



State of Vermont
Department of Corrections
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Agency of Human Services

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Department of Corrections and Department for Children and Families

CHILD PROTECTION MEASURES

OBJECTIVE:

To protect children from violent offenders by improving communication between staff of the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Department for Children and Families (DCF).

Part 1: Child Safety

DOC WILL:

- When DOC has control (furlough, or probation and parole with residence restrictions) over the offender's residence, prohibit an offender who poses a risk of sexual abuse or significant physical injury to children from residing in a home where children live.
- When DOC does not have control over the offender's residence, DOC will make a child abuse report to DCF when DOC has reason to believe that an offender presents a risk of harm to children in a current or proposed residence.
- Review DCF client index, with a follow up inquiry to the local DCF office, on all matches for any offender under supervision for an offense of family violence or sexual offenses. Coordinate planning and actions to promote child protection.
- Provide the DCF Emergency Services Program a current list of local DOC District Managers and facility superintendents.
- Contact the DCF Emergency Services Program or the local district office, to secure information about the custody status and responsible district office for a juvenile that has been taken into DOC custody.
- Contact DCF when field staff arrest or return an offender to jail, or facility staff admit an offender, who reports that there is no appropriate adult to provide immediate care for the offender's minor child(ren).

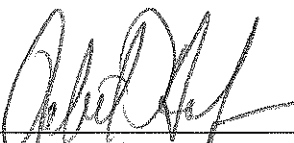
DCF WILL:

- Upon request, share information with DOC about current or past clients of the Family Services Division for child protection purposes.
- Pursuant to Family Services policies, accept and investigate reports from DOC employees, of suspected or potential child abuse.
- Check the DOC offender locator for all new DCF cases, and if there is a match, contact DOC staff to coordinate planning and actions to promote child protection.
- Consult with DOC before using any DOC case notes in a fact finding or judicial process. If DOC does not agree to use of the case notes, they will be used only if subpoenaed. If local staff from both Departments cannot agree on the appropriate use of a casenote, the decision will be made at the central office level.
- Invite DOC staff to attend case plan reviews (and treatment team meetings, as appropriate) for children when DOC is supervising a family member.
- Provide ongoing training to DOC staff about child abuse and neglect issues.

Part 2: Safeguarding Information


DCF and DOC will:

- Ensure that staff know that information exchanged between the Departments in any form is to be used only as needed to carry out professional responsibilities.
- Require staff to sign an acknowledgement of confidentiality requirements before being given access to the other Department's databases.
- Inform the other Department when it appears that an employee has misused case information and may be disciplined;
- Appropriately manage access of staff to automated information.
- Ensure that the other Department is informed of any changes in policy requirements related to access to case information.
- Develop local protocols to promote regular and efficient communication and collaboration between the respective district offices.



Robert D. Hofmann, Commissioner
Department of Corrections

Date 9/15/08



Stephen R. Dale, Commissioner
Department for Children and Families

Date 9/15/08