

Memorandum

CDP26-10

DATE: June 15, 2026

TO: Children's Division and Foster Care Case Management

FROM: Sara Smith, Children's Division Director

SUBJECT: **Policy Updates Regarding Safe Sleeping Environments**

OVERVIEW:

This policy applies to all open Child Abuse/Neglect (CA/N) reports, Newborn Crisis Assessments (NCA), Family Centered Services (FCS) cases, Alternative Care (AC) cases, and all resource licensing cases where the provider or family is caring for or preparing to care for an infant under one (1) year of age.

The Safe Sleep policy is to establish uniform standards for the education, observation, discussion and documentation of safe sleep practices for infants under one (1) year of age, and in homes where a birth is anticipated. The Safe Sleep policy promotes and ensures the implementation of safe sleep practices as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Children's Division staff, foster care case management staff, and foster home licensing workers must provide safe sleep education to all caregivers, assess environmental conditions for safety, have an in-depth discussion on the importance of safe sleep, and document findings as outlined in this policy.

For questions or concerns, please contact:

Misty Allen, Program Development Specialist, at Misty.M.Allen@dss.mo.gov

Kara Wilcox, Safety Unit Manager, at Kara.B.Wilcox@dss.mo.gov

Marcia Hazelhorst, Deputy Director, at Marcia.Hazelhort@dss.mo.gov

CHILD WELFARE MANUAL POLICY AND/OR COLLATERAL DOCUMENTATION:

[CWM 2.4.4.2 Safe Sleeping Environments](#)

[CWM 4.2.2 Initial Placement Activities](#)

[CWM 4.4.1 Working with Placements](#)

[CWM 4.6.4 Preparing the Parents for the Child's Return](#)

[Safe Sleep Flyer \(CD-278\)](#)

[Safe Sleep Discussion Resource Guide \(CD-278A\) NEW](#)

[American Academy of Pediatrics Recommendations – Safe Sleep Missouri \(mo.gov\)](#)

[Child Safety Resources](#)

The following policies will be revised to include safe sleep practices:

[**CWM 6.3.1 Resource Provider Licensing**](#)

[**CWM 6.13.1 Resource Development Worker Responsibilities**](#)

[**CWM 6.16.3 Placement Activities/Placement Support**](#)

NECESSARY ACTION:

1. *Review this memorandum with all Children’s Division and Foster Care Case Management team members.*
2. *Review Child Welfare Manual chapters and forms as indicated above.*