



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

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Shevaun L. Harris
Secretary

DATE: January 18, 2024
TO: Community Directors
FROM: Kate Williams, Assistant Secretary for Child & Family Well-Being *K. Williams*
SUBJECT: Voluntary Placement of Children for Private Adoption During an Open Investigation

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide guidance regarding minimum requirements to close an investigation when a parent chooses to place a minor child for adoption through a private entity.

BACKGROUND: Through case file reviews from the Quality Office, it was discovered that there were practice inconsistencies regarding investigative activities on intakes when a parent chooses to place a minor child for adoption through a private adoption entity, either shortly before or after commencement of an investigation. Some of the existing practices could result in the child being returned to the parent(s) without a safety assessment. A workgroup was previously convened to determine how to best serve the family in the least intrusive manner while ensuring child safety and consistent child protective investigative practices statewide.

NEW INFORMATION: When an intake is received and accepted by the Florida Abuse Hotline, and information obtained through the course of investigative activities (pre or post commencement) reveals the parent(s) plan or intend to pursue a private adoption, the Child Protective Investigator (CPI) must obtain a copy of the signed consent for adoption and signed consent for the adoption entity to pursue termination of parental rights. Both consents shall be obtained from the adoption entity and must be uploaded into the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System.

The CPI must verify the parent(s) did not withdraw the consent pursuant to s. 63.082(4)(c), Florida Statutes.

Once that action is complete and it is verified that there are no additional children in the household of focus, the history obtained along with all supporting documentation should be clearly documented in the chronological notes. The CPI must consult with the CPI Supervisor to determine if the investigation can be closed with 'No Jurisdiction' or if additional investigative activity is warranted.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please share this memorandum with all CPIs.

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Mission: Work in Partnership with Local Communities to Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

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CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have any questions regarding these procedures, please contact Jess Andrews, Director of Policy, at Jessica.Andrews@myflfamilies.com or 850-717-4671.

cc: Child Protection Directors
Grainne O'Sullivan, Director of Children's Legal Services
Community Based Care Lead Agency CEOs