

# Investigation Responsibilities by Program

(Revised 6/19/20)

[Introduction](#)

[Non-Custody Referrals](#)

[In-Custody Referrals](#)

[Filing a Petition on an Open Case](#)

[Responsibilities](#)

[Links for Related Policies](#)

[Alignment with SET](#)

---

## Introduction

Each program (ER, CI, VS, CS, and Adoptions) has different responsibilities during new and ongoing investigations.

This policy outlines the workflow process and tasks required for investigations by program after a referral is assigned by the Hotline.

**NOTE:** The term “Investigating SW” is used in this policy to describe both Emergency Response (ER) and Court Intervention (CI) SWs.

---

## Non custody referrals

The table below displays the ER to CI workflow process when a referral is received on a child who is **NOT** in custody and who is **not already in an open referral/case**.

The table includes steps and actions for a referral that begins as a non-custody, but has a petition filed during the investigation.

| Step | Who     | Action   |
|------|---------|--|
| 1    | Hotline | Follow the Hotline - Assignment of Referrals policy for assignment to the appropriate Regional Assignment Clerk.   |
| 2    | ER PSS  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review referral.</li><li>Does it appear <b>likely*</b> that a petition will be filed?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>If <b>YES</b>, then go to Step 3.</li><li>If <b>NO</b>, then assign to ER SW for investigation. Proceed to Step 4.</li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> If a child has a serious injury, a positive toxicology screen with additional issues, prior dependencies, etc. See Physical Abuse Protocol for additional information on serious injuries.</p> |

**Non-custody  
referrals (cont.)**

| Step | Who    | Action   |
|------|--------|--|
| 3    | ER PSS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If it seems likely that a petition will be filed, the ER PSS will consult with the CI PSS within 2 hours of receiving the referral. If the region has no CI PSS, then the ER PSS will discuss with ER PSS who supervises CI SWs or assign the referral as appropriate.</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> The goal of this discussion is to identify referrals that are likely to end up in CI anyway, to avoid assigning an interim ER SW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the referral belongs in ER, immediately assign to ER SW. Go to Step 4.</li> <li>If the referral belongs in CI, immediately transfer to CI PSS. Go to Step 7.</li> </ul> |
| 4    | ER SW  | Investigate referral.  |
| 5    | ER SW  | <p>Is a petition is needed (via Protective Custody Warrant or after an exigent removal)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If <b>YES</b>, then screen petition. Go to Step 6.</li> <li>If <b>NO</b>, then continue investigating following ER - Investigations policy and take appropriate action. STOP.</li> </ul>   |
| 6    | ER PSS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give ER SW 3 days of protection from IRS and 5-day referrals. (ER SW may still be assigned 10-day referrals.)</li> <li>Transfer to CI within 24 hours of the Detention Hearing.</li> <li>If opening for Voluntary Services (VS): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer to VS within 3 working days of decision to go voluntary.</li> <li>Arrange warm hand-off between ER and VS (see Case Transfers ).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> If incomplete tasks remain, the ER SW will make a secondary assignment to him/herself before the case is transferred or ER PSS can assign secondary before transferring.</p>                     |

**Non-custody  
referrals (cont.)**

| Step | Who    | Action  |
|------|--------|---|
| 7    | CI PSS | <p>Review referral and immediately assign to CI SW.</p> <p>If ER did any part of the investigation, contact the ER PSS for a warm hand-off* within 2 working days after receiving the referral (see Case Transfers ).</p>   |
| 8    | CI PSS | <p>Contact assignment clerk to find out which CS PSS is up for the next case.</p> <p>Within 5 calendar days after the Detention Hearing, email the CS PSS to <b>advise</b> that a new petition has been filed.</p>  |
| 9    | CS PSS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify (<b>DO NOT ASSIGN</b>) a CS SW within 3 business days to <b>consult*</b> with the CI SW re: services for the family.</li> <li>Notify the CI PSS of who the consulting CS SW is.</li> </ul>  |
| 10   | CI SW  | <p><b>Consult</b> with identified CS SW re: significant case-planning decisions, such as family engagement efforts (FEEs), placement, services, visitation, etc.</p> <p>It is best practice to invite the CS PSS to any Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> The CS SW does not meet with the family and is not responsible for performing any case-management activities until/unless the case is formally assigned to him/her.</p>  |
| 11   | CI SW  | <p>Per existing policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue investigating.</li> <li>If a petition has already been filed by ER, then write the Jurisdictional/Dispositional Report.</li> <li>If no petition has been filed but one appears warranted, then screen petition.</li> <li>If VS are appropriate, follow the policy When Voluntary Services Are Unsuccessful .</li> </ul> <p>After Disposition, submit to PSS for transfer to CS within 5 business days and participate in warm hand-of between CI and CS (see Case Transfers).</p> |

---

### Non-custody referrals (cont.)

**REMINDER:** The Detention Hearing Report is not intended to reflect a full investigation, but to explain why the SW believes the child is described by WIC §300. The Jurisdictional/Dispositional Report is the report designed to describe the full investigation.

While CI staff are fully capable of developing case plans, CS SWs often have more experience implementing them over the long-term so they can contribute another perspective that's beneficial to families.

**NOTE:** The consulting CS SW may or may not be ultimately assigned to the family due to multiple factors that cannot be predicted at the beginning (e.g., how long until the case will dispo, what the CS SW's workload will be at that time, whether or not there might be another SW who is a better "match" for the family, etc.)

---

### In-custody referrals

The table below displays the CI workflow process for a referral received on a child who is in custody, **not currently assigned to ER, and:**

- has been brought into custody by Law Enforcement, a Standby PSW or
- has been placed on a CWS Hospital Hold

**NOTE:** If the child is in an open **referral**, the Hotline will assign it to the current Investigating SW. If the child is in an open **case**, the Hotline will assign it according to Hotline - Assignment of Referrals policy.

| Step | Who     | Action  |
|------|---------|---|
| 1    | Hotline | Assign to Regional Assignment Clerk in appropriate region for assignment to CI, per existing policy.  |
| 2    | CI SW   | Investigate per existing policy. Is a petition warranted?<br><br>If <b>YES</b> , then go to Step 3.<br>If <b>NO</b> , then follow existing policy. STOP.  |
| 3    | CI SW   | Complete Detention Hearing Report and screen petition.  |
| 4    | CI PSS  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contact assignment clerk to find out which CS PSS is up for the next case or notify PSS of CS Cluster with matching zip code, per Neighborhoods 4 Kids (N4K) cluster model.</li><li>• Email CS PSS within 5 days after Detention Hearing to <b>advise</b> that a new petition has been filed.</li></ul> |

---

---

### In-custody referrals (cont.)

| Step | Who    | Action  |
|------|--------|---|
| 5    | CS PSS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify (<b>DO NOT ASSIGN</b>) a CS SW within 3 business days to <b>consult</b> with the CI SW re: services for the family.</li><li>Notify the CI PSS who the consulting CS SW is.</li></ul>   |
| 6    | CI SW  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Consult</b> with identified CS SW re: significant case-planning decisions, such as FEEs, placement, services, visitation, etc.</li><li>Invite the CS PSS to any CFTs and/or SOP mappings.</li></ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> The CS SW does not meet with the family, and is not responsible for performing any case-management activities until/unless the case is formally assigned to him/her.</p> |

**NOTE:** The consulting CS SW may or may not be ultimately assigned to the family, due to multiple factors that cannot be predicted at the beginning (e.g., how long until the case will dispo, what the CS SW’s workload will be at that time, whether or not there might be another SW who is a better “match” for the family, etc.)

While CI staff is fully qualified to develop case plans, CS SWs often have more experience implementing them over the long term so they can contribute another perspective that’s beneficial to families.

---

### Filing a petition on an open case

Most new referrals received on open cases will be assigned to the Open Case Investigations unit. However, whenever any ER worker is assigned a referral on an open case, they will follow the Open Case Investigations unit policy.

---

### Responsibilities

The table below describes who will complete what tasks after a petition is filed or case is opened for Voluntary Services.

**NOTE:** In the table below “Investigating SW” refers to the SW who filed the petition.

| Task                      | Completed by   |
|---------------------------|--|
| ICWA inquiry and noticing | ER SW will initiate ICWA inquiry and CI will continue inquiry and noticing as needed |
| Attend CFT meeting        | All SWs who have been involved with the referral (ER, CI, VS, consulting CS)         |

**Responsibilities  
(cont.)**

| Task  | Completed by  |
|---|---|
| Continue investigation for J/D  | CI SW   |
| Create Genograms/ecomaps<br><br><b>Reminder:</b> Update whenever new/updated information is received. | Investigating SW  |
| Develop Case Plan <b>with family</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CI SW for court involved cases and VS SW for VS cases.</li> <li>Include consulting CS SW in significant case-planning decisions, such as family engagement efforts, placement, services, visitation, etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>REMINDER:</b> The CS SW is not responsible for performing any case management functions until/unless the case is formally assigned.</p> |
| Provide noticing, including foreign consulate   | Investigating SW  |
| Initiate CLETS  | Investigating SW  |
| Schedule first visit between child(ren) and parent(s) (unless contact not appropriate)                | Investigating SW  |
| Order police reports, if there is a known criminal history  | Investigating SW  |
| Provide transportation assistance (tokens, Compass Card, etc.)  | Investigating SW  |
| Initiate parent/relative searches   | Investigating SW  |
| Initiate RFA assessments  | Investigating SW  |
| Complete <a href="#">EA forms</a>   | Investigating SW  |
| Get Releases of Information/Consent to Treat forms signed   | Investigating SW  |
| Writing the J/D report  | CI SW   |
| Participate in warm-hand off case transfer meeting  | All SWs/PSS who have been involved with referral/case (ER, CI, VS, consulting CS)   |
| Contact family within 5 business days of receiving case   | CI and Case Carrying SW (VS or CS)  |

**Links for related policies**

- ER - Investigations
- Court Intervention Procedures
- Petitions – General Information
- Voluntary Services
- Open Case Investigations

---

**Alignment with SET**

This policy aligns with [Value 1](#) by valuing Family Centered Meetings, identifying family support systems, and partnering with families when creating plans.

This policy aligns with [Value 6](#) by providing structure for a proactive workplace culture of responsiveness and shared responsibility, appreciating teamwork, and conducting warm hand-offs to help the family and next worker be successful.

---