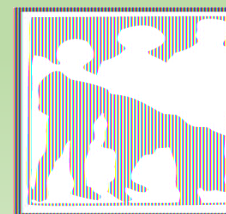


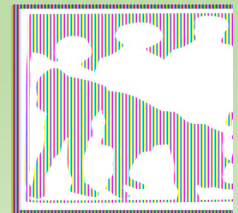
Families in Need of Services FINS

**Child Welfare and Attendance
February 2025**



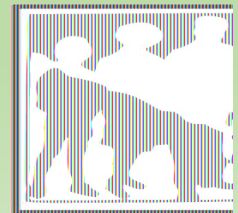
OBJECTIVES

- Provide a clear understanding of the Informal FINS Process
- How to make an appropriate referral to your local Informal FINS Office



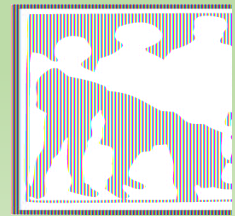
What is FINS?

- Families In Need Of Services (FINS) became effective in all courts having juvenile jurisdiction on July 1, 1994, as Title VII of the Louisiana Children's Code.
- It is an approach designed to bring together resources for the purpose of helping families (troubled youth and their parents) to remedy self destructive behaviors by juveniles and/or other family members.



Mission Statement

The Informal FINS Process is to coordinate quality rehabilitative services designed to respond to identified needs of children and their families to prevent further involvement in the Juvenile Justice System.



Informal

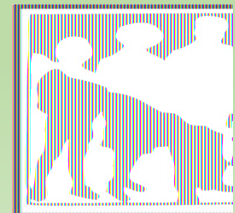
vs

Formal

1. Informal FINS is a preventative process that is designed to link families to services and to alleviate/improve the juvenile/family's situation.
2. Family participation is voluntary.
3. There is no authority to sanction in this process.

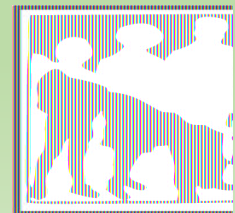


1. Formal proceedings begin by referral / complaint to the D.A. for prosecution.
2. D.A. determines which cases are prosecuted
3. Judge has authority to impose sanctions.



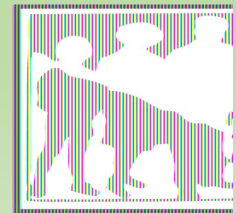
Informal FINS provides the following

- Early identification of Status Offense Committed with evidence based appropriate assessment
- Rapid, coordinated, targeted service response to identified needs
- Consistent, timely monitoring and revising of service plans
- Attention to family environmental factors affecting the child
- Coordination of Stakeholder in the development/implementation of an effective services plan
- Appropriate use of the District Attorney's Office and Juvenile or District Court to ensure family cooperation and behavioral change



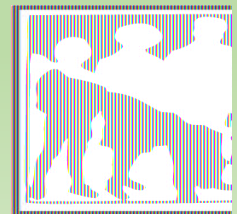
How does it work?

- The Informal FINS process begins with a written complaint, submitted to the Informal FINS program office alleging that the family is in need of services.
- Almost anyone can file a complaint: Most common are schools, law enforcement, parents/caregivers and service providers.
- The complaint is screened for venue and grounds. If these two criteria are present, the family is requested to appear for an Informal Conference. (See Process Map)



Grounds for Referral:

1. Truancy/willfully violates lawful school rules.
2. Ungovernable
3. Runaway
4. Repeatedly possessed or consumed intoxicating beverages or misrepresented his/her age for purpose of purchasing or receiving such beverages from any person or has repeatedly loitered around any place where such beverages are the principal commodities sold or handled
5. Committed an offense applicable only to children



Grounds for Referral

6. Child under ten years of age has committed any act which if committed by an adult would be a crime under any federal, state, or local law
7. Caretaker has caused, encouraged, or contributed to the child's behavior in delinquent acts
8. After notice, a caretaker has willfully failed to attend a meeting with the child's teacher, school principal, or other appropriate school employee to discuss the child's truancy, the child's repeated violation of school rules or other serious educational problems of the child
9. Child has been found incompetent to proceed with a delinquency matter
10. Repealed by Acts 2012, No. 730, 2
11. A child found to have engaged in cyberbullying



Truancy Referral Criteria

- **August-December (1st Semester)**

Refer students accruing 5 or more UNEXCUSED Absences or HABITUALLY TARDY (10 or more)

- **January – End of School Year (2nd Semester)**

Refer students accruing 10 or more UNEXCUSED Absences or HABITUALLY TARDY (10 or more)

Other Referral Considerations:

- Student has a past history of truancy according to records on file.
- Absences are negatively affecting academics.
- Absences are due to parental neglect to send minor to school.



Please do not refer students when:

- Parents are responsive to school's concerns regarding the child.
- Student has been hospitalized and contact made w/parent in reference to absences.
- Student has a chronic disability letter on file.
- Student is absent due to a religious holiday, death in family, or has medical notes.
- Student's parent has written notes to excuse day(s) absent.
- Student's unexcused absences are due to suspension(s).

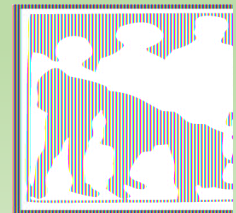


Behavior Referral Criteria

Regular Education Students

Refer student at the 3rd suspension and provide that 3 of the following processes are in place:

- A/BIT interventions have begun for regular education students
- Student has been seen by School Social Worker/Counselor for school based interventions.
- The school has held or attempted to hold a parent conference to discuss the student's behavior.
- Interventions are not affecting behavioral change and student continues to violate school rules.



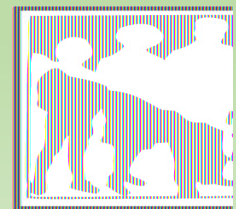
Behavior Referral Criteria

Regular Education Students

Refer all regular education students at the completion of Expulsion Hearing unless student has committed a delinquent act and/or been arrested (gun possession, drug possession, physical assault, etc..)

Please do not refer students when:

- The family has accessed services for the student and is actively participating in those services.
- The parent/guardian is responsive to the school's concerns, and is willing to work with the School Social Worker/Counselor and accepts referrals to community services.
- Abuse/Neglect is known/suspected. Refer to the Department of Children and Family Services 1-855-452-5437(DCFS)



Referral Criteria: Special Education Students

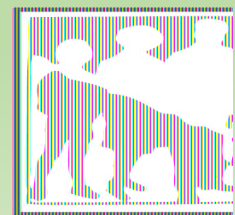
Refer Special Education Students when they are truant. Please use the same absences criteria as for regular education students.

Refer Special Education Students with behavioral issues **only** when parents do not attend IEP meetings. Others should be dealt with in accordance to Special Education Regulations.

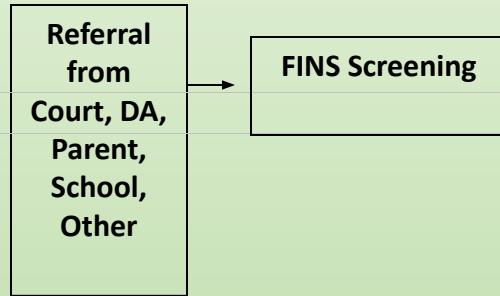


Informal FINS Process Map

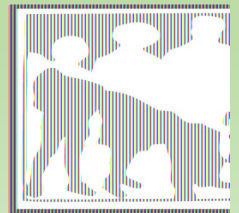
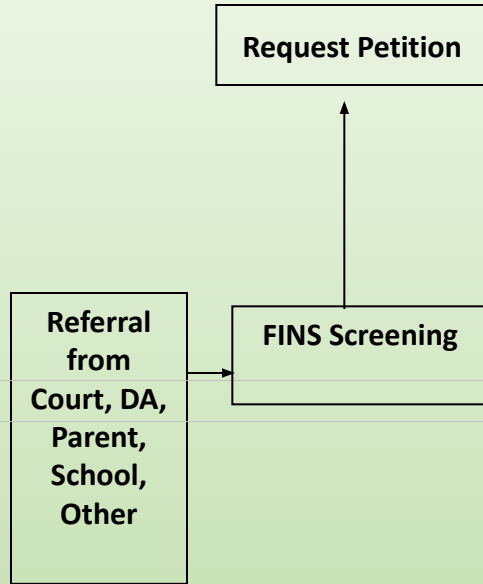
Referral from Court, DA, Parent, School, Other



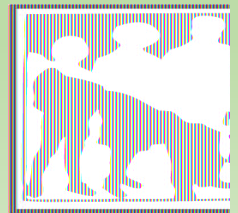
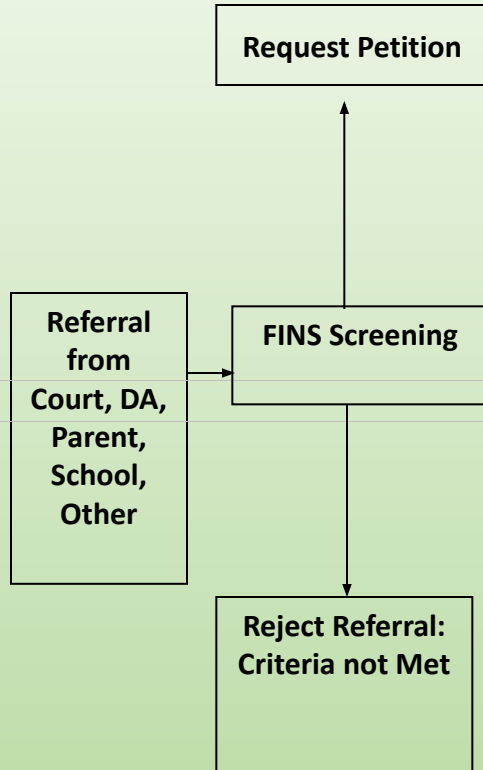
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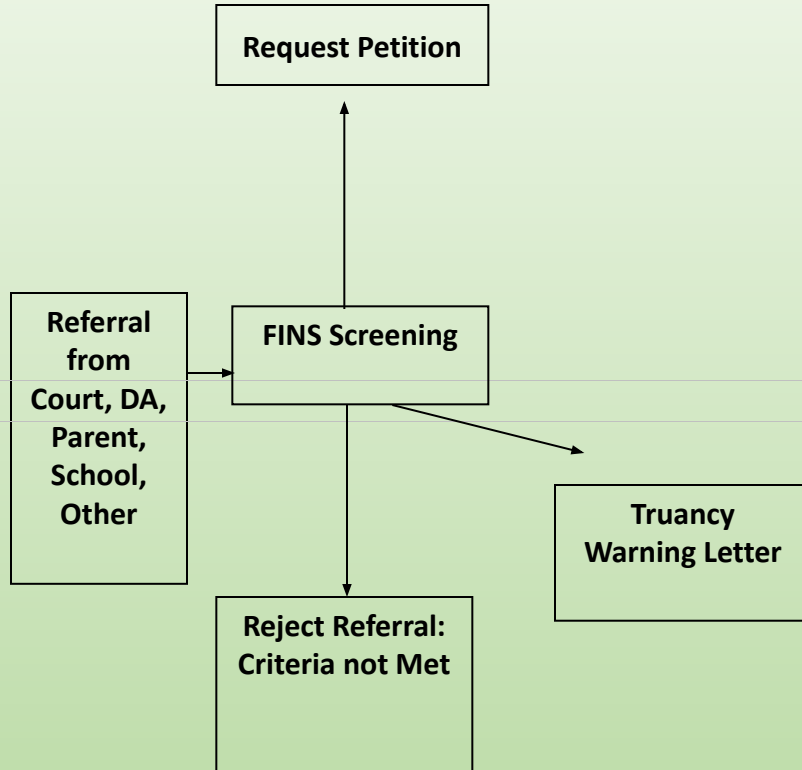
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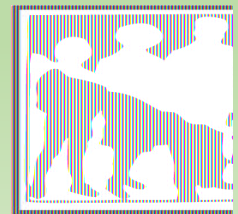
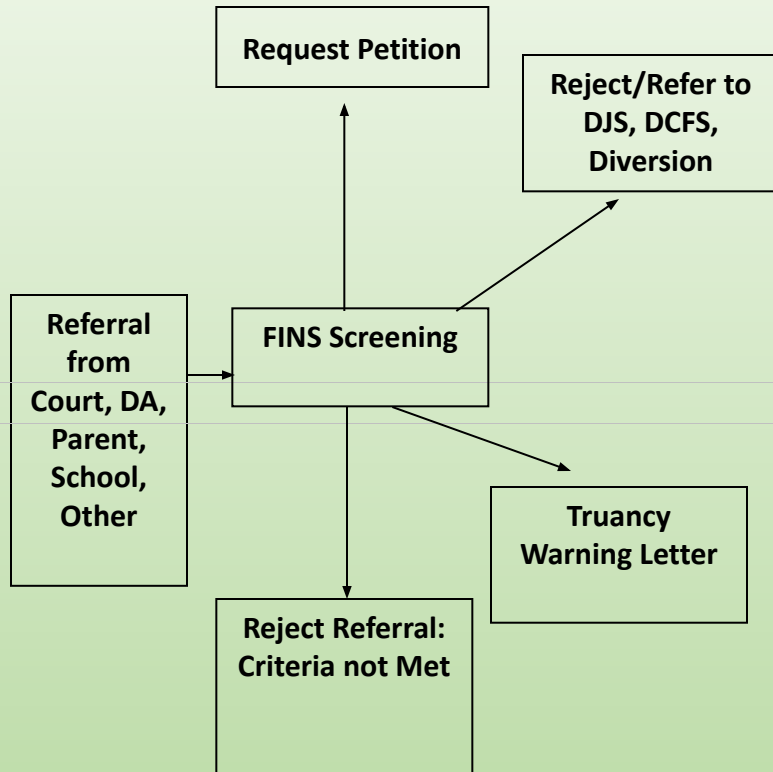
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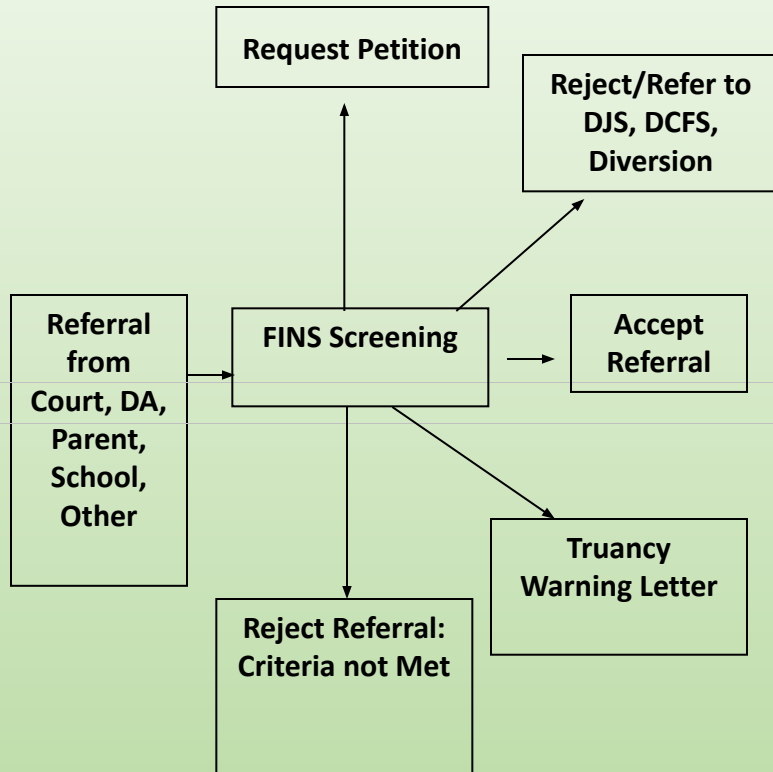
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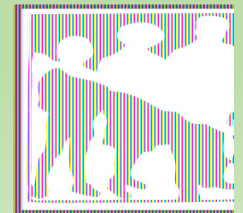
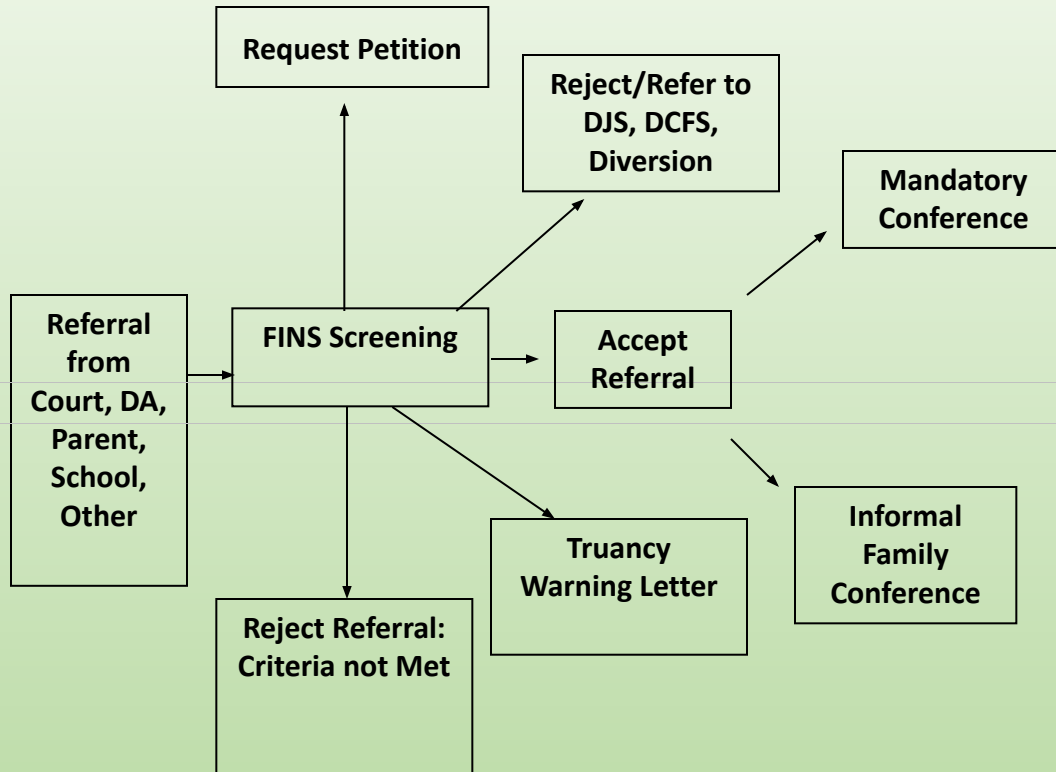
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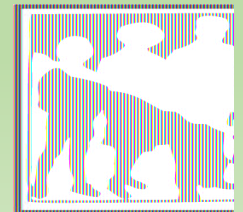
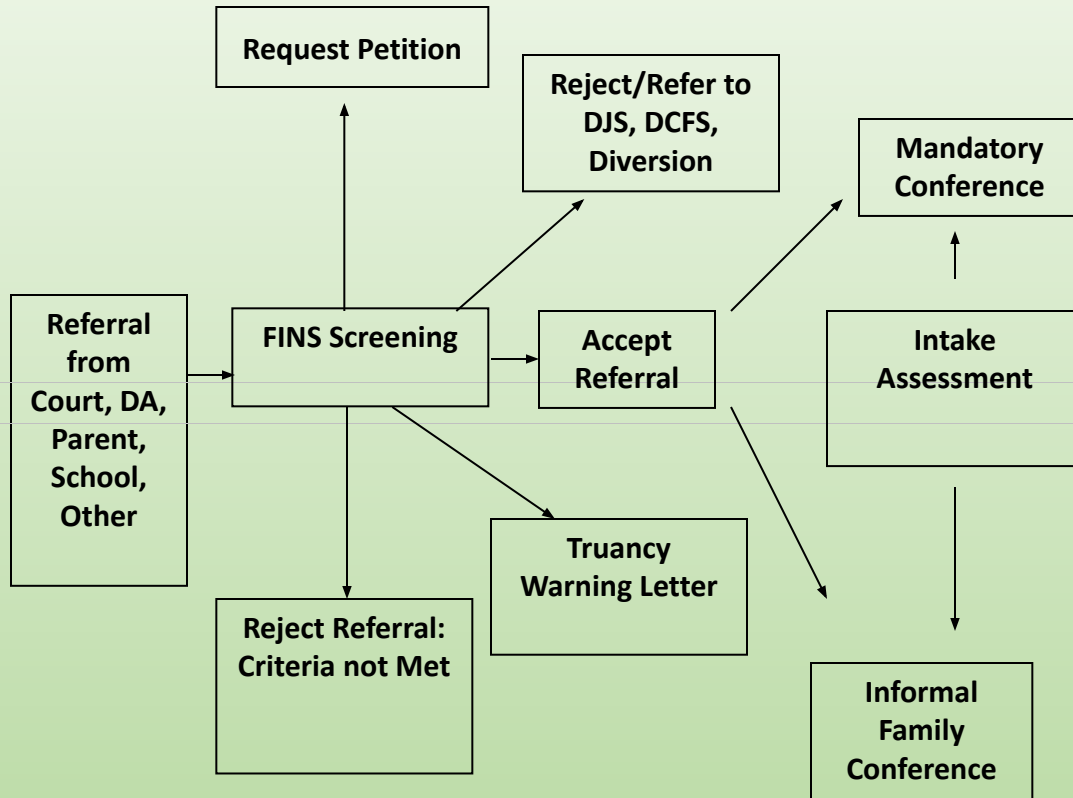
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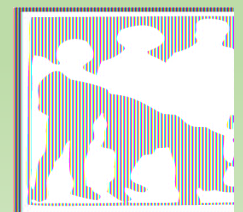
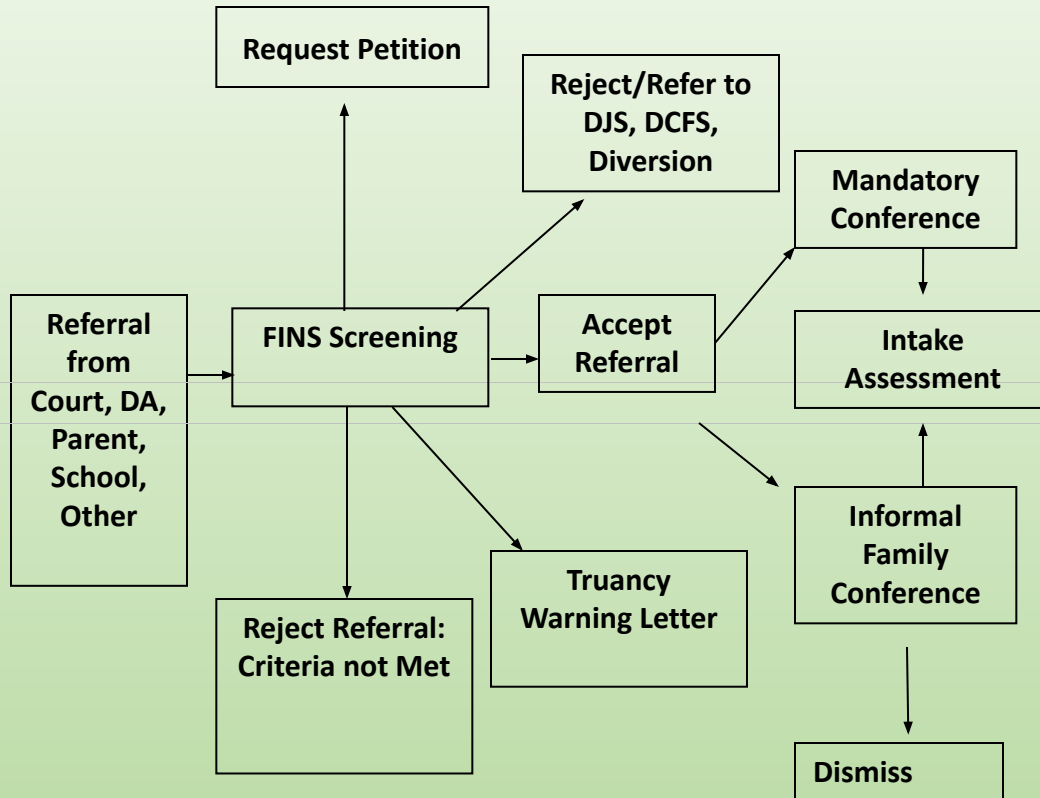
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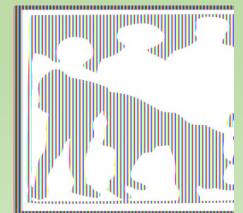
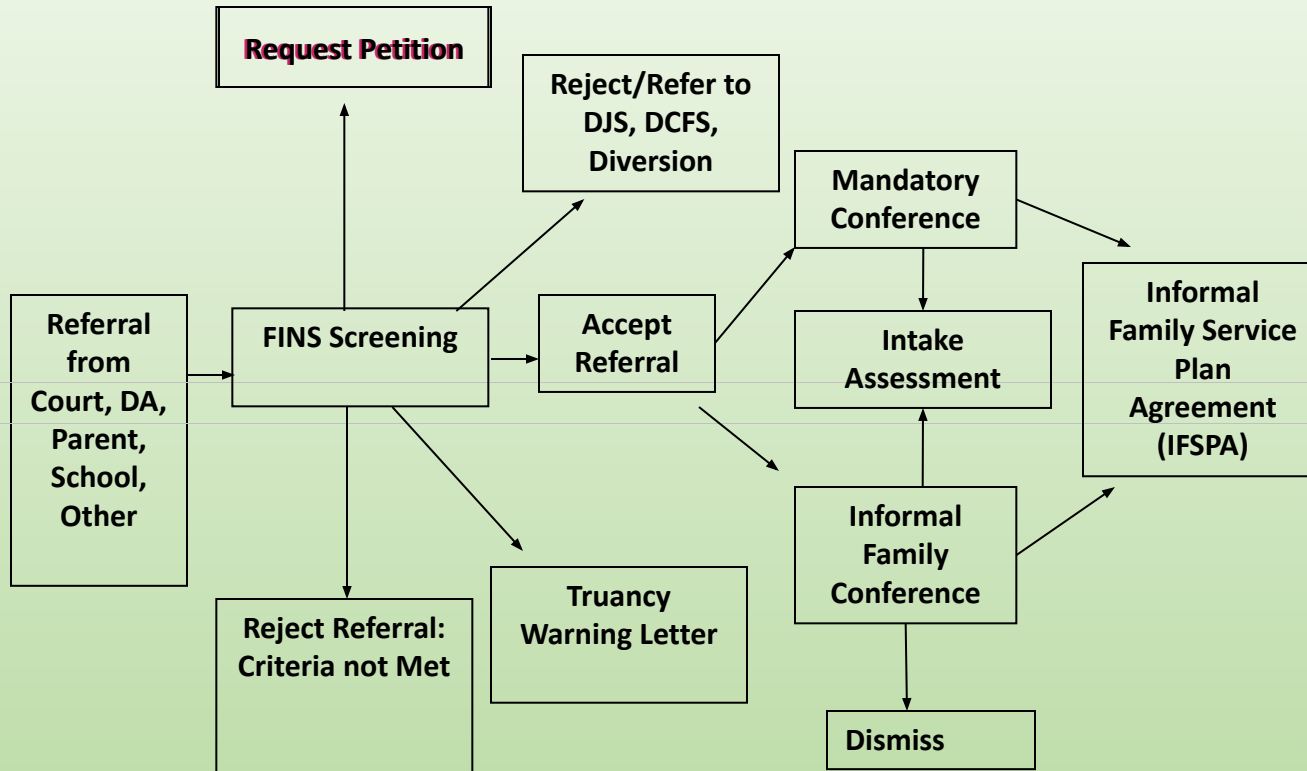
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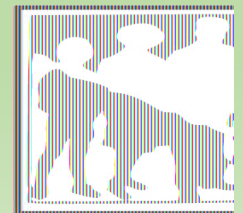
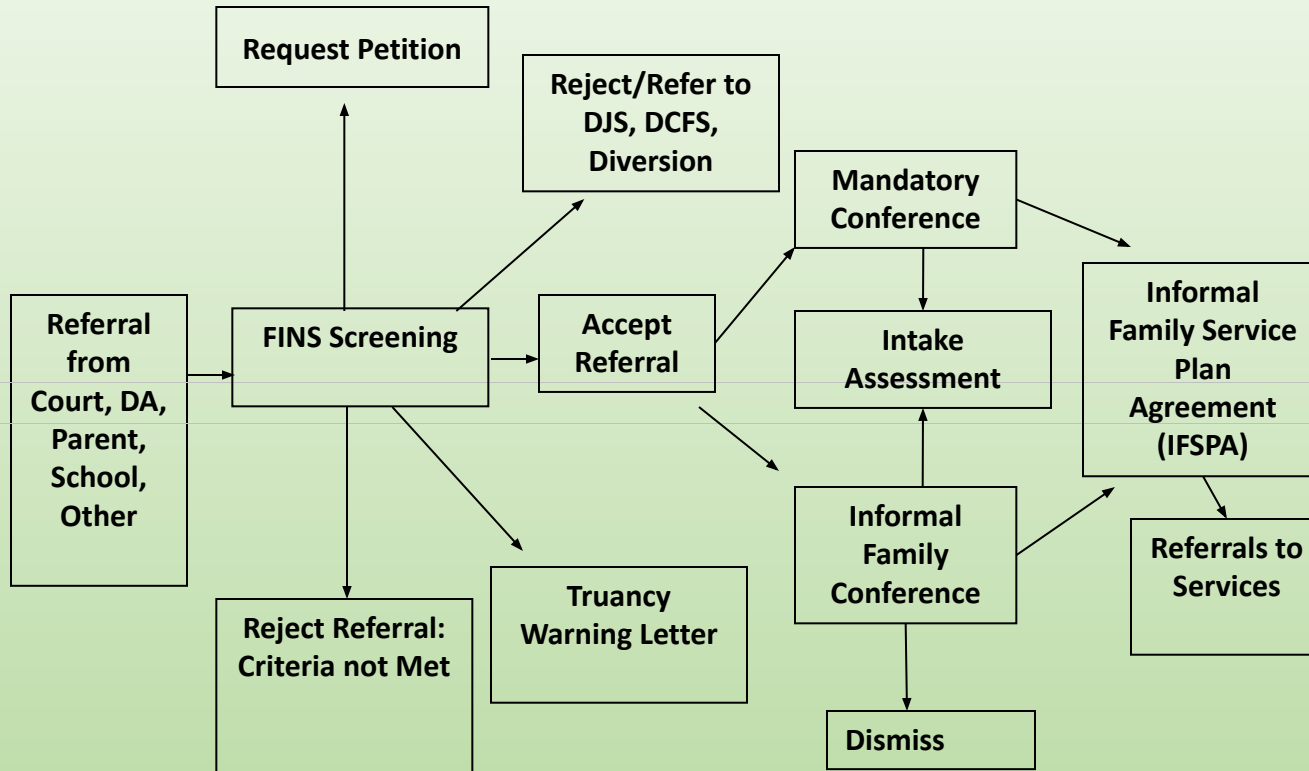
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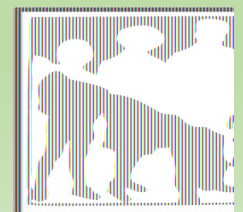
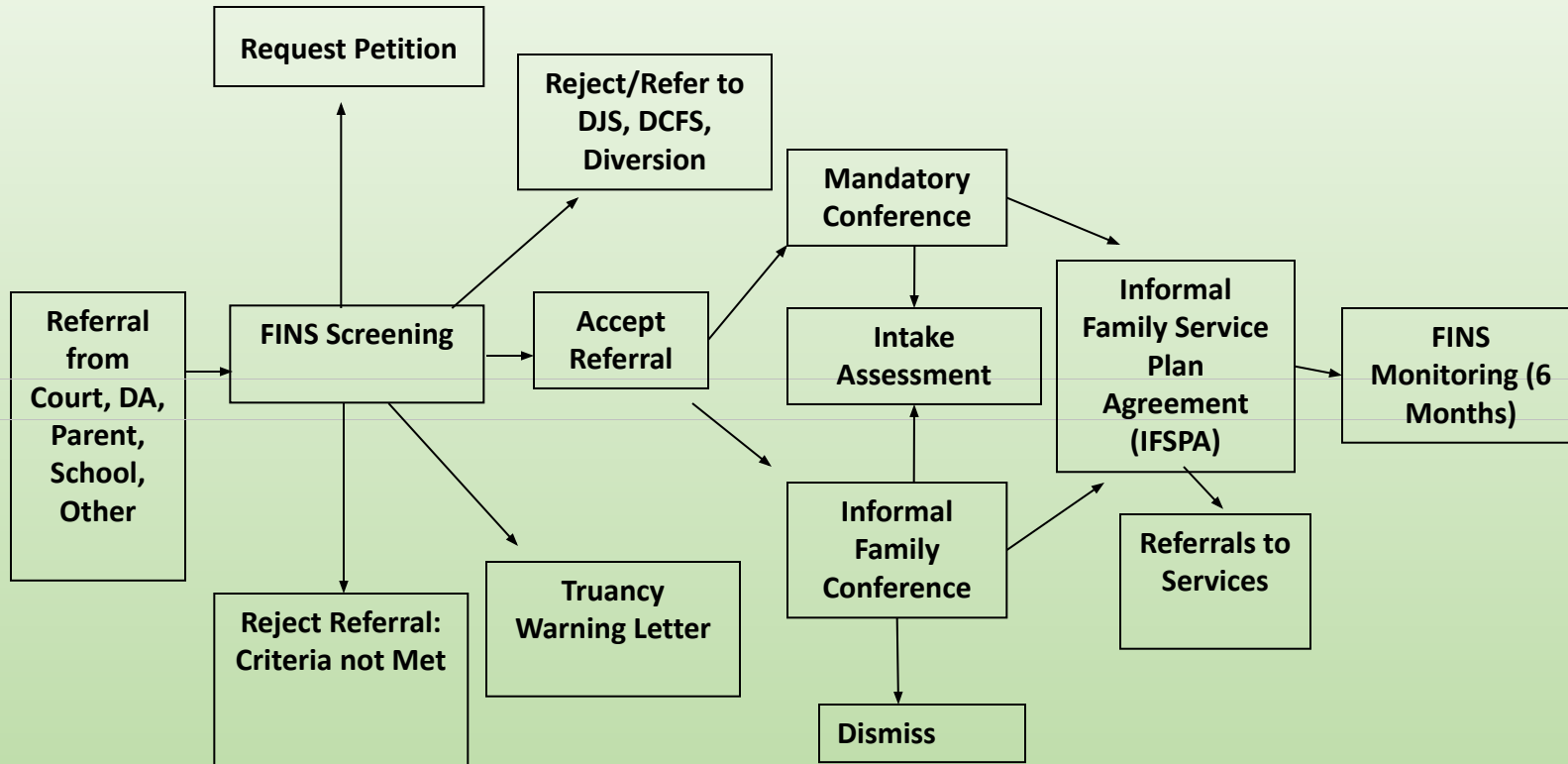
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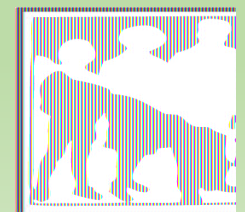
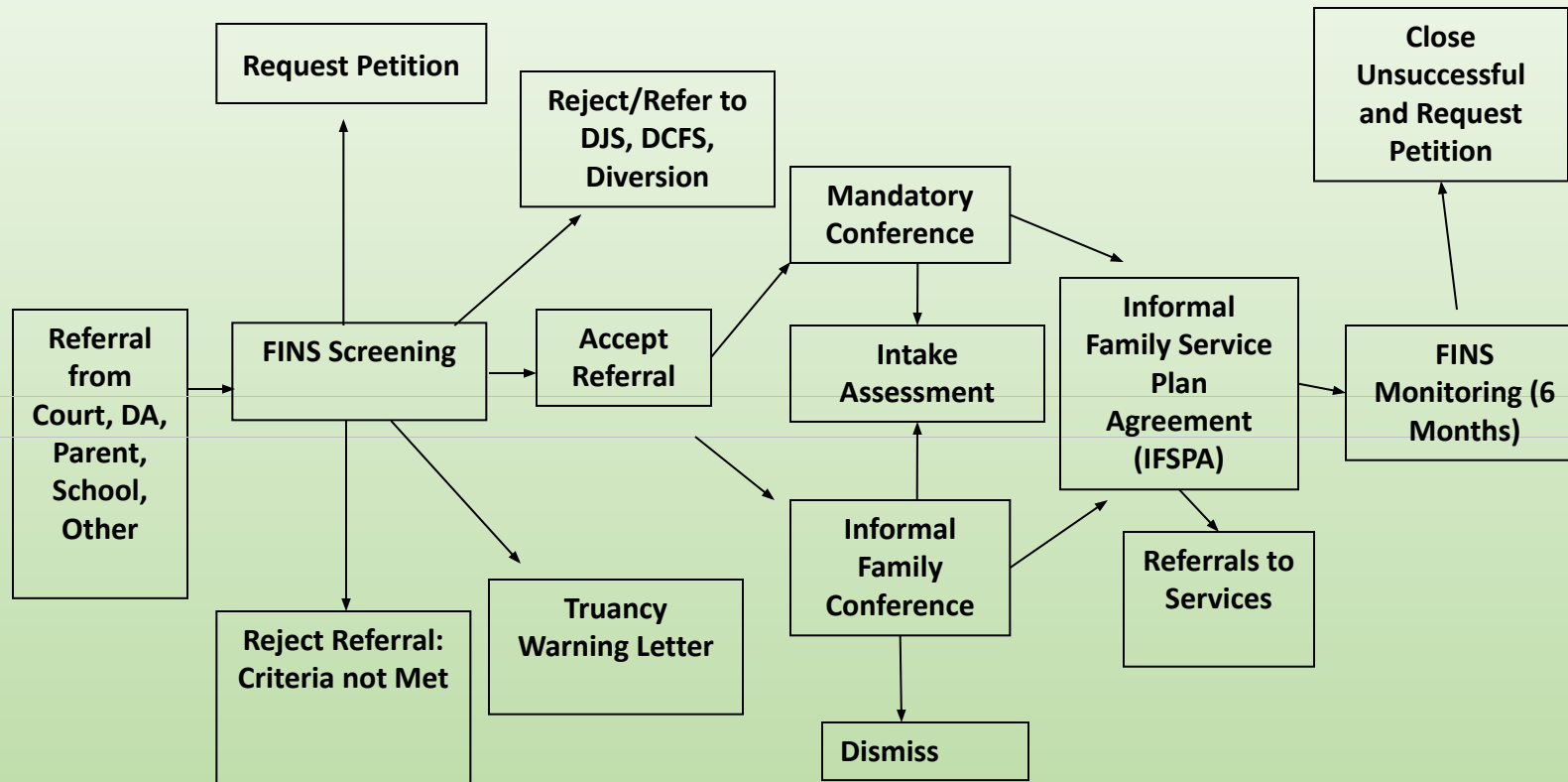
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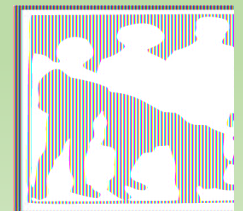
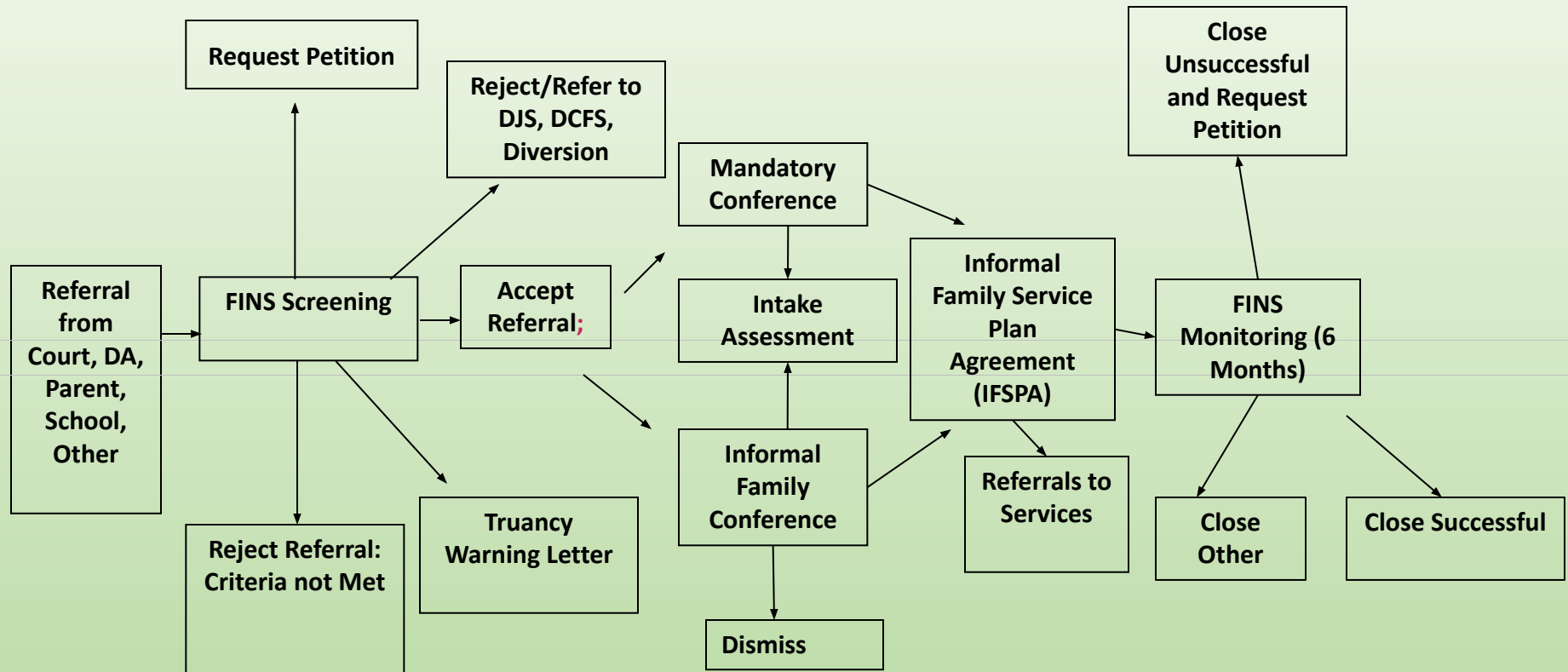
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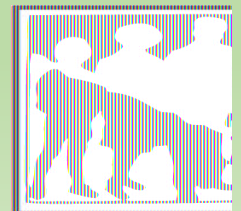
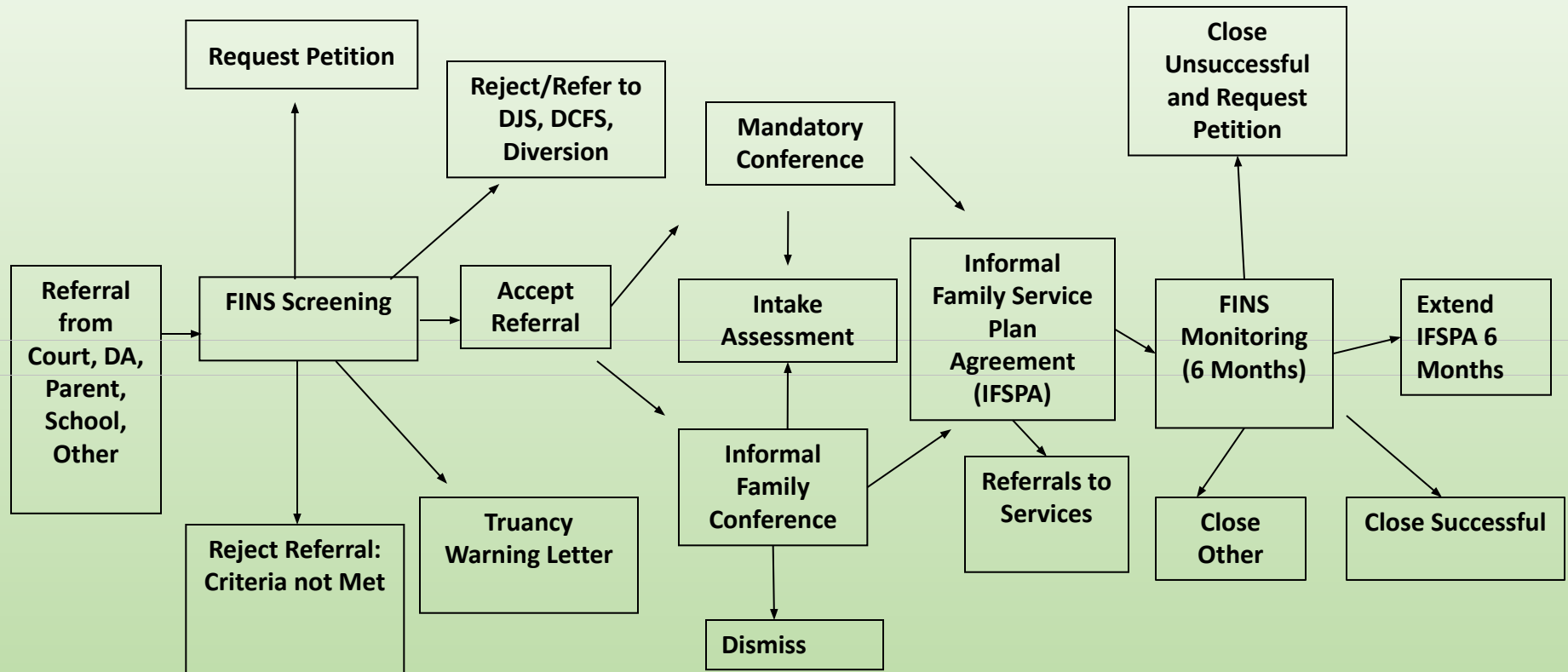
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Informal FINS Process Map



Annual Louisiana FINS Association 2025 Conference

APRIL 30 - MAY 2, 2025

Doubletree Hotel
1521 W Pinhook Rd,
Lafayette, LA 70503



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