

<b>Procedure Name:</b>	INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES
<b>Relevant Policy:</b>	NONE
<b>Domain:</b>	Operations
<b>Policy Location:</b>	S:\POLICIES & PROCEDURES\Operations\Foster Care\INVESTIGATIONPROCEDURES
<b>Approved By:</b>	Tita Yutuc, LCSW, Chief Operating Officer
<b>Effective Date:</b>	01/26/2013
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<b>References:</b>	

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for the actions to be taken in the event a serious allegation is made against an SOS Professional Foster Parent, Relief Parent, Significant Other or other adult residing within the Professional Foster Parent's home, as well as any employee of SOS Children's Villages Illinois with respect to a child in the Village. These guidelines are designed to protect the children and the reputations of all involved during the investigation. The Professional Foster Parent and/or Relief Parent will be supported accordingly based on the findings. It is important to note that the following procedures are internal to SOS Children's Villages Illinois and that DCFS may run their own investigation concurrently.

## AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Director of Programs and Services and Licensing Supervisor are responsible for ensuring that the investigation procedure is followed. The Chief Operating Officer oversees the administrators listed above.

## PROCEDURE

1. The following Procedures go into effect whenever an allegation against a Professional Foster Parent, Relief Parent, Significant Other or other adult residing within the Professional Foster Parent's home, as well as any employee of SOS Children's Villages Illinois is made that has warranted a hotline call into DCFS and/or a Licensing Complaint Investigation.
2. There are three levels of seriousness outlined below. The Director of Programs and Services is responsible for making a recommendation to the Chief Operating Officer regarding the appropriate level immediately upon making a hotline call. The Chief Operating Officer will consult with Human Resources and the Chief Executive Officer as necessary prior to making the final determination.
  - A) **Level 1**  
Egregious Allegations (e.g., visible cuts, bruises, welts, witnesses to abuse/neglect of child (ren) or confessing to using corporal punishment)

- Professional Foster Parent immediate removal from home. Relief Parent and/or any employee of SOS Children's Villages Illinois will not be allowed to work within the Village. If it is a significant other or another adult residing within the Professional Foster Parent's home, they will be asked to leave the home during the course of the investigation and until a determination is made.
- Suspension without pay until investigation has been closed
- Supervision with Director of Program and Services within 24 hours
- Weekly meetings and safety plan with Director of Programs and Services and Clinical (this includes Professional Foster Parent and Child, if applicable)
- Professional Foster Parent Parenting Assessment (required)
- SOS Children's Villages Illinois investigation initiated which could take up to 60 days. Such investigation may also result in termination within those 60 days.

**B) Level 2**

Multiple past unfounded allegations within the past five years

- 72-hour "separation period" in which a Professional Foster Parent will be removed from the SOS home or will stay in the SOS home with relief parents if warranted (this will be determined on a case-by-case basis). If warranted, a Relief Parent will not be able to work within that specific home for the 72-hour "separation period". A significant other or another adult residing within the Professional Foster Parent's home, will be asked to leave the home for the 72-hour "separation period".
- After the 72-hour "separation period," if warranted a Professional Foster Parent may be suspended and required to leave the Village premises. If suspended, the suspension will be without pay until the investigation has been closed. The Professional Foster Parent is expected to make him/herself available, minimally via phone even if suspended so as to cooperate with the ongoing investigation.
- Supervision with Director of Program and Services within 24 hours .
- Mandatory weekly meetings and safety plan with Director of Programs and Services and Clinical (this includes Professional Foster Parent and Child).
- Announced and unannounced increased home monitoring for up to 60 days.
- Professional Foster Parent Parenting Assessment (required).
- SOS Children's Villages Illinois investigation initiated which could take up to 60 days. Such investigation may also result in termination within those 60 days.

**C) Level 3**

First allegation (dependent upon severity of allegation and safety concern as defined by the Director of Programs and Services)

- 72-hour "separation period in which a Professional Foster Parent will be removed from the SOS home or will stay in the SOS home with relief parents if warranted (this will be determined on a case-by-case basis). If warranted, a Relief Parent will not be able to work within that specific home for the 72-hour "separation period". A significant other

or another adult residing within the Professional Foster Parent's home, will be asked to leave the home for the 72-hour "separation period".

- No suspension; pay will continue.
  - Supervision with Director of Program and Services within 24 hours.
  - Mandatory weekly meetings and safety plan with Director of Programs and Services and Clinical (this includes Professional Foster Parent and Child).
  - Announced and unannounced increased home monitoring up to 60 days.
  - Professional Foster Parent Parenting Assessment (required).
  - SOS Children's Villages Illinois investigation initiated which could take up to 60 days. Such investigation may also result in termination within those 60 days.
3. The Agency will determine the continuation of employment of the Professional Foster Parent, Relief Parent and/or any employee of SOS Children's Villages Illinois regardless of a DCFS finding of "unfounded." Professional Foster Parent's, Relief Parent's and/or any employee of SOS Children's Villages Illinois entire work history will be reviewed and a determination of continued employment will be made.
  4. A Parenting Stress Index Assessment is administered by an outsourced third part, if a call is accepted by the DCFS Hotline. If the call is taken as informational only, a Parenting Stress Index Assessment may not be necessary and will be determined if needed through the internal investigation. If the call is accepted, then the evaluation is mandatory if continued employment is desired. A Professional Foster Parent and/or Relief Parent are required to schedule the Parenting Stress Index Assessment within one week of the incident. The Assessment must be completed within two weeks of the incident, so that the report is completed within 30 days. Additionally, if allegations are made against a significant other or another adult residing within the Professional Foster Parent's home, that person may also be asked to participate in the Parenting Stress Index Assessment.
  5. None of the aforementioned levels may apply and employment may be terminated immediately as determined by the Chief Executive Officer.
  6. Depending on the severity of the offense, and at the discretion of SOS Children's Villages Illinois, the Professional Foster Parent will be placed on a one year performance improvement plan regardless of level.
  7. If suspension without pay is warranted and investigation results are unfounded by DCFS and/or SOS Children's Villages Illinois, a review for reinstatement of wages will occur. If reinstatement of wages is approved, then said wages will be retroactive on the proceeding pay period. However, reinstatement of retroactive wages is also contingent upon the Professional Foster Parent being cooperative with the DCP investigation and concurrent or subsequent Licensing Investigation and compliance with the required services and recommendations. As well, it is not limited to, mandatory Professional

Foster Parent Parenting Assessment, staffings, and meetings during the investigation process.

8. Hotline Calls taken as informational only, will typically be turned over to licensing to be internally reviewed and/or investigated. It is important to note that it will be internally investigated by the most immediate supervisor in consultation with the director of the identified village.
9. Investigation Documentation & Tracking
  - A) Step 1:** The UIR reflects the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline is called and when the call is received for an investigation to begin. The Child Welfare Supervisor is responsible for reporting results on the disposition of the UIR and checking the immediate actions taken checklist for completeness and accuracy.
  - B) Step 2:** The Child Welfare Supervisor receives written notification from DCFS that indicates whether a call is accepted or not. A Child Abuse & Neglect Report is issued for calls that are accepted; a written Information Only Report is generated if the call is rejected. The Child Welfare Supervisor forwards these reports to:
    - i. Chief Operating Officer
    - ii. Quality Improvement,
    - iii. Child Welfare Specialist
    - iv. Clinical Director
    - v. Licensing Supervisor
    - vi. Director of Programs and Services
    - vii. Assistant Director.
  - C) Step 3:** Information Only Reports are to be forwarded to the Licensing Supervisor for further review with the foster parent regarding the allegations. Investigations regarding other employees (excluding foster parents) will be conducted by DCFS Agencies and Institutions. All investigations will be conducted in accordance with the Investigation Policy.
  - D) Step 4:** Investigations are conducted within 60 days of the received allegations from DCFS. Extensions can be requested for any investigation with approval from DCFS and the Licensing Supervisor.
  - E) Step 5:** Written notification documenting the findings of all hotline calls resulting in an investigation are given to the employee who is the subject of the investigation, the person who made the initial hotline call, and the original recipients of the Child Abuse & Neglect Report/Information Only Report.
  - F) Step 6:** Final documentation and findings of hotline call investigations are approved by DCFS Agencies and Institutions and tracked by the SOS Children's Villages Illinois Licensing Supervisor.



# INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

## GETTING HELP

Any questions or additional assistance should be referred to the Directors of Programs and Services.