

Next Review Date: 1/2025

Last Reviewed: 1/2022

Review Responsibility: Board and Administrative Policies Committee

### **FCCS PROCEDURE**

**NO.: 3N.01**

**SUBJECT: WORKER SAFETY RISK  
MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL – Removal of  
Children for Placement**

**Approved by: Executive Council**

**Effective Date: June 14, 2004**

**Date(s) of Revision: Feb 19, 2008; Mar 21, 2011; Oct 14, 2014; Jan 16, 2018; Jan 18, 2022**

**Responsible for Implementation: All Staff**

#### **Purpose**

The removal of children from parental, relative home or non-agency setting is a situation that can be emotionally charged for parents, relatives, child, collaterals and staff. Risk to safety increases for all parties due to the change in control of the child's placement and decision-making for the child. Separation, loss and uncertainty regarding the immediate future are factors that may impact upon parties' actions.

#### **Procedure**

- 1) The caseworker and supervisor will discuss the following prior to removal:
  - a) What are the potential safety issues that are being assessed?
  - b) Is the child being removed voluntarily or involuntarily from the family or non-agency setting?
  - c) Does the parent or caretaker support or reject the need for removal from their setting?
  - d) Is the child willing or resistive to the removal and pending placement?
  - e) Does the parent or caretaker have issues that put the child at risk and thus necessitated the filing for the protection of the child? These issues could put the caseworker at risk of harm (e.g. substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health, anger management).

- f) Could the physical environment where the child is being removed place the caseworker at risk (e.g. bar, drug house, hotel)?
- g) Is the parent the complainant in the filing and willing to transport the child to the agency setting?
- h) Does the parent support the court orders and will they comply with removal by transporting child and participating in the placement process?
- i) Is the child in a school or daycare setting and will collaterals support the removal or exacerbate efforts?
- j) What are the number of staff needed for removal, taking into consideration the number of children, the age and special needs of the children?
- k) Are car seats needed?
- l) Will coats, clothing, blankets or diapers be needed during the removal?
- m) What will be the mode of transportation?

Situations involving removal of children from parental or relative home or non-agency setting under ECO or TOC may require the utilization of law enforcement assistance.

## 2) Coordination With Law Enforcement

- a) The caseworker and supervisor will determine police jurisdiction based upon the location where the children are being removed. To determine police jurisdiction, the caseworker shall call the Columbus Police Department (CPD) Radio Room at 614-645-4545 or the Franklin County Sheriff Office Radio room at 614-525-3333. The caseworker shall identify him/herself as a Franklin County Children Services employee and ask which police jurisdiction covers the address where the children are being removed. In the event that the police jurisdiction is not the CPD, the caseworker shall ask the radio room personnel for the dispatching phone number for the appropriate police jurisdiction.

- b) The caseworker will then arrange a meeting place with law enforcement out of the view of the location where the child is to be removed but within the cruiser district. Generally, law enforcement will require a call once the caseworker has arrived to the nearby location. The nearby location should generally be a well-lit public setting such as a gas station or convenience store. Other suburban jurisdictions may make other arrangements such as meeting at the police station. Agency personnel will advise the radio room or dispatch office that the agency is requesting the removal of children under a court order.
  - c) Staff will provide law enforcement with a copy of the court order, and provide necessary background information for them as to risk in the home (i.e. direct knowledge of guns, dogs, etc.) and special needs of the children.
  - d) Staff will discuss their roles with law enforcement as well as how the separation will be carried out and if supplies, medicine, special needs equipment can be secured.
- 3) At Time of Removal
- a) Follow the plan of approach as discussed with Supervisor and/or in coordination with law enforcement.
  - b) Staff will have cell phone or agency phone and any needed emergency numbers with them.
  - c) During the time of removal the primary objective is to safely remove the child from the setting and secondly to secure any medical or health related materials such as medicine, apnea monitors, oxygen and information as to allergies, current illnesses and formula types. Discussion regarding the merits of the filing is best handled in a separate setting. There are times when removals are performed quickly due to safety factors and other cruiser runs that need to be responded to. At times, due to family level of cooperation and law enforcement availability, more information can be discussed and shared during the removal. Open communication with law enforcement will help to gauge the situation. Remember, family members may always meet agency personnel at the office or call in to

the office to further discuss ICCA information and to discuss potential relatives or caretakers.

- d) Discuss with supervisor what documents are appropriate to give to parents or caregiver.
- e) The next court date will be given to the parent or caregiver and a copy of the order can be provided. Please refer to Policies and Procedures section 3N.03 Notifying Parents/Custodians of Court Hearings.

Protocol for removal of children from parental or relative home or non-agency setting under Officer Acceptance status – **keep in mind that Officer Acceptance status occurs when police respond to the scene and determine a need for safekeeping. The caseworker's role is to initiate the call for police assistance.**

4) Home Setting (Relative or Parent)

- a) During a home visit, if the caseworker determines the children are at imminent risk of harm (i.e., they have injuries, the home conditions are unsafe, etc.), the caseworker shall exercise the following:
  - i) Advise the parents that he/she has concerns and needs to step outside to contact his/her supervisor;
  - ii) Leave the home and go to a safe place out of view of the home (e.g., a nearby place of business parking lot or intersection) and call his/her supervisor/administrator;
  - iii) Call the police from the safe location if advised to initiate police contact;
  - iv) Meet with the police at the safe location and discuss the situation, advising the police that he/she sees a need for safekeeping;
  - v) Proceed to the home with the police. Take down the officers' badge numbers and request a U-10 if the children are removed;
  - vi) Police are to transport the children if they decide to remove, unless the police provide the caseworker on site with a U-10.
- b) Leave at the same time the police leave and follow them to the agency office. The caseworker needs to leave even if the parents may

be attempting to engage the caseworker in further conversation. The caseworker is not to remain at the home without the police present.

5) School Setting

- a) During a school visit with a child, if the caseworker determines the child is at imminent risk if allowed to return home after school, the following procedures should be followed:
  - i) The caseworker shall use a phone in another room and contact his/her supervisor/administrator.
  - ii) If advised to initiate police contact, the caseworker shall advise the school administrator (i.e., the principal or assistant principal) of the need to call a police cruiser to the school.
  - iii) The caseworker and administrator shall determine the most discreet way to handle the situation in order to protect the child's right to privacy.
  - iv) The caseworker shall contact the police and upon their arrival discuss the concerns.
  - v) The police make the decision regarding safekeeping.
  - vi) If the police decide the child does not need safekeeping, the caseworker shall immediately advise his/her supervisor/administrator.
  - vii) The police are to transport the child if they decide safekeeping is needed, unless the police provide the caseworker on-site with a U-10.
  - viii) The caseworker shall contact the parents as soon as possible to advise them of the child's removal from the school by the police.

6) Removing A Child From the Hospital

- a) The caseworker shall coordinate with the hospital social worker for discharge time and hospital procedures.
- b) If problems are anticipated regarding parent/caregiver's presence, the caseworker shall arrange with the hospital social worker to have security present.

- c) The caseworker shall request that hospital security accompany the worker to his/her car. The caseworker should check with hospital security for the safest place to park and have access to picking up the child.
- d) The police are to transport the child if they decide safekeeping is needed, unless the police provide the caseworker on-site with a U-10.
- e) The caseworker shall contact the parents as soon as possible to advise them of the child's removal from the hospital by the police.