

**Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services  
(CCDCFS)  
Policy Statement**

**Policy Chapter:** Referrals  
**Policy Number:** 2.01.09  
**Policy Name:** Courtesy Supervision and Joint Investigations

**Original Effective Date:** 10/30/1999  
**Revision Date(s):** 07/01/2019, 05/01/2016, 05/01/2013, 11/02/1998  
**Current Revision Date:** 07/01/2022  
**Approved By:** Cynthia G. Weiskittel

**PURPOSE:** To outline requirements of Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services (CCDCFS) staff when responding to requests for a home study, courtesy supervision, or joint investigations coming from another county's Public Children's Services Agency (PCSA). This policy also outlines CCDCFS staff's responsibilities when making similar requests/referrals to another PCSA agency - regarding both intrastate (non-contiguous counties within Ohio) and interstate (between two states).

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to all Direct Service, Hotline, and Out of Town Investigation/Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (OTI/ICPC) staff.

**POLICY**

CCDCFS works cooperatively with other PCSAs when there is a need for collaboration in placement approval, courtesy supervision, and/or investigation. It is in the best interest of children to respond timely to any request/referral from another state or county. Child safety is best achieved through active, collaborative, and respectful engagement of parents, family, community partners, agency stakeholders, and all other child protective agencies within and outside the state.

- I. A home study evaluation is requested when:
  - A. CCDCFS holds custody or court jurisdiction and seeks to place a child in a non-contiguous county,
  - B. A non-contiguous PCSA contacts the CCDCFS hotline seeking to place a child in their custody or court jurisdiction into Cuyahoga County,
  - C. A court sends an inquiry to CCDCFS with specific requirements,
  - D. CCDCFS or another PCSA in another state has custody of a child(ren) and seeks to place into another state with parents, relatives or a licensed/approved foster or adoptive home,
  - E. CCDCFS or another PCSA in another state has custody of a child(ren) and seeks to place with a parent from whom the child(ren) were not removed from.

- II. Courtesy supervision is requested when:
  - A. Another Ohio PCSA places a child into Cuyahoga County, the Ohio PCSA holding custody can request supportive services for the child; however, monthly visits and contact must be made by the sending Ohio PCSA who has full responsibility over the case planning and case management of the child's case.
  
- III. A joint investigation is requested when:
  - A. CCDCFS screens in a report and parties who need to be interviewed who reside outside of Cuyahoga County.
  - B. Non-contiguous PCSA requests interviews with parties residing in Cuyahoga County.
  
- IV. Lead agency is defined as the PCSA of the county or state where the child's parent/custodian resides.

## **PROCEDURES**

- I. Requests for Home Study and/or Courtesy Supervision
  - A. When CCDCFS has custody and wants to place a child in a county within the State of Ohio:
    - 1. Worker of record (WOR) consults with supervisor prior to pursuing placement in another county.
    - 2. WOR contacts the non-custodial PCSA and requests that county to complete a courtesy home study assessment. All pertinent case information, including social history and court documentation, shall be provided to the non-custodial PCSA. If the request is made verbally via contacting the non-custodial PCSA hotline, a written request on CCDCFS letterhead is sent immediately.
    - 3. Written home study approval from the non-custodial PCSA must be received and reviewed by CCDCFS WOR and supervisor prior to placing child(ren). All other placement requirements must be fulfilled prior to placement.
    - 4. If placement in the other county occurs, CCDCFS may also request the non-custodial PCSA to provide supportive services; however, monthly visits and contact must be made by CCDCFS as our agency has full responsibility in providing and overseeing case planning and case management services of the child's case. CCDCFS continues to be responsible for all Team Decision Making Meetings (TDMs), court proceedings, and communicating all case updates to the other PCSA.
  
  - B. When a custodial PCSA has custody and requests to place a child(ren) in Cuyahoga County, the following procedures applies:
    - 1. If the custodial PCSA has custody or court jurisdiction, the home study request is forwarded to the Kinship Caregiver Approval Resource & Assessment Unit (KCAR).

2. The KCAR unit shall request the custodial PCSA to provide all pertinent case information, including a social history of child along with any other relevant information and court jurisdiction confirmation.
  3. If the custodial PCSA places a child in Cuyahoga County, the KCAR unit can suggest supportive services. Monthly visits and contact must be made by the custodial PCSA who has full responsibility over the case planning and case management services of the child's case.
- C. When CCDCFS has custody of a child(ren) and seeks to place into another state with parents, relatives or a licensed/approved foster or adoptive home, an ICPC home study request is required. ICPC regulations and procedures shall be followed when placing a child(ren) who are in Cuyahoga's County's custody into another state.
- D. When CCDCFS has custody of a child(ren) and seeks to place with a non-custodial or non-residential parent and the parent resides in another county within the State of Ohio or in another state, a courtesy home study request can be requested:
1. CCDCFS contacts the local PCSA in the other county/state and initiates a request for that PCSA to complete a courtesy home study assessment, highlighting that the request is for a home study with a non-custodial or non-residential parent. CCDCFS provides all pertinent case information, including social history and court documentation with jurisdiction. If the request is made verbally via contacting the other county's PCSA hotline, a written request on CCDCFS letterhead must be sent immediately. PCSA's are not required to accept a courtesy home study request.
  2. If the courtesy request is not accepted by an out-of-state PCSA, and a home study is needed, CCDCFS must submit the ICPC home study request in accordance with all ICPC regulations and procedures.
  3. The written home study approval from the other PCSA must be received and reviewed by the CCDCFS WOR, Supervisor and Senior Supervisor prior to placing child(ren) into another state.
  4. If a courtesy parent assessment has been requested and results have been received from an out-of-state PCSA, upon placement, supervision services are not provided and there are no ICPC protections or oversight.
- II. Requests for Joint Investigation/Courtesy Interviews
- A. When CCDCFS receives a report from another PCSA regarding either:
- a) an incident of CA/N which occurred in Cuyahoga County or
  - b) a request for a required non-lead PCSA interview (when involved children are residents of another county or state), the following procedures apply:
1. The report is screened in according to SACWIS rules along with agency and state screening guideline(s).

2. If the report involves principals who resides in another county, CCDCFS requests the other county or state's PCSA to conduct needed interviews for the joint investigation.
  3. If the referral alleges a criminal offense, a referral to law enforcement agency is also made.
- B. When another county's PCSA has been determined to be the lead agency with respect to the investigation of report and that PCSA contacts CCDCFS, the following procedures apply:
1. CCDCFS completes interviews with the involved parties, witnesses, and any collateral sources residing in Cuyahoga County within forty-five days of the report.
  2. CCDCFS contacts the other county's PCSA and shares the assessment/investigation findings and documents all appropriate activity logs in SACWIS. CCDCFS indicates if services are needed or have been provided.
- C. If CCDCFS receives a report and determines the child and his/her legal guardian resides or moved to a non-contiguous county, CCDCFS completes an intrastate referral to a non-contiguous county's PCSA:
1. CCDCFS supervisor contacts the other county's SACWIS transfer administrator to determine if the other county is willing to accept the referral. If other county agrees then:
    - a) CCDCFS contacts other PCSA by phone immediately, if an emergency exists on the case. If an emergency does not exist on the case, CCDCFS contacts other PCSA within 24 hours of receipt of the report.
    - b) CCDCFS SACWIS Administrator transfers case to the other PCSA.
  2. If the case transfer is accepted, the receiving PCSA becomes the lead agency and is now responsible for the completion of the report activities including all investigative components, arriving at a disposition (if applicable) and case decision.
  3. If the case transfer is not accepted, CCDCFS remains the lead agency and retains responsibility for the completion of the report, including requests for required non-lead interviews.
- D. If CCDCFS receives a report of alleged abuse or neglect and determines the child and his/her legal guardian resides or moved to another state, then CCDCFS completes an interstate report to the other state:
1. If an emergency exists on the report, CCDCFS contacts other state's PCSA by phone upon notification. Within three working days of the telephone report, CCDCFS follows up with a written report to other state's PCSA.
  2. If an emergency does not exist on the case, CCDCFS contacts other state's PCSA within 24 hours. Within three working days of the telephone report, CCDCFS follows up with a written report to other state's PCSA. The report includes (but not limited to):

- a) all available identifying information on the child, his/her parent or guardian, including names, dates of birth, ages, and social security numbers,
- b) the child, his or her parent or legal guardian and other involved persons' relationships to each other,
- c) location, including address of the child and his or her parent or legal guardian,
- d) summary of CCDCFS involvement with child, parent/legal guardian and current case status, and copy of any CAPMIS tools.

**SEE ALSO:**

- **Ohio Administrative Codes:**

Section 5101:2-36 Screening and Investigation

Section 5101:2-37 Assessments

Section 5101:2-38 Case Planning and Reviews

Section 5101:2-39 Removals

Section 5101:2-40 Supportive Services

Section 5101:2-42 Substitute Care

Section 5101:2-42-65 Caseworker Visits and Contacts with Children in Substitute Care

Section 5101:2-52 Interstate Placement of Children

## EXAMPLES

- 1) Child runs away to Cuyahoga County and custodial parent lives in another non-contiguous county. *CCDCFS interviews child for abuse and neglect and share findings with PCSA in other county. The other PCSA is the lead agency.*
- 2) Child is abused or neglected in another county, and the custodial parent (whose legal residence is in Cuyahoga County) is unable to care for the child due to being incarcerated or otherwise not available. *CCDCFS is the lead agency since Cuyahoga County is where the custodial parent has residence.*
- 3) Child is found in a parking lot in Cleveland and parents' whereabouts are not known at this time. *CCDCFS is the lead agency since the child is located in Cuyahoga County.*
- 4) Divorced parents hold joint custody of child and live in non-contiguous counties. *The county where child resides majority of the time is the lead agency, if school aged, school residence is used.*
- 5) Custodial parent (residing in Cuyahoga County) passes away or location unknown and the non-custodial parent lives in another non-contiguous county. *CCDCFS is the lead agency and contacts the PCSA in the county where the non-custodial parent is located and formulates a plan in best interest of child.*
- 6) Custodial parent from another county leaves the child in care of person in Cuyahoga County. However, this person no longer wants the child. *Lead county is where the custodial parent resides. CCDCFS informs other county of the situation. CCDCFS would be responsible for interviewing all parties in Cuyahoga County and other county would be responsible for full investigation.*