

	CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES MANUAL		<i>Effective Date</i> November 8, 2005	
	<i>CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES</i>		Section 7	Subsection 3

SPECIALIZED SAFETY ASSESSMENT

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMICIDE EMERGENCY ASSESSMENT

Purpose: This assessment is part of the emergency/crisis response to a child or children who have just experienced a catastrophic event or series of events in their lives related to domestic violence. The primary purpose of the assessment is to find a safe temporary placement that if possible, can offer comfort, familiarity, predictability and calm to the child. A place where a child will not be subjected to any type of pressure by adults.

This assessment is not meant to be an in depth comprehensive assessment. It must address the special issues related to children who have experienced domestic violence and those adults who step forward to provide care to the child. It will be opened as a Safety Assessment in the parent's name.

Legal Base: Section 3, Title 22 MRSA §4023, sub. §2, paragraph E.
Section 4. Title 22 MRSA §4023, sub. §8.

These provisions charge the Department with conducting an emergency assessment to determine the temporary placement of a child with a relative or other appropriate adult when that child has lost both parents to a homicide or one parent to a homicide and the other parent has been arrested or otherwise detained for an offense related to the homicide.

As with the provision of all short term emergency services this service cannot be provided for more than 72 hours.

Procedures:

Intake

Upon receipt of a call at Intake from law enforcement that a child has lost both parents to a homicide or one parent to the homicide and the other is detained, Intake will record this call the same as all reports of abuse and neglect. This request will be called in and sent to the appropriate District Office immediately. If the call comes in after hours, the stand-by worker must be called immediately.

District Responsibilities

1. The request will be assigned immediately to a caseworker.

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2. The caseworker will immediately call the involved law enforcement officer to obtain any additional information necessary to complete the assessment.
3. The caseworker will conduct a Child Protective check on all potential caregivers.
4. The caseworker will request that law enforcement obtain all available criminal information on potential caregivers
5. Coordinate with law enforcement where and how prospective caregivers and the child will be interviewed.
6. Conduct the assessment using the format and areas to be assessed as guidelines. The facts in an individual case may call for a different approach.
7. The assessment will be given to the law enforcement personnel leading the investigation.
8. The Department will not conduct emergency assessments on potential caregivers when the child protective and/or criminal check raises concerns about the caregiver's ability to care for and protect the child in crisis.

Potential caregivers who do not have an emergency assessment are not precluded from requesting that they be considered as a caregiver when time permits a comprehensive assessment of the current and future needs of the child, and functioning of the potential caregivers.

There will be situations where one brief assessment is required. There may be an occasional situation where follow-up activities are required. Once the appropriate family has become involved there is no role for the Department.

Procedures:

The outline and questions following are to be used and recorded in the narrative log. A template will be available to "cut and paste" into the narrative log.

The decision window will show a substantiation of neglect by one or both parents. The name(s) of the relatives studied will be entered in the profile window.

Child Abuse and Neglect Allegations

At any time during the assessment process when the caseworker becomes aware that care of the child results in the abuse or neglect of a child or the threat thereof, a standard Safety Assessment will be initiated. The caseworker should consult with their supervisor about this.

An example might be that the deceased mother may have had children with different fathers. We conduct an emergency assessment on two children being

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cared for by their maternal grandparents. On the third child the non-custodial and different father assumes custody. Our records show that this father has abused children in the recent past and he has two children in foster care with a cease reunification order. The caseworker conducting the emergency assessment will create a report concerning the third child and the report will be a must assign report requiring an assessment to begin immediately.

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE EMERGENCY ASSESSMENT

Caseworker _____ Request Date _____ Today's Date _____

MACWIS # _____

Child(ren) for whom assessment is being completed:

_____ DOB _____

_____ DOB _____

_____ DOB _____

_____ DOB _____

Placement Name: _____ DOB _____

_____ DOB _____

Maiden and/or married names: _____

Address: _____

Relationship to Children to be placed: _____

Other Members of Household:



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Name: _____ Age _____ Relationship _____

Name: _____ Age _____ Relationship _____

Name: _____ Age _____ Relationship _____

Name: _____ Age _____ Relationship _____

Name: _____ Age _____ Relationship _____

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ADULT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

(These questions must be answered by the primary and secondary caregivers in the home.)

For the Prospective Caregiver(s)

1. Before this incident, how would you have described _____ (mother) & _____ (father)'s relationship?
 - a. How often were you around them? Together? Separately?
 - b. How did you see them manage conflict? How likely would you have said something like this would happen?
 - c. Did either _____ (mother) or _____ (father) ever talk to you about their relationship?
2. What do you know about what happened? Where did you get that information?
3. How are you feeling about what happened?
4. How well do you know _____ (each child) _____ ?
5. How do you think they are taking this right now? How do you think they'll be down the road? What about _____ (child) makes you think so?
6. How often do you see _____ (child) _____ ?
7. Has _____ (child) ever been to your home? How often? For what reason? Who was with _____ (child) _____ ?
8. How would you describe _____ (child) _____ ?
9. What do you think _____ (child) _____ needs right now? What is the best way to do that? What are some things that _____ (child) _____ doesn't need right now?
10. What are some things you could see or hear that might mean _____ (child) _____ is having a hard time? What would you do?
11. Caring for a child with this awful experience could be difficult at times. Who do you have that you can call on for help?

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12. You must have some pretty strong feelings yourself right now. What impact would there be on _____ (child) if he/she knew how strongly you felt about Mom/Dad?
13. How are you going to manage the other adults in _____ (child) _____'s life should they behave or speak inappropriately around him/her?
14. What are your hopes and fears about providing temporary care for _____ (child) _____?
15. What prompted you to come forward?

ABOUT THE CAREGIVER(S)

1. How able are they to meet the child's basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, privacy, supervision & protection?
2. What is the caregiver(s) adult relationship history? Currently?
3. What child rearing practices have they used? Discipline?

THE CHILD

Prior to determining whether and how much in depth the caseworker should interview the child she should consider:

- How and by whom has the child been interviewed and did the child offer any information about what adults they are close to?
- How distressed the child is
- Whether there are strong professional and/or family/kin supports available

The caseworker will obtain only enough information from the child to determine if they have a clear preference of where they want to be or not be.

The caseworker will gather as much readily available information from multiple sources about where and with whom the child spends time when not in her own home.

The caseworker will assure that appropriate crisis services are available for the child.

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Decision: Can this caregiver provide a safe secure home for the child?

Basis for the decision: