



New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Manual

1395 CHILD IN NEED OF SERVICES (CHINS)

Chapter: **Juvenile Justice Field Services**

Section: **Case Management**

Approved:

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., DCYF Director

Policy Directive: **22-15**

Effective Date: **July 2022**

References Of Note

Federal Authority:

Statutes: [RSA 169-B](#); [RSA 169-D](#); and

[RSA 170-G](#)

Administrative Rules:

Case Law:

This policy establishes DCYF's practice of providing services to children through a CHINS (Child in Need of Services) case.

Required Practices

Any deviations to the following information must be documented with Supervisory Approval.

- I. Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) will assess each referral for services through a CHINS case to determine if the child and family's needs can be met through a voluntary CHINS case.
- II. With the exception of Voluntary Services cases resulting from a JJS Needs Assessment, all referrals for services through a CHINS case will be screened by Central Intake to determine if the child meets the criteria for CHINS under RSA 169-D before forwarding the referral to the District Office.
 - A. Voluntary services cases recommended by a JJS Needs Assessment must be approved by the JJS Supervisor before being offered to the family and will be opened at the District Office.
 - B. Referrals for a CHINS case for a child found to be incompetent by the Court will be processed through Intake and be assessed by a JPPO to determine if a voluntary CHINS case is appropriate to meet the child's needs.
- III. Eligibility for a voluntary CHINS case requires that:
 - A. The presenting behaviors meet the legal definition of CHINS;
 - B. The child and parents/guardians are willing to cooperate with JJS and engage in services;
 - C. The child does not require placement; and
 - D. The child's needs are not already being met through an open JJS or CPS case.

- IV. The JPPO will review the available information, clarify details of the child's circumstances with the referring entity as needed, and discuss a voluntary CHINS case with the parents/guardians and child to determine appropriateness.
 - A. The JPPO will contact (or attempt to contact) the family within 3 business days of assignment, make additional attempts as appropriate, and consult with their Supervisor to determine next steps if they have not made contact within 14 days of assignment.
 - B. The family will be given up to 10 business days to decide if they would like to agree to participate in a voluntary CHINS case.
 - 1. The child and parents/guardians will be advised that it is their responsibility to notify the JPPO of their decision within the afforded timeframe and that failure to notify the JPPO will be treated as their declining voluntary services and will be reported to the referring entity (if different) as such.
 - 2. If the family wants to participate in a voluntary CHINS case, but are presently unable to participate due to extenuating circumstances, the referral may remain open up to 30 calendar days.
- V. Voluntary services are not appropriate when:
 - A. The child requires placement outside the home;
 - B. The family does not respond within a reasonable amount of time;
 - C. The child or parents/guardian decline voluntary services;
 - D. The child or parents/guardians do not cooperate or engage in services; or
 - E. Court-intervention is warranted based on the child's needs.
- VI. When it is determined that a voluntary CHINS case is appropriate, the JPPO will meet with the family to complete a Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment to inform the creation of a prevention plan (Form 1549), which will serve as the agreement between the family and JJS.
 - A. The JPPO will provide the family with the Information for Families with Children In Need Of Services (Form 1325) brochure no later than the first in-person meeting.
 - B. Services will not be put in place until informed by the CANS assessment.
- VII. If it is determined that a voluntary CHINS case is not appropriate to meet the child's needs, the JPPO will provide the referring entity written documentation of the determination via the Statement of Voluntary Services Eligibility (Form 1326).

- A. If it is determined, in consultation with DCYF legal counsel, that the child's needs would best be met through a court-involved CHINS case under RSA 169-D:2, II(d), the referring entity must also be provided written documentation of the Department's consent via the Departmental Consent to CHINS under RSA 169-D:2, II(d) (Form 1327), signed by the JJS Supervisor.
- VIII. Voluntary CHINS cases, including Voluntary Services cases resulting from the JJS Needs Assessment process, will be managed as an in-home case and will have access to all available DCYF services with the exception of placement.
- IX. Voluntary CHINS cases are based on the formal strengths and need assessment completed and managed in accordance with established policy and procedures in regards to family engagement, prevention planning, providing most appropriate services to meet the family's needs, and maintaining connections.
- X. A JPPO may close a voluntary services case when:
 - A. The family successfully completes the prevention plan; or
 - B. The voluntary services case is deemed no longer appropriate.
- XI. Excluding cases opened as the result of the JJS Needs Assessment, the JPPO will notify the referring entity and close the voluntary CHINS case when:
 - A. The child or the family/guardian decline voluntary services; or
 - B. The child does not meet the definition of CHINS.
- XII. Voluntary CHINS cases must close within 9 months unless there are mitigating circumstances (as approved by the JJS Supervisor) warranting an extension.
- XIII. Court-involved CHINS cases will be managed in accordance with standard procedures for court-involved cases and may access all services available through DCYF.
 - A. Placement in a residential treatment program may only be made under RSA 169-D:2, II (b) or (d) and must follow all standard placement procedures, including the development of a case plan (Form 1550).
- XIV. All contact with the child, family members, and collaterals for the purpose of assessing the appropriateness of a voluntary CHINS case, managing a CHINS case, and providing services will be documented in the DCYF electronic information system.
- XV. The reason for closing the referral case will be indicated in the closing screen.

Standard Operating Procedures		
SOP	Title	Applicable Disciplines
1395.1	Voluntary CHINS	JJS
1395.2	Court-Involved CHINS	JJS

Applicable Forms	
Form	Title
1325	Information for Families with Children In Need Of Services (CHINS)
1326	Statement of Voluntary Services Eligibility
1327	Departmental Consent to CHINS under RSA 169-D:2, II(d)
1549	Prevention Plan-Maintaining Home and Community Living
1550	Case Plan-Placement
1552	Child/Youth Information Sheet
1870	Application for Title IV-A Funding for Services

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

Document Change Log			
PD	Modification Made	Approved	Date