

Huron County
Child Abuse and Neglect
Memorandum of Understanding

FOREWORD

Children's protective services is a term used to describe a wide range of social services coordinated and delivered on behalf of children who have been or are in danger of becoming abused, neglected, or dependent.

The primary goal of protective services is to guard or shield children from adverse conditions that jeopardize their health and development. Children's protective services have a dual set of objectives:

- 1.) To protect the child, and
- 2.) To preserve the family

These objectives can be accomplished by providing services to families and children in their own home with parents maintaining the responsibility of nurturing and protecting the children. However, when this is not possible, it may be necessary to seek removal of the child from his/her own home on a temporary basis and provide placement services.

The goal of protection reflects society's commitment to respect both the rights of children and the rights of parents. There are several basic rights, which include the following:

- 1.) That abuse, neglect, and family dysfunction are symptomatic of the results of certain parental, social, and situational inadequacies or stressors;
- 2.) That each child has a right to adequate care and a stake in maintaining a continuing relationship with his/her birth family.
- 3.) That society has a vested interest in its children, and therefore, a responsibility to provide for a system of identifying and protecting children;
- 4.) That families have the right to know of the community's expressed concerns, to be advised of the agency's responsibility, to obtain legal counsel, and to retain legal rights and custody by court decree; and
- 5.) That parents have the right to know the community's expectations regarding minimum acceptable childcare.

The effects of neglect, abuse, and dependency are such that the protective service agency has both the right and responsibility to intervene on behalf of children reported to be in jeopardy. These responsibilities are well established under Ohio Law.

Those persons subscribing to this plan hereby recognize that the handling of child abuse and neglect problems requires the involvement of multiple agencies and disciplines, aimed at the protection of the child victim along with treatment of the perpetrator, even to include prosecution when necessary. They also recognize the need to maintain family unity when feasible with primary regard given to the feelings and well-being of the involved children.

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I. Introduction

This Huron County Memorandum of Understanding was developed in accordance with (1) Ohio Revised Code Section 2151.4221, which defines the reporting of child abuse and neglect and provides for a memorandum of understanding between legal professionals and organizations concerned with this social problem, and (2) Ohio Administrative Code Section 5101:2-33-26, which mandates the execution of this Memorandum.

A. Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum is to effectively address the need to protect children in Huron County, and to define the issues and concerns involved in doing so. These are identified as follows:

- 1.) To provide protection, aid and treatment to the victims of child abuse and neglect and their caretakers;
- 2.) To ensure the prompt reporting of incidents of suspected child abuse and neglect.
- 3.) To bring about prosecution and/or treatment of the perpetrators of child abuse and neglect;
- 4.) To establish the normal operating procedures to be employed by the participants of this Memorandum;
- 5.) To identify the responsibilities of the participants of this Memorandum; and
- 6.) To set forth the guidelines utilized by the Huron County Child Abuse Investigation Team governing the multi-disciplinary investigation, prosecutions and treatment of child abuse and neglect referrals.

B. Goals

The participants of this Memorandum agree to work cooperatively to achieve the following goals:

- 1.) To ensure the prompt reporting of incidents of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect;
- 2.) To conduct timely and thorough investigations of child abuse and neglect referrals in order to protect children;
- 3.) To protect the child and family from further abuse and trauma by elimination of duplication and gaps in efforts by all professionals involved (eliminate unnecessary interviews);

- 4.) To facilitate rapid and successful prosecution of offenders in all areas of child maltreatment;
- 5.) To assure specialized care and services, in a timely manner, to meet the multiple needs of the child and family and to reduce further trauma; and
- 6.) To define the responsibilities and interrelationships among participating agencies with regards to the handling and coordination of child abuse and neglect investigations, prosecution, and treatment.

C. Background Information

1.) Legal Mandate:

The legal mandate for the child abuse and neglect Memorandum of Understanding is contained in Section 2151.4220 of the Ohio Revised Code (Appendix A), which calls for mandated subscribers to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding concerning the handling and coordination of child abuse and neglect cases.

2.) Mandated Subscribers to this Memorandum are:

- Juvenile Court Judge
- Huron County Sheriff
- Norwalk Police Department
- Willard Police Department
- Bellevue Police Department
- Plymouth Police Department
- Greenwich Police Department
- Monroeville Police Department
- Wakeman Police Department
- Milan Police Department
- New London Police Department
- Ohio State Highway Patrol
- Huron County Prosecutor
- Huron County Department of Job and Family Services
- Huron County Children Services Board
- Huron County Humane Society

3.) Failure to follow Memorandum of Understanding

Failure to follow the procedures set forth in the Memorandum by the concerned officials is not grounds for, or shall not result in the dismissal of any charges or complaints arising from and reported cases of abuse or neglect or the suppression of any evidence obtained as a result of any reported child abuse or neglect and does not give, and shall not be constructed as giving, any rights or grounds for appeal or post-conviction relief to any person pursuant to ORC 2151.4223. (ORC 2151.421(E)(1))

4.) Development of Huron County's Child Abuse Investigation Team

The Huron County Child Abuse Investigation Team's (commonly referred to as the, "MDT") mission of the team is to provide a multi-disciplinary approach to investigation and coordination of cases involving allegations of severe physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect against children. Such

cases are often complex, emotionally charged, and hold the potential for the filing of criminal charges. The MDT members are part of the child advocacy center. It is believed that the combined efforts of professionals from various agencies can best address these issues by providing their own unique insights and areas of expertise. The intent of the team is to assure that efforts during the investigative process are consistent and thorough, yet efficient and free of unnecessary duplications of effort.

The team is composed of selected individuals, some of whom are Mandated subscribers to the Memorandum of Understanding, and others whose cooperation is necessary for the successful investigation, prosecution and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) members are from:

- Huron County Department of Job and Family Services
- Huron County Prosecutor's Office
- Huron County Sheriff's Department
- Huron County Police Departments
- Nord Center-Child Advocacy Center

II. Reporting Procedures

A. Mandated Reporters (ORC 2151.421- See Appendix A)

Anyone who is acting in the following official or professional capacities and knows or suspects that a child under eighteen years of age or is mentally retarded, developmentally disabled, or physically impaired under twenty-one years of age, has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the child, shall immediately report that knowledge of suspicion to the public children services agency or municipal or county peace officer in the county in which the child resides or which the abuse or neglect is occurring or has occurred. A mandated reporter is any person who is an:

- 1.) attorney;
- 2.) health care professional;
- 3.) practitioner of a limited branch of medicine as specified in section 4731.15 of the Revised Code;
- 4.) licensed school psychologist;
- 5.) independent marriage and family therapist;
- 6.) marriage and family therapist;
- 7.) coroner;
- 8.) administrator or employee of a child day-care center;
- 9.) administrator or employee of a residential camp, child day camp, or private, nonprofit therapeutic wilderness camp;
- 10.) administrator or employee of a certified child care agency or other public or private children services agency;
- 11.) school teacher;
- 12.) school employee;
- 13.) school authority;
- 14.) peace officer;
- 15.) humane society agent;
- 16.) dog warden;
- 17.) deputy dog warden, or other person appointed to act as an animal control officer for a municipal corporation or township in accordance with state law, an ordinance, or a resolution;
- 18.) person, other than a cleric, rendering spiritual treatment through prayer in accordance with the tenets of a well-recognized religion;
- 19.) employee of a county department of job and family services who is a professional and who works

- with children and families;
- 20.) superintendent or regional administrator employed by the department of youth services;
 - 21.) superintendent, board member, or employee of a county board of developmental disabilities;
 - 22.) investigative agent contracted with by a county board of developmental disabilities;
 - 23.) employee of the department of developmental disabilities;
 - 24.) employee of a facility or home that provides respite care in accordance with section 5123.171 of the Revised Code;
 - 25.) employee of an entity that provides homemaker services;
 - 26.) employee of a qualified organization as defined in section 2151.90 of the Revised Code;
 - 27.) a host family as defined in section 2151.90 of the Revised Code;
 - 28.) foster caregiver;
 - 29.) a person performing the duties of an assessor pursuant to Chapter 3107. or 5103. of the Revised Code;
 - 30.) third party employed by a public children services agency to assist in providing child or family related services;
 - 31.) court appointed special advocate;
 - 32.) or guardian ad litem.

Pursuant of Section 5153.28 of the Ohio Revised Code, boards of township trustees, the superintendent of any county home, and other officers and employees of any county, municipal corporation or other political subdivisions of the state shall make a report to the public children services agency respecting any child in the county coming to their attention, who is deemed to be in need of public care.

Those children who are living in this county in a Domestic Violence or homeless shelter pursuant to agreement with another county will be the responsibility of the county of origin. (Appendix B 2151.422).

B. Voluntary Reporters

Anyone having reason to believe that a child has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or other condition or a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the child, may report or cause reports to be made of that knowledge or suspicion to the public children services agency or to a municipal or county peace officer.

C. Where to Report and What to Report

Reports may be filed with Huron County Department of Job and Family Services, located at 185 Shady Lane Drive, Norwalk, Ohio 44857, phone number (419) 668-8126, or with any law enforcement agency.

The Huron County Department of Job and Family Services has staff available to receive reports by telephone on a 24 hour a day, seven days a week basis. The agency utilizes the Huron County Sheriff's Department as an answering service, after regular business hours, on weekends, and holidays, so that reports can be received. The after-hours number is (419) 668-8126 or (419) 668-5281. Upon the Huron County Sheriff's Office receiving a call regarding any child abuse, neglect, or dependency, they shall immediately notify Huron County Department of Job and Family Services' on-call supervisor at (419) 541-7691 or (419) 541-7689. A caseworker and a supervisor are available during these times to respond to emergency situations. Law enforcement personnel may access staff by dialing the Huron County Department of Job and Family Services after hours number.

The daily hours and after-hours phone numbers are published to the public via the phone book, published

literature by the agency, and in all advertisements.

Reports may be made by telephone, in person, or in writing. (See Appendix C for a copy of the Agency's referral form.) The report shall contain, at a minimum, the following information (ORC 2151.421(C)):

- 1.) The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or the person(s) having custody of the child, if known;
- 2.) The child's age and the nature and extent of the child's known or suspected injuries, abuse, or neglect, or the known or suspected threat of injury abuse or neglect including any previous evidence of previous injuries, abuse or neglect, and;
- 3.) Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the known or suspected injury, abuse or neglect, or of the known or suspected threat of injury, abuse or neglect.

D. Referrals from Law Enforcement to Huron County Children Services

Upon the receipt of a report concerning the possible abuse or neglect of a child or the possible threat of abuse or neglect of a child, the law enforcement officer who received the report shall immediately refer the report to the appropriate public children services agency. It is recommended that law enforcement officers make reports to Huron County Children Services immediately, if the officer believes the child to be at immediate risk of abuse or neglect. Reports of non-life-threatening situations should be made to the phone screener or by fax to Children Services within 24 hours. Any time there is a question as to if the situation warrants a report to Children Services, a call to Children Services should be made. Agency staff will answer questions and inform the reporter if the information warrants agency intervention.

E. Color Photos/X-Rays

Any person, who is required to report child abuse or child neglect that is known or reasonably suspected or believed to have occurred, may take or cause to be taken color photographs of areas of trauma visible on a child and, if medically necessary for the purpose of diagnosing or treating injuries that are suspected to have occurred as a result of child abuse or child neglect, perform or cause to be performed radiological examinations and any other medical examinations of, and tests or procedures on, the child. Any person who is REQUIRED TO REPORT cases of abuse or neglect MAY TAKE OR CAUSE TO BE TAKEN color photographs of the area of trauma visible on a child and, if medically indicated, cause to be performed RADIOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS of the child, without parental consent. Normally, Children Services or law enforcement initiates such procedures when indicated.

F. Information Shared with Mandated Reporters (ORC2151.421)

A person who is required to make a report may request Huron County Children Services to provide the following information:

- 1.) Whether the agency has initiated an investigation of the report;
- 2.) Whether the agency is continuing to investigate the report;
- 3.) Whether the agency is otherwise involved with the child who is the subject of the report;
- 4.) The general status of the health and safety of the child who is the subject of the report; and/or
- 5.) Whether the report has resulted in the filing of a complaint in Juvenile Court or criminal charges in another court.

When an employee of Huron County Children Services Board receives a report, they shall inform the mandated reporter of their rights to request this information by sending a mandated reporter letter (See Appendix D). Any information provided to a mandated reporter shall be documented in the

case record.

G. Confidentiality of Reports/Immunity from Civil or Criminal Liability

Each report of suspected child abuse and neglect is confidential. The information shared with the subscribers of this memorandum of understanding is made available only for the purpose of investigation, treatment or case management of suspected child abuse and neglect (or otherwise deemed to be in the best interest of the child victim or the family).

The information provided in a report and the name of the person who made the report shall not be released for use, and shall not be used, as evidence in any civil action or proceeding brought against the person who made the report. In a criminal proceeding, the report is admissible as evidence in accordance with the Rules of Evidence and is subject to discovery in accordance with the Rules of Criminal Procedure.

No person shall permit or encourage or the unauthorized dissemination of the contents of any report made pursuant to this memorandum of understanding.

The identity of the referral source shall be considered a part of the report. Huron County Children Services Board shall not release or affirm the identity of any party without the referral source's consent, except for the purpose of judicial testimony, if court intervention is deemed necessary to protect the child.

Huron County Children Services will work with the prosecutors to protect the identity of all reporters of child abuse and/or neglect whenever possible. During the intake process, a mandated reporter will be informed he/she might have to testify if the case indicates the need.

Anyone or any organization participating in good faith in the making of reports of possible child abuse or neglect, and anyone participating in good faith in a judicial proceeding resulting from the report, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability (ORC 2151.421(H)(1)(a)).

H. False Reports

A person who knowingly makes or causes another person to make a false report under Division B of section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code that alleges that any person has committed an act or omission that resulted in a child being an abused child or neglected child is guilty of a violation of Section 2921.14 of the Ohio Revised Code. (ORC 2151.421(I)(3) (Appendix E).

I. Unauthorized Dissemination of Information (OAC 5101:2-33-21, Appendix F)

The information received in a report of alleged child abuse or neglect is highly sensitive and should be maintained in confidence. When any person commits, causes, permits or encourages the unauthorized dissemination of information, Huron County Children Services Board shall give written notification of such unauthorized dissemination to the County Prosecutor or City Law Director and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The reporter's identity is confidential and is not to be confirmed or denied. (OAC 5101:2-33-21(D)).

J. Failure to Report

When any mandated reporter fails to report suspected child abuse or neglect as required by section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Children Services Board is required to give written notification to the County Prosecuting Attorney, the appropriate City Law Director, or Village Solicitor.

III. Emergency/Non-Emergency Procedures

Huron County Children Services Board receives reports of alleged child abuse and neglect 24 hours per day, seven days per week. All allegations of abuse and neglect are prioritized as an emergency or non-emergency by using information from the reporter and Agency records, as well as collateral sources when appropriate.

A. Emergency

Huron County Children Services Board shall consider the report an emergency when it's determined that there is imminent risk to the child's safety or there is insufficient information to determine whether or not the child is safe at the time of the report.

For identified emergency reports, an investigation will include attempted face to face contact with the alleged child victim within one hour from the time the referral is screened in, to assess child safety and interview the alleged child victim.

B. Non-Emergency

When the report does not indicate an emergency, Huron County Children Services Board within 24 hours attempt face-to-face contact with an ACV or a phone contact with a principal of the report or collateral source who has knowledge of the alleged child victim's current condition, and can provide current information about the child's safety and wellbeing.

If Huron County Children Services Board has attempted a face to face contact with the alleged child victim and the child was unavailable, attempts will continue according to rule 5101:2-36-03.

IV. Collaborative Efforts between Law Enforcement, Huron County Children Services Board and Other Agencies

In compliance with Ohio Administrative Code Section 5101:2-33-26, procedures for cross referral and sharing information among subscribers are built into this signed Memorandum of Understanding. The signers of this document thereby express a commitment to share information to facilitate the investigation, treatment and/or case management of suspected child abuse or neglect. (Appendix G)

A. Joint Investigation Requirements

1. Initial intervention of child abuse and neglect cases can be made by either the children services agency or the appropriate law enforcement agency; however, any serious report involving injury, hospitalization, or possible removal of a child from the home requires a joint cooperative intervention between the agencies.
2. The following types of cases will always require a joint investigation:
 - a. Those cases requiring a third party involvement;
 - b. Those involving a child death in which abuse or neglect is suspected as a cause;
 - c. Those involving child sexual abuse allegations including human trafficking
 - d. Those involving serious physical abuse or neglect that may result in criminal proceeding;
and
 - e. Those involving alleged withholding of appropriate nutrition, hydration, medication, or

medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life threatening conditions.

3. Upon receipt of a potentially life-threatening child abuse or neglect report, immediate contact between the children services agency, and the appropriate law enforcement agency will be made by telephone or pager to jointly plan the intervention and investigation.
4. In joint investigations, the children services agency and law enforcement will share immediately all statements, reports and verbal and written opinions concerning the abusive or neglectful situation.
5. Huron County Children Services Board shall meet its obligation of maintaining communications with the appropriate law enforcement agency regarding child abuse and neglect investigations. The following guidelines will apply:
 - a. A written report will be filed with law enforcement regarding any investigation involving the death of a child;
 - b. Telephone contact will be maintained to share information on joint investigations and to notify law enforcement agencies of independently initiated Children Services Board investigations of actual abuse or neglect situations (in such cases, follow-up reports in conference or in writing will be provided upon request by law enforcement officials).
 - c. Written reports will be filed with law enforcement agencies as required by law.
6. Huron County Children Services Board will report suspected crimes to law enforcement authorities. If further investigation is required, the prosecuting attorney will collaborate with the appropriate law enforcement agency or Children Services in preparing the case for presentation.
7. If law enforcement is unable to conduct the joint interview within the mandated timeframes set forth in section 5101:2-36-03 of the Ohio Administrative Code (Appendix H), Huron County Children Services Board will conduct the interviews within their mandated time frames.

B. Requesting Law Enforcement Assistance

A caseworker investigating a report of suspected child abuse and neglect shall immediately notify the appropriate law enforcement agency in the following situations:

1. To request assistance in completing any mandated or necessary investigations requirements;
2. When the situation is of such a nature as to possibly warrant criminal action to be taken;
3. When a third-party investigation is required;
4. When an out of home investigation is required;
5. With cases involving a missing child;
6. With cases involving the death of a child from alleged abuse or neglect;
7. In all reports containing allegations of sexual abuse;
8. In all reports containing allegations of severe injury or cruel and unusual punishment.
9. When requesting assistance in removing a child;
10. When a threat of physical harm to the caseworker, or to anyone else involved in the case exists including when working with a family that has historically threatened to do harm to Huron County Children Services staff.
11. When requesting assistance in after-business-hours investigations; and/or
12. When there is reason to believe that a crime has been committed or is going to be committed.

V. The Investigation

Huron County Children Services Board has the responsibility of conducting a legally sound and effective investigation. It is also their responsibility to coordinate their investigation with the local law enforcement agency who has jurisdiction over the case. Both professional departments must decide how to intervene in a fashion that will maximize the information obtained from the investigation while minimizing the risk of trauma to the alleged child victim and/or family members. It is important to remember that every

investigation is stressful for a child and a family, but that it does not have to be traumatic. Joint interviews should be conducted whenever possible to minimize trauma.

The investigation is a detailed fact-finding process with four primary goals:

1. To determine whether the allegation is founded;
2. To determine the degree of risk of the child;
3. To develop and implement a plan to protect the child;
4. To gather evidence to support criminal prosecution and other judicial proceedings, where indicated.

A. Required Interviews

Risk factors and/or safety of the alleged child victim should ultimately determine the sequence and timing of interviews; however, Children Services has mandated timeframes to adhere to as outlined in section 5101:2-36-03 of the Ohio Administrative Code (Appendix H). It should be noted that the sequencing of the interview process may change if the details or specifics of a certain allegation/case warrant these changes.

B. Interview Environment

1. Interviews with the alleged child victim should be conducted in the least stressful, safest environment possible, under the circumstances that exist at that time, and taking into consideration the child's chronological age, developmental age, and pertinent environmental factors.
2. Interviews with non-offending parent(s) and siblings or other children in the home should occur where they feel most comfortable.
3. Interviews with the alleged offender are generally conducted in a law enforcement setting.

C. Documentation of Interviews

All interviews, whether conducted jointly or separately, are documented by each entity involved. Huron County Children Services Board will document its contact with the family within the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). Victim Witness advocates and law enforcement officers also complete reports of their findings. By signing this memorandum of understanding, it is understood that all involved parties will share copies of these written reports with each investigative entity, as required on a case-by-case basis, and as permitted subject to restrictions regarding confidentiality.

D. Alleged Child Victim (ACV) Interview(s)

The interview with the ACV should always take into consideration the strengths and limitations of the child to be interviewed. Interviews should acquire working knowledge of the child's chronological age, developmental age, level of functioning, grasp of the English language, and the ability to pair known information with verbal responses.

1. Supportive Evidence

Collaborating evidence to the alleged child victim's interview strengthens the case and increases the possibility of criminal prosecution.

- a. Photographs of areas of visible trauma/neglect on an ACV should be taken unless it is unnecessary or determined to not be in ACV's best interest. Photographs need to be dated with

the child's name and identifying characteristics such as the child's face, who took the picture, and what time/date the picture was taken.

- b. A medical examination for a child may be arranged:
 - With parent, guardian, or custodian consent;
 - Without parent, guardian, or custodian consent upon:
 - 1. Request of the alleged child victim; or
 - 2. Request of a law enforcement officer or prosecuting attorney and with consent of the alleged child victim; or
 - 3. Court order.
- c. A radiological examination may be arranged:
 - With parent, guardian, or custodian consent;
 - Without parent, guardian, or custodian consent if determined by a physician to be medically indicated through examination or observations.
- d. Psychological diagnosis or treatment may be arranged:
 - With parent, guardian, or custodian consent;
 - Without parent, guardian, or custodian consent with a court order.
- e. In neglect cases, photographs of the condition of the home and/or children should be taken if possible:
 - With parent, guardian, or custodian consent;
 - Without parent, guardian, or custodian consent if requested by law enforcement and/or court order.

E. Interviews with the Alleged Non-Offending Parent/Caregiver

The interview with the non-offending parent is important in determining whether the non-offending parent is:

- 1. Supportive or refuting the child's allegation;
- 2. Able and willing to ensure the child's safety;
- 3. Capable;
- 4. Promoting the child to make or recant an allegation.

F. Interview with Alleged Offender

The interviews with the alleged offender will be conducted by both a law enforcement officer and a Children Services worker, when possible. Law enforcement is typically in charge of this interview due to their specialized training and legal connection to the court system. The purpose of the interview is to gather information regarding the alleged abuse; assess the danger to which the alleged offender is a risk to the child; and to persuade the offender to cooperate with a plan to ensure the safety of the child.

At its conclusion, the Children Services worker and the law enforcement officer will be provided with a verbal report of the results of the interrogation. A written report will be provided one week after the completion of the interview.

IV. Roles and Responsibilities of Mandated Subscribers

A. Responsibilities of Huron County Children Services Board (ORC 2151.421):

1. To receive and respond to reports of child abuse or neglect from any source 24 hours per day, seven days per week.
2. To initiate and investigate within twenty-four hours each report of known or suspected child abuse or neglect and of known or suspected threat of child abuse or neglect.
3. To determine the circumstances surrounding the injuries, abuse or neglect or the threat of injury, abuse, or neglect, the cause of the injuries, abuse or neglect, or threat, and the person or persons responsible.
4. To provide protective and emergency supportive services on behalf of children about whom reports are made, in an effort to prevent further neglect or abuse, to enhance their welfare, and whenever possible, to preserve the family unit.
5. To conduct investigations in cooperation with appropriate law enforcement agencies. When criminal activity is suspected, joint interviews of children will be planned and conducted in order to eliminate unnecessary interviews. Written investigative summary reports will be completed for each investigation and will be available for appropriate law enforcement agencies within two weeks of the completion of said investigation.
6. To request legal custody of children when deemed necessary for their protection and to provide appropriate placement.
7. Using SACWIS to submit information regarding each child abuse and neglect referral to the Ohio Central Registry, which the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) maintains. Additionally, within 45 days of the receipt of each report, submit the disposition and final case decision. An additional 15 days can be requested if necessary to complete investigative activities.
8. Submit a report of its investigation in writing to the law enforcement agency involved.
9. Make any recommendation to the County Prosecuting Attorney or City Law Director that it considers necessary to protect any children brought to the agency's attention.
10. To preserve the confidentiality of the referral source of child abuse or neglect reports and notify the County Prosecuting Attorney or City Law Director when there is an unauthorized dissemination of information.
11. To notify the County Prosecutor or City Law Director when any mandated reporter of child abuse and neglect fails to report.
12. To handle and coordinate investigations of cases alleged withholding of appropriate nutrition, hydration, medication, or medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions that include;
 - Gathering and maintaining contact information regarding the name, address, and telephone number of each appropriate health care facility within its jurisdiction.
 - Identifying and maintaining contact data regarding the name, title, and telephone number of each facility's contact person for allegations involving alleged withholding of medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions, hereinafter referred to as alleged withholding.
 - Identifying and maintaining the name and chairperson of the appropriate health care facility's review committee, if such a committee exists.
 - Huron County Children Services Board will provide a procedure for intervening in cases involving alleged withholding.
13. To handle and coordinate investigations of child abuse and neglect in out-of-home care settings.
14. To handle and coordinate third party investigations of child abuse and neglect.
15. To be full, active members of the Child Abuse Investigation Team.
16. To make referrals when deemed necessary to the Child Advocacy Center/Nord Center.
17. To participate on the county's fatality review team/board.
18. Huron County Children Services will continue to maintain operations including, but not limited

to, receiving and investigating child abuse and/or neglect referrals in the event of a disaster (ORC 5101:2-5-13.1)

B. Responsibilities of the Huron County and City Law Enforcement Agencies:

1. To receive and accept complaints regarding child abuse or neglect from any source (ORC 2151.421).
2. To refer reports of suspected child abuse and neglect to the County Children Services Board upon receipt (ORC 2151.421).
3. To investigate cases of child abuse and neglect in cooperation with the County Children Services Board (ORC 2151.421). When criminal activity is suspected, joint interviews of children will be planned and conducted with the Children Services Board. To further reduce the possibility of unnecessary interviews, written investigative reports or statements from collaterals and perpetrators resulting from independently conducted interviews will be available to Children Services within two weeks of said interview.
4. To take the lead in interviewing perpetrators in cases where criminal culpability is suspected.
5. To initiate criminal prosecution of the alleged perpetrator(s) when appropriate.
6. To testify before the Court(s) in prosecuting cases of child abuse and neglect.
7. To not remove a child about whom a report is made from the persons having custody of the child, without consultation with Huron County Children Services, unless, in the judgment of the officer, and if the report was made by a physician, immediate removal is considered essential to protect the child from further abuse or neglect.
8. To handle and coordinate investigations involving the death of a child which may have resulted from child abuse or neglect.
9. To assist caseworkers from the County Children Services Board in hazardous/dangerous situations.
10. To assist caseworkers where the provision of protective services or the investigation of child abuse or neglect is impeded.
11. To determine criminal culpability and to conduct criminal investigations when information may warrant prosecution.
12. To receive and respond to reports of cases involving individuals who aide, abet, induce, cause, encourage, contribute to, or act in any way tending to cause a child or a ward of the Juvenile Court to become delinquent, unruly, neglected, dependent, or to become a runaway child. (NOTE: Runaway is a child who leaves the custody of any person, department, or public or private institution without the legal consent of that person, department or institution).
13. To assist Huron County Children Services Board in investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect in an out-of-home care setting or reports requiring third party investigations.
14. To collect evidence as indicated (photographs, etc.).
15. To be full, active members of the Child Abuse Investigation Team.
16. Receiving and Responding to reports of missing children
Upon learning that a minor child has either run away from or is otherwise missing from the home or the care, custody, and control of the child's parents, custodial parent, legal guardian, or non-custodial parent, the CDJFS/PCSA shall:
 - Refer the reporter to the law enforcement agency in the appropriate jurisdiction.
 - Contact the law enforcement agency for entry into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database if the child is in PCSA custody.
 - Contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) if the child is in PCSA custody.
 - Upon request of law enforcement, the PCSA shall provide assistance and cooperation in the investigation of a missing child, including the immediate provision of any information possessed by the PCSA that may be relevant in the investigation.

Law enforcement shall notify the appropriate PCSA upon learning that a minor child who is alleged to be in the children services system or who is known or suspected to be abused or neglected has either run away from or is otherwise missing from the home or the care, custody, and control of the child's parents, custodial parent, legal guardian, or non-custodial parent.

C. Responsibilities of Huron County Prosecutors:

1. To report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the Huron County Children Services or the appropriate law enforcement entity (ORC 2151.421).
2. To take legal actions to protect a child from further harm resulting from child abuse or neglect as defined by Title 29 of the Ohio Revised Code.
3. To criminally prosecute perpetrators of child abuse (physical or sexual) and neglect as defined by Title 29 of the Ohio Revised Code.
4. To assist in resolving cases of alleged withholding of appropriate nutrition, hydration, medication, or medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions.
5. To be available to law enforcement and Children Services staff for questions or assistance in the investigation of child abuse and neglect cases where criminal activity is suspected.
6. To put into practice interview guidelines and prosecution practices that will minimize trauma to child victims and eliminate unnecessary interviews of children who are the subject of reports.
7. To prepare witnesses and victims for court testimony in criminal cases.
8. To assist in the filing of appropriate criminal complaint pertaining to: a. Cases involving unruly, delinquent, or runaway minors.
9. To be full, active members of the Child Abuse Investigation Team.

D. Responsibilities of Huron County Prosecutor's Office, Victim Witness Division:

1. To report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the Huron County Children Services Board or the appropriate law enforcement entity (ORC 2151.421).
2. To provide advocacy services to the alleged victim and his/her family.
3. To testify before the court(s) in prosecuting cases of child abuse and neglect, as permitted subject to restrictions regarding confidentiality.
4. To be full, active member of the Child Abuse Investigation Team.

E. Responsibilities of Huron County Juvenile Court:

1. To report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the Huron County Children Services Board (ORC 2151.421).
2. To ensure adequate examination and evidence collection via court order.
3. When feasible, to consult with Children Services so that physical examinations of alleged victims of child abuse and neglect can be coordinated to reduce the need for multiple examinations.
4. To issue temporary emergency orders, pending hearing on a complaint.
5. To order emergency medical and surgical treatment, upon the certification of one or more reputable practicing physicians.

VII. Child Placement

If it is determined that the child has been or is at risk of being abused, neglected, or dependent, agency services are offered to the family. The agency will first attempt to keep the family together by coordinating services needed to strengthen the family.

Services may include: information and referral, counseling, substance use treatment services, parent education, case aide or homemaker services, as well as visits by caseworker to give assistance with planned changes. Because separations from family have a traumatic impact on children, it occurs only when the child can neither be protected nor have his/her basic needs met within the primary family.

If the child cannot remain safely within their own home, the agency will utilize one of the following options:

1. Work with the family to develop a temporary, safe living arrangement, usually with a relative or significant other, through safety planning;
2. Contact Huron County Juvenile Court ask for removal of the child from the home.

A. Emergency Removals:

Huron County Children Services will consider the emergency removal of a child from the child's own home when all of the following conditions exist:

1. The child is at imminent risk and in need of protection from abuse or neglect;
2. The caretaker is unavailable, unable, or unwilling to provide protection from child abuse or neglect.
3. Supportive services cannot provide adequate protection to the child if the child remains in the home; and
4. The Court issues or has issued an emergency court order.

When an emergency removal has occurred, the caseworker shall provide the caretaker and the child, when age appropriate, with the following information:

1. The reason for removal
2. The name, agency address, and telephone number of the case worker:
3. The address, hours, and phone number of Juvenile Court to discuss the appointment of an attorney, if necessary.
4. Where and when a hearing will be held to determine if there is a need for continued custody, placement or other court orders; and
5. A visitation plan, pending the completion of the case plan.

When an emergency removal has occurred by ex-parte court order, the agency will petition the court the next working day for an order authorizing the continued placement of the child.

B. Non-emergency Removals

Huron County Children Services will remove a child from the child's own home and provide temporary placement when:

1. Huron County Juvenile Court has determined that the child is in need of protection and orders the child into the temporary custody of the agency. This may occur through the course of regular court activity or through the motion of Children Services.

C. Assistance from Law Enforcement

Huron County Children Services will request assistance from the appropriate law enforcement agency to facilitate a removal when any of the following conditions exist (Appendix G):

1. The caseworker is denied entry into the residence or denied access to the child;

2. Children Services is removing a child from his or her family via an order of the court and assistance of law enforcement is needed as there is reason to believe the family will challenge the removal;
3. Children Services has reason to believe the child is in immediate danger of serious harm;
4. Children Services has reason to believe the caseworker is, or will be in danger of harm;
5. Children Services has reason to believe that a crime is being committed or has been committed against a child.
6. Children Services must conduct an assessment/investigation at a known drug house and a law enforcement escort is needed.
7. An exigent circumstance exists.

Huron County Board of County Commissioners

<u>Terry Boose</u>	<u>1-4-24</u>
Terry Boose	Date
<u>Harry Brady</u>	<u>1-4-24</u>
Harry Brady	Date
<u>Bruce Wilde</u>	<u>1-4-24</u>
Bruce "Skip" Wilde	Date

January 4, 2024

24-014

RESOLUTION

**IN THE MATTER OF APPROVING HURON COUNTY CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

Bruce Wilde moved the adoption of the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Lenora Minor, Department of Job and Family Services Director, has presented the Huron County Child Abuse and Neglect Memorandum of Understanding for adoption; and

WHEREAS, this Huron County Memorandum of Understanding was developed in accordance with (1) Ohio Revised Code Section 2151.4221, which defines the reporting of child abuse and neglect and provides for a memorandum of understanding between legal professionals and organizations concerned with this social problem, and (2) Ohio Administrative Code Section 5101:2-33-26, which mandates the execution of this Memorandum; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Huron County Commissioners hereby adopts the Huron County Child Abuse and Neglect Memorandum of Understanding as attached hereto and expressly incorporated by reference herein; and further

BE IT RESOLVED, that the foregoing resolution was adopted and all actions and deliberations of the Board of Commissioners of the County of Huron, Ohio, relating thereto were conducted in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all applicable legal requirements, including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Harry Brady seconded the motion. The roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

<u>Yes</u>	<u>Terry Boose</u> Terry Boose
<u>YES</u>	<u>Harry Brady</u> Harry Brady
<u>YES</u>	<u>Bruce Wilde</u> Bruce Wilde

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the resolution passed by the Board of Huron County Commissioners on 1/4/24 and is recorded in the Commissioners Journal Volume 105.

Vickie Thumbla
Administrator/Clerk

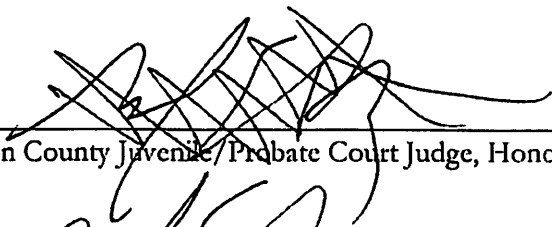
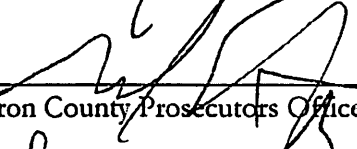
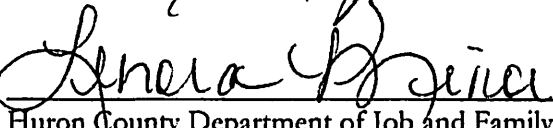
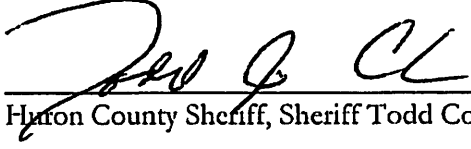
Signature Page

Timothy L. Cardwell, Judge

13 Dec 23

Huron County Juvenile/Probate Court Judge, Honorable Judge Timothy Cardwell	Date
Huron County Prosecutors Office, Huron County Prosecutor James J. Sitterly	Date
Huron County Department of Job and Family Services, Lenora Minor, Executive Director	Date
Huron County Humane Society, Amanda Fearing, Medical Director	Date
The Nord Center, Don Schiffbauer, CEO	Date
Huron County Board of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Kristen Cardone, Executive Director	Date
Family Health Services, David Tatro, CEO	Date
Firelands Counseling and Recovery Services-Norwalk, Laura Miller, Site Director	Date
Family Life Counseling, Dr. Steven Burggraf, CEO	Date
Ohio State Highway Patrol, Lt. Tim J Hoffman	Date
Huron County Sheriff, Sheriff Todd Corbin	Date
Bellevue Police Department, Chief Marc Linder	Date

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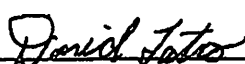
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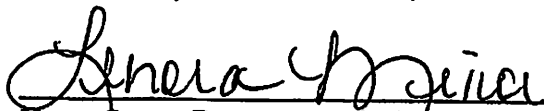
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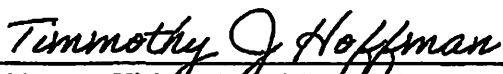
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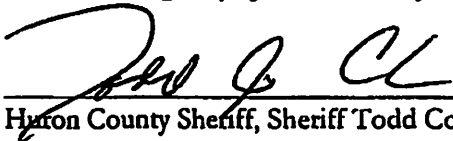
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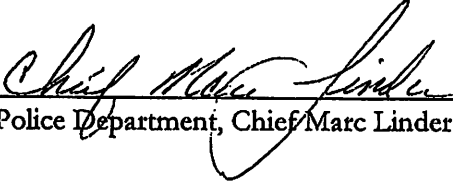
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Milan Police Department, Chief Robert Meister

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Gary M. Lyons
Monroeville Police Department, Chief Gary Lyons

12-18-2023
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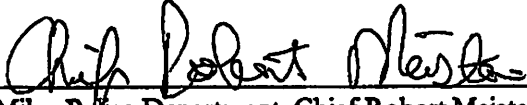
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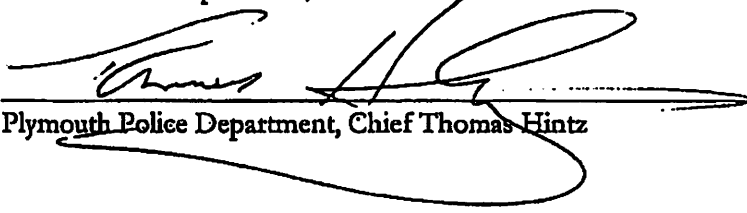
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