

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES
STANDARDS FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

STANDARDS FOR INTAKE / ASSESSMENT / INVESTIGATION

2.7 OUT OF HOME AND THIRD PARTY INVESTIGATIONS

Council on Accreditation Standard

The Council on Accreditation Standard G8.1(Screening and Intake) links to and supports Standard 2.7 *Out of Home and Third Party Investigations*.

Administrative Code

The Ohio Administrative Code Rules 5150:2-34-34 (PCSA Requirements for Conducting Out-of-Home Care and Third Party Investigations) and 5101:2-34-35 (PCSA Requirements for Cross-Referring Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect) address Standard 2.7 *Out of Home and Third Party Investigations*.

I. Philosophy

Third party investigations take place when there is a report of alleged child abuse/neglect involving agency staff, foster caregivers, and other individuals/systems operating under the auspices of the public CFSA and/or the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Out-of-Home Care investigations of child abuse and neglect also include: detention facilities; shelter facilities; certified organizations; unlicensed day care providers; overnight and day camps; public and nonpublic schools.

Third party investigations are conducted by public CFSAs in collaboration with an independent third party to minimize any potential conflict of interest which can arise due to the relationship the public CFSA has with those involved with the case or out-of-home care facility. While the public CFSA and third party investigator(s) should conduct the investigation with sensitivity, these, like all other investigations exist to collect sufficient data and information to render a decision as to the validity of the allegation. Third party investigations require a high level of objectivity and should therefore be conducted by individuals who are skilled and experienced in conducting child protection services investigations.

II. Outcome

Child safety and risk are determined.

The child is safe in out-of-home care settings.

III. Evaluation

FACSIS events, CPOE and the Federal Health and Human Services outcomes may be considered when evaluating this standard. In addition, the public CFSA may consider the following:

- the number of reports of alleged child abuse/neglect involving agency staff, foster caregivers, or individuals operating under the auspices of the CFSA;
- the accuracy and completeness of the information collected during the assessment;
- the accuracy and thoroughness of employee and foster parent screening and background checks;
- the number of allegations to substantiations.

IV. Standards for Implementation

- 1) Upon receipt of a referral for child abuse or neglect, the referral is screened in or out by the Intake Assessment Unit based on referent and other available information.
- 2) When the referral is identified as a possible rules violation regarding a licensed entity, the Intake Assessment Unit directs the referral information to the appropriate agency staff or licensing authority within one working day (refer to Standard 6.5, *Rules Violation*).
- 3) When the referral is screened in as a child abuse or neglect report, the public CFSA should conduct an investigative assessment (see Standard 2.4 *Intake Assessments and Interviews*) or request that another public CFSA conduct the intake assessment. All incidents of abuse or neglect must be reported to the licensing authority no later than within one working day. These licensing authorities include:
 - a. The Ohio Department of Mental Retardation (ODMR/DD) Division of Developmental Centers Quality Assurance, when the report involves a developmental center managed by ODMR/DD; or the Office of Licensure when the report involves a foster or group home licensed by ODMR/DD.
 - b. The local county board of mental retardation and developmental disabilities when the report involves any program managed by the county board of ODMR/DD.
 - c. The local board of alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health and the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) when the report involves a residential care facility licensed by ODMH.
 - d. The Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS) chief inspector when the report involves an institution or facility for delinquent children managed by ODYS; or the juvenile judge and ODYS' division of parole, courts, and community services when the report involves a detention or rehabilitation facility managed by a juvenile court and approved by ODYS.
 - e. The superintendent of the local schools and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) when the report involves a primary or secondary school setting, or ODE's legal counsel when reports involve the school for the deaf or blind managed by ODE and early education program such as head start.
 - f. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services' (ODJFS), Children Services Licensing when the report involves a foster home, group home or children's residential facility licensed by ODJFS; or the child care licensing section when the report involves a day care center (more than twelve children) or a type A family day care home which is or should be licensed by ODJFS.
 - g. The local county Department of Job and Family Services (CDJFS) when the report involves an in-home aide who is certified by the CDJFS or a type B family day care home which is certified by CDJFS.

- 4) The public CFSA shall request a parallel intake assessment be conducted by law enforcement as identified in the County Memorandum of Understanding.
- 5) All Out-of-Home Care and third party investigations shall be subjected to the time frames and activities as specified in Standard 2.4, *Intake Assessments and Interviews*, and Standard 2.11, *Incident Disposition and Case Resolution*. Issues regarding staff culpability should also be addressed.
- 6) When the decision is made to request that another public CFSA assume the full intake investigation responsibilities, the requesting public CFSA should abide by the recommended disposition.*
- 7) The public CFSA should share case information and discuss the findings as appropriate, and provide written notification within 3 working days per the Ohio Administrative Code.

**This Standard is based on effective practice. However, it does not currently comply with the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) or Ohio Administrative Code (OAC).*

V. Financial Implications

Costs associated with Standard 2.7, *Third Party Investigations* arranging for and conducting third party investigations for certain allegations of child abuse and neglect are considered part of the operating costs when implementing Standard 2.2, *The Referral Process*; and Standard 2.4, *Intake Assessments and Interviews*.