Slide 1

Investigative Response

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Slide 2

Purpose:
Child Protective Investigations

The first step of a comprehensive service delivery process designed to remedy the conditions that led to maltreatment.

Assess:
• if child is at significant risk
• best methods to ensure child safety
• if protective services are needed

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Your Responsibilities

Collect evidence & assess if child needs protection.

Initiate interventions that protect the child.

Establish the agency’s relationship with the family.

Begin a joint effort to identify maltreatment causes & eliminate them.
Module 1: Preparing for the Investigation

Objectives

- Summarize Hotline intakes/FSFN assessments.
- ID & check information sources/records prior to commencement.
- Use Child Maltreatment Index to define specific allegations & maltreatment types.

Module 1: Preparing for the Investigation

Types of Intakes

Relevant to Protective Investigations

- Child Intakes: In-Home or Institutional
- Special Conditions Referrals
- Service Referrals
- Additional & Supplemental Intakes

Module 1: Preparing for the Investigation

Special Conditions Referrals

Requests that require agency intervention to ensure service provision
Special Conditions Referrals

Child-on-Child Sexual Abuse
Caregiver Unavailable
Foster Care
Parent in Need of Assistance

Child on Child Sexual Abuse Referrals

Any sexual behavior between children 12 yrs. or younger occurring without consent, equality, or as a result of coercion.

You must respond to all child on child sexual abuse intakes when the alleged offender is 12 yrs. or younger.

Hotline immediately transfers reports/calls to LE if alleged offender is age 13 or older.

Services for family/caregivers, victim, juvenile sex offender, or child who exhibited inappropriate sexual behavior must be voluntary & of necessary duration.

Foster Care Referrals

Concerns that do not meet the criteria for intakes involving the care provided in a licensed foster home, group home or emergency shelter.
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**Caregiver Unavailable**

The parent/caregiver has been incarcerated, hospitalized or died and immediate plans for the child’s care must be made.

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**Parent Needs Assistance**

Situation in which a parent/caregiver is having difficulty caring for a child, afraid of abusing the child or is looking for help and without intervention maltreatment may occur.

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**Institutional Intakes**

- s. 39.302, F.S.

- Allegations that an employee/agent of DCF or any other entity/person covered by s.39.011(33) or (47), F.S. who

- is acting in an official capacity

- committed an act of child maltreatment
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Institutional Investigations

Notify
SA, LE, contract manager and licensing agency (oral notification)
Child’s parents/legal guardian, GAL, attorney.

Notify written report to LE written & working discipline
Interview collaterals and alleged perpetrator
Interview child at child’s residence

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Missing Children

Children ordered into custody
Refer to FDLR Missing Child Tracking System
Follow 65C-30.019

Reasonable efforts to locate

39.0141

Requires all agencies to make reasonable efforts to locate & file report re: s.937.021 if the child is determined missing 39.0141

65C-29.013

Reasonable efforts to locate

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False Reports

A report to the Hotline made maliciously made...

- to harass, embarrass, or harm another person
- for personal financial gain
- to get custody of a child
- for the reporting person’s personal benefit

The term “false report” does NOT include reports of maltreatment made in good faith to the hotline.
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**Investigation Requirements**

- 39.391(9)(a)1:
  - Conduct/assess state & federal records checks, including D.O.C. records on the parents/legal custodians/caregivers, & any others in the same household.
  - Crime Intelligence Unit at the Hotline provides this information on all intake subjects.
  - Request record checks on any additional participants revealed during investigation.
  - Research court records.

65C-29.009: addresses all investigations requirements.

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**Gather Information Prior to Contact**

- Assess child safety
- Protect personal safety
- Follow the law
- Identify questions you should ask
- Assess for pattern of abuse or neglect
- Learn about prior services provided and whether cooperative
- Identify other family members

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**Gather/Document Information**

- Current/prior intakes/investigations
- Out-of-state child welfare agencies when family has resided outside of Florida
- If priors with findings, staff with supervisor
- Existing services case files
- Service provider reports
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Gather/Document Information: Criminal History

- State & federal records checks
- Local LE; includes call outs to home
- Dept. of Juvenile Justice
- Dept. of Corrections
- Domestic Violence Injunction Registry

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Reporter Contact

Why contact the reporter?

- Verify Hotline information.
- What is their relationship to alleged victim?
- Do others have knowledge of allegations?
- Find the extent, severity, frequency of maltreatment.
- Assess safety issues/actions.
- Demographics, school, prior occurrences, ability to protect

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Caller ID

When can caller ID be used?

- When it's the same number the reporter provided.
- If the caller is a child who is self-reporting & their location is unknown.
- If all attempts to locate child victims & contact the reporter at the number provided have failed.
- Supervisor approval is required.
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**Child Maltreatment Index**

- Defines specific maltreatments
- Excluding factors: help hotline & PIs select the right maltreatment

**Assessing for maltreatment:**
- Documentation to support findings: evidence needed to support findings

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**Objectives**

- Describe the purpose of the Safety Assessment Tool
- Identify the categories & organization of the Safety Assessment Tool
- Use the FSFN Safety Assessment Tool to document assessment information & evidence of alleged maltreatments.

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**Safety Assessment Tool**

- Helps identify critical factors that place child at immediate threat of harm
- Helps you decide if a safety plan is needed
- Promotes consistent decision-making
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**Supervisory Review**

- Make sure safety plans are in place when needed.
- Make sure safety plans address safety threats.
- Complete review within 72 hours of your submission.
- Provide feedback to you within 24 hours.
- Note: PIs must review supervisor information and follow up on identified tasks.

Supervisors must review all SA’s and:

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**Second Party Review**

Combination of any two of the following:
- Child age 5 or younger or nonverbal and/or
- Prior intake involving any subject of current intake regardless of finding and/or
- Actual injury, neglect or threatened harm is serious or severe

Second Party Review is required:

Parent, caregiver, or other household member is responsible for the death or serious injury of another child.

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**Second Party Review Timeframes**

Second party reviewer must:

- Complete review within 72 hours from receipt of supervisory review
- Provide feedback to your supervisor within 24 hours after review completion
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Updating the Safety Assessment

65C-29.003(6)(e) – Must update:

- After initial contact w/ the child or any other subject of the intake if it occurs after the initial submission
- When assessing if child removal is necessary
- As often as necessary to ensure child safety
- When you have new information that impacts child safety
- When circumstances w/in the child’s environment change
- Prior to a recommendation to the court for disposition
- Prior to closure of the investigation

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Request for Assistance Assessment (RFA)

Parent in Need of Assistance

RFA Assessments: Document activities, assessment, & removal information for these special conditions referrals:

- Foster Care Referral
- Caregiver Unavailable

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Module Three

Completing the Investigation
Case Transfer
Components of the Investigative Summary and Assessment Summary
Module 3 Learning Objectives

Participants are able to:
- Determine findings based upon the credible evidence to support/refute alleged maltreatments
- Apply the Child Maltreatment Index for Maltreatment Finding
- Define and illustrate the purpose of the risk assessment for investigation completion
- Evaluate the application of the risk assessment through case applications
- Evaluate the investigation closure for appropriateness
- Assess the actions necessary for case transfer to community based care and ongoing safety management
- Identify investigative & assessment summary components
- Describe decisions & documentation prior to closing investigation

Definition of Maltreatment

“Maltreatment” means a specific type of injury or harm

Determining Findings

Credible Evidence
Types of Findings
Determiining the Finding

Finding:
The determination as to whether there is a preponderance of credible evidence supporting the reported harm or threat of harm for each alleged maltreatment.

Types of Findings

Verified Findings
- A preponderance of the "credible evidence" indicates that the maltreatment was the result of abuse/neglect.
- Evidence of reliable and relevant information makes it more likely than not that the maltreatment occurred.

Not Substantiated Findings
- There is credible evidence which does not meet the "preponderance" standard to support the maltreatment was due to abuse/neglect.
- The evidence weighs something, but it is not indisputable, and cross-checking has failed to produce additional information.

No Indicators Findings
- There is no credible evidence to support the alleged maltreatment.

Actuarial Risk Assessment

- Does not PREDICT, only probability
- A Classification System that compares characteristics of this household, based on its composition at assessment, with other households in a child welfare system with similar characteristics
- Is based on a HOUSEHOLD, NOT a CHILD (a child is not 'at risk')
Risk Assessment
Safe children:
• provides a measure for identifying families for prevention services.

Unsafe children:
• Risk assessment does not determine families for case management services, regardless of risk level.

Case Transfer Sufficiency
Checklist to Guide Transfer Process