

 VERMONT DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		59
Chapter:	Intake and Investigation	
Subject:	Child Protection Teams	Page 1 of 2
Approved:	Fredrick M. Ober, Division Director	Effective: 11/3/99 FINAL
Supersedes:	Policy 59 and Guidelines for Practice, page 5	Dated: 1/8/99 Dated: 3/1/97

Purpose

To clarify the procedure for empanelment of short term and ongoing members of child protection teams. Empanelment is the act of officially appointing an individual to a child protection team by signing the team membership certificate.

Policy

A child protection team is a group of professional or non-professional community members appointed ("empanelled") by the commissioner under 33 V.S.A., Chapter 49, for the purpose of case review, coordination of services, public information and education, and other purposes mentioned in the law.

Disclosure of information or records used or obtained in the course of providing services to prevent child abuse or neglect or to treat abused or neglected children and their families by one member of a multi-disciplinary team to another member of the team is permissible by statute (49 VSA § 4919).

A member of the team is defined as anyone who participates in a meeting of the team (family members who are participating in a team meeting need not be empanelled.) Most members serve terms of one year. However, in the interest of promoting effective case review and coordination, some professionals will be members for only one or two meetings. No person will participate in child protection team meetings without being empanelled, except that a family member may attend to discuss his or her own family situation.

During the month of September, every child protection team will submit a list of team members for the year to the commissioner. The commissioner will empanel the team and members for the year, beginning October 1. During the year, if there are changes in long-term members, teams will send updates to the commissioner, stating which members to add or delete. These will be sent in a timely fashion so that members do not participate in meetings without being empanelled.

The commissioner has authorized district directors to empanel short-term members of child protection teams. Teams will submit names of members to be empanelled for one month or less, to the district director in their area. Teams that have representation from more than one district office may choose which director to contact. Teams must submit the names with sufficient notice so that directors have at least four working days to respond.

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Referrals to Child Protection Teams

District office staff may request a Child Protection Meeting on any family with child protection issues, whether or not the concerns rise to the level of a report of child abuse or neglect. (This supersedes a more restrictive policy statement articulated on page 5 of the ***Guidelines for Practice for Child Protection Teams*** published by the department in March of 1997.)