

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P.O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

March 17, 2006

MEMORANDUM

WHAT'S INSIDE:

-Emergency Protocol for emergency situations;
-Foster parent's responsibilities in developing an emergency plan and notifying staff of foster child status in an emergency.

TO: ALL REGIONAL EXECUTIVE STAFF, CIRCUIT MANAGERS AND CHILDREN'S DIVISION STAFF

FROM: PAULA NEESE, INTERIM DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: REGIONAL AND CIRCUIT PROTOCOLS EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE.

FOSTER PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES IN DEVELOPING AN EMERGENCY PLAN AND NOTIFYING STAFF OF FOSTER CHILD STATUS IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide protocol guidelines for each Circuit with Regional approval to develop emergency procedures and Foster Parent's guidelines for responding to emergency and other life threatening situations at all local levels. This plan shall be submitted to Central Office for approval. Once the emergency protocol is developed by the respective Regional Office and approved, all foster parents and staff will be trained regarding the protocol. Each plan must include the following elements:

- A. A list of local facilities that are suitable for temporary lodging, supplies and food that is given to all foster parents at STARS Pre-Service Training. This list will be updated and mailed out annually by the licensing Children's Service Worker;
- B. An emergency communication plan. This plan, which is part of each Circuit's overall disaster plan, should include who shall be contacted in cases of emergencies. In cases where there is a man-made or natural disaster, a communication center in a different Region from the affected Region shall be set up as a communication center as a back-up for the Regional/Circuit office. The selected Children's Division (CD) office should be far enough away that it is unlikely to be directly affected by the same event. **The administrative number at the Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline, 877-642-6320, shall be**

given to each foster parent to use only when all other usual means of communication are down which preclude foster parents from contacting their local/regional contacts. Please note: a written protocol should accompany this number which shall spell out when this administrative number is to be used; this information will be included in the local circuit's protocol that is to be shared with foster parents. Each Region will designate an individual/group of staff who will coordinate information received from the disaster affected Region and communicate this information to the Regional Directors and Central Office.

The protocol should include instructions that all staff in the affected area shall call into the designated communication center. The foster parent guidelines for responding to emergencies, as referenced earlier, shall include the 1-877-642-6320 administrative number **to be used only when no other communication channels are available to reach local/regional contacts.**

This plan shall include:

1. Who to contact at the local and regional level during an emergency situation, during normal work hours as well as after hours;
2. Who to contact during man-made or natural disaster when all normal communication channels are down, i.e. administration number 877-642-6320. This plan will also include how the foster parent will contact the communication center when normal communication is down, i.e. use of cell phones, messages through established web pages;
3. Who will contact the Birth Parent/Relative, Children's Division Director, and the Juvenile Office, regarding the child's emergency situation;
4. How often foster parent/staff shall communicate with the designated communication site during man-made or natural disasters, i.e. daily, weekly etc;
5. The information to be provided regarding emergency situations;
6. How and where in the case record the information is to be documented;
7. How it will be monitored;
8. Address voluntary or involuntary closure of facilities in emergency situations;
9. Address the requirement of notifying the person's parent or legal guardian and other appropriate authorities;
10. Any additional requirement as specified by the Regional Office.

In the event of a mandatory evacuation order, foster parents must comply with the order insofar as they must ensure their foster children are evacuated according to the plan and procedures set forth by the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA).

Additionally, in the event of emergency, the Department of Social Service's Communications Office will coordinate all communication with the media, leadership staff, personnel, persons served and the public.

Foster Parents' Responsibilities:

Foster parent shall develop and display a family emergency plan that will be approved by their local office and become part of their Family Development Plan. Their plan should include the following:

1. An evacuation plan for various disasters;
2. A meeting place for all family members if and when a disaster occurs;
3. Contact numbers which shall include:
 - i. Local law enforcement;
 - ii. Regional Communication Plan with Contact Personnel;
 - iii. Emergency Numbers;
 - iv. **Administrative number, 877-642-6320, only to be used when no other local/regional communication channels are available.**
4. A disaster supply kit that includes "special needs" items for each household member, first aid supplies including prescription medications, a change of clothing for each person, a sleeping bag or bedroll for each foster child, battery powered radio or television, extra batteries, food, bottled water and tools. For information regarding what to place in an Disaster Kit you may go to "American Red Cross Disaster Plan Kit Item list" www.redcross.org

As part of the disaster plan each foster parent will identify what will happen to the child if he/she is in school or the foster parent is away from the child; i.e. will the school keep the children until a parent or designated adult can pick them up or send them home on their own.

Foster parents will provide their Children's Service Workers with back-up contact phone numbers in case of emergency in which they cannot be located by their home or work phone. Foster parents should consider providing staff with back-up phone numbers of individuals (such as relatives) they would contact in case of an emergency.

Each foster home will review this plan with their foster children every six months and report this information back to the foster child's respective case worker. The worker will record this information in the provider's file.

The emergency plans shall be made available through the Regional Office, upon request.

NECESSARY ACTIONS:

1. Please review this memorandum with all Children's Division Staff.
2. All comments and recommendations regarding this subject should be cleared through normal supervisory channels.

PDS CONTACT:	PROGRAM MANAGER:
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CHILD WELFARE MANUAL REVISIONS	
Section 4, Chapter 6 Attachment B Section 6, Chapter 1 Attachment F Table of Contents	<i>Direct Service Worker Duties</i> <i>Foster Parent's Emergency Procedures</i>
ADMINISTRATIVE RULE:	
13 CSR 40-60 Licensing of Foster Family Homes	
AVAILABLE REFERENCE MATERIALS:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Public Safety <i>Emergency Preparedness</i> http://ready.missouri.gov/ • Department of Social Services, Human Resource Center, Safety and Security Toolkit http://dssweb/dpl/pages/safety.htm (Employee Access Only) 	
COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION (COA) STANDARDS: (Employee Access Only)	
G5.7.01 The organization follows procedures for responding to accidents, serious illness, fire, medical emergencies, water emergencies, natural disasters, and other life threatening situations	
G5.7.04 All of the organization's programs prepare to deal effectively with injuries, accidents and illnesses	
PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP):	
N/A	
SACWIS REQUIREMENTS:	
N/A	

PN/VES/KS