

**Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services
(CCDCFS)
Policy Statement**

Policy Chapter: Case Requirements
Policy Number: 5.01.08
Policy Name: Caseworker Contact Requirements for Children and Families Involved with the CCDCFS

Original Effective Date: 03/01/2015
Revision Date(s):
Current Revision Date:
Approved By: Richard B. Werner

PURPOSE: To ensure that workers of record (WOR) have and document in the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) regular and frequent face-to-face contact with all children and families involved with the CCDCFS.

SCOPE: This policy applies to all case-carrying staff at CCDCFS.

POLICY

- A. WOR makes ongoing and frequent face-to-face contacts with all children, families and substitute caregivers. Face-to-face contacts are focused on the child's safety, permanency and well-being.
- B. At a minimum, the WOR makes face-to-face contact with all children, parents, guardians, custodians, pre-adoptive parents and substitute caregivers participating in and receiving services as listed in the case plan each month regardless of custody status of the child, with the majority of the interactions conducted in the placement setting. Additional recommended monthly contacts are based on increased risk and/or changes in circumstances. The WOR and supervisor make this determination. If the initial attempt to complete the face-to-face contact is unsuccessful, the WOR makes a minimum of two additional attempts to complete the face-to-face requirement within the calendar month. Specific requirements for face-to-face contacts between the WOR and child/caregiver/parent must be included in the case plan.
- C. The WOR makes concerted efforts to conduct frequent face-to-face contacts with both mothers and fathers who are involved in the child's life, including non-custodial parents. Interaction and dialogue during contacts are focused on progress in goal attainment through participation in case plan services.
- D. CCDCFS may delegate another CCDCFS caseworker to conduct one or more of the required face-to-face contacts on behalf of the assigned WOR in cases

where multiple CCDCFS staff are involved with the family. WOR cannot delegate more than 50% of the contacts in a 90 day timeframe.

- E. The WOR documents contacts in the case activity notes section of SACWIS within 72 hours of the activity. All documentation contains at a minimum; type, date, and time of contact, location, names of persons present, discussion of permanency, case plan, health concerns, and outcomes of any meetings. Documentation may not be left in “draft” status. It is completed and saved at the time of entry.

PROCEDURES

Below are specific requirements that expand upon the above policy.

Frequency of Visits and Contacts with Children in Custody

- A. For a child placed in a relative or non-relative home approved pursuant to OAC 5101:2-42-18 or a foster home or group home certified pursuant to OAC 5101:2-5-02, or on adoptive placement status, the following occurs:
 - 1) One face-to-face contact with the child and substitute caregiver within the substitute care setting during the first week of placement, not including the first day of placement.
 - 2) One face-to-face contact with the child and the substitute caregiver within the substitute care setting during the first four weeks of placement, not including the visit during the first week of placement.
 - 3) Monthly face-to-face contact with the child and the substitute caregiver within the substitute care setting which may include A(1) and (2), provided at least one of the contacts occurs each month.
 - 4) In a foster home, which has two foster caregivers listed on the certificate, each caregiver must receive at least one face-to-face contact as defined in A (1) and (2) in each two month (60 day) period. If a caregiver is out of the home for the entire two month (60 day) period, such as in the military or hospital, the caregiver is exempt for the visits for the time period. This exemption is documented in the case activity notes.
- B. For a child in a treatment or medically-fragile foster home certified in Ohio in which the foster caregiver is providing care for a child in which a special, exceptional, or intensive needs difficulty of care payment is made pursuant to OAC 5101:2-47-18, the following occurs:
 - 1) One face-to-face contact with the child and substitute caregiver within the substitute care setting during the first week of placement, not including the first day of placement.

- 2) One contact each week (every seven days) with the caregiver to monitor the child's progress. These contacts can be made by phone or in person.
 - 3) One face-to-face contact with the substitute caregiver and child every two weeks (14 days) within the treatment or medically fragile home, with each substitute caregiver receiving one face-to-face contact in each two month (60 day) period where there are two licensed substitute caregivers.
- C. For a child placed in a children's residential center (CRC) certified in Ohio, the following occurs:
- 1) One contact with the CRC within ten days of placement, this can be in person or by phone.
 - 2) Monthly face-to-face contact with the child, within the CRC.
 - 3) The caseworker within the CRC **shall not** conduct visits on behalf of the WOR.
- D. For a child who is sixteen years of age or older and placed in an independent living arrangement certified in Ohio which he/she is fully responsible for his/her individual living arrangement, the following occurs:
- 1) One face-to-face contact with the child within the living environment within seven days of placement. This can be in person or by phone.
 - 2) Monthly face-to-face contact with the child within the living environment.
- E. For a child who is placed through the "Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children" into a substitute care setting outside Ohio, the following occurs:
- 1) Request the out-of-state children's service agency (CSA) to provide needed supervision and services to the child as identified in the child's case plan and submit written supervisory reports on a monthly basis.
 - 2) Contact the substitute care placement setting by phone within ten days of the child's placement and at least every other month thereafter.
 - 3) Conduct monthly face-face contacts with the child within the substitute care setting. CCDCFS may request the supervising CSA in the other state to conduct these visits. All contacts made by the WOR or the supervising CSA, are entered into the case activity notes in SACWIS by the WOR.
- F. For children in the home of their parent/guardian/custodian, and in-home services or Court Ordered Protective Supervision (COPS), the WOR has face-to-face contact with each child, parent, custodian or guardian participating and being provided services as listed in the case plan.

- 1) At least one face-to-face contact with the child and parent/guardian/custodian in the home setting within seven days of receiving the case.
- 2) Monthly face-to-face contacts with the child and parent/guardian/custodian in the home setting.

Quality of Contacts

Quality contacts with the caregiver/adoptive parent are critical to achieving an effective casework relationship. Face-to-face contacts build relationships and facilitate the caregiver/adoptive parent's involvement in case planning, services, and decision-making for the child. WOR documents in the case activity notes section of the case record in SACWIS and address the following:

- A. The child's safety and well-being within the substitute care setting. The WOR addresses the following, through observation and any information obtained during the contact with the caregiver/adoptive parent:
 - 1) The child's current behavior, emotional functioning and current social activities in which the child is involved.
 - 2) The child's current safety and vulnerability, and any issues or concerns expressed by the child.
 - 3) The protective capacities of the child's caregiver/adoptive parent.
 - 4) Any new information regarding the child, the home setting, and the impact on the caregiver/adoptive parent's willingness or ability to care for the child including but not limited to:

Well-being:

- a.) Any supportive services needs for the child or caregiver to assure the child's safety.
- b.) Child's daily activities; extracurricular/cultural activities, hobbies.
- c.) Educational, school status, performance, behaviors and services provided for child.
- d.) Date of child's last physical and dental exam, medication dosages and diagnoses, medical/dental/mental health concerns, appointments, treatment, follow up care, and therapy dates.
- e.) Significant changes in the health status of a household member.
- f.) Birth of a child, death of a child or household member.

Any New Information:

- a.) Information on criminal charge, conviction, or arrest of any household member
- b.) A change in employment or other financial hardships.
- c.) The caregiver's family adjustment to the child placement.
- d.) Any Children's Protective Services complaints since the last visit.

Relationships:

- a.) Change in marital status of any caregiver.
- b.) Family relocation.
- c.) Addition or removal of temporary or permanent household member.

B. Permanency planning in accordance with the child's case plan.

C. The child's progress towards any goals in the case plan, including information from the child's caregiver/adoptive parent.

SEE ALSO:

Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services Policies

- 5.01.03 Case Plan Policy
- 5.03.03 Case Record and Case Documentation
- 6.01.03 Placement Into Out-of-Home Care Setting

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Family, Children and Adult Services Manual; Ohio Administrative Code (OAC)

- 5101:2-42-65 Caseworker visits and contacts with children in substitute care; effective 8/11/2014.
- 5101:2-33-22 Access/confidentiality of child abuse neglect information contained in the uniform statewide automated child welfare information system (SACWIS); effective 1/15/2011.
- 5101:2-42-05 Selection of a placement setting; effective 5/10/2014.
- 5101:2-45-90 Information to be provided to caregivers, school districts and juvenile courts; information to be included in individual child care agreement; effective 11/09/2009.
- 5101:2-38-05 PCSA case plan for children in custody or under protective supervision; effective 5/30/2014.