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Date: October 1, 2021
To: DCS Child Welfare Staff
From: Terry Stigdon, Director
Sarah Sailors, Deputy Director of Field Operations
Subject: Coordination with Military, Federal, and Law Enforcement Agencies
DCS-21-16

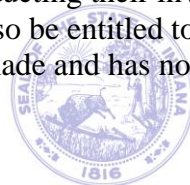
This Administrative Letter provides guidance regarding information sharing and cooperation between the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS), the Indiana National Guard (National Guard), the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA).

Information Sharing Between DCS and National Guard, DOD, HHS, or LEA

- The military base or post commander will designate a central point of contact (POC) for DCS regarding requests for information and coordination of DCS activity on the military installation. Likewise, the National Guard, DOD, DHS, and HHS may request information from DCS regarding military personnel and their families and their involvement with DCS or information from DCS regarding refugee or humanitarian parolee (“parolee”) families housed on a military installation.

Note: Designated POCs will be communicated to all DCS Family Case Managers (FCMs) assigned to or covering a DCS office that responds to allegations of Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) on a military installation. Communication will occur via email and by posting the information in the local DCS office.

- In the event that a military family has DCS involvement off-base, the FCM shall confer with the DCS Staff Attorney to determine who should be notified of the involvement.
- DOD and military law enforcement authorities have legal authority to perform criminal investigations into allegations of CA/N which occur on a military installation and/or involve refugees/parolees housed on a military installation and/or military personnel. Therefore, DCS may share case-related information with those entities if such information is necessary for conducting their investigation. In some situations, the National Guard and HHS may also be entitled to case-related information under [IC 31-33-18-2\(6\)](#). If such a request is made and has not already been approved, the FCM shall



contact their LOD and the chief counsel of their region to confirm whether the requested information may be provided.

- DCS will continue to share information with local LEA pursuant to [IC 31-33-18, et seq.](#) and with other agencies and individuals as outlined in policy [2.06 Sharing Confidential Information](#).

Required Notification to Point of Contact

- The FCM will notify the military installation POC prior to responding to an on-base report, or, if not practical, as soon as possible thereafter.
- An FCM responding to allegations of CA/N, involving a refugee/parolee family who is housed on a military installation or military family, where the alleged CA/N did not occur on the military installation, shall notify the military installation POC of the incident as soon as possible after becoming aware that the allegation pertains to a refugee/parolee family housed on a military installation or a military family.

Note: Designated POCs will be communicated to all FCMs assigned to or covering a DCS office that responds to allegations of CA/N on a military installation.

Communication will occur via email and by posting the information in the local DCS office. In the event that a military family has DCS involvement off-base, the FCM shall confer with a DCS local office attorney to determine who should be notified of the involvement.

Child Safety, Safety Planning, and Transportation of a Military or Refugee/Parolee Child

- If a child who resides on a military installation as part of a military or refugee/parolee family is temporarily taken from the military installation for an evaluation, forensic interview, or other assessment or case related activity, the child shall be returned to the military installation unless safety cannot be ensured through thorough safety planning. Safety may be ensured by installation personnel making individual arrangements with families in order to protect children from their alleged perpetrators. See policy [4.19 Safety Planning](#) for additional information regarding safety planning.
- FCMs and other DCS personnel shall not transport a refugee/parolee child for whom custody (i.e., Child in Need of Services [CHINS]) has not been ordered to DCS by the court. Transportation will be arranged by the POC at the military installation (or their designee) and an interpreter will also be provided by the military installation POC (or their designee) as needed.
- If a child's safety cannot be ensured on the installation, the FCM should contact the LOD prior to proceeding with requirements outlined in policies [2.22 International and Cultural Affairs Services](#), [4.03 Conducting the Assessment](#), and [5.03 Engaging the Family](#).

Collaboration Between DCS, Military Authorities, and LEA

- DCS will update the military installation POC as requested regarding assessments and cases involving a military family or refugee/parolee family who is housed on a military installation. A representative of DOD, DHS, and/or HHS shall be invited to all Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings and case plan conferences. See policies [5.07 Child and](#)



[Family Team \(CFT\) Meetings](#) and [5.08 Developing the Case Plan/Prevention Plan](#) for additional information regarding these meetings.

- The National Guard, DOD, and HHS will provide documentation of any relevant interviews and investigations to DCS. DCS will not intentionally duplicate investigatory work done by the National Guard, DOD, or HHS.
- DCS will collaborate with local LEA as outlined in policy [4.29 Joint Assessments](#) when LEA is involved in an assessment regarding a military family or refugee/parolee family housed on a military installation.

DCS Case Closure and Military or Refugee/Parolee Transfer Notifications

- Prior to closing an assessment, Child in Need of Services (CHINS) case, or Informal Adjustment (IA) for a military family or refugee/parolee family who is housed on a military installation, the FCM will notify the military installation POC of the agency's intent to close the assessment or case. Notification should occur two (2) business days prior to case closure when possible. If a case is closed by the court without an initiating closure request by DCS, the FCM shall notify the military installation POC within two (2) business days. See policies [5.09 Informal Adjustment/Prevention Plan \(IA\)](#) and [5.12 Closing a CHINS Case](#) for additional requirements.
- The POC will advise DCS and provide DCS with all vital information when a military employee or military employee's family, or a refugee/parolee or a refugee/parolee's family is to be relocated, reassigned, resettled, or discharged while they are the subject of or a party to an active DCS assessment, CHINS case, or IA. The POC will provide this information to DCS at least one (1) week prior to the relocation, reassignment, resettlement, or discharge.

Designation of Military Installation Liaison

- A Regional Manager (RM) who is responsible for a county which borders a military installation, or the RM's designee, is responsible for serving as a liaison and a resource to the military installation, as needed, with any issues which may arise.

Any questions should be directed to your local office management.

Sincerely,



Terry J. Stigdon, MSN, RN, Director



Sarah Sailors, Deputy Director of Field Operations

