



**State of Florida
Department of Children and Families**

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carroll
Secretary

DATE: April 4, 2016

TO: Community-Based Care Lead Agency CEOs
Regional Managing Directors
Florida Abuse Hotline Chiefs of Operations and Program Development

THROUGH: David L. Fairbanks, Deputy Secretary
Janice Thomas, Assistant Secretary for Child Welfare
Wicki Abrams, Assistant Secretary for Operations

FROM: Traci Leavine, Director of Child Welfare Practice
Pat Badland, Director of Child Welfare Operations
Patricia Badland

SUBJECT: CFOP 170-2, Completing Hotline Intake Assessment and
CFOP 170-5, Child Protective Investigations
Effective date: April 4, 2016

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide notification that new child welfare operating procedures for the Florida Abuse Hotline and Child Protective Investigations personnel have been finalized and will be effective April 4, 2016. This memo highlights significant changes that will go into effect upon publication.

BACKGROUND: The effort to establish a comprehensive set of child welfare operating procedures for the Hotline and Child Protective Investigation staff began early last year. Participation and feedback from Hotline staff, child protective investigators, case managers, Children's Legal Services, and other professional disciplines, including our domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health partners was integral to the process. The results of this collaborative effort, *Completing Hotline Intake Assessment* (CFOP 170-2) and *Child Protective Investigations* (CFOP 170-5) will be effective April 4, 2016. Significant changes and additions to policy include the following:

- For all in-home child reports, the household of the maltreating caregiver is the focus of the assessment and determines the selection of intake participants as well as the county to which the intake is assigned.
- Acceptable means to locate for child reports are provided.
- The "Other" investigative subtype will include reports in which the alleged perpetrator is a parent/legal guardian who is deceased or residing in another state and reports in which there are allegations of human trafficking by a non-caregiver.
- Procedures for a hotline counselor on contacting the reporter to obtain additional information when a call is disconnected prematurely or when a fax or web-based report contains insufficient information

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Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

- Out of state child welfare personnel who call the Hotline to request child welfare record checks will be referred to the web-based record request form on the Department's public internet site
- When a victim child in an in-home intake is located outside of the county of assignment at the time of a report, the response time will be immediate and counselors will follow procedures for multiple county assignment.
- Requirement to attempt to contact the Reporter for all investigations.
- Clarification on the use of professional assessments during family functioning assessments.
- Requirements to seek inter-agency consultations in investigations involving domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health have been strengthened.
- Reports from the Department of Juvenile Justice or Baker Act facility personnel alleging that a child is locked out of their home due to the refusal, inability, or unavailability of the parent(s) will be accepted as Caregiver Unavailable if there are no additional concerns of abuse or neglect.
- Response time criteria for special conditions are established.
- Requirements for investigators to "close the loop" in arranging for family support services for high and very high risk household have been established.

To review these documents in their entirety please use the following links on the Department's Home Page or Center for Child Welfare websites, respectively:

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/asg/Publications.shtml>

<http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/HorizontalTab/DeptOperatingProcedures.shtml>

ACTION REQUIRED: Please share this memorandum with all Hotline personnel, child protective investigators and case managers, and ensure that the new operating procedures are implemented effective April 4, 2016.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you require additional information or have any questions please contact Alissa Cross, Safety Manager, Office of Child Welfare at (850) 717-4653 or Alissa.cross@myflfamilies.com.

cc: JoShonda Guerrier, DCF Director of Child Welfare Strategic Projects
Ginger Griffith, Director of Child Welfare Performance and Quality Management
Regional Family and Community Services Directors