

BUTLER COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

POLICY NO.: 1.2	SUBJECT: INITIATING THE ASSESSMENT
OAC: 5101: 2-36-03	EFFECTIVE DATE: 6/22/04
ORC: 2151.35.18, 2151.35.22, 2151.42.1, 2151.41.6, 5103.03, 5153.16, 5153.17	REVISION DATE: 7/27/04, 9/27/05, 2/07, 9/07
	REVIEW DATE: 9/27/05, 2/07, 9/07

PURPOSE:

To ensure that all investigation of allegations/referrals of child abuse and/or neglect (CA/N) are responded to in a timely fashion. To ensure that the worker of Record (SW) makes an assessment of the immediate action to protect the ACV(s) from harm or risk. To ensure that proper documentation of failures to meet the deadlines are included in each case record.

DEFINITION:

Intra-Familial Assessment/Investigation means an assessment/investigation conducted by BCCS in response to a child abuse and/or neglect report and includes an alleged perpetrator who is one or more of the following:

- (1) Is a member of the alleged child victim's family.
- (2) Has sanctioned or continued access to the alleged child victim.
- (3) Is involved in daily or regular care for the alleged child victim, excluding a person responsible for the care of a child in an out-of-home care setting.

Specialized Assessment/Investigation means an assessment/investigation conducted by BCCS in response to a child abuse or neglect report and includes an alleged perpetrator who meets one or more of the following criteria:

- (1) Is responsible for the care of a child in an out-of-home care setting as defined in rule 5101:2-1-1-01 of the Administrative Code.
- (2) Is a person responsible for a child's care in out-of-home care as defined in section 2151.01.1 of the Revised Code.
- (3) Has access to the child by virtue of his/her employment by or affiliation with an institution.

Stranger Danger Investigation means a family in need of services intake requiring a report disposition which alleges a criminal act against a child of assault or sexual activity as defined under Chapter 2907. of the Revised Code and includes an alleged perpetrator who is all of the following:

- (1) Is not a member of the alleged child victim's family.
- (2) Has no sanctioned or continued access to the alleged child victim.
- (3) Has no relationship with the alleged child victim and family.
- (4) Is not involved in daily or regular out-of-home care for the alleged child victim.

Dependent Child pursuant to section 2151.04 of the Revised Code means any child:

- (1) Who is homeless or destitute or without adequate parental care, through no fault of the child's parents, guardian, or custodian; or
- (2) Who lacks adequate parental care by reason of the mental or physical condition of the child's parents, guardian, or custodian; or
- (3) Whose condition or environment is such as to warrant the state, in the interests of the child, to assume the child's guardianship; or
- (4) To whom both of the following apply:
 - (a) The child is residing in a household in which a parent, guardian, custodian, or other member of the household committed an act that was the basis for an adjudication that a sibling of the child or any other child who resides in the household is an abused, neglected, or dependent child; and
 - (b) Because of the circumstances surrounding the abuse, neglect or dependency of the sibling or other child and the other conditions in the household of the child, the child is in danger of being abused or neglected by that parent, guardian, custodian, or member of the household.

Third Party means the requirement that a BCCS request the assistance of law enforcement or another Children Services Agency or both when conducting an assessment/investigation due to the potential conflict of interest BCCS may have assessing/investigating an entity.

POLICY:

This policy does not replace the requirements in the Ohio Administrative Code, but provides a brief outline of timeframes required when initiating an investigation. All investigations shall be in compliance with OAC 5101:2-36-01 thru 14.

1. When the agency screens in a report of a child at risk of abuse and neglect, the worker shall review information from the following sources:
 - The referent;
 - Child protective services records regarding the principals of the report.
2. An intra-familial assessment/investigation may require a third party assessment/investigation when a principal named in the report poses a conflict of interest for the agency. (See policy # 1.4)
3. The Intake Administrator is to serve as Designee of the Director to approve as necessary the downgrading or upgrading of a priority rating on a referral.
4. The Intake Administrator is to serve as Designee of the Director to give approval as necessary as well as justification for and continuation of an investigation that cannot be completed within the allotted time pursuant to 5101:2-36-11.
5. The response time in this policy applies to all of the investigations in the definitions of this policy.

6. For an emergency report, the worker shall attempt face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim within one hour from the time the referral was screened in, to assess child safety and interview the alleged child victim.
7. For all other reports, the worker shall attempt a face-to-face or telephone contact within twenty-four hours from the time the referral was screened in, with a principal of the report or collateral source, excluding the referent, who has knowledge of the alleged child victim's current condition, and can provide information about the child's safety. If the twenty-four hour attempt was not an attempted face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim, a face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim shall be made within seventy-two hours from the time the referral was screened in to assess child safety and interview the alleged child victim. BCCSB is striving to achieve a higher standard, therefore, whenever possible the worker may attempt a face-to-face interview with the alleged child victim within 12 hours and face-to-face or telephone contact within 12 hours with a principal or collateral source to ensure that the child is safe.
8. When the worker has attempted to make-face-to face contact with the alleged child victim and at a minimum one parent, guardian, or custodian and one or more of the parties was unavailable, the worker shall attempt at least one additional face-to-face contact within the first four working days from the date that the referral was screened in as a child abuse and/or neglect report in order to complete the JFS 01401 "Comprehensive Assessment and Planning Model – I.S., Safety Assessment.
9. If the attempted face-to-face contacts with the alleged child victim are unsuccessful, the worker shall at a minimum, continue making attempts for face-to-face contact at least every five working days until the child is seen or until the worker is required to make a report disposition.
10. For any report alleging that an infant has been born and identified as affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, the worker shall assess safety and risk and develop a plan of safe care as needed. (Also see policy no. 1.10, Children Born Exposed to Drugs, 1.11, Safety Assessments and Safety Plan).
11. The worker may request the assistance of law enforcement during an assessment/investigation when one or more of the following situations exist and the reason for contacting law enforcement is documented in the case record:
 - (a) The agency has reason to believe that the child is in immediate danger of serious harm.
 - (b) The agency has reason to believe that the worker is, or will be, in danger of harm.
 - (c) The agency has reason to believe that a crime is being committed, or has been committed against a child.
 - (d) The assistance of law enforcement needs to be invoked in accordance with the county child abuse and neglect memorandum of understanding.



Approval Date:

Michael A. Fox, Executive Director