

Section: Family and Children's

Subject: Foster Care – Reporting Serious Incidents

Title: Reporting Serious Incidents

- I. PURPOSE:** It is important to provide documentation of serious incidents that involve foster children that have been placed in the care of the department and ultimately in the care of foster parents and/or respite providers. This policy clarifies the types of incidents that are classified as serious and places the responsibility on the care provider for providing written documentation. Wisconsin State Statutes 48.66(3) state that, "the department shall prescribe the form and content of records to be kept and information to be reported by persons licensed by the department." Chapter 56.09(4) (C) and 56.09(11)(a) 7 also addresses this issue.
- II. APPLICABILITY:** This policy applies to all La Crosse County foster homes and La Crosse County respite/foster care.
- III. DEFINITIONS:** **Abuse:** physical, sexual, emotional harm to a child that was inflicted intentionally so as to cause harm to the child.
Neglect: lack of providing food, clothing, shelter, supervision or medical or dental care that seriously endangered the physical health, safety or well-being of the child.
- IV. POLICY/PROCEDURE:** The following list of specific incidents are to be reported verbally, and immediately to the on-call CPS intake worker(785-6054). If one of these specified incidents occurs after-hours, then a call must be made to non-emergency dispatch or the law enforcement center to have an on-call intake worker paged:
- 1.) If/when you have reason to believe or suspect that a child has been abused or neglected.
 - 2.) Any activity that occurred giving you reason to believe that a child abused another or engaged in sexual activity with another.
 - 3.) Any physical or emotional harm that may have occurred to a foster child placed in your care.
 - 4.) Any physical altercation between children resulting in an injury to one of the children.
 - 5.) For children experiencing a mental health crisis call 784-4357
 - 6.) The death of a foster child/youth.

The following list of incidents are to be documented in writing on an incident report and turned in to the Foster Care Program social worker within 24 hours:

- 1.) If/when you have reason to believe or suspect that a child has been abused or neglected
- 2.) Any activity that occurred giving you reason to believe that a child abused another or engaged in sexual activity with another.

- 3.) Any physical or emotional harm that may have occurred to a foster child placed in your care.
- 4.) Any incident requiring the services of a law enforcement agency at the foster home which involved a foster child including but not limited to:
 - a.) Physical or sexual assault.
 - b.) Drug related offenses.
 - c.) Damage or theft of property.
 - d.) Weapons offenses.
- 5.) Any injury or trauma to a child where the services of a licensed medical practitioner are required included but not limited to:
 - a.) A broken bone.
 - b.) A burn caused by a flame or hot surface.
 - c.) A concussion.
 - d.) A wound requiring stitches.
 - e.) The ingestion of poison or a drug overdose.
 - f.) A traumatic incident such as a near drowning, suffocation or going into shock.

The foster parent is responsible for contacting the biological parent to inform them of the injury and to get consent for medical treatment. If the parent is not available the ongoing social worker should be contacted, after normal working hours the foster parent should call the on call worker. Leaving a voice mail does NOT constitute reporting. If the ongoing worker is not available contact a supervisor.
- 6.) A medication administration error resulting in an adverse (harmful, unfavorable, detrimental) physical reaction for a child.
- 7.) Any injury sustained by a foster child while being restrained.
- 8.) Any physical attempt of suicide by a foster child/youth.
- 9.) An assault on a foster parent by a foster child/youth.
- 10.) Any incident requiring intervention by the Mental Health Crisis Program

V. METHOD OF REVIEW: This policy will be reviewed annually in August

EFFECTIVE: DECEMBER 19, 2000

REVISED: AUGUST 15, 2007

APPROVED: KEITH KELLER