



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carroll
Secretary

DATE: December 18, 2015
TO: Regional Managing Directors
THROUGH: Vicki Abrams, Assistant Secretary for Operations
Janice Thomas, Assistant Secretary for Child Welfare
FROM: Traci Leavine, Director of Child Welfare Practice
SUBJECT: Mandatory Contact with Reporters
Effective Date: Immediately

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to inform child protective investigation staff that effective 12/13/15, Florida Administrative Code 65C-29.003 was amended to require child protective investigators to contact all individuals identified as reporters in child intakes.

BACKGROUND: The former language in 65C-29.003(2)(a), F.A.C., directed the child protective investigator to make a determination regarding the need for contacting a reporter, who has not remained anonymous, to obtain additional information or to clarify information obtained by the Florida Abuse Hotline.

Unfortunately, this ambiguous wording only reflected half of the statutory intent as s. 39.301(9)(a), F.S., further clarified the determination was essentially about when the reporter was contacted (i.e., "*before* (italics added) face to face interviews with the child and family members"), not if the reporter should be contacted.

The revised language (see below) in 65C-29.003(2)(a) more accurately reflects statutory intent. It still allows for the determination of when the reporter is contacted by the child protective investigator but clearly directs follow-up contact with all reporters not contacted prior to commencement.

"A determination shall be made as to whether the reporter should be contacted prior to commencement of the investigation to obtain additional information on the child or family or to clarify information obtained by the Florida Abuse Hotline. When circumstances preclude contacting a reporter prior to commencement (such as when a concern for child safety and the need for expediency warrants a post-commencement contact) or when an attempted contact is unsuccessful, the investigator shall contact the reporter after the initial on-site response is completed."

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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

ACTION REQUIRED: Please share this memorandum effective immediately with all child protective investigation staff.

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have any questions, please contact Alissa Cross, Safety Manager, Office of Child Welfare, at (850)717-4653 or via e-mail at Alissa.Cross@myflfamilies.com.

Attachments

cc: Sheriff Offices
David Fairbanks, Deputy Secretary
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