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Subject:	Investigating Reports of Child Abuse or Neglect in Regulated Facilities	Page 1 of 3
Approved:	James Morse, Commissioner	Effective: 1/8/99 FINAL
Supersedes:	Interim Policy #54	Dated: 10/1/97

Purpose

To outline the special considerations for child abuse and neglect investigations conducted by the Special Investigations Unit (SIU).

Policy

The division has a special responsibility when it is suspected that a child may have been abused or neglected in a facility licensed or regulated by the department. In addition to protecting the child or children named in the report, the division must act to prevent harm to other children in those facilities.


Scope of SIU Responsibility

The SIU is responsible for investigating reports of child abuse and neglect in the following settings, hereafter called “facilities”.

- foster homes licensed by the division;
- foster homes approved by a child placing agencies;
- kinship care homes approved by the division;
- child care settings providing ongoing and regular child care, whether or not that setting is licensed or registered by Child Care Services.
- residential care facilities licensed by the division;
- residential schools approved by the Department of Education;
- public or private schools when the alleged perpetrator is a member of the staff.

Commencing an Investigation

The investigation of a report of child abuse or neglect in a facility will commence as soon as possible. When the alleged perpetrator has continued access to alleged victim, or if other children may be at risk, the investigation will commence within 24 hours. In other cases, the investigation will commence within 72 hours. The operations manager must approve any waiver of this requirement.

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Policy Guidelines for SIU

The applicable requirements of division policies on investigating and substantiating child abuse are in effect for investigations conducted by the SIU.

No Placements during Investigation

No additional placements will be made in the facility while the investigation is underway.

Role of SIU when Referral Not Accepted as a Report

When the SIU receives information from a district office or ESP that does not constitute a report, but raises concerns about the care of children in the facility, the SIU Chief may take one of the following actions, as appropriate:

- Gather additional information from collateral sources to determine if:
 - the referral rises to the level of a report;
 - if an on-site evaluation necessary;
 - if a referral to licensing is necessary.
- Conduct an on-site evaluation of the adequacy of supervision in the facility when the referral alleges:
 - sexual activity between children or youth in residential facilities;
 - intrusive or adult-like sexual activity between children in a child care facility.
- Refer possible licensing violations to the appropriate licensing unit.

Notification of Case Disposition

The SIU Chief will notify the district office and the appropriate licensing and program units of the following:

- whether or not the referral has been accepted as a report;
- if the report is not accepted, what further actions the SIU will take, if any; and,

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- if the report was accepted, the case determination, including any necessary follow-up by the district.

Transfer of Cases from the SIU to the District Office

Promptly after any substantiation, the SIU Chief will notify the district director of any pending transfer of the case to the district. The SIU Chief will coordinate with the director to ensure the prompt and smooth transfer of the case.

The SIU Chief will ensure that the MIS is updated and the record contains:

- transfer memo;
- Initial Investigation Series, as appropriate (FS-242(a-e));
- Case Opening Form (FS-609) for cases not previously opened ;
- Child Abuse/Neglect Form (FS-590);
- SIU Intake Form;
- SIU Report (if one was required);
- Contact Sheets (FS-240);
- Correspondence.