



Policy and Procedures

<u>Department Name</u>		
Quality Management		
<u>CHAPTER:</u>	<u>SUBJECT:</u> Identification Of Children	<u>POLICY NUMBER:</u> QM-030
<u>APPROVAL:</u>	<u>EFFECTIVE DATE:</u> August 31, 2006	<u>REPLACES (policy # and date):</u> OP 175-83 Child Welfare Legal Services

- I. **PURPOSE:** This operating procedure describes the procedure for photographing, fingerprinting and obtaining birth verification for children under court ordered supervision. The purpose of obtaining these documents (photographs, fingerprints and birth verification) is to serve as a means of child identification. Release of photographs and/or fingerprints shall be confined only to the purpose of identification of missing children. Any exceptions to this usage will require the authority of the courts.

- II. **REVIEW HISTORY:** New policy.

- III. **CONTACT:** Quality Management Department.

- IV. **PERSONS AFFECTED:** Children’s Network Of Southwest Florida Staff and Contracted Case Management Organizations.

- V. **POLICY:** This operating procedure is applicable to all Children’s Network staff who work with children under court ordered supervision, in both out-of-home care and in-home care. This operating procedure does not apply to children under voluntary protective services supervision or young adults formerly in foster care who have reached the age of 18.

- VI. **RATIONALE:** Describes actions necessary to assure that all identifying information of children is obtained and up to date.

- VII. **CROSS REFERENCES:** Administrative rule 65C-30.004

- VIII. **DEFINITIONS:**
 - a. “Designee” means a person, contractual provider or other agency or entity named by the Department.

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- b.** "In-Home Supervision" means supervision provided to families and children living in their own homes, including children and families who are on post-placement supervision.
- c.** "Out-of-Home Care" means the placement of a child, arranged and supervised by the Children's Network Staff of contracted provider, outside the home of the child's custodial parent. This includes placement in licensed (i.e., shelter, foster home, group home) and non-licensed (i.e., relative and non-relative) settings.
- d.** "Voluntary Protective Services Supervision" means that the family has consented to receive services from the Children's Network Staff or contracted provider without court intervention.

IV. PROCEDURES:

1. Photographing:

- a.** All children under court ordered services will have their photographs updated every 6 months for ages zero to five years and once per year for ages five years and up until the child reaches the age of 18. Children in out-of-home care need to be photographed within 72 hours of removal. Children in in-home care need to be photographed within 15 days of being transferred to a services unit.
- b.** Any child under in-home supervision or out-of-home care who was previously reported as missing and returns will have his/her photograph taken immediately, unless the child's appearance has not changed significantly since the last photograph.
- c.** The primary case manager for any child under in-home supervision or out-of-home care must ensure the photograph is taken and properly filed.
- d.** If the parent or caregiver refuses to allow the case manager access to the child under in-home supervision or in out-of home care for the purpose of obtaining photographs the case manager will:
 - (1)** Document diligent efforts to obtain the photograph in the HomeSafenet chronological notes.
 - (2)** In conjunction with Child Welfare Legal Services, will request an order from the court for authorization to obtain the initial photograph, within 15 days of the order being signed, and to update the photograph per the schedule of once every 6 months for ages zero to five years and once per year for ages five years and up until the child reaches the age of 18.

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- e.** For children currently placed out of state, the case manager is required to:
- (1)** Contact the caregiver and/or courtesy case manager (if assigned) to request that a photo of the child be sent. The caregiver and/or courtesy case manager will also be asked to follow up with photographs every 6 months for children ages zero to five years and yearly for every child age five years and up until the child reaches the age of 18.
 - (2)** Some caregivers may not have cameras and may be unable or unwilling to take photographs. In these cases, the case manager must make diligent efforts to document his/her efforts to inform the caregiver of the need for photographs. These efforts must be clearly documented in HomeSafenet documentation.
- f.** All children that are to be placed out of state will have photographs made prior to leaving Florida for placement out of state. The caregiver and/or courtesy case manager (if assigned) will also be asked to follow up with photographs every 6 months for children ages zero to five years and yearly for every child age five years and up until the child reaches the age of 18. The caregiver and/or courtesy case manager will be asked to send a photo to the case manager for filing in the child's case record.
- g.** As soon as the out of state placement or courtesy supervision request is approved by the receiving state or district/region, the sending district will ensure that a recent photograph is provided to the receiving state or district/region within 15 days of child's placement.
- h.** For children sent to Florida from another state or when a child is sent from one district/region of the state to another for courtesy supervision, it will be the responsibility of the case manager supervising the child to maintain a current photograph of the child in his/her case record and be updated accordingly. The child's photograph will be kept in the case record of the district/region that is providing the courtesy supervision.
- i.** For all photographs the child must be positioned for a full facial photograph, from the shoulders to the top of the head. The photograph will be maintained in the hard copy case file and uploaded into HomeSafenet. When a child is placed out-of-district, copies will be maintained in the case file where supervision is occurring. The child's name and date of birth must be indicated on the picture (either front or back) and date the photograph was taken must be generated on the photograph by the camera or written on the front or back of the picture. If digital photographs are used, alternative ways to document name and age must be used.

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2. Fingerprinting:

- a.** Children three years and older who are in out-of-home care will be fingerprinted within 15 days of initial placement. If the child is under the age of three, a means of obtaining the child's footprints shall be explored. If the caregiver refuses to allow the case manager access to the child for the purpose of obtaining fingerprints, the case manager will document his/her diligent efforts to obtain the fingerprints in the HomeSafenet chronological notes. The case manager, in conjunction with Child Welfare Legal Services, will request an order from the court for authorization to obtain the fingerprints.
- b.** All children that are to be placed out of state will have fingerprints secured prior to placement.
- c.** For children currently placed out of state, the caregiver will be contacted to request that fingerprints be obtained. In some cases, the caregiver may be unable or unwilling to secure fingerprints. In these cases, the case manager must make diligent efforts to document his/her efforts to inform the caregiver of the need for fingerprints. These efforts must be clearly documented in HomeSafenet documentation.

3. Birth Verification:

- a.** Verification of the child's birth may be obtained by photocopying the child's birth certificate, contacting the in-state or out-of-state Office of Vital Statistics to request a printout that verifies the birth information or by accessing the vital statistics information and obtaining a certified copy of the child's birth certificate.
- b.** Children entering out-of-home care must have documentation of verification of the child's birth within 15 calendar days of the placement.
 - (1)** For children placed in licensed out of home care a certified copy of the child's birth certificate will be required.
 - (2)** For children placed in relative or non-relative care any of the defined methods of birth verification listed above may be obtained.
- c.** For children placed under in-home supervision, birth verification will be obtained 15 days after the case has been staffed and transferred to a services unit.
- d.** Birth verification records will be maintained in the official case file.