

1212 ADDED ALLEGATIONS AND NEW REPORTS DURING ASSESSMENTS

Chapter: **Child Protective Field Services**

Section: **CPS Family Assessments**



New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Manual

Policy Directive: **17-37**

Effective Date: **November 2017**

Scheduled Review Date:

Approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Ribsam".

Joseph E. Ribsam Jr., DCYF Director

Related Statute(s): [RSA 169-C](#)

Related Admin Rule(s):

Related Federal Regulation(s):

Related Form(s):

Bridges' Screen(s) and Attachment(s):

The Division for Children, Youth and Families is guided by the principle that all children and youth should be safe. When in the course of an Assessment, new allegations arise, the new allegations must be screened and addressed in a consistent manner. Through consistent practice in screening allegations and initiating new Assessments when necessary, DCYF can determine if there is immediate danger to the child(ren)/youth, identify what the family needs to assure continued safety and promote the well-being of the child(ren)/youth and family, and connect them with resources to promote their safety and well-being.

Purpose

This policy is to define how CPSWs and Supervisors will respond to information received regarding a new allegation of child abuse or neglect during an Assessment and help CPSWs determine when to add an allegation to a current Assessment. Through this policy, all allegations should receive proper review to be addressed in the most efficient manner.

Definitions

"Added Allegations Report" means a report received at Central Intake that meets the criteria to be screened in to be added to a current open Assessment at the District Office that has been open for 45 calendar days or less.

"Allegation" means a reasonable belief that a child has been subject to abuse or neglect through conduct, actions, or omissions that constitute harm, or a threat of harm, to the life, health, or welfare of the child.

"Assessment" means an investigation of alleged child abuse or neglect completed by a Child Protective Service Worker (CPSW) pursuant to RSA 169-C:34.

"CPSW" or **"Child Protective Service Worker"** means an employee of DCYF who is authorized by the Division to perform functions of the job classification Child Protective Service Worker.

"DCYF" or the **"Division"** means the Department of Health and Human Services' Division for Children, Youth and Families.

"Person Responsible for the Child Abuse or Neglect" or **"Perpetrator"** means a person who has, or is alleged to have, physically abused, sexually abused, or neglected a child, regardless of age or family relationship to the victim.

Policy

- I. Any information gathered during the course of an ongoing Assessment that indicates a new allegation, must be reviewed by a CPSW with his/her Supervisor.
 - A. When a child/youth not identified as an alleged victim is a sibling and member of the household in the current Assessment and has subsequently been identified as an alleged victim, the Supervisor will:
 1. Update the child/youth's role to be an alleged victim; and
 2. Enter an allegation of abuse or neglect for the child/youth in Bridges.
 - B. When the newly identified alleged victim is not a sibling or member of the household in the open Assessment, the CPSW should make a report to Central Intake to determine if a new Assessment will be opened.
 - C. When the newly identified alleged victim is a substance-exposed infant, the CPSW should make a report to Central Intake to determine if a new Assessment will be opened.
 - D. When a parent or member of the household not previously identified as an alleged perpetrator in the open Assessment has been identified as an alleged perpetrator, the Supervisor will:
 1. Update the individual's role to be an alleged perpetrator, and
 2. Add the individual as an alleged perpetrator in the allegation.
 - E. When the newly identified alleged perpetrator is an individual outside the family and household:
 1. The CPSW will contact Law Enforcement pursuant to [policy 1174](#);
 2. The CPSW will consult Central Intake if the new allegation may need to be referred to the Special Investigations regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a DCYF employee or individual who perpetrated through his or her role as a Foster Care Provider or at a Residential Treatment Program; and
 3. The Supervisor may enter the alleged perpetrator into the existing referral if no information indicates a new referral is necessary.
- II. Information gathered/reported during an Assessment that may constitute a new allegation of abuse or neglect not contained in the open Assessment, but involving the individuals identified in the open Assessment is to be treated as follows:
 - A. A Supervisor may add the allegation to the open Assessment if the information was received or determined within the first 45 calendar days of the open Assessment.
 - B. Following the first 45 calendar days of the open Assessment:
 1. A report should be made to Central Intake; unless

2. A Supervisor determines the allegation is directly related to the allegations under investigation and will add the allegation to the open Assessment, including but not limited to:
 - (a) An allegation entered for abuse is determined to be a finding of neglect; or
 - (b) An allegation entered for abuse or neglect is determined to have an additional allegation of abuse or neglect resulting from the same incident or an ongoing concern initially reported as a one-time incident.
- III. Additional allegations received by Central Intake will be sent to District Offices as Added Allegation Reports pursuant to [policy 1158](#):
- A. Added Allegations Report will be assigned a response priority in the Bridges inbox; and
 - B. The assigning Supervisor will be responsible to ensure the CPSW assigned is aware, and responds to, the Added Allegations Report in accordance with the response priority level Central Intake assigned.
- IV. The CPSW must clearly document when any added allegation is incorporated into an open Assessment, including a new alleged victim or alleged perpetrator.
- A. An Assessment contact must be created in Bridges when a CPSW receives/identifies the added allegation.
 1. The contact must clearly state, "ADDED ALLEGATION;" and
 2. In the contact narrative box, the CPSW will enter what the added allegations are and who the identified victim(s) is/are in the added allegations, including the Added Allegations Report number if applicable.
 - B. The CPSW must document interviews with the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator and contacts to law enforcement or a professional reporter regarding the "ADDED ALLEGATION" in the Bridges Assessment Contact Log.
- V. The CPSW must respond to the added allegation(s).
- A. Unless the CPSW reported the added allegation following a face-to-face visit, the CPSW must make a face-to-face contact with the alleged victim within the assigned response priority or 72 hours of the receipt/identification at the latest, to assess immediate safety and the credibility of the added allegation.
 - B. A Supervisor will add the new allegation into the open Assessment within 24 hours, if applicable.
 - C. Law Enforcement Letters will be sent, if appropriate, regarding the Added Allegations.
 - D. The CPSW will contact the new professional reporter regarding the Added Allegations Report, if applicable.
 - E. The CPSW must complete a new NHIA Safety Review regarding the new information within 24 hours.

- VI. The CPSW will consult with his/her supervisor prior to notifying Central Intake, when a new report may be required.
- A. If Central Intake determines that a new report needs to be opened for Assessment, the CPSW must commence the new report separate from the current Assessment.
- VII. If the professional reporter for an added allegation is different than the original reporter, they will receive information regarding the Assessment closing that is consistent with typical closing procedures.
- VIII. The Assessment (including all original and added allegations) will be closed within 60 days of the initial referral being assigned to the District Office, regardless of when the added allegations were received/added to the Assessment.

Practice Guidance

Why was a new Assessment opened by Intake if I was aware of the allegations prior to the 45 day timeframe?

- Supervisors/CPSWs can add allegations during the course of an Assessment and are encouraged to if they discover new allegations during the Assessment. If the Supervisor/CPSW has added an allegation during the course of an Assessment and Central Intake subsequently receives a report with the same information, it will be considered already reported, thus making it an Additional Information Report.
- If the allegation is never added in Bridges, then Central Intake cannot conclude that the allegation was known and investigated, and has to enter it as a new report if the 45 day window has closed.

What should I do with my original report if a new report is opened after the initial 45 days for ongoing concerns from the initial report?

- Staff should consult with their attorney on making a finding, or if staff are unable to make a finding at that point in time, the report should be closed "incomplete." If the report is closed as unfounded, that report may impact DCYF's ability to use it to show history/pattern of involvement with the Division later on if there is a need to pursue court intervention.
- If the original report had the **same or very similar allegations** it should be closed "incomplete, unable to locate" in Bridges. All standard requirements for collaterals and Assessment procedures must be completed. In the closing summary, indicate that "the referral is being closed incomplete new report received. The allegations will continue to be addressed in the new report" and include the report number. In the closing letter, indicate the same as what was entered in the closing summary so that the family has a clear understanding that the closure of the original assessment is due to a new report being received.
- Please note that if an open assessment is a **different** allegation, the CPSW must complete it and make a founded or unfounded determination. The incomplete option is only if the new report is for the same or similar allegations. It will only come in as a new report if the CPSW is at the end of the investigation on the open Assessment and it is beyond the time frame to add in the allegation to the existing report.