



**State of Florida
Department of Children and Families**

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Shevaun L. Harris
Secretary

DATE: October 11, 2021

TO: Regional Managing Directors
Sheriff Offices Conducting Child Protective Investigations
Community-Based Care Lead Agency CEOs

THROUGH: Taylor Hatch, Deputy Secretary

FROM: Stefanie Camfield, Assistant Secretary for Child Welfare *SBC*
Sharron Washington, Assistant Secretary for Operations *SW*

SUBJECT: Psychotropic Medication for Children in Out-of-Home Care

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to remind child welfare professionals on policy and procedure for the administration and utilization of psychotropic medication for children in out-of-home care.

BACKGROUND: The Department of Children and Families (Department) is governed by section 39.407, Florida Statute; Chapters 65C-35 and 65C-46, Florida Administrative Code; and CFOP 170-18, Chapter 3 regarding the administration of psychotropic medication. It is important that child protective investigators (CPIs) – including sheriff offices conducting child protective investigations, case managers, and caregivers comply with the following:

- Children in out-of-home care who are prescribed psychotropic medication must receive expressed and informed consent from the child's parent or legal guardian, or the courts.
 - When a child is administered medication in the case of an emergency, the Department/CBC must be notified immediately to allow for Children Legal Services (CLS) to notify the court within three working days pursuant to s. 39.407(3)(e)2, F.S.
- CPIs and case managers shall seek a pre-consent review when:
 - A physician or psychiatric nurse proposes prescribing psychotropic medication or changing the dosage of prescribed psychotropic medication outside the dosage parameters documented in the Medical Report; and,
 - The child is age birth through 17 years; and
 - The child is prescribed two or more psychotropic medications.
- CPIs and case managers must complete a Department approved training on medication management and administration when working with a child who is prescribed psychotropic medication. Training must be completed prior to assuming responsibility for a child who is prescribed psychotropic medication. Training can be located on the Center for Child Welfare website (centerforchildwelfare.org) under Training, Psychotropic Medications eLearning.

2415 North Monroe Street, Suite 400, Tallahassee, Florida 32303-4190

Mission: Work in Partnership with Local Communities to Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

MEMO: Psychotropic Medication for Children in Out-of-Home Care

October 11, 2021

Page 2

- All caregivers responsible for administering psychotropic medication must complete training within 30 calendar days of the child's placement into the caregiver's home. Training can be located on the Center for Child Welfare website (centerforchildwelfare.org) under Training, Psychotropic Medications eLearning.
- Department contracted service providers must develop locally approved medication logs for documenting the administration of psychotropic medications and any side effects or adverse reactions.
- Child-Caring agencies licensed and certified by the Department are prohibited from utilizing chemical and mechanical restraints.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please share this memorandum with all child welfare staff including all child protective investigators, sheriff offices conducting child protective investigations, case managers, Community-Based Care Lead Agencies (CBCs), CBC subcontracted providers, and caregivers.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have any questions regarding these procedures, please contact Jessica Johnson, Out-of-Home Care Specialist, at Jessica.Johnson@myflfamilies.com or 850-717-4491, or Vanessa Snoddy, Manager of Policy and Practice for Case Management & Well Being, at Vanessa.Snoddy@myflfamilies.com or 850-717-4769.

cc: Regional Family and Community Services Directors
Grainne O'Sullivan, Director of Child Welfare Legal Services
Heather Allman, Policy Unit Manager, Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Jack Plagge, Manager for Hospital & Outpatient Services Unit, Agency for Health Care Administration
Center for Child Welfare