

## BUTLER COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES

POLICY NO.: 1.15	SUBJECT: <b>DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROTOCOL</b>
OAC: 5101: 2-36-01	EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/07
	REVISION DATE: 3/10
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**PURPOSE:**

To protect children and create stable families by responding effectively to domestic violence.

**POLICY:**

1. Referrals on domestic violence shall be screened-in as a report when the child is present in the home at the time of the alleged incident. Please refer to CAPMIS screening guidelines for more clarification.
2. The assigned worker shall recognize the added risk posed to the adult victim and make provisions to safeguard both the child and the adult victim.

**Procedures:**

1. As time permits the worker assigned to the case shall gather information regarding the history of domestic violence in the family prior to making contact. This shall include gathering current and historical information regarding criminal history.
2. The worker assigned shall request assistance from the appropriate law enforcement agency when appropriate.
3. The worker shall attempt initial contact with the non-offending adult victim without the knowledge of the alleged perpetrator.
4. The worker shall make every effort to obtain signatures on the release of information forms at the time of initial contact to gather information regarding the family.
5. The worker shall interview all household members separately beginning with the child, alleged adult victim, and alleged offender. When interviewing the alleged offender, the worker shall not share direct quotes and statements made by others already interviewed.
6. The worker shall use the Safety Assessment to determine if there is a credible safety threat.

7. When the worker determines that there is domestic violence, the worker shall immediately initiate safety planning for the child/children.
8. Domestic violence should not warrant the automatic removal of the children from the home. Safety of the victim and children should be the first concern. Any information obtained from the victim and/or the children should not be shared with the perpetrator.

Documentation:

1. Shared disclosure of domestic violence, and shared documentation, can dramatically increase the risk to the adult victim and child. The following standards can help reduce these risks when information is to be shared:
  - a. BCCS shall protect all information in the case record pertaining to a confidential address of the adult victim and/or child.
  - b. Any disclosures made by the adult victim or child regarding their safety should not be shared with the alleged perpetrator.
  - c. When information must be shared (e.g., court interventions) the adult victim should always be notified so s/he may plan for the safety of the child and self.
  - d. All documentation of domestic violence should be written in a manner which holds the perpetrator responsible as a means of advocating for both the adult victim and child.
  - e. BCCS shall inform prosecutors that information which could impact the safety of the child and the adult victim should be shared privately with the judge prior to the court proceedings.
  - f. Legal documents should not contain any information which would aide the alleged perpetrator in determining the victim's whereabouts.

Approval Date: 5/17/10

Jeff Centers, Executive Director

