



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Social Services

ROY COOPER • Governor

MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH • Secretary

SUSAN OSBORNE • Assistant Secretary for County
Operations for Human Services

April 23, 2021

DEAR COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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

**SUBJECT: A GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR SUBSTANCE AFFECTED INFANT CASES AND
DEVELOPING A PLAN OF SAFE CARE**

REQUIRED ACTION: Information Only Time Sensitive – *Effective Date 6/1/2021* Immediate

The NC Division of Social Services (NCDSS) is committed to providing counties with guidance and resources to support the continuum of services for substance affected infants (SAI) impacted by child welfare. Healthcare providers must notify CPS of all substance affected infants and a Plan of Safe Care (POSC) must be developed for every SAI to ensure the safety of our most vulnerable children as required by The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). When there are alleged concerns of abuse, neglect, or dependency for a SAI that meet the criteria for acceptance the county child welfare agency is tasked with developing the POSC.

A new guidance document has been developed to assist county child welfare agencies with cases when a SAI has been identified. It includes information that addresses intake screening, child welfare assessments, the development of the POSC, case decisions, and case planning for in home and foster care services. There are also additional resources for reference.

The additional guidance provides county child welfare workers a comprehensive overview of how to address the unique needs of infants when substance use is a safety factor within the family. The attached guidance is offered to assist in responding to the aforementioned situations and will be effective June 1, 2021. It will be published under Child Welfare Practice Resources on the Division’s webpage at <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/child-welfare/policy-manuals/>.

The information in the attached guidance document along with related fatality data will be reviewed virtually during the upcoming Regional Meetings. Those invitations will be sent out separately. The times and dates for each region are as follows:

April 29, 2021	9:00am	Region 4
May 3, 2021	9:00am	Region 5
May 4, 2021	9:00am	Region 3
May 5, 2021	9:00am	Region 2

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LOCATION: 820 S. Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building, Raleigh, NC 27603
MAILING ADDRESS: 2409 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2409
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-527-6390 • FAX: 919-733-3052

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May 5, 2021	1:30pm	Region 7
May 6, 2021	9:00am	Region 6
May 6, 2021	1:30pm	Region 1

If you have any questions, contact your Regional Child Welfare Consultant and include your local support manager. This information can be found at (<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/social-services/county-staffinformation/local-support-staff-schedules/childrens-services>).

Sincerely,



Kathy Stone

Section Chief for Safety and Prevention
North Carolina Division of Social Services

Cc: Susan Osborne, Assistant Secretary for County Operations
Lisa Cauley, Senior Director of Child, Family and Adult Services
Teresa Strom, Section Chief for County Operations
Carla McNeill Section Chief for Permanency
Linda Waite, Section Chief for Licensing and Regulatory

Attachments: Child Welfare Resources for Substance Affected Infants and Plan of Safe Care

CWS-15-2021

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