did you choose to become a pediatrician?

Is this a solo or group practice? If group, how often will we see other doctors in the practice?

Who are the doctors who will care for my child if you are not available?

Will your initial meeting with my baby be at the hospital or at their first well-child checkup?

Do you have a subspecialty or area of pediatric interest? If so, what is it?

If I have routine/non-emergency questions, who should I contact and when?

Where do you stand on the below topics:

Breastfeeding/Formula: _____

Childcare: _____

Sleep: _____

Vaccinations: _____

Other: _____

Do you and your staff practice trauma informed care?

What other services are offered at your clinic?

If my child needs to see a specialist, how do you handle referrals?

How far in advance do well-child appointments need to be scheduled?

Does the practice have an after-hours answering service?

If you are not available on the phone, who will handle my questions? Do you respond to questions by email?

Other questions you want to ask:
