



Practice Alert

DOCUMENTING PRIOR HISTORY IN CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT (CA/N) REPORTS

The purpose of this Practice Alert is to inform staff what constitutes prior history in a CA/N Investigation or Family Assessment, and to explain how the Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline Unit (CANHU) screens out documented calls. Revisions have been made to the Child Welfare Manual with regard to these clarifications.

PRIOR HISTORY

Prior history is the total sum of an individual or family's previous involvement with the Children's Division as it would pertain to CA/N Investigations, Family Assessments, or previous intervention or treatment services. Staff are required to review and examine the context of all prior CA/N Reports and the outcomes of each. There are essentially three places in a CA/N Investigation or Family Assessment where documentation of prior history should be recorded. FACES generates an automated account of prior reports and referrals on the CPS-1. Staff are required to complete a Risk Assessment in every CA/N Report, which must include an account for all prior CA/N Investigations and/or Family Assessments of the household members involved in the current CA/N Report. Subsequent to the Risk Assessment, staff are expected to give an account of the SDM Risk Level in the summary and conclusion section of the CA/N Report. It would be best practice for staff to also take into account the success or impediment of prior intervention and treatment services when working with families.

DOCUMENTED (DOC) CALLS

The calls that do not meet either the statutory requirements for a CA/N Report or the Division's requirements for a Non-CA/N Referral are classified as documented calls. Documented calls shall not be considered as a part of an individual or family's prior history. The following are some examples of documented calls:

- The child is 18 or older and not in Children's Division custody,
- The child/family cannot be located because of insufficient information,
- All subjects given in the call reside and are located out of state and the reporter is not a Missouri mandated reporter, or
- There is no child abuse/neglect allegation.

REVISIONS TO THE CHILD WELFARE MANUAL

The following sections of the Child Welfare Manual have been revised to include the clarifications provided in this Practice Alert:

[Section 2 Chapter 1 Child Abuse/Neglect \(CA/N\) - Reports Received at CANHU](#)

[Section 2 Chapter 4.1.1 Preparing for the Investigation](#)

[Section 2 Chapter 5.3.1 Preparing for the Family Assessment](#)

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