



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

DCYF Standard Operating Procedure

1508.2 SAFETY PLAN PROCEDURES - JJS

Policy Directive: **23-09**

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Approved:

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., DCYF Director

This SOP defines JJS procedures for safety planning with families in a juvenile justice case specific to addressing the actions or inactions of parents/caregivers that create danger for children in the home.

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. Safety plan considerations:

A. Based on case-specific circumstances, can the following 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 parents/caregivers to follow the plan;

C. The willingness and ability of any alternative caregiver to follow the plan; and

D. 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 applicable), to keep children safe that includes:

1. A clear description of how each danger indicator will be mitigated (what the family will do to ensure safety, including what action or behaviors will be taken or stopped by the responsible party 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. The safety plan is 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, the JPPO assesses the alternative caregiver's ability and willingness to abide by the plan.
- A. Prior to plan implementation, the JPPO:
 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 JPPO 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 JPPO reviews the plan with the parents/caregivers to ensure they understand the importance of entering into the agreement and the potential outcomes 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 JPPO's workday, but no later than the next business day. The contact:
 - A. Is entered as a new collateral titled "SAFETY PLAN" with the details of the plan entered in the body of the contact; and
 - B. 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 Supervisor that another plan is necessary.
 - A. While in effect, the JPPO reviews the safety plan with the family and any alternative caregiver within 7 days, and documents the status of the identified dangers. Any revisions needed are documented on the plan and in the DCYF electronic information system.
 - B. If a safety plan is still necessary after 7 days, the JPPO consults with their Supervisor as to what further action may be required.
 - 1. If CPS is also involved with the family, the assigned CPSW and a CPS Supervisor should be included in the consultation.
 - C. A safety plan is still necessary at 10 days, the JPPO will consult with their Supervisor, the CPSW, the CPSW's Supervisor, and the CPS Staff Attorney to determine next steps to ensure the children are safe and the family will receive appropriate services.
- XI. If unable to create a viable safety plan with the family, the JPPO:
 - A. Calls law enforcement to respond; and
 - B. Calls Central Intake to report the abuse/neglect that is creating the danger.
 - 1. If the JPPO is at the residence they should remain there until law enforcement or a CPS colleague arrives.
 - 2. The JPPO makes themselves available for case consultation or collaboration with CPS regarding their work with the family.

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 JPPO should indicate on any written plans any individuals who were consulted, but not physically present.

Q3. 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.

Q4. How do I safety plan with a family whose primary language is not English or who are hearing/vision impaired?

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

Q5. 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](#)

"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