



NH Department of Health & Human Services
Division for Children, Youth & Families

DCYF Standard Operating Procedure

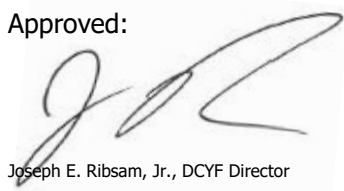
1508.1 SAFETY PLAN PROCEDURES - CPS

Policy Directive: **23-09**

Approved:

Effective Date: **March 2023**

Implements Policy: **1508**


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This SOP defines the CPS procedures to safety plan with families in a CPS Assessment or open case.

Procedure

The following information is to support the implementation of the above referenced policy. This document shall not preclude staff from using their professional judgement based on individual circumstances, consistent with the requirements of the policy.

- I. The following is considered in determining if a safety plan is appropriate:
 - A. If one of the following interventions can mitigate danger:
 1. Children remain safely in the home with a safety plan (that may or may not include community resources or paid services) in place that removes the danger;
 2. Children remain safely in the home with the safety plan in place and an alternative caregiver present in the home;
 3. Persons responsible for the danger are safety planned outside the home; or
 4. Children are safety planned outside the home;
 - B. The willingness and ability of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to follow the plan;
 - C. The willingness and ability of any alternative caregiver to follow the plan; and
 - D. If short-term intervention is sufficient to keep children safe.
- II. The following is included in any safety plan (written or verbal):
 - A. Identification of the conditions or behaviors in the home that place children in the home in danger (worry statements);
 - B. Identification of what required actions need to be taken (or stopped) immediately (non-negotiables) and by who (participant's name and safety network participant's name, as appropriate), to keep children safe that includes:

1. A clear description of how each of the dangers indicated will be mitigated (what the family will do to ensure safety, including what action or behaviors will be taken or stopped that will make children safe in the current conditions); and
 2. Acknowledgement by all participants that they understand the presenting danger, their role in mitigating danger, and what is expected of them;
 - a. Actions to keep children safe are not assigned to individuals who were not included in the safety planning discussion; and
- C. The expectations around follow-up to ensure that actions to keep children safe are being carried out and remain appropriate.
- III. Safety Plans are shared with service providers put in place through the Division to work with the family. This includes discussion as to the Division's expectations of the provider.
- IV. Safety Plans are shared with community services working with the family as appropriate, based on their role in ensuring safety within the family.
- V. Whenever a safety plan will utilize an alternative caregiver, CPSWs assess the alternative caregiver's ability and willingness to abide by the plan.
- A. Prior to plan implementation, the CPSW:
1. Checks with local law enforcement to see if they have had any involvement with the individual or others residing in their home;
 2. Discusses the identified danger, the plan, and expectations for follow through with the alternative caregiver; and
 3. Checks the DCYF electronic information system regarding the alternative caregiver and others in the home of the alternative caregiver as appropriate.
- B. The CPSW visits the home of the alternative caregiver (if children are safety planned outside the home) within 24 hours (as appropriate based on children's vulnerability or other safety considerations) to assess safety and home conditions, and to assist the alternative caregiver in setting up any provisions needed for the care of the children.
- VI. The CPSW reviews the plan with the parent(s)/caregiver(s) to ensure they understand the importance of entering into the agreement and the potential consequences of not following the plan. This includes discussion around what will occur to ensure the plan is being followed and expectations around working with service providers and/or community services.

- VII. Safety plans in effect longer than 24 hours should be written, preferably on the Safety Plan template (Form 1508), and include all the components of procedure II above.
- VIII. All safety plans, written or verbal, should be entered into the DCYF electronic information system by the end of the CPSW's workday, but no later than the next business day. The contact:
 - A. Is entered into the appropriate SDM 24 Hour Assessment/Safety Review (for Assessment) or In-Home/Reunification Risk Review (for Family Services);
 - B. Is entered as a new collateral titled "SAFETY PLAN" with the details of the plan entered in the body of the contact; and
 - C. Contains the information outlined in procedure II above.
- IX. If a written safety plan is scanned into the system, a collateral contact needs to be entered as noted in VIII above, with a note as to where in the system the plan can be reviewed.
- X. Safety plans remain in effect and are monitored closely until either the danger is mitigated or it is determined, in consultation with the CPS Supervisor that another action is necessary.
 - A. Danger identified in the structured decision making tool (SDM) is taken into account when considering the continued need for a safety plan.
 - B. The CPSW reviews the safety plan with the family within 7 days and documents the status of identified dangers (and any revisions needed) on the plan and in the DCYF electronic information system.
 - 1. If a safety plan is still necessary after at 7 days, the CPSW consults with their Supervisor (and may include the Staff Attorney) as to what further action may be required.
 - 2. If the safety plan is still required at 10 days, the CPSW will review with their Supervisor and Staff Attorney to determine the best course of intervention, which may include:
 - (a) CPS Voluntary Services case;
 - (b) Before Court case (also known as a B case/non-court case); or
 - (c) Court action.

Applicable Forms

Form	Title
1508	Safety Plan

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. What if the parent/caregiver will not agree to share the safety plan with involved parties (alternative caregivers, safety network, services)?

- A** If they will not agree to share the safety plan with involved parties, it is not a viable safety plan.

Q2. What if a parent/caregiver or alternative caregiver is part of the plan, but they are not present?

- A** Anyone involved in the safety plan must be consulted before the plan is put into effect. Preferably, they would be present during the planning stage, but at the very least they must be consulted over the phone.
- A** The CPSW should indicate on any written plans any individuals who were consulted, but not physically present.

Q3. Are children involved in safety planning when they are developmentally able to do so?

- A** Parents/Guardians, alternative caregivers, and others in the safety network are responsible for developing and following the safety plan.
- A** Children can be included, as age and developmentally appropriate, by asking them to identify alternative caregivers or what would make them feel safe.
- A** Adolescents, as developmentally appropriate, may also be assigned tasks such as a check-in with members of the safety network.

Q4. Is it appropriate to have a contingency plan, along with a safety plan?

- A** There may be times when it is appropriate to have a contingency plan incorporated into the safety plan. The contingency plan must be discussed with all parties and documented in the same manner as the primary safety plan.
- A** A contingent safety plan can be developed in conjunction with the original safety plan, or at a later date, so long as the family and any alternative caregivers are engaged in its development.

Q5. How do I safety plan with a family whose primary language is not English or who are hearing/vision impaired?

- A** The CPSW should utilize DHHS Interpreter Services and other communication access resources through <http://intranet/omha/index.html>.

Q6. What is the difference between risk and danger?

- A** Risk involves a situation in which there is a potential threat to a child's health or well-being (i.e. things may become unsafe), whereas danger is when things are already unsafe or very likely to become unsafe without intervention.

Glossary and Document Specific Definitions

[A - B](#) [C - D](#) [E - F](#) [G - I](#) [J - L](#) [M - N](#) [O - Q](#) [R - S](#) [T - V](#) [W - Z](#)

For the Purpose of this Document:

"Safety" initially means the absence of danger to a child. Once danger has been identified, safety means actions of protection taken by the caregiver that mitigate the danger and are demonstrated over time.

"Safety Network" means one or more people who are not part of the household who agree to help keep the child(ren) safe from an identified danger until caregivers are able to demonstrate safety. This may include an alternative caregiver as applicable.

Document Change Log

PD	Modification Made	Approved	Date
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