

Standby After-Hours Investigations

(Revised 03/26/21)

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Forms

The following forms are referenced in this file:

- 04-06 Standby Investigation Summary
- 04-277 SDM Safety Plan
- 04-277arabic SDM Safety Plan (Arabic)
- 04-277sp SDM Safety Plan (Spanish)
- 04-277a Substitute Care Provider (SCP) Safety Plan
- 04-277asp Substitute Care Provider (SCP) Safety Plan (Spanish)

Policy

The Child Abuse Hotline will maintain a pool of Standby staff assigned to be on-call after normal business hours to investigate immediate response (IRS) referrals determined by a PSS to necessitate an immediate in-person investigation.

Standby hours of operation are:

- Weekdays: 4:00pm – 11:00pm
- Weekends and Holidays: 8:00am – 11:00pm

Standby SWs must have a minimum of 1 year of service with CWS and/or must demonstrate all required competencies and have standard or above standard performance evaluations to participate in IRS Standby.

Standby SWs will review and follow all applicable policies and procedures, including those related to Emergency Response investigations.

**Procedures for IRS
Referrals Received
After-Hours**

Procedures to follow for IRS referrals received after-hours:

STEPS	WHO	PROCEDURES
1	Hotline Screener	Consult with a Standby PSS on any immediate (24-hr) response referral that cannot be assigned by 4:00pm on a regular business day or on any weekend/holiday.
2	Standby PSS	<p>Standby PSS will evaluate IRS referrals received during Standby hours of operation to determine if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The referral meets criteria for Standby assignment. • An immediate in-person response is warranted to assign a Standby SW. <p>If an immediate in-person response is warranted, then the Standby PSS will assign a Standby SW accordingly.</p> <p>NOTE: Dependent on staff availability, Standby PSSs have discretion to accept a referral for Standby to investigate.</p>
3	Standby SW	<p>Standby SW will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate referrals assigned to them. • Review and follow Standby SW expectations as well as all applicable Emergency Response policies and procedures. • Consult with the assigned Standby PSS about the investigation and all allegations throughout the entire investigation and prior to leaving the field. <p>NOTE: If a disagreement exists between the Standby SW and the Standby PSS about removal or other referral management decisions, an additional Standby PSS/ CWS Manager should be consulted if unable to come to consensus.</p>

Criteria for Standby Assignment

The criteria for Standby IRS assignment include the following situations:

- Child is alleged to be in imminent danger of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- PSS determines an immediate in-person response is warranted and that the child may need immediate protection.
- Region is requesting Standby assistance (see Regions Requesting Standby Assistance below).

If a Standby SW is unable to make contact with a family after reasonable efforts, the Standby SW will contact the Standby PSS who will make a decision about reassigning the referral for continued investigation.

Regions requesting Standby assistance

Regions may request Standby assistance on referrals or cases, including continuing attempts to locate a child/family on an IRS referral or serving a Protective Custody Warrant (PCW) after ordered by a judge. The following table outlines steps for requesting assistance from Standby.

Step	Who	What
1	Regional SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make reasonable attempts to locate the family. <p>NOTE: Reasonable attempts includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least 3 in-person attempts at the home, including at least one attempt after 4pm if region received a referral at 4:00pm.• Searching databases such as CWS/CMS, ConnectWellSD, and Eligibility for additional addresses and making in-person attempts at those locations.• Contacting the RP for additional information to locate the family.• Contacting relatives and collaterals for additional information to locate the family, if appropriate depending on the nature of the allegations.• Review information in prior referrals for additional information to locate the family.• Calling all phone numbers available for the parent(s), if appropriate depending on the nature of the allegations.
2	Regional PSS	Contact Standby PSS to discuss request for assistance.

**Regions requesting
Standby assistance
(cont.)**

Step	Who	What
3	Standby PSS	<p>Have reasonable attempts to locate the family and child(ren) been made?</p> <p>If NO, go to Step 4. If YES, go to Step 5.</p>
4	Standby PSS and Regional PSS	Discuss additional attempts regional SW will make before Standby assistance may be provided.
5	Standby PSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine if Standby has staff capacity to accept referral. • Assign referral to a standby worker.
6	Regional PSS	Instruct Regional SW that Standby will provide ongoing assistance.
7	Regional SW	<p>Provide Standby PSS with the following information via email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses and times of day when in-person attempts have been made and the outcome of those attempts • Phone numbers that have been tried and the outcome • Contact information for collateral sources • Any identified safety threats for SW safety, including potential need for law enforcement • Photographs or a physical description of each child and parent, if available • A scanned copy of the signed PCW, including all children's names, if requesting assistance with a PCW • Potential identified placement options, including names, addresses phone numbers and relationships, if child will be brought into protective custody • Any special needs known about the child • Contacts and any safety plan imported in CWS/CMS for Standby PSS and Standby SW to review, as applicable.

Regions requesting
Standby assistance
(cont.)

Step	Who	What
8	Regional SW and/or Regional PSS	Provide Standby PSS contact information for Regional SW and/or PSS if consultation or additional information is required.
9	Standby SW	<p>Standby SW will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate referrals assigned to them.• Review and follow Standby SW expectations as well as all applicable Emergency Response policies and procedures.• Consult with the assigned Standby PSS about the investigation and all allegations throughout the entire investigation and prior to leaving the field. <p>NOTE: If a disagreement exists between the Standby SW and the Standby PSS about removal or other referral management decisions, an additional Standby PSS/ CWS Manager should be consulted if unable to come to consensus.</p>

Standby SW
expectations

Standby SWs are required to:

- Report to Standby PSS at the beginning of their Standby shift. Standby SWs begin their Standby shift immediately upon the completion of their regularly scheduled daytime shift (during the week this may range from 4:00pm-6:30pm depending on the SW's regular schedule). On weekends and holidays the Standby SW shift begins at 8:00 am. The Standby SW is on-call until 11:00pm, but an investigation may last beyond scheduled hours.

NOTE: Any Standby SW who wishes to change their schedule once it has been posted must arrange for a replacement from the authorized list. This replacement must meet the necessary requirements of the program (e.g., Spanish-speaking). Consult with Standby PSS and receive approval for changes to ensure appropriate coverage.

- Accept and investigate all referrals assigned to them during the assigned shift.

NOTE: Staff may be assigned multiple referrals in a shift as determined by the standby supervisor.

Standby SW expectations (cont.)

- If a family has been identified as a Native American family from one of our local 17 federally recognized tribes, the SW will contact local tribal representatives to coordinate an investigation and follow specific policies surrounding investigations and ICWA; please see the Protocol for Working with Indian Families, Children and Tribes for more information. If the tribal representative is unavailable or does not respond the SW will continue with the investigation.
- Carry working cellular phones/laptops at all times during their assigned shift. Standby SWs must be prepared with all necessary equipment/paperwork necessary for serving a family during an investigation and for exigent removals.
- Complete all necessary paperwork and CWS/CMS entries (including contacts) during their standby shift. All documentation must be completed by 9:00am the following day, unless prior arrangements are made with the Standby PSS.
- Review and follow all applicable policies and procedures related to Emergency Response and all other pertinent investigation protocols.
- Attempt to have face-to-face contact with all children alleged to be abused, neglected, or exploited, and with all parent(s)/guardian(s) who have access to the child(ren) on a Standby investigation, or document all efforts to locate and interview.
- If applicable, make collateral contact with persons having knowledge of the family, or document all efforts or no efforts to make contact.
- Attend quarterly Standby Meetings.

Unable to locate a parent and/or family

The Standby SW must make reasonable efforts to locate the family. If the SW is unable to locate the family, the SW will fill out the standby transfer summary form and enter contacts. (as applicable, collaterals, attempts, etc.).

Reasonable efforts to locate a family include:

- Attempting three in-person home visits as time permits, AND
- Attempting three telephone contacts at different times of the day as time permits. If the referral alleges family violence, consult with the PSS to consider if it's safe to call prior to making the call and/or if a welfare check is needed.

NOTE: Standby worker and PSS will consult to determine the amount of attempts necessary during the timeframe and to discuss if a welfare check is warranted.

Safety Networks/Collaterals

Standby is not required to complete a genogram/ecomap, however, the worker will explore the family's current or potential safety networks. The Standby SW will include information gathered during the investigation on the standby investigation summary form.

Collateral/Support Network to include:

- Name
 - Relationship to child, parent(s), or family
 - Contact information
 - Any information that workers should be aware of.
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Transfer of Referral to Region After Standby Investigation is Completed

Prior to a Standby referral being transferred to region, the following must be completed:

Step	Who	Action
1	Standby SW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete SDM safety assessment(s) for all referrals investigated. <p>NOTE: A Risk Assessment is not required during a Standby Investigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete all documentation required during Standby Investigation. Submit documentation to a Hotline/Standby PSS for approval by 9:00 am the following business day, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Standby PSS. This includes a clear and detailed Standby Investigation Summary, and, if applicable, scan and upload the signed Safety Plan (04-277) in CWS/CMS then mail original Safety Plan via county mail to Standby PSS, who will sign and forward to Regional SW for their files <p>NOTE: Protective Services Supervisors are authorized to sign safety plans electronically.</p>
2	Standby PSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the required documents in CWS/CMS and approve. Send the referral electronically to the region's assignment desk on the next business day within the 2-hour timeline to continue the investigation.
3	Regional Assignment Desk	Accept the transfer and assign the referral accordingly.
4	Regional PSS	The Regional PSS will review all documentation received from the standby investigation, to include delivered service logs, standby investigation summary, and any uploaded documents and will assign it to the regional worker accordingly.

**Transfer of Referral
to Region After
Standby Investigation
is Completed (cont.)**

Step	Who	Action
5	Regional SW	<p>Review standby investigation, to include delivered service log, standby investigation summary, and any uploaded documents, prior to contacting the family. After all documents have been reviewed, the regional worker may contact the Standby worker for additional questions as necessary.</p> <p>NOTE: Regional worker will not modify the standby Investigation summary (04-06). The Regional worker will complete the investigation narrative (04-2).</p>

NOTE: The role of the standby worker is completed once the referral has been reviewed and approved by the standby PSS. However, the assigned standby worker will be available to answer questions as necessary.

Alignment with SET

This policy supports [SET Value 1](#) by focusing on how abuse/neglect may impact the child/youth, [SET Value 3](#) by prioritizing children remaining safe in their own home, and [SET Value 6](#) by demonstrating a workplace culture of responsiveness and shared responsibility.
