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Authorized Signature

Number: CW-IM-05-001
Issue Date: 03/02/2005

Topic: Foster Care

Subject: Face-to-Face Contact Policy

Applies to (check all that apply):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All DHS employees | <input type="checkbox"/> County Mental Health Directors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Area Agencies on Aging | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Services |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children, Adults and Families | <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors and People with Disabilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> County DD Program Managers | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): |

Message:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide clarification and direction regarding policy *I.B.1 Caseworker Contact with Children, Parents, and Caregivers* in three distinct areas: unannounced visits, documentation, and data entry.

I. Unannounced visits

Unannounced or unscheduled visitation with children, parents and caregivers is a recommended practice. Announced and unannounced contact is necessary for the staff to assess safety, ensure the child's well-being, and provide support to the children in the care of the department. Visits will occur in a manner that is consistent with the purpose of the visit and is respectful of the child and the parents or caregivers involved in the visit.

Please refer to current policy:

I.B.1 Caseworker Contact with Children, Parents, and Caregivers

II. Documentation

Documentation of contact with children, parents, and caregivers is necessary in order for the case record to accurately reflect the efforts made to ensure safety, to successfully implement case plans and service agreements, and to comply with court orders. The policy, *Caseworker Contact with Children, Parents, and Caregivers*, requires documentation in the case notes section of FACIS.

The documentation should include: the date of the contact; who made the contact and with whom; and the location of where the contact occurred. The case notes include the caseworker's documentation updates on the child's education, health, counseling, visitation plans, behavior and adjustment to the placement. This is also the area to update relevant information as to the parents' status and documenting the review of the progress of the case plan and services provided.

Additionally, a caseworker will provide updates as to the contact with caregivers and address any support needs they may have in order to care for the child.

Please refer to current policy:

- I.B.1 Caseworker Contact with Children, Parents, and Caregivers
- I-1.2 Narrative Recording

III. Data Entry

Documentation of caseworker contact must be entered into the FACIS case notes section of the electronic case file. A change has been made to the system that will now allow case notes to be entered by someone other than the caseworker. The new input method will allow caseworkers, support staff, or management staff the ability to enter face-to-face contact by indicating who made the contact, whether it was face to face and the date the contact was made. *[In practice, a caseworker will make the contact per policy requirements and then may choose to have assistance inputting the case notes and documenting the contact in the FACIS system.]* This change in case note entry does not change the policy requirement of caseworker contact; it merely aids the caseworker in having someone entering the case notes on his/her behalf.

The ORBIT tracking system will continue to report by the caseworker responsible for ensuring that face-to-face contact occurs, and the most recent date of the contact. It will no longer collect information solely by the caseworker load code, but rather by the client case. This will allow a more accurate reflection of face-to-face contact.

If you have any questions about this information, contact:

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