

Commissioner Guidance Document Transmittal

Date – 3-16-2015

Manual - Child and Family Services Manual, Chapter C, Child Protective Services (CPS)

Transmittal # - 268

The purpose of this transmittal is to provide guidance for the Child Protective Services Chapter of the Child and Family Services Manual. Unless otherwise stated, the provisions included in this transmittal are effective upon release.

Significant changes include:

- Clarification for releasing the name of the complainant to law enforcement and the Commonwealth Attorney.
- Adding guidance for sample actions that may be included in a safety plan.
- Revised guidance for interviews with victim children that are conducted in joint investigations where the CPS worker is not the primary interviewer.
- Added definitions for child care settings in Out-of-Family section.
- Added sample letters of notification for Out-of-Family investigations.
- Revised model agreement between the Departments of Social Services and Education regarding investigations and public schools.
- Documentation of reasonable candidacy for foster care in OASIS.

This transmittal and manual are available on SPARK at:
<http://spark.dss.virginia.gov/divisions/dfs/cps/manual.cgi>

Significant changes to the manual are as follows:

Section 1 Introduction to Child Protective Services	
Subsection	Significant Changes
Entire Section	No changes
Section 2 Definitions	
Subsection	Significant Changes
Entire Section	No changes
Section 3 Complaints and Reports	
Subsection	Significant Changes
3.6.1.7	Added clarification for the release of the complainant's name to local law enforcement and Commonwealth's Attorney.
Section 4 Family Assessment and Investigation	
Subsection	Significant Changes
4.4.12.1	Added new section header for safety plan criteria for family assessments.
4.4.12.2	Added new section titled safety plan actions. This new section provides sample actions that may be included in a safety plan in a family assessment.
4.4.12.3	Added new section header for safety plan signatures for family assessments.

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4.5.6	Added new guidance regarding interviews of the victim child conducted by team members in investigations.
4.5.21.1	Added new section header for safety plan criteria for investigations.
4.5.21.2	Added new section titled safety plan actions. This new section provides sample actions that may be included in a safety plan in an investigation.
4.5.21.3	Added new section header for safety plan signatures for investigations.
4.5.21.3	Added name of alleged abuser within sample letter of notification to the non-custodial parent or legal guardian when the disposition of the investigation is unfounded.
4.21.3	Added name of alleged abuser into sample letter of notification for unfounded disposition sent to parents or guardian.
Section 5 Out of Family Investigations	
Subsection	Significant Changes
Entire section	Due to adding a new section heading, the numbering has changed. Some section heading names were amended and new titles were italicized.
5.3.1	Deleted definition for child placing agency because it exists in the regulation cited in section 5.3. Relocated definition of religiously exempt day care center to new section 5.3.2.
5.3.2	Added new section providing definitions of child care settings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child day centers • family day homes • family day system homes • voluntarily registered family day homes Added link to child care and licensing on the VDSS public website.
5.5.5	Added new guidance regarding interviews of the victim child conducted by team members in investigations.
5.9.4	Added reference to new appendix containing sample letters of notification.
5.9.6	Added reference to new appendix containing sample letters of notification.
5.11	Added guidance referencing revised model agreement between Virginia Department of Social Services and the Virginia Department of Education regarding investigations and public schools.
5.14	Amended Appendix B with the revised model agreement between Virginia Department of Social Services and the Virginia Department of Education regarding investigations and public schools.
5.16	Added new Appendix D: Sample Letters of Notification for OOF Investigations.
Section 6 Services	
Subsection	Significant Changes

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6.3.5	Amended guidance regarding documentation of reasonable candidacy for foster care is now in OASIS.
6.8.3.2	Amended guidance regarding documenting re-determination of reasonable candidacy for foster care in OASIS.
6.8.3.4.1	Added guidance that the documentation form for reasonable candidacy for foster care is in OASIS.
6.8.3.4.2	Amended guidance that supervisor approval is recommended for documentation of reasonable candidacy for foster care.
6.8.3.4.3	Added guidance for documenting re-determination of reasonable candidacy for foster care in OASIS.
Section 7 Appeals	
Subsection	Significant Changes
Entire section	No changes
Section 8 Judicial Proceedings	
Subsection	Significant Changes
Entire section	No changes
Section 9 Confidentiality	
Subsection	Significant Changes
9.2.1.2	Added clarification for the release of the complainant's name to local law enforcement and Commonwealth's Attorney.
9.3.2	Added citation of 22VAC-40-705-160 B and clarification for the release of the complainant's name to local law enforcement and Commonwealth's Attorney because they have a legitimate interest.
Section 10 Substance Exposed Infants	
Subsection	Significant Changes
Entire section	No changes
Section 11 Child Deaths	
Subsection	Significant Changes
Entire section	No changes

Questions about this transmittal should be directed to Rita Katzman, CPS Program Manager at 804-726-7554 or by email at rita.katzman@dss.virginia.gov


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 Commissioner

