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**The county child abuse and neglect memorandum of understanding.**

(A) The county child abuse and neglect memorandum of understanding, hereinafter referred to as the memorandum, is a document that sets forth the normal operating procedures to be employed by all concerned officials in the execution of respective responsibilities pursuant to division (J)(2) of section 2151.421 of the Revised Code when conducting a child abuse or neglect assessments/investigations. The purpose of the memorandum is to clearly delineate ~~clearly~~ the role and responsibilities of each official or agency in assessing/~~or~~ investigating child abuse or neglect in the county. The respective duties and requirements of all involved shall be addressed in the memorandum.

(B) Each public children services agency (PCSA) is to prepare a memorandum and submit to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) before December thirty-first of the biennial year. PCSAs are encouraged to use the Ohio department of job and family services' model memorandum.

(C)B) The memorandum must be signed by all the following parties: Each public children services agency (PCSA) shall prepare a memorandum that is signed by all of the following parties:

(1) The juvenile judge of the county or the juvenile judge's representative with approval from the juvenile judge; or if there is more than one juvenile judge in the county, a juvenile judge or the juvenile judge's representative selected by the juvenile judges or, if they are unable to do so for any reason, the juvenile judge who is senior in point of service or the senior juvenile judge's representative.

(2) The county peace officer.

(3) ~~All chief~~ Chief municipal peace officers of all political subdivisions within the county.

(4) Other law enforcement officers who handle child abuse and neglect cases in the county.

(5) The prosecuting attorney of the county.

(6) The PCSA.

(7) If the PCSA is not the county department of job and family services (CDJFS), the CDJFS.

(87) The county humane society. The local animal cruelty reporting agency.

(98) If the PCSA participated in the execution of a memorandum under section 2151.426 of the Revised Code establishing a children's advocacy center, each participating member of the children's advocacy center.

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(D) The clerk of the court of common pleas in the county may sign the memorandum.

(E) If any individual serving as the official identified in paragraph (C) or (D) of this rule changes, an amendment of the memorandum is required, including the signature of all the required parties.

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(F)D The memorandum shall include all ~~of~~ the following:

- (1) A statement that failure to follow procedures set forth in the memorandum by the concerned officials is not grounds for, and shall not result in the dismissal of any charges or complaints arising from any reported case of abuse or neglect or the suppression of any evidence obtained as a result of any reported child abuse or neglect and does not give, and shall not be construed as giving, any rights or grounds for appeal or post-conviction relief to any person.
- (2) The PCSA's system for receiving reports of child abuse and neglect twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week. If the PCSA contracts with an outside source to receive after-hour calls, a copy of a signed agreement shall be attached to the memorandum which indicates that all reports ~~with identifying and demographic information of the reporter and principals of the report~~ will be forwarded to a designated PCSA worker within an hour of receipt and that confidentiality requirements will be met. In addition, ~~when the PCSA contracts with an outside source, the PCSA shall include in the memorandum its system for informing the general public of the after-hours phone number, as applicable.~~
- (3) The roles and responsibilities of all concerned officials for responding to emergency and non-emergency reports of child abuse and neglect.
- (4) A system for consultation among ~~signatories~~~~subscribers~~ as it is deemed necessary to protect children. The county's system for consultation shall include at a minimum the PCSA's protocol for consulting with law enforcement, the prosecuting attorney's office, the juvenile judge, and if applicable, the children's advocacy center established pursuant to section 2151.426 of the Revised Code, for any cases which may require their intervention or assistance.
- (5) Standards and procedures for handling and coordinating joint ~~assessments~~/investigations of reported cases of child abuse and neglect ~~pursuant to rule 5101:2-36-12 of the Ohio administrative code~~ including sharing of investigative reports and procedures specific to cases which:
  - (a) Involve out-of-home care child abuse or neglect.
  - (b) Involve third party investigative procedures and the assistance of law enforcement including addressing instances where law enforcement declines to assist the PCSA.

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- (c) Require law enforcement to respond immediately.
  - (d) Involve alleged withholding of medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions, including: -  
~~The PCSA's procedures to respond to cases regarding the alleged withholding of medically indicated treatment from a disabled infant with life threatening conditions including:~~
    - (i) Gathering and maintaining current information regarding the name, address, and telephone number of each appropriate health care facility within its jurisdiction.
    - (ii) Identifying and maintaining current data regarding the name, title, and telephone number of each facility's contact person for allegations involving alleged withholding of medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions, hereinafter referred to as alleged withholding.
    - (iii) Identifying and maintaining the name and chairperson of the appropriate health care facility's review committee, if such a committee exists.
    - (iv) Internal PCSA procedures for intervening in cases involving alleged withholding.
  - (e) ~~(d)~~ Involve a child death in which abuse or neglect is suspected as the cause of death.
  - (f) Involve the death of a child who is in the custody of the PCSA in accordance with rule 5101:2-42-89 of the Administrative Code.
  - (g) Involve alleged child abuse and/or neglect constituting a crime against a child, including human trafficking, - and require a joint assessment/investigation with law enforcement. The procedures shall include a statement of assurance as to how the PCSA will ensure child safety and not compromise the child protective assessment/investigation while concurrently assisting law enforcement with the criminal investigation.
- (6) A statement addressing the PCSA's policy for requesting the assistance of law enforcement, which may include, but is not limited to:
- (a) The PCSA has reason to believe the child is in immediate danger of serious harm.

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- | (b) The PCSA has reason to believe the worker is, or will be in danger of harm.
- | (c) The PCSA has reason to believe that a crime is being committed, or has been committed against a child.
- (d) An exigent circumstance exists.
- (e) The PCSA worker must conduct a home visit after regular PCSA business hours and a law enforcement escort is requested as a standard operating procedure.
- | (f) The PCSA is removing a child ~~from his or her family~~ via an order of the court and the assistance of law enforcement is needed as the PCSA has reason to believe the family will challenge the removal.

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- (g) The PCSA is working with a client who has a propensity toward violence and the assistance of law enforcement is needed to ensure the safety of all involved.
- (h) The PCSA is working with a family that has historically threatened to do harm to PCSA staff.
- (7) A statement regarding the processes and procedures to attempt to ensure the assistance of law enforcement is obtained timely in cases where child abuse or neglect is alleged in order to ensure child safety and conduct investigative activities within the maximum sixty--day time frame afforded PCSAs to complete abuse/neglect assessment/investigations pursuant to Chapter 5101:2-36 of the Administrative Code.
- (8) Methods to be used in interviewing ~~the child who is~~ the child subject of the report or the alleged child victim.
- (9) Standards and procedures addressing the categories of persons who may interview the child ~~who is the~~ subject of the report or the alleged child victim.
- (10) A system for the elimination of all unnecessary interviews of a child ~~who is the~~ subject of the report or the alleged child victim, when feasible conducting only one interview.
- (11) A system for receiving and responding to reports involving:
  - (a) Individuals who aid, abet, induce, cause, encourage, or contribute to a child or a ward of the juvenile court:
    - (i) Becoming a dependent or neglected child.
    - (ii) Becoming an unruly or delinquent child.
    - (iii) Leaving the custody of any person, department, or public or private institution without the legal consent of that person, department, or institution.
  - (b) Missing children.
- (12) Standards and procedures for removing and placing children on an emergency and non-emergency basis.

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(13) The PCSA's system for notifying the county prosecuting attorney or city director of law when any mandated reporter of child abuse or neglect fails to report suspected or known child abuse or neglect.

(14) Contain the following statements:

(a) The disclosure of confidential information discovered during an assessment/investigation to any federal, state, or local government entity that needs the information to carry out its responsibilities to protect children from abuse or neglect.

(ba) A description of information that a law enforcement agency and PCSA may share with each other in order for both agencies to carry out the responsibilities to protect children from abuse or neglect.

(cb) A description of information that a law enforcement agency and the PCSA is permitted to, or prohibited from, disclosing to the public.

(154) The PCSA's system for notifying the county prosecuting attorney or city director of law when there is unauthorized dissemination of confidential PCSA information.

(G)E In accordance with rule 5101:2-5-13.1 of the Administrative Code, the memorandum may address how the PCSA would continue to maintain operations including, but not limited to, receiving and investigating child abuse and/or neglect reports in the event of a disaster.

(H) The PCSA is to ensure that every official pursuant to paragraphs (BC) and (CD) of this rule biennially:

(1) Reviews and evaluates the memorandum for necessary updates to terms and procedures;

(2) Updates the memorandum's terms and procedures, if it is determined that an update is necessary;

(3) Signs the reviewed memorandum.

(I) Upon obtaining required signatures, the PCSA is to submit the signed memorandum to the board of county commissioners for approval.

(J)F) The PCSA All PCSAs shall submit a written copy of the memorandum to the appropriate ODJFS Ohio department of job and family services (ODJFS) field office within thirty days from the board of county commissioners' approval and before

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December thirty-first for final compliance.

(K) If ODJFS determines the memorandum to be compliant pursuant to Ohio revised code section 2151.4220, the memorandum is considered effective and supersedes any previous memorandum. The PCSA is to post the memorandum to the general web site of the county within thirty days from the compliance determination.

(L) If ODJFS determines the memorandum is non-compliant, the PCSA is to submit a compliance assurance plan not later than sixty days from the date ODJFS determined the memorandum non-compliant.

~~(1) The PCSA shall submit a written copy of any amendment to the memorandum to the appropriate ODJFS field office within ninety days of amendment.~~

~~(2) If amendment to the memorandum is necessary because of revisions to this rule, the PCSA shall submit a written copy of the revised memorandum to the~~



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~~ODJFS field office within ninety days of the effective date of this rule. The revised memorandum shall be signed by all parties to the memorandum.~~

(N) If the PCSA revises a previously approved memorandum, the PCSA is to obtain all required signatures and submit a **written** copy of the revised memorandum to ODJFS within ninety days.

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