

State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Charlie Crist
Governor

Robert A. Butterworth
Secretary

DATE: November 28, 2007
TO: Regional Directors
THROUGH: George Sheldon, Assistant Secretary for Operations
David Fairbanks, Assistant Secretary for Programs
Patricia Badland
FROM: Patricia Badland, Director of Office of Family Safety
SUBJECT: Family Safety - Special Review Protocol

PURPOSE: This provides the structure for Family Safety special reviews that are the responsibility of Regional Family Safety Quality Assurance. **It is effective upon receipt.**

BACKGROUND: Regions, circuits, sheriffs' offices, and community based care agencies, are responsible for performance within their organizations, conducting ongoing quality assurance reviews, and responding to customer calls and other inquiries at the local level. However, there are situations that require special or independent reviews.

A special review refers to a request for a quality assurance review that is beyond planned monitoring activities of the Region.

ACTIONS: Effective immediately, the Director of the Office of Family Safety will review and sign all high profile special reviews that are conducted by Regional Family Safety Quality Assurance prior to dissemination.

Whether the situation is a high profile, high risk or critical, or if it involves other circumstances that require further review, the regional quality assurance staff will plan and conduct the review as necessary. See the attached guideline and flow chart documents.

A request for a special review may come from headquarters, Regional Directors, circuit administrators, community based care management, or others in leadership capacities. The request must be sent to the Regional Quality Assurance Manager in order to initiate the review.

Special review situations where an independent review is warranted may require the Regional Director to seek help for the review from another Regional Director, and in some situations seek technical assistance from headquarters.

1317 Winewood Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700

Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

Family Safety - Special Review Protocol
November 28, 2007
Page 2

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have questions on this, please contact Patricia Badland,
Director of Office of Family Safety at (850) 487-2383.

Attachments

cc: Don Winstead, Deputy Secretary
Erin Geraghty, Director of Communications
Circuit Administrators
Regional Program Managers
Regional Quality Assurance Managers

Regional Family Safety Quality Assurance Special Review Protocol

Purpose: This protocol provides the framework for regions in managing requests for special reviews. It is applicable to the Department (DCF), County Sheriffs' Offices that complete child protective investigations, community based care lead agencies, and their subcontractors.

Background: Regions, Sheriffs' Offices, and community based care lead agencies have a responsibility to manage performance within their organizations. This includes conducting quality assurance reviews and responding to customer calls and other inquiries at the local level. However, these entities may also come across special conditions that require special reviews.

A special review refers to a quality assurance review outside of the routinely planned monitoring activities in child protective investigations or in ongoing case management. A request for a special review may be made by DCF headquarters, legislators, regional directors, circuit administrators, community based care executives, Sheriffs, or others in a leadership capacity.

Action: This process is effective upon receipt.

Step 1: Region identifies a need for a special quality assurance review.

Step 2: Region quality assurance (QA) manager receives request for special review.

Step 3: Region quality assurance staff conduct an initial probe (via desk review) into the investigation, prior history, open or past case management, if appropriate, and/or current judicial status.

Step 4: Region quality assurance staff assess the information gathered and submit preliminary findings to the requestor.

Step 5: The requestor determines if further review is needed.

Step 6: Requestor determines whether or not the situation is high profile. A high profile case review is appropriate when allegations or events require intense scrutiny by leadership. This includes situations that attracted negative media attention; there is a potential for public outcry; or involves possible performance failures. If the situation is high profile, the requestor informs Operations, Leadership, Communications, Director of Child Welfare Legal, and headquarters Family Safety Program Office immediately. When a situation is high profile, the final report is due within **two weeks**.

Step 7: Region assigns review lead and review team.

Step 8: Review lead develops review plan that includes communication needs, timeframes, deliverables, coordination with other key offices, interview lists, schedules, document needs, logistics, keeping other offices informed as to progress, etc.;

Step 9: Region QA conducts the review;

Step 10: Review lead communicates initial findings with requestor and headquarters;

Step 11: Region QA writes draft report;

Step 12: Regional Director or designee reviews draft report;

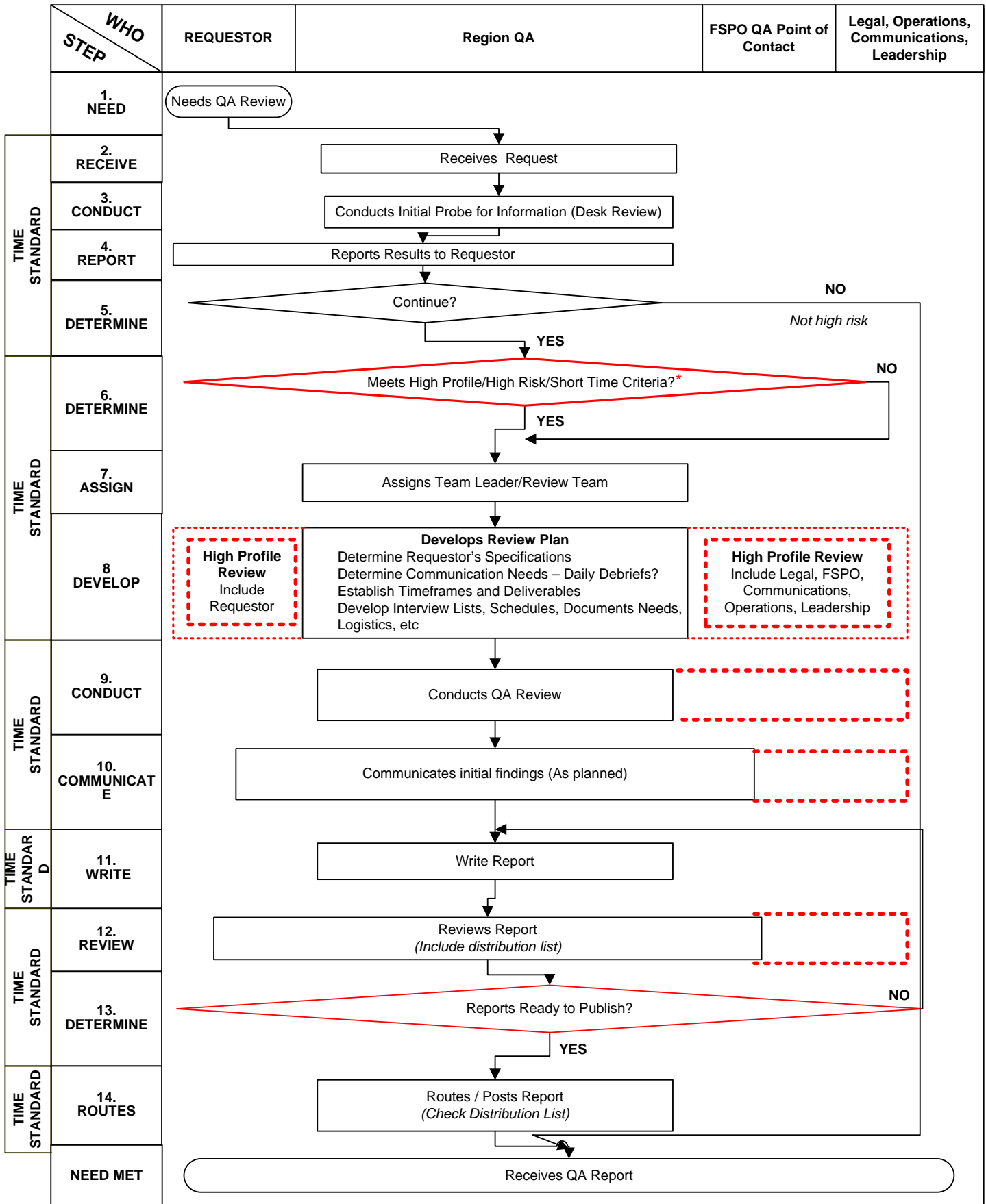
Step 13: Region leadership routes draft report to Director of Office of Family Safety for review and routing to executive leadership (Assistant Secretary for Operations, Assistant Secretary for Programs, Director of Child Welfare Legal); and

Step 14: After Family Safety and executive leadership review and approval, final report is posted.

Headquarters Office of Family Safety is designated as the central contact point for high profile child welfare reviews. The Director of the Office of Family Safety and the Chief of Systems Performance Management in the Office of Family Safety are the contact points. Headquarters Office of Family Safety will:

- ❑ coordinate headquarters' review of each high profile special review and provide technical assistance as needed;
- ❑ consult with the Director of Communications on any edits or clarifications needed in preparing the final draft for presentation to headquarters Operations, Programs, General Counsel, and Communications;
- ❑ develop report framework/template in collaboration with Communications;
- ❑ establish a "team room" for posting source documents, i.e., file documents, review plan, draft report, etc.;
- ❑ provide the final draft to the designated point person from each headquarters office and will schedule a briefing in coordination with the regional staff; and
- ❑ submit final document to Director of Office of Family Safety for signature.

Quality Assurance Special Review Process



* Define criteria for High Risk/Profile Reviews: See Protocol (For example: Potential Safety Concerns for victims? Potential High Risk to Department? Potential for Negative Press? Full team involvement Need On-site Review with Team Urgency – Short turn around)