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PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY TRANSMITTAL LETTER, 22-07

TO: Service Region Administrators
Service Region Administrator Associates
Service Region Clinical Associates
Regional Program Specialists
Family Services Office Supervisors

FROM: Melanie Taylor, Assistant Director
Division of Protection and Permanency

DATE: April 2, 2022

SUBJECT: SOP Chapter 2 – Revisions related to the implementation of the Structured Decision-Making® intake assessment tool

The purpose of this transmittal letter is to advise staff of the numerous revisions to SOP Chapter 2, including changes to acceptance criteria and intake policies and procedures. The revisions ensure alignment with current statutes, regulations, and the new Structured Decision Making® (SDM®) Intake Assessment Tool and manual.

In 2020, DCBS partnered with Evident Change to develop structured decision-making tools for use in Kentucky's child welfare system. The SDM® model offers workers a framework for consistent decision making and helps agencies direct resources toward those who can benefit most. SDM® tools were developed by Evident Change using empirical research. Many of you participated in the research during the inter-rater reliability (IRR) testing.

The intake assessment tool is scheduled to be released in TWIST on April 2, 2022, and will be applied to any reports received on or after that date.

The intake assessment tool is a consensus-based tool that is designed to operationalize statute, regulation, and policy to support decisions made by staff for intake determinations and response times. The tool is designed to assist staff in working through critical decisions at the intake level and develop a consistent and supported result.

The new SOP and the SDM® manual include changes in practice, programs/subprograms, and terminology. Please review the below summary of significant changes:

- **SOP 2.1 Receiving and Assigning the Report**: Updated procedures during the intake assessment, updated information on procedures for entering a specialized report, and entering the report into TWIST utilizing the SDM® Intake Assessment Tool.
- **SOP 2.2 Reports not accepted for Assessment/Investigation**: Updated all language for acceptance criteria to mirror the SDM® Intake Assessment definitions and how to enter the acceptance criteria into TWIST.
- **SOP 2.3 Acceptance Criteria**: Updated all language for acceptance criteria to mirror the SDM® Intake Assessment definitions and updated the statutory and regulatory information for acceptance criteria. Procedures for reports that are not accepted were moved to SOP 2.2. There are changes in TWIST programs categories, including the addition of several neglect categories and the elimination of the basic neglect and neglect risk of harm subprograms. There are additions to include a subprogram for threat of physical abuse, threat of emotional injury, and threat of sexual abuse. Human trafficking programs have been added as their own categories and are no longer a designation under exploitation.
- **SOP 2.4 Non-Investigatory Response**: The Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) may respond to other case scenarios outside of abuse and neglect reports, these efforts fall under non-investigatory response cases. This SOP includes new definitions around reports that require intervention but do not meet the threshold for abuse and neglect. These include:
 - Safe Infant Path
 - Safety Net Path
 - Status Offender Path
 - Safety Check and Review/Border Agreement
 - Safety Check and Review/Court Ordered
 - Non-Specific Court Orders/Court-Ordered Activity
 - Out-of-State Requests for Assistance
 - Law Enforcement Assist Path
 - Dependency
 - Recommitment
- **SOP 2.6 Completing the CPS Intake**: Updates procedures on how to complete an intake in TWIST while utilizing the SDM® Intake Assessment Tool.
- **SOP 2.7 Safe Infant Act-Intake**: This is a new sub-chapter in chapter 2 to provide specific information when entering a report regarding the Safe Infant Act.
- **SOP 2.14 Investigations of Child Fatalities and Near Fatalities**: Updates to provide specific information for the consultation processes regarding child fatality reports and near fatality reports.
- **SOP 2.15.8 Investigations involving DCBS Employees**: Updates that include criteria for determining when a report should be designated as an employee investigation and follow the consultation process.
- **SOP 2.16 Safe Infant Assessments**: This is a new sub-chapter in chapter 2 to provide specific information regarding reports that were not determined as Safe Infant during the intake process and need to be designated as Safe Infant during the investigative phase of the case. This policy also provides specific information on procedures related to Safe Infant investigations.

- **[FAQ on Residency Determination](#)**: Updates information around residency determinations that include policy changes around accepting out-of-state referrals.
- **[KY SDM Intake Manual® Intake Assessment Manual](#)**: The new Kentucky Structured Decision Making® Intake Assessment Manual that provides specific definitions and procedures on completing the assessment.
- **Updated [DPP-115](#)**: Updates the language on the DPP-115 to include new program areas around human trafficking and remove outdated language around domestic violence concurrent cases.
- **Case modifications and second incidents**: Definitions have been added for these tasks. Second incidents are new reports that are made on the same family but are different from the original program/subprogram. Each report can only have one additional incident added to the intake screens and it must be received within the first 15 working days from the date the original report was received. Any new allegations received after 15 working days will be entered as a new report. The new 15 day timeframe provides time for the SSW to fully assess and investigate the new allegations. Victim/perp pairings can be added at any time during the 30 working period by the investigative worker, if it is connected to the original program/subprogram. After 30 working days a new referral and investigation is required.
- **Intake/case deletes and re-entry requests**: The DPP Child Protection Branch will manage and complete all deletes and re-entries. Please send requests for deletes to DCBSChildProtection@ky.gov.

We recognize the hard work and dedication staff put into their day-to-day work with children and families. These revisions are an effort to streamline your work, remove duplicative or unnecessary items, and to shore up decision making so there is consistency across the state.

Screening a child protection report is one the most significant decisions made in a child's life. It determines whether a family becomes involved in the child welfare system and that decision can have substantial implications on that family for years to come. It is our hope that these revisions will provide you the support you need when making decisions for children throughout Kentucky.

If you have any questions regarding this transmittal letter, you may refer to the [PPTL 22-07 Statement of Consideration for SOP Chapter 2 – Revisions related to the implementation of the Structured Decision-Making® intake assessment tool](#).

If you have any questions regarding this memorandum, please contact:

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