

Intercounty case responsibilities, requirements and oversight procedures

Chapter 3, appendix 12

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Intercounty case responsibilities, requirements and oversight procedures

The purpose of this document is to provide consistent statewide requirements that promote the best interests of the children and families the Department serves regardless of their geographical location within the state. Specifically, this procedure is meant to guide Department staff involved in cases where more than one county is providing services to a child and his/her family.

The foundation of this procedure is to promote best practices among counties by approaching each situation in a collaborative manner and with an understanding that what may appear to be most convenient for staff may not always be in the best interests of the child and family. Following the model of parallel process, counties are encouraged to work with one another by being open-minded and practicing frequent communication.

CPS assessments and interviews

CPS assessments must be assigned and completed by the county in which the child resides. The child's residence is determined by where the child and his/her family are physically residing. This may include shelters, motels, case-managed housing, or other temporary housing. When a family does not have a stable residence, the motel or shelter where the family is staying will be treated as the residence, even though it is temporary. When the family has a stable residence but is temporarily staying elsewhere, the assessment will be assigned and completed where the residence is located.

When a child is temporarily staying outside the family home, residence will not be defined by the child's short-term visit location or placements designed to be short term (e.g. hospitalizations, sub-acute care, or stabilization centers). When the child/young adult is temporarily placed in a setting such as these, and the alleged abuse/neglect has occurred in the familial setting, the CPS assessment will be assigned and completed where the family resides. It is recognized that initial contact with the child/young adult may need to occur in the county in which the child is temporarily located, and this initial contact should be coordinated between the offices.

The exception to assigning the CPS assessment in the county where the child resides is when the abuse is alleged to have occurred in a substitute care setting. If child abuse is alleged involving a child-caring agency, licensed group home or certified foster home, the CPS assessment must be assigned in the county where the abuse occurred.

When it is learned that the residence of the child has been inaccurately identified or a child is residing at a new address, re-assignment of the assessment must be considered. If contact with

most participants has been already been made in the county that was inaccurately identified, then that county will complete the assessment and may ask for a secondary caseworker to assess the safety of the home. If little to no contact has been made with the family, then the screening report should be moved to the correct county, which is where the child resides.

The sending county will notify the new county, and the receiving county must respond to confirm the family's location prior to transfer of the case assignment. The assessment will be reassigned to the county where the family resides using applicable extensions. A new assessment will not be generated unless the original assessment was closed prior to determining the family's location. A courtesy interview may be requested by another county if the family is more than 30 miles away from the requesting county and the other county's branch office is closer to the family. Courtesy interviews must be documented in the six domains and in the assessment activity section of the CPS assessment.

If a child moves to a different county during a CPS assessment, the assigned county continues with and completes the assessment, requesting courtesy interviews as needed. If it is determined a child is unsafe at the conclusion of the assessment, discussion about the filing of a dependency petition in the new county of residence must occur between the two counties and may include the DDA or AAG, as warranted. If appropriate, a courtesy interview may be requested; however, the original assigned caseworker is responsible for completing the assessment.

If a mother of a child in DHS custody is placed in a residential treatment facility and she has a new baby, the county with the open case will assess and plan for that new baby with the assistance of the county in which the residential treatment program is located.

If there is a referral assigned to assess the safety of a new baby on an open case (except residential treatment) or if there is a new CPS referral on an open case (court involved, non-legal cooperative, FSS, etc.), the county in which the child resides will complete the new assessment with the expectation of partnering with the open case county for case history and family engagement, as appropriate.

Cross-county case supervision

- Cross-county case supervision requires a joint effort between branches and/or counties to ensure child safety and quality service. Requests should, when possible, occur prior to placement of the child or family's move to the receiving county. Cross-county case supervision may be requested by another county under the following circumstances:
 1. If the family's residence is more than approximately 30 driving miles away from the requesting county, the other county's branch office is closer to the family, and the family will need services identified within the receiving county; or
 2. If the family's residence is more than approximately 70 miles away from the requesting county, the other county's branch office is closer to the family, and no service identification will be needed within the receiving county.
- To facilitate a plan that best meets the needs of the child and family, all information must be shared and documented in OR-Kids in a timely manner. Responsibilities are as follows:
 1. The sending county will:
 - a. Verify that the information that supports working with the child and family is scanned into or is otherwise available in OR-Kids. This includes the safety plan, current case plan, current child specific case plan, current action agreement, current petition and court order and any other relevant information, such as evaluations and medical records.
 - b. Assure the supervisor of the sending caseworker has reviewed and authorized the request. Send an email to the receiving branch's inter-county case services request email address requesting cross-county case supervision prior to placement of the child. For residential treatment cases, the proposed plan for after-care should be included in the request when available.
 - c. If a child has been placed in the receiving county on an emergency basis, the sending county will notify the receiving county within one business day.
 - d. Retain case planning responsibility.
 - e. If applicable, determine which caseworker will be present at treatment reviews, court hearings and other relevant proceedings with an understanding that the sending caseworker will, at minimum, participate by phone.
 - f. The sending county must document the request in a case note in OR-Kids within one business day.

2. The receiving county will:
 - a. Document receipt of the request in OR-Kids case notes within one business day.
 - b. Notify sending branch of receipt of request within two business days of the receipt of the request.
 - c. Verify and review documents in OR-Kids. The assigned caseworker must document in an OR-Kids case note that review of the information occurred. Documentation must clearly demonstrate a thorough review of Department history and include a short analysis of decision making leading up to the request and indicate whether the receiving branch agrees with previous decision making. If the receiving branch does not agree with previous decision making, a staffing comprised of staff from both the sending and receiving branches must be scheduled within one business day to discuss and resolve any concerns. The staffing must include the caseworker, the caseworker's supervisor, and the program manager or designee from both branches. The staffing and outcome must be clearly documented in a case note in OR-Kids by the receiving branch in a timely manner.
- Initiate communication with the sending branch within seven calendar days of the receipt of the request. In cases where active efforts apply, communication should occur within three calendar days. This communication should include:
 1. Identification of the assigned caseworker and Active Efforts worker.
 2. Clarification of roles and responsibilities.
 3. Discussion and agreement on the needed frequency of communication among caseworkers.
 4. Development of a plan to provide court-ordered services by the receiving branch.
 5. If applicable, determination of which caseworker will be present at treatment reviews, court hearings and other relevant proceedings with an understanding that the sending caseworker will, at minimum, participate by phone.
 6. Once the child has been placed in the receiving county, the caseworker will have face-to-face contact with the child within five business days. If a child has been placed on an emergency basis, the receiving county will have face-to-face contact with the child within five calendar days.

7. Ensure children and families will receive services consistent with those being provided in the receiving branch. Those include both contracted (Strengthening, Preserving and Reunifying Families; In-Home Safety and Reunification Services; etc.) and non-contracted services (System of Care, Foster Care Prevention, etc.), which will be provided by the receiving branch based on availability in their area. In addition, Central Office-based contracted services (Independent Living Program, Behavioral Rehabilitation Services, etc.) will be made available to the child and family.
8. Assume responsibility for face-to-face contact and documentation of these contacts for all children and parents receiving cross-county case supervision. Documentation of face-to-face contacts must clearly demonstrate how safety has been ensured.
9. If the caseworker is unable to locate the child and/or parent receiving cross-county case services, communication to the sending branch must include detailed narration regarding the number of attempts and what steps were taken to locate the family.
10. All other responsibilities will be negotiated as necessary.

Children placed in a child caring agency

Cases will be accepted for cross-county case supervision when the situation meets the criteria established under (1) and (2) below and will comply with all of the expectations listed for both the sending and receiving branch under the Cross-County Case Supervision section.

1. Seventy miles (per diem Guideline) workstation to placement; and
2. Placement anticipated to be longer than 90 days.

An exception can be made to (2) if the distance is more than 100 miles between workstation and placement.

Out-of-county placements

Notification of intent to place children out of county shall occur prior to placement, unless there is an emergency, in which case notification shall occur the next business day. Notification must be made to the receiving branch's inter-county case services request email address. This includes placements with biological parents of children who are in the care and custody of the Department.

To coordinate services for the child and/or family, information required for cross-county case supervision must be immediately available in OR-Kids. If the receiving branch believes the needs of the child, parents and/or foster parents are not being met, the receiving county reserves the right to require cross-county case supervision regarding the availability of services in the area. In situations involving Department-certified foster homes, the certifier of that home, in conjunction with his/her supervisor, can deny placement with good cause. All information must be thoroughly documented in an OR-Kids case note.

Transfer of jurisdiction

- Transfer of jurisdiction is sometimes necessary to meet the needs of the children and families we serve. In order to ensure the safety of the child and continuity of services, the following criteria have been established:
- Prior to requesting the court send or accept a case for transfer of jurisdiction, the sending branch will request and have cross-county case supervision in place for at least six months. The receiving branch may notify the sending branch of its willingness to accept transfer of jurisdiction at any time.
 1. EXCEPTION to (1): Transfer of jurisdiction may be requested without cross-county case supervision or the six-month waiting period in cases where it is clearly in the best interest of the child and supportive of achieving the permanent plan for the child. For example, a current or recent TPR case in the receiving county.
 2. If the court initiates this process without DHS consultation, a manager must be notified immediately. Within one business day, the manager must take action to address any concerns regarding the court-ordered transfer of jurisdiction and thoroughly document steps taken in a case note in OR-Kids. As ensuring child safety is critical, the receiving branch maintains the responsibility of timely face-to-face contact and must follow all steps outlined in this procedure.
- Sending branch retains case planning responsibility until the legal case has been received and accepted in the receiving county and its court.
- If a non-legal cooperative case exists, and it is determined safety threats can no longer be managed without court involvement and a petition must be filed, the receiving county will have sending county representation at initial court proceedings in the receiving county, if requested, with regard to availability of services in the area.

Out-of-county foster/adoption home studies

- In situations where it is necessary to study or certify a home out of county, a request should be made to the receiving branch, via the receiving branch's inter-county case services request email address, to provide certification or adoptive home study services. All studies should be given the same priority regardless from which branch they are being referred. Prior to requesting a home study of a family interested in child-specific foster care or adoption, the sending branch is responsible for:
 1. The initial discussion with the potential applicant (including sibling planning issues, a brief discussion about certification and adoption standards, and that the assessment process includes criminal and child welfare background checks as well as a full assessment of the family and home environment); and
 2. An initial check of databases (OR-Kids, IIS, OJIN/eCourt)
- If after conducting an assessment or home study, the receiving branch determines the family cannot be approved, the receiving branch will notify the requesting branch prior to providing notification to the applicant and an explanation of the withdrawal process of their application versus denial.
- Placements out of county are subject to the approval of the receiving branch. The counties can jointly agree to follow the Foster Home Certification rule (OAR 413-200-0260 to 0424) that allows the sending county certifier to enter the receiving county for the purpose of completing the certification. This exception requires District Manager approval from the receiving county.

Dual-county cases

Situations may occur where new allegations arise or a family seeks services in a new county of residence. This may include an older child in permanent foster care or in an Independent Living Program who is receiving services in another county. If there is no plan for reunification and no current involvement between the child and the family, a separate case plan with the same case number/name should be opened and shared between counties. In situations of co-managing cases, branches should determine in partnership when making changes in OR-Kids primary and secondary caseworker designation.

Required staffings and documentation

Required staffings and documentation involving all inter-county case services include:

- A staffing that includes caseworkers and supervisors from both sending and receiving branches at the following critical junctures:
 1. At initiation of cross-county case supervision, once a caseworker has been assigned.
 2. Upon any changes or disruptions in placement of child. If the child is moved after hours or on an emergency basis, a staffing must occur the next business day. Documentation of the staffing must include the following:
 - a. Identification of any health and medical, mental health, educational or other concerns for the child. This includes documentation of any necessary follow-up required or other appointments previously scheduled or requiring scheduling.
 - b. Identification of any prescription or over-the-counter medications taken by the child and confirmation the medications were given to the appropriate caretaker with instructions on how to administer, whom to contact for clarification, and when a review of medication needs to occur.
 - c. Verification medication logs were provided and explained to the caretaker.
 - d. Plan to address educational and other needs as necessary.
 - e. Review of any CANS assessment and supervision plan as applicable.
 3. Upon relocation of any other member of the family receiving cross-county case supervision services from the receiving county.
 4. In advance of all court hearings at a time agreed to by both receiving and sending counties.
 5. Upon conclusion of the cross county-case supervision.
- All written communication between branches must include the assigned caseworkers and supervisors to ensure safety of the child and family is not overlooked in the event of unexpected or otherwise scheduled staff absence.

Dispute resolution

Disputes that may arise in any sections within this procedure that are unable to be resolved at the supervisory level should be staffed with the program manager from each county, the involved supervisors, and caseworkers, as appropriate. If the dispute still cannot be resolved, it will then be staffed with the respective district managers and the applicable Central Office program manager.

Email Addresses for Inter-County Case Services Requests

- D1 Inter-County Case Services Requests D1Inter-CountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D2 Inter-County Case Services Requests D2Inter-CountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us
- Inter-County Case Services Requests D3 Inter-County.CaseServicesRequestsD3@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D4 – Benton Inter-County Case Services Requests
D4BentonInterCountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D4 – Lincoln Inter-County Case Services Requests
D4LincolnInterCountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D4 – Linn Inter-County Case Services Requests D4LinnInterCountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D5 Inter-County Case Services Requests D5InterCountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us
- Inter-County Case Services Requests D6 Inter-County.CaseServicesRequestsD6@dhsoha.state.or.us
- Inter-County Case Services Requests D7 - Coos Inter-County.CaseServicesRequestsD7-Coos@dhsoha.state.or.us
- Inter-County Case Services Requests D7 - Curry Inter-County.CaseServicesRequestsD7-Curry@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D8 – Jackson Inter-County Case Services Requests
D8JacksonInterCountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D8 – Josephine Inter-County Case Services Requests
D8JosephineInterCountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us
- Inter-County Case Services Requests D9 Inter-County.CaseServicesRequestsD9@dhsoha.state.or.us
- Inter-County Case Services Requests D10 Inter-County.CaseServiceRequestsD10@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D11 Inter-County Case Services Requests D11InterCountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us
- Inter-County Case Services Requests D12 Inter-County.CaseServiceRequestsD12@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D13 Inter-County Case Services Requests D13InterCountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us

- Inter-County Case Services Requests D14 Inter-County.CaseServiceRequestsD14@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D15 – N. Clackamas Inter-County Case Services Requests
D15NClackamasInterCountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D15 – Oregon City Inter-County Case Services Requests
D15OregonCityInterCountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D16 – Beaverton Inter-County Case Services Requests
D16BeavertonInterCountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us
- D16 – Hillsboro Inter-County Case Services Requests
D16HillsboroInterCountyCaseServicesRequests@dhsoha.state.or.us

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