

5101:2-36-20 Public Children Services Agencies Assessment Requirements for Child Abuse and Neglect Reports in Alternative Response

[FCASMTL 282](#)

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(A) This rule applies to public children services agencies (PCSAs) that received training and written approval from the Ohio department of job and family services (ODJFS) to implement alternative response.

(B) The PCSA shall conduct an assessment in response to a child abuse and/or neglect report assigned to the alternative response pathway.

(C) The PCSA shall initiate the screened in child abuse and neglect report assigned to the alternative response pathway in accordance with the following:

(1) For an emergency report, attempt a face-to-face contact with the child subject of the report within one hour from the time the referral was screened in as a report in order to assess child safety.

(2) For all other reports, complete one of the following activities, within twenty-four hours from the time the referral was screened in as a report, with a principal of the report or collateral source, who has knowledge of the child's current condition and can provide current information about the child's safety:

(a) Attempt a face-to-face contact with the parent, child or collateral source.

(b) Attempt a telephone contact with the parent or collateral source.

(c) Send a letter to the parent, guardian, or custodian acknowledging a report was received and inviting the family to engage with the PCSA.

(D) The PCSA shall document in the case record the date, time, and with whom the assessment was initiated. For all reports initiated by the mailing of a letter, the date the letter is mailed shall be documented in the case record.

(E) The PCSA shall complete face-to-face contacts within the first four working days from the date the report was screened in as a child abuse or neglect report to assess the safety of the child.

(1) The PCSA shall complete and document the JFS 01401, "Comprehensive Assessment and Planning Model - I.S., Safety Assessment" (rev. 2/2006) pursuant to rule 5101:2-37-01 of the Administrative Code in the statewide automated child welfare information system (SACWIS) within seven working days from the date the report was screened in as a child abuse and/or neglect report.

(2) If the PCSA has extended the timeframe for completion of the JFS 01401 pursuant to rule 5101:2-36-11 of the Administrative Code, the PCSA shall document the assessment of safety by completing the JFS 01401 within three working days from the face-to-face contact with the child subject of the report and one parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker.

(F) The PCSA shall not contact a child without parental consent, unless one of the following exigent circumstances exists:

(1) There is credible information indicating the child is in immediate danger of serious harm.

(2) There is credible information indicating the child will be in immediate danger of serious harm upon return home from school or other locations away from his or her home.

(3) There is credible information indicating the child may be intimidated from discussing the alleged abuse or neglect in his or her home.

(4) The child requests to be contacted at school or another location due to one of the circumstances listed above.

(G) If a child is contacted without parental consent, the PCSA shall attempt a face-to-face contact with the child's parent, guardian, or custodian to inform them that contact with his or her child occurred and provide the specific facts necessitating the child be contacted without parental consent. This face-to-face contact shall occur the same day the child was contacted.

(H) The specific facts necessitating contact with the child be completed without parental consent shall be documented in the case record.

(I) The PCSA shall complete and document face-to-face contacts with each child residing within the home of the child(ren) who were the subject of the report.

(J) The PCSA shall complete and document face-to-face contacts with all adults residing within the home of the child(ren) who were the subject of the report.

(K) If the attempted face-to-face contacts with the family, as specified in paragraphs (I) and (J) of this rule are unsuccessful, the PCSA shall continue making attempts of face-to-face contact at least every five working days, at a minimum, until the child is seen or until the PCSA is required to complete a case decision pursuant to paragraph (T) of this rule.

(L) The PCSA shall convert a case from the alternative response pathway to the traditional response pathway if any of the following occur:

(1) The family requests a pathway change from the alternative response pathway to the traditional response pathway.

- (2) The JFS 01401, JFS 01419 "Alternative Response Family Assessment" (rev. 7/2008), or JFS 01423 "Alternative Response Ongoing Case Assessment" (rev. 7/2008) cannot be completed because the family refused to engage in the assessment process or the family can not be located.
- (3) The PCSA files a complaint with the juvenile court pursuant to section 2151.27 of the Revised Code alleging the child is abused, neglected or dependent child.
- (4) The PCSA screens in a report requiring assignment in a traditional response pathway pursuant to paragraph (H) of rule 5101:2-36-01 of the Administrative Code.
- (M) The PCSA shall advise the parent, guardian, or custodian of the information contained in the report at the time of the initial contact. The initial contact between the PCSA and the parent, guardian, or custodian includes face-to-face or telephone contact, whichever occurs first, if information is gathered as part of the assessment process.
- (N) If the PCSA determines a child to be in immediate danger of serious harm, the PCSA shall follow procedures outlined in rule 5101:2-37-02 of the Administrative Code.
- (O) The PCSA shall conduct and document face-to face or telephone contact with any person identified as a possible source of information during the assessment to obtain relevant information regarding the safety of and risk to the child. The PCSA shall exercise discretion in the selection of collateral sources to protect the family's right to privacy.
- (P) If two or more PCSAs are involved in an assessment, the PCSA located within the county where the parent, guardian, or custodian of the child subject of the report resides is the lead. If an order of shared parenting has been issued, the PCSA located within the county of residence of the custodian who has physical care of the child subject of the report at the time the referral information is received, is the lead, unless the court order identifies a designated custodian of the child subject of the report, in which case, the county of residence of the designated custodian of the child is the lead.
- (Q) The PCSA may request the assistance of a non-lead PCSA, either verbally or in writing, to contact any principals of the report and collateral sources located within the non-lead PCSA's jurisdiction to complete the JFS 01401, JFS 01419 or JFS 01423.
- (R) If the PCSA determines a family member involved in the alternative response assessment has an impairment causing a barrier in communication (e.g., deaf or hearing impaired or limited English proficiency), the PCSA shall have an interpreter present for all interactions.
- (S) The PCSA and the family may develop and implement the JFS 01418 "Alternative Response Family Service Plan" (rev. 3/2011) any time after the assessment of safety has been conducted and the PCSA and the family agree upon services.
- (T) The PCSA shall make a final case decision by completing the JFS 01419 no later than forty-five days from the date the PCSA screened in the referral as a report.

- (1) The PCSA may extend the timeframe for completion of the JFS 01419 with written justification and supervisory approval. The time frame for extension shall not exceed fifteen days.
- (2) The JFS 01419 shall be entered in SACWIS within three working days from the date of the final case decision.
- (U) If the child abuse and/or neglect report involves a family member receiving services after the completion of the JFS 01419, the PCSA shall make the final case decision by completing the JFS 01423.
 - (1) The JFS 01423 shall be completed no later than forty-five days from the date the PCSA screened in the referral as a report.
 - (2) The JFS 01423 shall be entered in SACWIS within three working days from the date of the final case decision.
- (V) If the case decision is to transfer the case for ongoing PCSA services, and the case will continue to be assigned to the alternative response pathway, the agency shall provide ongoing services to the family pursuant to rule 5101:2-38-20 of the Administrative Code.
- (W) Within two working days of completion of the assessment, the PCSA shall do both of the following:
 - (1) Notify the parent, guardian, or custodian of the final case decision in writing.
 - (2) Refer to "Help Me Grow" any infant born and identified as affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure.
- (X) Documentation of the alternative response assessment, including any materials obtained during the assessment, shall be maintained in the case record.
- (Y) The PCSA may extend time frames for completion or waive assessment activities pursuant to rule 5101:2-36-11 of the Administrative Code.

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