Date: April 15, 2019

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

From: Deborah Rathermel, Director
     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.