



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

JOSH STEIN • Governor

DEV DUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary

LISA TUCKER CAULEY • Division Director, Human Services

January 17, 2025

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM MANAGERS

SUBJECT: Communication Regarding Updates to Child Fatality Reviews

REQUIRED ACTION: X Information Only X Time Sensitive X Immediate

Senate Bill 382 was enacted on December 11, 2024, after the North Carolina General Assembly overrode the Governor's veto. This legislation includes a provision extending the full implementation of changes to the Child Fatality Prevention System by six months, setting the new implementation date to July 1, 2025. The extension aims to provide additional time to restructure the system effectively, ensuring comprehensive measures are in place to prevent child fatalities across the state. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) has been actively working on these changes, emphasizing the importance of thoughtful implementation to enhance child safety.

For local child welfare agencies who have pending fatality reviews that occurred on or after July 1, 2024 and have been screened in for an Intensive Review, these case reviews will be conducted by Local Teams as set out in SL 2024-57 and coordinated by the new State Office of Child Fatality Prevention. These reviews will begin after July 1, 2025.

For pending fatality reviews that occurred on or prior to June 30, 2024, NC DSS Intensive Child Fatality Team has reviewed, analyzed, and categorized them into **three tiers**

Tier 1: Intensive Child Fatality Review

- These cases have been identified as critically in need of an **Intensive Child Fatality Review**.

Tier 2: Desk Review

- These cases require a review but can be addressed through a **desk review of the records**.

Tier 3: Other Pending Cases

- These cases have been analyzed by date of the occurrence of the fatality and the **manner and cause of death**.
- Service or practice needs identified have been classified and **resources and support** will be provided to the counties.

Local DSS agencies should plan to engage with the Local Teams for all cases received after July 1, 2024, while pending reviews from earlier dates will follow the outlined tiered approach. An Intensive Child Fatality Reviewer will be in touch with you about your cases and their status in the coming days.

If you have questions after talking to your Intensive Reviewer, you may contact Kathy Stone at 919-817-5153.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Sincerely,

Kathy P. Stone

Kathy P. Stone,
Section Chief for Safety

Cc: Lisa Tucker Cauley, Division Director, Human Services, Child, Family, and Adult, Regional Support
Adrian W. Daye, Deputy Director for Child Welfare Practice
Donna Fayko, Interim Deputy Director for County Operations
Ben Rose, Lead Regional Director
Kimaree Sanders, Section Chief for Regulatory and Licensing
Peter West, Section Chief for County Operations

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