



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

ROY COOPER • Governor

KODY H. KINSLEY • Secretary

LISA TUCKER CAULEY • Division Director, Human Services

April 19, 2024

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**ATTENTION: DIRECTORS, CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS, MANAGERS,
SUPERVISORS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS**

**SUBJECT: CLARIFICATIONS TO IN-HOME POLICY TO ASSIST WORKERS WITH IDENTIFYING SERIOUS
OR IMMINENT RISK**

REQUIRED ACTION: Information Only Time Sensitive Immediate

NCDSS is committed to ensuring that counties are provided with the best protocol and guidance to support compliance with the law and best practice of child welfare services. As a result of reviews conducted on several In-Home services cases and feedback during the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) Innovation Zone, NCDSS made clarifications to the In-Home policy manual with the goal of assisting alignment with statute, improved practice, and increased consistency across child welfare statewide. The most critical change is understanding when a child is considered at serious and imminent risk for foster care and the importance of coding day sheets correctly in In-Home based on the status of the child.

NCDSS has partnered with the Family and Children's Resource Program, UNC School of Social Work (FCRP), to offer six (6) in-person training events of the course CPS In-Home in Child Welfare Services. These events are targeted for counties who have been selected for implementation of FFPSA and require additional training to support FFPSA implementation. This update to policy has been included in these trainings.

The revised manual changes include:

- **CPS In-Home**
 - Safety Provider has been changed to Temporary Safety Provider throughout the document to align language for clarity.
 - Requirement to review the In-Home Family Services Agreement with the family prior to case closure to ensure that the family understands the changes that need to be sustained to maintain safety in the home.
 - Clarification in guidance regarding determining serious and/or imminent risk for each child and the impact on coding.
 - Guidance to document the behavioral progress/lack of progress of the family.

The revised protocol and guidance will provide workers with what must be done and how it should be done. The changes and clarifications listed above were made to assist workers in correctly identifying serious and/or imminent risk. Identification will allow workers to determine candidacy and coding for each child and reduce financial penalties on the counties or improper coding.

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Next Steps

The revised changes will be presented to the county child welfare agencies at the Children's Services Committee on June 12, 2024.

NCDSS Safety section will provide Office Hours for multiple upcoming changes to be announced at a later date. This policy is already published and effective immediately. It can be found on the Division's web page at <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional-n-z/social-services/child-welfare-services/> for your review.

If you have any questions, please contact your Regional Child Welfare Specialist or Amanda Hubbard at Amanda.Hubbard@dhhs.nc.gov, DSS HS Program Consultant.

Sincerely,



Kathy Stone

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