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|  | INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL | |
| | Chapter 4: Assessment | Effective Date: August 1, 2014 |
| | Section 1: Reviewing the Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) Intake Report and Other Records | Version: 5 |

POLICY

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will thoroughly review the [Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect \(SF 114 CW0310\)](#) (Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) intake report) and other available records in order to gain insight into potential issues prior to making contact with the child and family.

DCS will consider the following when reviewing the CA/N intake report and other records:

1. What is the nature and extent of the family's current and previous involvement with DCS, Division of Family Resources, and community-based services;
2. What safety concerns exist for the child and for the FCM; and
3. What issues should be discussed with the child and family members.

[NEW] The local office will ensure that *all* assigned reports are sent to the appropriate Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) on a daily basis by fax, email, or hand delivery. Reports received on weekends or holidays will be delivered on the following business day.

Code References

[IC 31-36-3-3 \(b\) Notification To Department; Investigation Of A Child; Notification To Parents](#)

PROCEDURE

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:

1. Review the CA/N intake report;

Note: Per [IC 31-36-3-3](#) DCS must conduct an assessment concerning a child who voluntarily enters an emergency shelter or shelter care facility without the presence or consent of a parent, guardian, or custodian, no later than **48 hours** following notification by the emergency shelter or shelter care facility of the child's name, location and whether the child alleges CA/N.

2. Review prior DCS and Department of Family Resources (DFR) contact with the family via the following sources **if available**:
 - a. Child protection service records: Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK) (see Practice Guidance for viewing limited-access unsubstantiated CA/N history), and/or
 - b. **[REVISED]** Child support records: Indiana Support Enforcement Tracking System (ISETS) Child Support Inquiry Web Tool.

3. Discuss the CA/N intake report with the assigned FCM of any open DCS assessment or ongoing case;
4. Review pertinent information from outside sources (e.g., Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA), schools, public utility companies, Bureau of Motor Vehicles, etc.);
5. Obtain and review additional confidential information as needed (e.g., medical records, social services records, etc.);
6. Consider the following when reviewing records:
 - a. What is the nature and extent of the family's current and previous involvement with DCS, Division of Family Resources, and community-based services,
 - b. What safety concerns exist for the child and for the FCM, and
 - c. What issues should be discussed with the child and family members.
7. **[REVISED]** Determine if the alleged perpetrator is a DCS employee or a child care worker. See separate policy, [2.3 Child Care Worker Assessment Review Process](#).

[NEW] The Local Office will:

1. Ensure that all assigned reports are sent to the appropriate LEA jurisdiction on a daily basis by fax, email, or hand delivery. Reports received on weekends or holidays will be delivered on the following business day.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Viewing Unsubstantiated, Limited-Access CA/N History

Upon supervisor approval of an unsubstantiated assessment DCS will retain a hard copy of documentation relating to the assessment of child abuse or neglect in the DCS local office for six (6) months after the assessment. At that time, the hard copy file will be transferred to the records center in accordance with the [Records Retention Schedule](#).

Documentation in electronic form will be maintained until 24 years after the birth of the youngest child named in the DCS assessment report as an alleged victim of CA/N. Upon supervisor approval of the assessment, only management personnel will have limited-access to the assessment for 180 days. When completing an assessment that has limited-access history, the FCM may obtain temporary access to the documentation through their supervisor. This documentation may be used in the assessment of a subsequent report concerning the same child or family; however, DCS may not rely solely on the unsubstantiated history to support substantiation. Unsubstantiated case documentation will not be available when it has been expunged to comply with a court order.

Thorough Review of Records

A thorough review of the CA/N intake information enables the FCM to form an initial assessment of the child's safety. Factors like the child's age and vulnerability and the family history are critical in this initial stage of the assessment.

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. [Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect \(SF 114 CW0310\)](#)
2. [Records Retention Schedule](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A