

Memorandum

CD26-03

ISSUED DATE: January 14, 2026

TO: ☒ Children's Division ☐ Contracted Staff

FROM: Sara Smith, Children's Division Director

SUBJECT: **Unable to Locate CA/N Policy**

RATIONALE:

This memo is to inform staff of policy changes related to being unable to locate families when responding to a CA/N report or Newborn Crisis Assessment (NCA) intended to provide improved guidance to staff on steps that must be taken prior to making a conclusion of "Unable to Locate".

OVERVIEW:

Staff must review Section 2, Ch. 5.2.17 Unable to Locate and Section 2, Ch. 5.2.14.6 Unable to Locate Consults in their entirety. Policy has been revised to:

- Introduce the Unable to Locate Checklist (CD-338), now a required form.
- Clarify that the "Unable to Locate" conclusion may only be utilized when not one single child **nor** any parent/caregiver included in the report is located. This does not include parents who do not themselves know the whereabouts of the child and are thus unable to assist in locating them AND after Regional Office approval.
- Clarify that staff must continue to make exhaustive efforts to locate the family throughout the duration of the 45-day report period.

NECESSARY ACTION:

1. Review this memorandum with all Children's Division and contracted staff.
2. Review revised Child Welfare Manual chapters and forms as indicated below.

PDS CONTACT:

Name: Cari Pointer

Email: Cari.A.Pointer@dss.mo.gov

MANAGER CONTACT:

Name: Kara Wilcox

Email: Kara.B.Wilcox@dss.mo.gov

DEPUTY DIRECTOR CONTACT:

Name: Marcia Hazelhorst

Email: Marcia.Hazelhorst@dss.mo.gov

NEW/ REVISED CHILD WELFARE MANUAL POLICY AND COLLATERAL DOCUMENTATION:

[Section 2, Ch. 5.2.17 Unable to Locate](#)

[Section 2, Ch. 5.2.14.6 Unable to Locate Consults](#)

[Unable to Locate Checklist \(CD-338\)](#)