

# Mnaasged Child and Family Services



## Child Protection Policy and Procedure Manual

2019

*Acknowledging the Past  
Serving the Present  
Creating the Future*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>SECTION 2: KATELYNN’S PRINCIPLE</b> .....	<b>2</b>
KATELYNN’S PRINCIPLE-DECISION MAKING AFFECTING A CHILD .....	2
<b>SECTION 3: PROCEDURES, PRACTICES, AND STANDARDS OF SERVICE FOR CHILD PROTECTION CASES</b> ...4	
REVIEW OF REFERRALS/REPORTS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES .....	4
VOLUNTARY SERVICES FOR NON-PROTECTION SITUATIONS – COMMUNITY LINKS .....	6
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #1: RECEIPT OF A NEW REFERRAL AND DETERMINING THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE; COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY .....	8
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #1A: DISPOSITION OF THE REFERRAL; DETERMINING THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TIME .....	13
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #2: PLANNING AND CONDUCTING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION .....	16
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #2: CONDUCTING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION; FAMILY BASED .....	18
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #2: CONDUCTING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION; INSTITUTIONAL.....	22
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #3: CONDUCTING THE SAFETY ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPING THE SAFETY PLAN – COLLABORATING WITH THE FAMILY .....	25
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #4: CONDUCTING THE RISK ASSESSMENT.....	28
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #5: CONCLUDING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION .....	30
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #6: TRANSFERRING A CASE .....	33
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #7: ONGOING SERVICE CASE MANAGEMENT: THE FIRST MONTH ...	36
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #7: CASE MANAGEMENT .....	40
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #8: CASE CLOSURE .....	46
CHILD PROTECTION STANDARDS: SUPERVISION.....	48
DEPARTURE FROM A CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD.....	51
<b>SECTION 4: MANAGEMENT OF RECORDS AND FILE CONTENT</b> .....	<b>53</b>
RECORDING .....	53
RELEASE OF INFORMATION – CONSENT FORMS.....	55
PARENT OR GUARDIAN REFUSAL TO SIGN THE RELEASE OF INFORMATION FORM.....	57
DISCLOSURE OF, OR ACCESS TO, RECORDS WITH CONSENT .....	58
DISCLOSURE OF, OR ACCESS TO, RECORDS PERMITTED WITHOUT CONSENT.....	59
CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE FILES .....	61
PREVIOUS WARDS – REQUEST FOR INFORMATION .....	63
FAST TRACK INFORMATION SYSTEM.....	65
PREPARING CLOSED FILES FOR STORAGE IN THE CENTRAL STORAGE .....	67
<b>SECTION 5: PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN</b> .....	<b>69</b>
ALTERNATIVES OF ADMISSION TO CARE – ADMISSION PREVENTION .....	69
INVOLUNTARY ADMISSION OF A CHILD TO A PLACE OF SAFETY .....	71
PLACE OF SAFETY.....	77
ADMISSION INTO CARE – LEGAL DOCUMENTATION .....	80

PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN .....	82
RETRIEVING A CHILD’S/YOUTH’S IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTS FROM THE PARENT(S) OR GUARDIAN(S).....	83
CHILD ADMISSION FORMS .....	85
AUTHORITY FOR SIGNING MEDICAL CONSENTS .....	87
AUTHORIZATION FOR LIMITS FOR EXPENDITURES FOR SUPERVISORS.....	90
RIGHTS OF A CHILD IN CARE AT ADMISSION.....	92
ORIENTATION FOR CHILDREN IN CARE .....	94
ONTARIO CHILD ADVOCATE .....	96
RIGHTS OF A PARENT OR A GUARDIAN.....	99
REINTEGRATION PLANNING .....	101
STABILITY PLANNING .....	103
PRESERVING THE IDENTITY OF A CHILD IN CARE .....	105
MAINTAINING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.....	108
COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO IDENTIFY AND REMOVE BARRIERS FOR FAMILY ACCESS TO SERVICES.....	111
CHILD TAX CREDIT .....	113
<b>SECTION 6: LEGAL STATUS.....</b>	<b>115</b>
TEMPORARY CARE AGREEMENTS .....	115
FORMAL CUSTOMARY CARE AGREEMENT .....	118
SPECIAL NEEDS AGREEMENT.....	125
<b>SECTION 7: SERVICE COMPLAINTS .....</b>	<b>127</b>
SERVICE COMPLAINTS .....	127
<b>SECTION 8: SERIOUS OCCURRENCE .....</b>	<b>136</b>
SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING AND PROCESS .....	136
DEATH OF A CHILD RECEIVING SERVICES REQUIRING ENHANCED SERIOUS OCCURRENCE .....	148
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES – SEXUAL ASSAULT .....	153
NOTIFICATION OF SERIOUS OCCURRENCE PROCEDURE TO THE ALTERNATIVE CARE PROVIDER .....	155
DEBRIEFING SUPPORT FOR PARENTS, GUARDIANS, AND ALTERNATIVE CARE PROVIDERS FOLLOWING CRISIS SITUATIONS .....	157
DEBRIEFING SUPPORT FOR STAFF FOLLOWING CRISIS SITUATIONS.....	159
EXPUNCTION HEARINGS.....	160
CHILD ABUSE REGISTRY .....	162
<b>SECTION 9: GENERIC SECTION.....</b>	<b>164</b>
ALERTS WITH OTHER CHILDREN’S AID SOCIETIES .....	164
CASE COVERAGE DURING PLANNED ABSENCE .....	166
CASE MANAGEMENT BETWEEN OFFICES.....	168
CASE NOTES.....	170
CORRESPONDENCE.....	172
FAMILY CASE CONFERENCE.....	173
CIRCLE.....	175
FREQUENCY OF HOME VISITS/CONTACT WITH FAMILIES.....	178
HIGH-RISK PREGNANCY REFERRALS ON CLOSED OR NEW FILES.....	180
INVESTIGATIONS INVOLVING BOARD MEMBERS.....	181

INVESTIGATIONS INVOLVING STAFF ..... 183  
PLACEMENT PRIORITIES ..... 185  
PROTOCOL POLICY ..... 188  
SERVICE PLANS TO BE SHARED..... 190  
SUPERVISION ..... 191  
TIMELINES..... 195  
TRANSFERRING A CASE..... 198  
UNANNOUNCED HOME VISITS..... 201  
USE OF CUSTOMARY CARE ..... 203  
USE OF POLICE ..... 205  
VULNERABLE INFANTS..... 207

**SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

## SECTION 2: KATELYNN'S PRINCIPLE

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Katelynn's Principle	
Subject: Katelynn's Principle-Decision Making Affecting a Child	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act Legislation: Bill 57, Katelynn's Principle Act, 2016</i>	

### KATELYNN'S PRINCIPLE-DECISION MAKING AFFECTING A CHILD

#### POLICY

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*Mnaasged Child and Family Services honours the memory of Katelyn Sampson. She was seven years old when she died from being brutally abused over many months by her legal guardians. Many factors contributed to Katelynn's vulnerable situation and to her case not being addressed by the authorities. The jury in the coroner's inquest into her death made 173 recommendations for preventing another tragic death. The first recommendation, referred to as Katelynn's Principle, places Children at the centre of decisions affecting them.*

*The issue of barriers requires mandatory regular reviews at all Case Planning Meetings, Circles, or Family Case Conferences.*

#### PROCEDURE

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##### KATELYNN'S PRINCIPLE

1. The Child/Youth must be at the centre of the decision.
2. The Child/Youth is an individual with rights. The Child/Youth must always be seen, the Child's/Youth's voice must always be heard, and the Child/Youth must be listened to and respected.
3. The Child's/Youth's heritage must be taken into consideration and respected. Attention must be paid to the broad and diverse communities defined by matters such as race, ethnicity, religion, language, and sexual orientation.

4. Actions must be taken to ensure that Children/Youth who can form their own views is able to express those views freely and safely about matters affecting them.
5. The Child's/Youth's views must be given weight in accordance with the Child's/Youth's age and maturity.
6. In accordance with the Child's/Youth's age and maturity, the Child/Youth must be given the opportunity to participate before any decisions affecting the Child/Youth are made, whether the participation is direct or through a support person or representative.
7. In accordance with the Child's/Youth's age and maturity, the Child/Youth must be engaged through honest and respectful dialogue about how and why a decision affecting them is made.
8. Every person who provides services to Children/Youth or services affecting Children/Youth is a Child Advocate. Advocacy may be a Child's/Youth's lifeline, and it must occur from the point of first contact and on a continuous basis thereafter.

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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## SECTION 3: PROCEDURES, PRACTICES, AND STANDARDS OF SERVICE FOR CHILD PROTECTION CASES

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Review of Referrals/Reports Not Eligible for Services	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

### REVIEW OF REFERRALS/REPORTS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES

#### POLICY

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*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that all referrals and reports received will be reviewed to determine eligibility.*

#### PROCEDURE

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1. Those referrals that are not determined to be eligible for a protection response will be viewed as equally important as those that receive a Child/Youth Protection Response. Referrals that are determined ineligible for service will occur in the following manner:
2. The First Response Helper/Assigned Helper will complete the People Profile and Referral modules on the Mnaasged Information Management System within 24 hours and will immediately forward to a Supervisor.
3. The Supervisor may, upon review, do one of the following:
  - a) Simply review and approve the code
  - b) Approve the code but with a minor Intervention Plan
  - c) Change the code to one that is above the Intervention Line; therefore, initiating a community link or Child/Youth Protection Response
  - d) Refer the case to the Prevention and Early Intervention Services offered by Mnaasged or by a community served by Mnaasged

4. The Supervisor will review and approve the People Profile and Referral modules within 24 hours.
5. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of these referrals determined ineligible for Child Protection Service.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Voluntary Services for Non-Protection Situations – Community Links	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## VOLUNTARY SERVICES FOR NON-PROTECTION SITUATIONS – COMMUNITY LINKS

### POLICY

*Individuals or families who approach Mnaasged Child and Family Services for assistance with a particular non-protection related problem will be referred to the appropriate services.*

*The First Response Helper/Assigned Helper will be required to complete an initial Assessment of the presenting problems of the family prior to determining community links required or needed.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The First Response Helper will complete the People Profile, the Internal Record Check, the Fast Track Record Checks, and the Referral module based on the report received.
2. The First Response Helper will provide the family with names and contact information of services that the family may access to assist them with the presenting problems identified or will refer the family directly to services that handle problems requiring more intensive support; in these situations, the First Response Helper will meet with the family to identify the areas of concern, the service goals, and the expectations of the family and of Mnaasged. The Helper will endeavour to present a full range of options that will assist the individual and the family with their current situation.
3. The First Response Helper will work in collaboration with the First Nation Band Representative, the family, the relevant Service Providers, and the community to develop the family's Service Plan. Once completed, the family will be asked to sign the Service Plan.
4. This type of service should be short term and will be reviewed on a regular basis. Any decision to extend the original Service Plan beyond 60 days requires approval of the

Supervisor. When these matters exceed 60 days, the file will be transferred to the Family Circle of Care Team or identified community-based services for ongoing services.

5. When the Eligibility Spectrum criteria is not met for Child Protection Services and the family is not receptive to Mnaasged following up on Community Link referrals, the First Response Helper will document the community link within 14 days.
6. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of these types of referrals determined ineligible for Child Protection Service.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Child Protection Standard #1: Receipt of a New Referral and Determining the Appropriate Response; Collaborating with the Community	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard 1, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i> , and **** Federal Legislation	

## CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #1: RECEIPT OF A NEW REFERRAL AND DETERMINING THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE; COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will maintain a formal system to determine eligibility for Child Protection Services, Child safety, assess risk of future harm, and develop plans of service to assist families and Children/Youth in need.*

*Mnaasged also has a responsibility under the federal Child Well-being legislation and Mnaasged Child and Family Services own community standards to provide supportive services beyond the Child Protection Standards under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act.*

*When reports are received regarding concerns of a Child/Youth, it will be considered as a potential referral. Reports received during regular office hours will be received by the First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper. The Helper will immediately take the referral information and will determine if the information meets the stated criteria for Mnaasged to offer Child Protection Services. Decisions of eligibility are based on the following:*

- a) If the Child/Youth will need protection as defined in Part V of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act*
- b) If the Child/Youth currently resides within Mnaasged Child and Family Services' territorial jurisdiction (if the Child/Youth does not reside within Mnaasged's jurisdiction, the First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will immediately refer the matter to the appropriate Children's Aid Society)*

- c) If the Child/Youth requiring Child Welfare Services is within the Mnaasged Child and Family Services jurisdiction and is a member of Mnaasged's member First Nations, or any First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Child/Youth and family within the jurisdiction eligible to be served by Mnaasged Child and Family Services. (If the Child/Youth does not meet these criteria, the First Response Helper or Assigned Helper will refer the matter immediately to the appropriate Children's Aid Society serving the jurisdiction where the Child/Youth and family reside).*

*Based on an assessment of whether the referral information matches one of the situations described in the Eligibility Spectrum, Mnaasged Child and Family Services will know if it will open the case for a Child Protection Investigation under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act or if the case is eligible for services under one of the other mandated services offered by Mnaasged Child and Family Services.*

*The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will assume responsibility for the referral until the case is approved by the Supervisor and assigned to a Child Safety Intervention Helper/Assigned Helper.*

## PROCEDURE

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1. When criteria are met, the First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will be required to provide information to the referral source with the ongoing duty to report and to engage the referral source for detailed information regarding the Child/Youth and family, ethnic origin, First Nation or Indigenous community affiliation, religion, language of family, their support networks, witnesses, and Helper safety issues.
2. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper receiving the information must advise the referral source that there is no guarantee Mnaasged can assure confidentiality regarding their identity. Mnaasged will not disclose their identity throughout the investigation; however, their identity may be revealed in circumstances where such disclosure is necessary to ensure the protection of a Child/Youth, such as during a court proceeding. Information concerning a Child/Youth or family who are members of a First Nation (or are eligible for membership) is always disclosed to its First Nation Band Representative.
3. When the referral source is a professional, the First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will formally acknowledge the report by sending a letter acknowledging the referral and, at the end of the investigation, acknowledging that follow-up occurred; however, no details will be provided about the outcome.
4. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will acknowledge the report and will request the referral source to contact Mnaasged when new information is received.
5. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will inquire and gather as much information as possible about the Child's/Youth's First Nation or Indigenous community.

The purpose of gathering this information is to accurately document the appropriate First Nation(s) affiliated, to engage the First Nation, and to ensure that Mnaasged will be able to follow the Protocol for each member First Nation.

6. The information gathered will guide the Helper to determine if another First Nation is affiliated with the family. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will notify both First Nations when required.
7. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper who is authorized under section 74(1) of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* is required to rate the referral using the Eligibility Spectrum and to document the eligibility decision with the supporting reasons in the People Profile and Referral modules within the Mnaasged Information Management System.
8. Eligibility refers to when the Child Protection Services are needed to protect a Child/Youth based on the severity of the issue. Extremely severe or moderately severe situations are classified as being above the “Intervention Line,” which means that protection services as defined by the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* are needed and that Children/Youth are eligible for service. Minimally severe or not severe situations will not likely require a protection intervention under the provincial mandate, but these may include a community link with a referral to prevention or community services or other services offered by Mnaasged or the community under federal legislation or community mandates.
9. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper who is authorized under section 74(1) of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* will be required to decide on the response time based on the eligibility code for a Child Protection Investigation.
10. Extremely severe situations are when Child/Youth safety is of immediate concern or that physical evidence is at risk of being lost due to delay. In these situations, the family must be seen by the First Response Helper/Assigned Helper within 12 hours.
11. Moderately severe situations are when there are no immediate safety threats identified for a Family-based Investigation. In these situations, the response time will be within seven (7) days of the referral. If there are no immediate safety threats to the Child/Youth in a Community Caregiver Institutional Investigation, then the response time will be within 48 hours.
12. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will be required to screen all referrals for domestic violence.
13. The First Response Helper will be required to complete a record check of all family members in the home within 24 hours in Mnaasged’s Information Management System and the Provincial Fast Track. Information pertaining to the reported Child/Youth is to be documented on the People Profile and Referral modules in the Mnaasged Information Management System. If Fast Track indicates there has been previous contact with the family and a Children’s Aid Society or an Indigenous Child Well-being Agency, the relevant

information from the database concerning the contact will be included in the case record. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will obtain relevant and detailed file information from the Children's Aid Society or the Indigenous Child Well-being Agency prior to initiating contact with the subject family as soon as possible.

14. When there is an existing open Child Protection File or new information has been received, the information must be provided to the Assigned Helper and noted on file the same day or before the next working day. If the information was received after hours by an After Hours Helper, a decision will be made in consultation with the Supervisor who is on call to constitute a new referral and begin an investigation. Calls requiring a response within 12 hours of receipt before the scheduled office closure will be addressed by a Helper assigned to respond to the referral before the First Response Helper and the Supervisor leave for the day.
15. The First Response Helper will be required to open a new file for the family if a file does not already exist. The First Response Helper will also complete the People Profile and Referral modules in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
16. If the referral source has alleged that a Child/Youth may have suffered or is suffering from abuse, the First Response Helper will be required to complete a record check in the Ontario Child Abuse Register (CAR) within three (3) days of receiving the referral for service involving a Child/Youth needs protection. (Please refer to the Child Abuse Registry Policy.)
17. The First Response Helper will be required to document all People Profiles and Referrals in the Mnaasged Information Management System as soon as possible and within 24 hours of receipt of the referral.
18. The First Response Helper will be required to complete the People Profile and Referral modules in the Mnaasged Information Management System and to send electronically to the First Response Supervisor for review and approval.

#### SPECIFIC TO COMMUNITY CAREGIVER FAMILY-BASED OUT-OF-HOME INVESTIGATIONS

1. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will be required to document the referral information regarding the Alternative Care Provider or other family-based setting receiving service or support from Mnaasged. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will provide the referral information immediately to the Assigned Children's Circle of Care Helper responsible for overseeing the Child/Youth and the Home. The Assigned Helper will immediately consult with the Supervisor. Referral information regarding the Child/Youth in other residential settings will be provided immediately to the Assigned Helper, the Supervisor, the Alternative Care Supervisor, the Senior Manager, and in their absence the Director of Services.

2. When there is a Family File open, the First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will be required to cross-reference the Community Caregiver Files with the Protection Files of the Child/Youth being considered an alleged victim and the family of origin.
3. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will be required to document referrals concerning allegations about Community Caregivers (family-based or institutional) into the Mnaasged Information Management System (by selecting the option on the Referral module).
4. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will be required to list all the Children/Youth being cared for in the Home, including the Community Caregiver's own Children.
5. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will be required to open a referral when protection concerns exist with family-based settings using the same method to process other Family Protection Files.

#### SPECIFIC TO INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS INVESTIGATIONS

1. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will be required to document the person alleged to have caused the reason for a protection referral as the Guardian within the institutional setting.
2. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will be required to document the facility or institution as the secondary Caregiver on the People Profile module when a protection referral is required.

Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of these referrals to ensure Eligibility Spectrum codes are appropriate.

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Child Protection Standard #1A: Disposition of the Referral; Determining the Most Appropriate Response Time	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard 1, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

**CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #1A: DISPOSITION OF THE REFERRAL;  
DETERMINING THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TIME**

**POLICY**

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that the Ontario Child Welfare Eligibility Spectrum screening tool is used at the time of the referral to make a consistent and accurate decision regarding the eligibility for service and to determine an appropriate response time.*

*In addition, the Helpers will consider all known relevant information available, such as the Child’s/Youth’s vulnerability, the family’s strengths and needs, information pertaining to the Child’s/Youth’s First Nation or community, and other family issues that mitigate risk in determining the disposition of the referral and in making decisions to respond appropriately.*

**PROCEDURE**

1. When a Child Protection Investigation will be the most appropriate response, the First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will make the decision as to when the investigation will be initiated based on the referral information provided. The response time will be determined by the assessed level of urgency and by the present or imminent threat to the safety of the Child/Youth. Investigation response times will occur as follows:
  - a) As soon as possible or within 12 hours of being reported, when suspected or risk of harm is Extremely Severe and the Child/Youth is in urgent need of Child Protection Services, a Supervisor will be consulted, and the Child/Youth will be seen by an assigned Child Safety Intervention Helper for referrals to families in the community. As well, Family-Based and Institutional Community Caregiver Investigations will receive a response within the same time frame if there is imminent threat to the safety of a Child/Youth or when physical evidence is at risk of being lost due to a delay. For

investigations that involve families who are part of Mnaasged's member First Nations, the terms of the Protocol for engagement of the First Nation Band Representative will be followed

- b) Within seven (7) days for Family-Based Investigations if no immediate safety threats are identified
  - c) Within 48 hours for Community Caregiver Institutional Investigations with no immediate safety threats identified
2. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will consult with the Supervisor. The Supervisor, in consultation with the First Nation Band Representative Supervisor of the First Nation, will provide immediate approval based on assigning and documenting a referral rating and response time according to the Eligibility Spectrum.
  3. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will be required to document the referral information within 24 hours of receipt on the Referral Form in the Mnaasged Information Management System.

Referrals not requiring protection investigations under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* include the following:

- a) Reports of minor injury resulting from a physical restraint in an institutional setting, unless there is surrounding circumstances to indicate abusive or neglectful behaviour by the care provider
  - b) Referrals regarding a Child/Youth fatality because of suspected abuse or neglect if there are no surviving siblings or other Children/Youth cared for in the Home
  - c) Referrals in which the only allegation is exposure to domestic violence and if the violence has not resulted in the following:
    - i. Abuse or risk as defined in the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*
    - ii. Risk of such abuse or neglect
4. A "non-protection report" about the care of a Child/Youth in Mnaasged's Out-of-Home Care will not be subject to Child Protection Standards. For these types of cases, Mnaasged has developed policies and procedures that include the following:
    - a) Designation of the person responsible for the assessment
    - b) Establishment of a response time
    - c) Process and practice expectations

- d) Completion time
  - e) Documentation requirements
5. If the First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper receives factual first-hand information after the response decision has been made but prior to the first face-to-face contact with the Child/Youth, and information indicates there is no longer any reasonable or probable ground to suspect the Child/Youth may need protection, the response decision may be changed, and the investigation discontinued. The decision not to proceed with the investigation will require documentation in the Case File and approval by the Supervisor.
  6. The First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will be required to consult with the Supervisor and to document approvals relating to departures from the Child Protection Standards.
  7. For cases requiring the Community Link Service, the First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will complete the Disposition on the Referral Form within 24 hours of receiving the referral. The Helper will then contact the family by telephone within five (5) days of the referral and provide information about early intervention, prevention, or treatment services. The Community Link must be documented in the file within 14 days. Other methods of contact will be used if the family does not have a telephone. If the Community Link is on an open Family Service File, the information will be assigned to the Assigned Helper who will assist the family in accessing the appropriate community resources. If the service link is to another Mnaasged program, the Helper will offer to introduce the family to the person delivering that service.
  8. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of referrals to ensure an appropriate response time.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Child Protection Standard #2: Planning and Conducting a Child Protection Investigation	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard 2, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #2: PLANNING AND CONDUCTING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that an Investigation Plan is completed for a referral requiring a Child Protection Investigation.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The First Response Helper and the Supervisor, based on the information received, will determine that the referral requires a Child Protection Response. The Supervisor shall ensure that the information obtained will be made available immediately to the Supervisor responsible for the Child Safety Intervention Helpers who are responsible for serving the First Nation or geographic area where the Child/Youth and family are located.
2. The Supervisor receiving the referral shall ensure that a Child Safety Intervention Helper/ Assigned Helper is assigned to conduct the investigation. The preference is for an Assigned Helper who is known to the Child/Youth and family or who regularly delivers services within the First Nation or community where the Child/Youth and family reside. If that is not possible, the assignment will be given to another Assigned Helper who is able to respond within the timelines required by the initial assessment.
3. The Assigned Helper will ensure that the Investigation Plan addresses all safety concerns prior to face-to-face contact with the family.
4. The Assigned Helper will obtain prior approval to commence an investigation from the immediate Supervisor and will collaborate with the Supervisor to develop and document the Investigation Plan following a thorough review of all current and historical information known about the Child/Youth and family.

5. The Assigned Child Helper will determine how the Investigation Plan will be carried out using the Customized Approach as identified within the Ontario Child Protection Standards.
6. The Assigned Helper and the Supervisor shall immediately contact the Family Circle of Care Supervisor for the First Nation or community in which the Child/Youth and family live. The Family Circle of Care Supervisor will ensure that a Family Circle of Care Helper who serves the First Nation or community of the Child/Youth and family is immediately contacted and is available to attend with the Assigned Helper within the timelines required for the initiation of the investigation. Preference shall be given to a Family Circle of Care Helper who is already known to the Child/Youth and family.
7. The Assigned Helper will include the option for the family to proceed with culturally appropriate services that may include smudging, Circles, ceremonies, or participation of Elders or Traditional Practitioners as a step within the Investigation Plan.
8. The Assigned Helper will ensure that all referrals involving allegations of a criminal offense that may have occurred against a Child/Youth require Mnaasged to immediately contact and work collaboratively with Police Services as per protocol. Management of Child Welfare Cases involving Policing Agencies and protocols with various Police Services are accessible to all Staff and must be complied with by all Staff.
9. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of referrals to ensure that planning is appropriate.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Child Protection Standard #2: Conducting a Child Protection Investigation; Family Based	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard 2, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #2: CONDUCTING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION; FAMILY BASED

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that the Ontario Child Protection Standards related to the completion of Family-Based Child Protection Investigations will be completed.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will also ensure that families will be provided access to culturally appropriate services, such as Circles, smudging, ceremonies, and participation with Elders or Traditional Practitioners. In addition, the family will have access to a Family Circle of Care Helper during the investigation to provide support and assistance in understanding and responding to the issues or concerns raised during the process.*

*For investigations that involve families who are part of Mnaasged' Child and Family Services' member First Nations, the Assigned Worker will work with the First Nation Band Representative according to the agreed upon protocol between Mnaasged and the involved First Nation.*

*For investigations involving families who are members of a First Nation that is not a member of Mnaasged Child and Family Services, contact with and involvement of their First Nation Band Representative throughout the investigation will always meet or exceed the requirements of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act and of any protocol reached between the First Nation and Mnaasged Child and Family Services.*

### PROCEDURE

\*The first six (6) steps in Family-Based Investigations will always be completed.

1. \*The Assigned Helper will interview and observe the Child in the Home using communication methods coinciding with the Child's/Youth's developmental stage.
2. \*The Assigned Helper will interview other Children/Youth being cared for in the Home, except if the Child/Youth cannot be interviewed based on the developmental level or the ability to communicate, in which case direct observation will be required.
3. \*The Assigned Helper will interview all caregivers connected to the Child/Youth.
4. \*The Assigned Helper will observe the Child's/Youth's living situation to monitor potential hazards. In addition, the Helper will observe the entire Home, particularly the Child's/Youth's sleeping area, to determine if there are any risks or safety hazards or signs of neglect, based upon the norms and standards of the community where the Home is situated.
5. \*In cases concerning maltreatment, the Assigned Helper will interview the alleged perpetrator of maltreatment with the Police as appropriate.
6. \*The Assigned Helper or the Family Circle of Care Helper will make referrals for the family to access culturally appropriate services throughout the investigation if requested by the family.
7. The Assigned Helper will observe direct interaction between the Child/Youth and the caregiver(s) as part of the assessment process.
8. The Assigned Helper will interview witnesses involved.
9. The Assigned Helper will use the Eligibility Spectrum to assist in determining if others are at risk and if prior interviews indicate there may be potential victims of maltreatment, such as siblings or Children/Youth in other families.
10. The Assigned Helper will be required to interview all adults who reside in the Home. The Family Circle of Care Helper and the First Nation Band Representative may be present during those interviews at the request of the family but will allow the Assigned Helper to take the lead for the interviews.
11. The Assigned Helper will obtain Consent to the Release of Information Forms from caregivers to assist with the gathering of evidence from other professionals involved with the Child/Youth and the family (e.g., medical, education, and law enforcement).
12. The Assigned Helper, in consultation with the Supervisor, will consider the need to seek a warrant/telewarrant for case information if required. The input of the First Nation Band Representative will be sought in this decision. The Family Circle of Care Helper may also provide input as may be applicable to the situation.

13. The Assigned Helper would report to the Police immediately if information obtained during an investigation regarding a domestic violence perpetrator will place someone in danger.
14. All assigned Helpers will be required to document all interviews completed on case notes in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
15. All assigned Helpers will be encouraged to regularly consult with their Supervisor when required.
16. Decisions on the way the investigation will be conducted will also take into consideration the following:
  - a) Whether to contact the Caregiver prior to interviewing the Child/Youth if there is no reason to believe the Caregiver failed to protect the Child/Youth or that contacting the Caregiver may compromise the integrity of the evidence
  - b) The severity of the reported Child Protection concern
  - c) The Helper's ability to protect the Child/Youth and to gather information in sufficient detail
  - d) The likelihood of the family fleeing from the current address or jurisdiction
  - e) The need for the Child/Youth to have a medical examination, preferably with the Caregiver's consent and conducted by a pediatrician
17. Parents will be informed when their Child/Youth will be interviewed except in the following situations:
  - a) Where the Parent is the alleged abuser
  - b) There is reason to believe the Caregiver failed to protect the Child
  - c) There is reason to believe that contacting the Caregiver may compromise the integrity of the evidence
18. The protection of the Child/Youth will be ensured through ongoing risk and safety assessments. The preferred method of interviewing a Child/Youth is in the Home with the consent of the Caregiver if safety is not compromised because of the interview. In many cases, the first contact will be with the Caregiver and the Child/Youth together before the Child/Youth is interviewed separately and in private.
19. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of investigations to determine adherence to Standards.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Child Protection Standard #2: Conducting a Child Protection Investigation; Institutional	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard 2, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #2: CONDUCTING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION; INSTITUTIONAL

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that the Ontario Child Protection Standards related to the completion of Institutional Child Protection Investigations will be completed.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that Child Welfare Staff who complete Institutional Investigations will be provided with the knowledge, skills, and special training to conduct investigations within an institutional setting. Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that Community Caregiver Investigations will be managed and completed with the appropriate Policing Service based on the protocols of the Child Welfare Service. In many cases, Institutional Investigations may require coordination with other Children’s Aid Societies within the jurisdiction or with Police Services.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will also ensure families will be provided access to culturally appropriate services, such as Circles, smudging, ceremonies, and participation with Elders or Traditional Practitioners. For investigations that involve families who are part of Mnaasged Child and Family Services’ member First Nations, the Assigned Helper will contact the First Nation Band Representative and will request their presence as part of the investigation.*

*When it is alleged that there are multiple victims within the Institution in question, additional Helpers may be assigned to assist. If it is reported that some of the alleged victims are not Indigenous, the First Response Helper or the Assigned Helper will coordinate the investigation with the Assigned Staff from the appropriate Children’s Aid Society responsible for investigating the allegations against non-Indigenous alleged victims.*

## PROCEDURE

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\*The first two steps in institutional investigations are always completed. Conducting an institutional investigation will include the following steps:

1. \*As part of the Investigation Plan and depending on the referral concerns, the Assigned Helper will complete interviews with the alleged victim, the alleged perpetrator, the Staff witnesses (current and former), the Facility Administrator, and the Supervisors of the alleged perpetrator.
2. \*The Assigned Helper will complete an examination of the physical layout of the setting.
3. The Assigned Helper may consider using a community resource when completing investigations; community resource professionals may include Elders, Traditional Practitioners, extended family members, education authorities, physicians, nurses, mental health and addictions Helpers, and so on. For investigations that involve families who are part of Mnaasged's member First Nations, the Assigned Helper will contact the First Nation Band Representative to request their presence as part of the investigation.
4. Depending on the referral concerns, the Assigned Helper will consider an examination of Facility Files and will document the following:
  - a) Daily log of Children's/Youth's activities
  - b) Medication administered and logged
  - c) Restraints and Serious Occurrences
  - d) Individual files on each Child/Youth
  - e) Facility policies and procedures, staffing levels, shift patterns, staff training and qualifications, daily routines, and programming
5. The Assigned Helper will conduct an examination of the records to determine if there was any activity related to historical allegations of abuse.
6. Examination of Facility Files and information about the alleged victims will assist the Assigned Helper with determining background information on Children/Youth and on Staff at the facility. This may include the following:
  - a) Characteristics of the victims, including their primary language, and problems that might affect their ability to be interviewed (e.g., deafness or speech difficulties)
  - b) Length of stay in the setting
  - c) Prior allegations of abuse in any setting

- d) Prior allegations of abuse related to the current incident, the perpetrator, or the setting
  - e) Prior abuse or exposure to abuse in another setting
  - f) Child's/Youth's relationship and feelings toward the alleged perpetrator
  - g) Any other information relevant to the investigation
7. If information obtained during an investigation indicates that a domestic violence perpetrator may place someone in danger, the Assigned Helper will alert the person at risk and will then contact the Police immediately.
  8. The Assigned Helper will complete as many steps within the investigation process as required until determining one of the following:
    - a) The allegations of Child abuse or neglect will be clearly verified or ruled out without recourse to one or more of these additional steps
    - b) The absence of immediate safety threats and long-term risk factors will be clearly established
    - c) All reasonable efforts have been made to collect evidence and continuing the investigation would yield no new information
  9. The Assigned Helper will complete case notes on the interviews relating to the initial Assessment Process in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
  10. Community Caregiver Investigations will be conducted by Assigned Helpers who have special training, knowledge, and skills related to these types of investigations.
  11. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of investigations to determine adherence to the Standards.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Child Protection Standard #3: Conducting the Safety Assessment and Developing the Safety Plan – Collaborating with the Family	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard 3, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #3: CONDUCTING THE SAFETY ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPING THE SAFETY PLAN – COLLABORATING WITH THE FAMILY

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that when it receives a referral with results from a rating above the Intervention Line based on the Eligibility Spectrum, a Child Protection Investigation will be required.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that a safety assessment will be completed for all investigations at the first point of face-to-face contact within the response time for new referrals or for ongoing cases that are assigned for investigation.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will ensure that the Safety Assessment will be completed within five (5) days of the first face-to-face contact; however, the Assigned Helper will ensure that the First Contact Note will be completed within 24 hours of the first contact with the family.
2. The Assigned Helper will ensure that the Child’s/Youth’s family, the extended family, the Family Circle of Care Helper, the First Nation Band Representative, and the other community resources will be utilized in assessing the safety of Children and families when developing a Safety Plan.
3. If after the first face-to-face contact the Assigned Helper, in consultation with the First Nation Band Representative and the Family Circle of Care Helper, determines the referral information was visibly wrong, the investigation will be withdrawn upon approval from the Supervisor.
4. The Assigned Helper will complete the following:

- a) Privately interview the Children/Youth subject to the referral (or observe the Children/Youth if non-verbal)
  - b) Interview the primary Parent or Caregiver
  - c) Check the home environment if it has been alleged to be hazardous
  - d) Interview or observe, with the assistance of the Family Circle of Care Helper, other Children/Youth cared for in the Home if the initial interviews revealed the presence of threats to their safety
5. The Assigned Helper will ensure that interviews for Children/Youth, Parents, and Caregivers will be completed within the required response time as determined by the Eligibility Spectrum.
  6. A Safety Plan will be mandatory each time a safety threat is identified. The Assigned Helper will develop the Safety Plan with the family, the Family Circle of Care Helper, and the First Nation Band Representative immediately following the assessment of safety threats. The Safety Plan will be developed with the family to address risks and will include specific direction as to who will take what action, when they will do it, and how the Plan will be monitored.
  7. The Assigned Helper will ensure that the Safety Plan will address the safety of the referred Child/Youth and all other Children/Youth in the Home.
  8. If injuries are identified or if medical care is required during the Safety Assessment, a medical examination must be arranged immediately by the Assigned Helper within 24 hours of receiving the referral. Whenever possible, the Assigned Helper or the Family Circle of Care Helper will accompany the Child's/Youth's Parent or Guardian to the medical exam or will seek written consent from the Parent or Guardian to have the examination completed in the Parent's or Guardian's absence. If the Parent or Guardian is unable to accompany the Child/Youth or provide consent, the Child/Youth will be brought into Care, with Supervisory approval, to ensure that the medical exam and treatment will be completed.
  9. When no safety threats are present, the Assigned Helper will review the Safety Assessment with the Supervisor the next working day. When safety threats are found, the Helper will consult with the Supervisor prior to the implementation and completion of the Safety Plan and Safety Assessment. The Assigned Helper will complete the Safety Assessment in the Mnaasged Information Management System, including the input from the Family Circle of Care Helper. The Supervisor will be required to review and approve the Safety Plan and Safety Assessment.
  10. The Assigned Helper will be required to review the Safety Plan with the family, the First Nation Band Representative, and the Family Circle of Care Helper to assess changes to the identified safety threats or the ability to assure safety.

11. The Safety Plan will be regularly and consistently monitored throughout the Child Protection Investigation.
12. The Assigned Helper will discontinue the Safety Plan only when safety threats are eliminated, the Caregiver's ability to protect the Child/Youth has improved, or the Safety Plan has become long term for actions to secure the Child's/Youth's safety and then becomes integrated with the next regular Service Plan.
13. The Assigned Helper may also complete a Safety Assessment to reassess a family receiving ongoing services and when there has been a change in circumstances that could induce stress to the family unit.
14. The Assigned Helper will recommend immediate Child Protection File closure to their Supervisor after the Safety Assessment if the initial interviews yield information that maltreatment has clearly not occurred. The following will be considered for this action:
  - a) There are no safety threats to the Child/Youth
  - b) The family shows significant strengths for individual and family functioning
  - c) There is an absence of conditions indicating risks of maltreatment
  - d) There is no probable or reasonable ground to believe a Child/Youth needs protection
  - e) All the investigative steps have been completed
  - f) The criteria for concluding a Child Protection Investigation have been met
15. The First Nation Band Representative (if applicable) has been consulted and agrees with the plan to close the investigation.
16. Under these circumstances an investigation can be concluded without a risk assessment if the entire required core steps have been completed and the criteria for concluding a Child Protection Investigation have been met.
17. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of investigations to determine adherence to Standards.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Child Protection Standard #4: Conducting the Risk Assessment	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard 4, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #4: CONDUCTING THE RISK ASSESSMENT

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that a Risk Assessment will be completed to assess future risk of maltreatment for all Family-Based Investigations including Out-of-Home Care by the relatives, the community members, an Alternative Care Provider, or a Customary Care Home. The Risk Assessment will be conducted by the Assigned Helper, with input from the First Nation Band Representative and the Family Circle of Care Helper.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helpers will complete Risk Assessments using the Ontario Risk Assessment Model tool until an Indigenous tool becomes available. The intent of the Risk Assessment will be to guide decision making on the following:
  - a) Whether Children/Youth and their families receive ongoing Protection Services from Mnaasged and, if so, the level of the services required
  - b) Whether Children/Youth and their families should be linked with other Community Service Providers
  - c) Whether the case should be closed following the Protection Investigation

The Risk Assessment is meant to aid, not substitute, for the exercise of professional judgment to determine risk of future harm to a Child/Youth, and it is a process and a clinical tool to guide the disposition of the case. The Risk Assessment must also be interpreted through an understanding of the cultural norms and values of the First Nation or Indigenous community with whom the Child/Youth and family is connected.

2. The Assigned Helper will conduct the Risk Assessment Process with the family through discussions regarding their unique circumstances to consider what risk factors are present in the family.
3. The Assigned Helper will discuss the protection concerns and explain clearly to the family what a Risk Assessment is, the reasons for doing one, and how the family's participation will assist in making important decisions.
4. The Assigned Helper will consult with the First Nation Band Representative, and the Family Circle of Care Helper when appropriate, to obtain input into the Risk Assessment Process. The Assigned Helper will complete the Risk Assessment document in the Mnaasged Information Management System prior to the verification decision and completion of the investigation.
5. The Assigned Helper will complete the initial Risk Assessment within 60 days with Supervisory approval from the date of the referral.
6. The Risk Assessment will be reviewed and approved by the Assigned Helper and the Supervisor. Any overrides must be approved by the Supervisor.
7. The results of the Risk Assessment will be shared with the family and the Child/Youth (if age appropriate given the Child's/Youth's developmental level).
8. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of investigations to determine adherence to standards.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Child Protection Standard #5: Concluding a Child Protection Investigation	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard 5, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #5: CONCLUDING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that Child Protection Investigations are completed within 45 days of receiving a referral, including all required clinical tools and case transfer documentation for cases requiring ongoing Child Protection Services. When the investigation cannot be concluded within 45 days it is within the Supervisor’s discretion to extend the time frame up to 60 days from the date of the referral. The reason for the extension will be documented in the case record. In extenuating circumstances, any file remaining at the investigation stage must be approved by the Director of Services.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper and the Family Circle of Care Helper will both complete case notes documenting the steps taken and the information obtained throughout the investigation based on their own observations and assessment.
2. The Assigned Helper—in collaboration with the First Nation Band Representative (where applicable), the Family Circle of Care Helper, and the Supervisor—will complete a Case Review to determine whether the alleged protection concerns have been verified, not verified, or inconclusive and whether the Child/Youth needs protection. The Case Review is comprised of reviewing all relevant information gathered from the investigation.
3. When a Child/Youth is determined to need protection, the case will be referred for ongoing Protection Services. The Assigned Helper will complete the documentation requirements and will prepare the file for transfer to the Helper assigned to provide the ongoing services.
4. When a Child/Youth is determined to not need protection, a decision will be made to close the file as a Child Protection matter. The Assigned Helper will consider referring the family

to community services, including any services and supports available through Mnaasged or the First Nation for ongoing support when appropriate and if the family agrees. The Family Circle of Care Helper will assist the family in accessing these services.

5. When an allegation of abuse has been verified, the procedures for reporting to the Child Abuse Register must be followed.
6. If a decision is made during the investigation process to conclude an investigation, the Assigned Helper will complete the Case Closure documentation in the Mnaasged Information Management System and will submit this for approval within 45 days from the date of the referral, unless a Supervisor approval for an extension was granted to which 60 days would apply.
7. The Supervisor will review and approve all documentation within seven (7) days of receipt of the completed case documentation if it is being transferred to a Community Team or it is within 14 days, at which time the case may be closed in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
8. The Assigned Helper will be responsible to provide notification of the outcome of the investigation as follows:
  - a) Notification will be given to the Child/Youth alleged to need protection (as appropriate), the Caregiver(s), the Child's/Youth's Helper, and the First Nation Band Representative. The person alleged to have caused the need for protection will be provided notification verbally or in writing (special consideration given to situations of Child abuse or situations of domestic violence; see practice notes Standard 5) within 14 days following the completion of the investigation, and it will contain non-identifying information such as the following:
    - i. The details of the allegation
    - ii. The verification decision and rationale
    - iii. The placement of information in the provincial database
  - b) Notification to the Facility Administrator will be provided in writing within 14 days following the completion of the investigation, which will contain non-identifying information such as the following:
    - i. The details of the allegation
    - ii. The verification decision and rationale
    - iii. The placement of information in the provincial database

- c) Notification to the Alternative Care Provider will be provided within 14 days following the completion of the investigation at a face-to-face meeting, which minimally includes the Assigned Helper responsible for the Home. The investigation, including the outcomes of the Safety and Risk Assessments and any optional assessments administered, are shared at this time. A written notification will also be provided and will contain the following:
  - i. The details of the allegation
  - ii. The verification decision and rationale
  - iii. The details of any Safety Plan
  - iv. Recommendations regarding any additional supports or remedial action
  - v. Information on the persons who were the subjects of the Child Protection Investigation will be placed in the provincial database (Notification will be provided to them by the Assigned Helper.)
- 9. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of investigations to determine adherence to Standards.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Child Protection Standard #6: Transferring a Case	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard 6, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #6: TRANSFERRING A CASE

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that when a case transfers from one Helper, Department, or Agency to another the transfer will occur within 10 days of submission of the transfer documentation for approval to the Supervisor and according to Child Protection Standard 6.*

### PROCEDURE

1. For cases transferred from one jurisdiction to another, the Interagency Protocol will be followed. A transfer will be effective on the date the receiving Child Protection Helper has the first face-to-face contact with the family.
2. It is the responsibility of the receiving Helper to ensure that notification will be given to all other Service Providers of the receiving Helper's identity and contact information within seven (7) days of assuming responsibility for the case. The transferring Helper, in collaboration with the receiving Helper, will also plan a Circle or Family Case Conference with all family members within seven (7) days of the transfer.
3. If the family relocates to another area within Mnaasged's jurisdiction the Assigned Helper must carry out the following:
  - a) Consult with the First Nation Band Representative
  - b) Request monitoring and assistance from the receiving office
  - c) Determine if this is a temporary or permanent relocation for the family

- d) If it is a permanent relocation, the Transfer Policy process must be followed. Any exception to transferring a file under these circumstances requires the approval of the Director of Services.
4. Once a case has been identified for transfer, the referring Supervisor will email the receiving Supervisor to arrange a time to present the case. The referring Helper and the referring Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that all relevant documentation is complete, including case notes, the case activity, record checks, updated eligibility code, transfer recording (comprehensive assessment and Service Plan), and supervision notes.
5. The Assigned Helper will complete a summary update of the significant events for cases that are receiving ongoing services three (3) months or less unless the existing assessments are relevant.
6. The transferring Helper will complete a full Case Review for cases being transferred more than three (3) months following the completion of the last full Case Review.
7. The receiving Supervisor will assign an appropriate Helper to the case, depending on the type of service required. The receiving Assigned Helper and the receiving Supervisor must read the file within three (3) business days. The Assigned Helper will contact the transferring Helper directly if clarity is required for any content in the file.
8. The receiving Supervisor and the Assigned Helper will schedule the file transfer meeting with the transferring Helper and the transferring Supervisor, along with the First Nation Band Representative in accordance with the protocol between Mnaasged and the First Nation. The transfer of the file must be completed within 10 days.
9. Until the case transfer is completed, the transferring Helper will keep responsibility for managing the Safety Plan and addressing emergency family needs until the case is transferred or unless the family has moved to another jurisdiction.
10. The transferring Helper will arrange the transfer of the case within seven (7) days with the family and the Assigned Helper. The first face-to-face meeting with the family will be to transfer the primary case management responsibilities.
11. The receiving Assigned Helper will notify the Service Providers in writing within seven (7) business days of assuming care responsibility that they are the new Assigned Helper.
12. The Helper transferring the case must ensure that all court documentation for the next scheduled court appearance is completed or in draft form.
13. The receiving Supervisor will be responsible to transfer the file in the Mnaasged Information Management System to the receiving Assigned Helper who will commence service to the family.

14. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of file transfers to determine adherence to Standards.

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Child Protection Standard #7: Ongoing Service Case Management: The First Month	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard 7, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #7: ONGOING SERVICE CASE MANAGEMENT: THE FIRST MONTH

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that ongoing services to Children/Youth and families focus on mitigating and reducing risk through the establishment of goals and outcomes while prioritizing the Child's/Youth's need for safety and family.*

*When a case is transferred the focus of the first 30 days of ongoing Child Protection Services is on the following:*

- a) Manage and review the Safety Plan*
- b) Engage the Child/Youth and family in Child Protection Services*
- c) Assess the Child's/Youth's and the family's strengths and needs*
- d) Develop a Service Plan*
- e) Identify the role of each Helper involved with the family*
- f) Identify the types and roles of the cultural supports and services to be provided as part of the Case Plan*
- g) Identify the minimum level of contact with the family and the use of announced/unannounced home and school visits (connect to a policy on the use of unannounced visits)*
- h) Manage the Case Review and evaluation process*
- i) Identify any concurrent planning*
- j) Review the Case Review and termination documentation*

- k) Manage subsequent referrals*
- l) Document any consideration of prescribed methods of Alternative Dispute Resolution or Circle process and outcomes*
- m) Document any court activity and findings*
- n) Manage Supervisory reviews, consultations, and approvals related to this Standard*

## PROCEDURE

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The Assigned Helper will work closely with the family, the First Nation Band Representative and the community Service Providers when consents have been completed to review the existing Safety Plan developed during the investigation as part of the ongoing Case Planning. The Safety Plan will be reviewed at every home visit.

1. The Assigned Helper, together with the family, will develop an alternative Safety Plan if there have been changes resulting in new safety threats. A new Safety Plan will be documented within five (5) working days and will require the approval of a Supervisor prior to its implementation with the family.
2. The Assigned Helper will complete a Child and Family Strengths and Needs Assessment on every file receiving ongoing Child Protection Services prior to the development of the Service Plan, as follows:
  - a) Prior to the development of the initial Service Plan
  - b) At six (6) month re-assessment intervals
  - c) When a case is considered for closing
  - d) When a case is being transferred to a new Helper and the previous assessments are more than three (3) months old
  - e) When a case is being transferred to a new Helper and the previous assessment is less than three (3) months old but no longer relevant
  - f) When assessing a Parent who has presented a plan for a Child's/Youth's care
3. The Assigned Helper will complete a Child and Family Strengths and Needs Assessment when the following occurs:
  - a) Completion of any subsequent investigation that has resulted in identification of new risk factors, new Child Protection Concerns, or a new Risk Assessment

- b) At any additional point when a change in family circumstances is thought to affect the strengths or needs of family members
4. All Child and Family Strength Needs Assessments require the approval of a Supervisor.
  5. The Assigned Helper will review and discuss the results of all required assessments with the family during the Service Planning Process.
  6. The Assigned Helper will work with the family, the First Nation Band Representative, and the other community resources to develop the Service Plan. If the family or the Child/Youth refuses, or if either is unavailable to participate in developing the Service Plan, the Helper will do the best to lay out a plan and document reasons on a case note indicating why the family or the Child/Youth is not involved.
  7. The Assigned Helper will ensure that the services of the Plan related to ongoing Case Planning are completed as follows:
    - a) Within 30 days of the completion of the investigation, or within 30 days of the date of every case transfer following the initial investigation
    - b) Every six (6) months thereafter while the family is receiving ongoing Child Protection Services
    - c) When there have been changes to the family circumstances affecting the relevance or validity of the current Service Plan
    - d) When a Family and Child Strengths and Needs Assessment is completed because of a transfer of a different Helper identifies changes that require a new Service Plan
  8. The Assigned Helper will develop the Service Plan through the following:
    - a) Have the family participate in the Service Planning process by use of a collaborative approach, either Traditional family or community Circles or regular family-centred case conferencing
    - b) Assist the family in identifying those individuals or community partners (including representatives chosen by the First Nation) they see as being a support to them and view as important participants in a Service Plan discussion
    - c) Carefully consider all solution-focused options put forth by the attendees at the Service Plan conference or Circle, striving for consensus
    - d) Ensure that family uniqueness is honoured and valued by customizing a Service Plan that matches the family's individual strengths and needs

- e) Develop realistic, clear, and measurable goals that are understood and agreed on by the Child/Youth and family
9. All Service Plans require the approval of a Supervisor.
  10. The Assigned Helper will follow through with the tasks identified in the Service Plan and will monitor the family's progress through regular meetings with them
  11. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of Service Plans to determine adherence to Standards.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Child Protection Standard #7: Case Management	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard 7, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #7: CASE MANAGEMENT

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that case management practices are completed following the development of the Service Plan. The Service Plan will be implemented and managed.*

*Some examples of case management practices are as follows:*

- a) Service Plan development, management, and regular reviews*
- b) Interviews with Parents and Children/Youth, at a frequency that will ensure ongoing support for the Children/Youth and families*
- c) Regular, consistent coordination of Circles and meetings with the family and Service Providers to ensure that the family will achieve the goals of the Service Plan*
- d) Regular and ongoing communication with the First Nation Band Representative to ensure that they will be involved in Case Planning and will be informed about the family on a regular basis. As well, ongoing communication of information between the First Nation Band Representative and the family will be maintained to ensure that the best support will be available to the Child/Youth and the family*
- e) Respond to planned or unplanned changes or circumstances resulting in a change to the Service Plan*
- f) Review the need for court interventions if required*
- g) Provide support to families prior to and while they are involved with Service Providers*

*h) Consider concurrent planning when required*

**PROCEDURE**

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1. The Assigned Helper will consider all case management components when providing ongoing services to a family.
2. The Assigned Helper will obtain consent from families to assist them to engage with Service Providers and to ensure that regular communication occurs and that reports are provided to Mnaasged.
3. The Assigned Helper will meet with the family at least once a month to ensure that the identified goals and outcomes of the Service Plan are achieved and completed. However, the frequency of visits will increase if there is a lack of progress or other potential concerns causing increased risk to the Children/Youth in the Home. The Assigned Helper will interview the Children/Youth privately either at home or in another setting at each visit. At each visit, the non-verbal Children/Youth will be observed directly in their home environment and particularly as they interact with their Caregiver.
4. The Assigned Helper will arrange, coordinate, collaborate, and discuss the family's progress with Service Providers monthly to ensure that effective service and engagement are achieved. Copies of reports from the Service Providers will be obtained with the consent of the family for the purpose of assessing the family's progress with services and the overall Service Plan.
5. The Assigned Helper will case note all contact simultaneously with clients and collaterals.
6. The Assigned Helper will facilitate communication among the family and the Service Providers to assist in achieving the goals of the Service Plan. It is the responsibility of the Assigned Helper to arrange regular Circles or Case Conferences and to invite immediate family members and Service Providers to attend.
7. The Assigned Helper will develop and implement a concurrent plan if the likelihood for a Child's/Youth's reunification with the Parent/Guardian is poor.
8. If a new referral is received on an open file it will be treated as a potential referral that requires a new Safety Risk Assessment. The verification decision is completed by the Assigned Helper in collaboration with the Supervisor. If new risk factors have emerged the Assigned Helper will complete an enhanced Service Plan. If new or additional information is received on a known incident the Assigned Helper will discuss this information with the family at the next home visit.
9. The Assigned Helper will ensure that ongoing Child Protection Files are reviewed within the context of scheduled supervision sessions with the regular, or covering, Supervisor

minimally once every six (6) weeks. Files with a higher degree of risk or complexity will be reviewed more often.

10. The Assigned Helper will conduct a Formal Case Review quarterly (or as dictated by the protocol with the First Nation or community) after the development of the Service Plan. A Case Review will also occur when reunification tools have been completed and the Child/Youth is or will be reunited with the Child's/Youth's family. A Case Review includes a reassessment of risk, assessment of access, an alternate plan that would be developed, and an assessment of strengths and needs. The Case Review is a meeting where Helpers, Supervisors, and Senior Managers involved in the case come together to review plans and make decisions with the First Nation Band Representative (if applicable). The Case Review will provide support for the Helpers and will ensure teamwork and joint involvement in the decision making. The Case Review will also ensure plans of service and Child/Youth Well-being Plans are consistent with Mnaasged policies and are made in the best interests of Children/Youth and their families. The Case Review ensures that all individuals involved in the case have an opportunity to give their input and to make consensus decisions whenever possible.
11. A Case Review will be convened at the following times:
  - a) The Assigned Helper will review the Child/Youth Well-being Plan (Plan of Care) (as needed or at least once every 90 days) with the family and the Service Providers involved with the Child/Youth in Care to discuss joint responsibilities that include arranging family visits, to review the need for a possible placement of a Child/Youth in Care, and to plan for the return home of the Child/Youth
  - b) The Assigned Helper, in consultation with the immediate Supervisor and the Legal Department, will develop a joint plan for Court
  - c) When a case is being transferred from one Helper to another
  - d) Develop a plan for the investigation of protection allegations within an Alternative Care Provider's Home that include providing support to the Alternative Care Providers and reviewing the results of the investigation
  - e) The request of a Helper, a Supervisor, a Senior Manager, the Director of Services, or the First Nation Band Representative for assistance with decision making or with clarifying or resolving a case issue.
12. The Assigned Helper will schedule Case Reviews at a time convenient for those involved. All Helpers and Supervisors/Senior Managers involved in the case will be expected to participate in the discussions. Alternative Care Providers may be invited to attend. The Assigned Helper will be responsible for scheduling, coordinating, and inviting internal Helpers, First Nation Band Representatives, and Service Providers to the Case Review. The

Assigned Helper will ensure that the minutes of the Case Review (particularly those present and the decisions made) will be kept and placed in the appropriate case files.

13. The Assigned Helper—through case conferencing with the Supervisor, the Senior Manager, other Helpers, the Parents, the Alternative Care Providers, the First Nation Band Representative, and all other Service Providers—is responsible for making critical decisions for the Child/Youth and for making sure the Child's/Youth's needs are met. The Assigned Helper must work closely together with the Alternative Care Providers, Staff in a group home, or other Alternative Care resource that is caring for a Child/Youth in Care.
14. The Assigned Helper will review the eligibility coding at each quarterly review and at the point of case closing to determine whether the case remains eligible for service. If the case is no longer eligible for service, the Helper will have three (3) weeks in which to complete the closing documentation after the termination meeting with the Child/Youth and the family. The Assigned Helper will consult with the immediate Supervisor to finalize the Case Disposition within seven (7) days of receipt of the documentation.
15. The Assigned Helper will review and revise a Risk Reassessment or Risk Reunification Assessment and any other supplemental tools that were administered. A Plan of Service on every open file will be reviewed and revised at the following intervals:
  - a) Every three (3) months or as required by the protocol with the First Nation or community
  - b) Prior to transferring the case to another Assigned Helper
  - c) Prior to case closing
  - d) Prior to a Child/Youth in Care being returned home
16. The Assigned Helper will consult with the immediate Supervisor prior to completing a full Case Review for these listed areas. The Supervisor will review and approve all recordings when required in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
17. The Assigned Helper will complete a clinical analysis of all the assessments, the significant events, and a review of the last Service Plan resulting in conclusions. The Case Review will include a case summary containing the following:
  - a) A summary of significant case events, new Child Protection Investigations, and verification decisions
  - b) A summary of Child Welfare Court activity, if applicable
  - c) A summary of the family's progress or lack of one in achieving goals, objectives, and tasks

- d) Changes to the most critical risk factors
  - e) The quality of the service provision, the appropriateness of the services, any barriers to the service provision, and the family's participation in the services
  - f) The extent to which a positive support network, formal and informal, is present and useful to the family to help mitigate risk
  - g) The expectation for change or reunification
  - h) The continued need for Child Protection Services
  - i) A new Service Plan developed with the family and the First Nation Band Representative outlining the family's plan for accessing services, supports, and resources
  - j) Updated reason for the service, including a new Eligibility Spectrum code
  - k) Supervisory signature
18. Unannounced visits must be approved by the Supervisor and may be required for the following:
- a) The Helper needs to determine whether the perpetrator is in the Home
  - b) If it is not possible to contact the family to arrange an appointment
  - c) It is necessary to assess the Child's/Youth's living conditions without the family having an opportunity to modify any of its usual conditions
  - d) If, in consultation with a Supervisor, it is determined that unannounced visits are necessary to determine the Child's/Youth's safety based on specific circumstances of the case

## CONCURRENT PLANNING

1. At the first Formal Review and at all subsequent reviews following a Child/Youth being placed in Out-of-Home Care it is critical to structure the expectation for the family to achieve reunification. If the family's issues, problems, and needs are significant with little or no progress being made to achieve the goals or objectives and the prognosis is poor, a Concurrent Service Plan is developed with the family. A Reunification Assessment will guide the decision.
2. It is important to involve all interested extended family members, relatives, or other family supports that include the First Nation Band Representative or other person who may ultimately become the Child's/Youth's permanent Caregiver. The Assigned Helper will conduct a thorough, continuous search for people who will make a commitment to

participate in a permanent plan for the Child/Youth. Wherever possible, the Child/Youth should be placed with family willing to work cooperatively with the Child's/Youth's Caregiver toward reunification but is also willing to become the Child's/Youth's permanent family if needed.

#### NEW REFERRAL REGARDING A CASE RECEIVING SERVICES

1. All information received by Mnaasged with concerns about a Child/Youth will be considered as a referral. A report regarding a Child/Youth in need of protection is given an immediate Initial Assessment by the family's Assigned Helper and a Referral Disposition is made. Standard #2 will apply to decisions made to initiate a Child Protection Investigation when a new or previously unknown incident or condition is reported.
2. New information about a known incident or condition could provide additional facts about a Child's/Youth's and family's strengths and needs that do not require an investigation. It will be discussed with the family at the next possible opportunity as part of the ongoing Assessment Process and integrated into the Reassessment at the time of the next Formal Review.
3. When a Child Protection Investigation is conducted on a case receiving ongoing Child Protection Services, the Helper will complete the following:
  - a) A Safety Assessment
  - b) A Risk Assessment
  - c) The verification decision with the rationale
  - d) A plan (if new risk factors are identified or as required)
4. All information obtained during the investigation will be recorded in case notes.
5. The information obtained during the investigation and the verification decision will be integrated into the summary of significant case events and will be considered as part of the assessment of the Child's/Youth's and family's strengths and needs and as part of the overall analysis of the case. These will be completed at the next regularly scheduled Case Review.
6. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of Family Service Files to determine adherence to Standards.

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Child Protection Standard 8: Case Closure	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard 8, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD #8: CASE CLOSURE

### POLICY

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*Mnaasged Child and Family Services Child Protection Files will be closed according to Ontario Child Protection Standard 8.*

### PROCEDURE

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1. Before identifying a Child Protection case for closure the Assigned Helper will review the case with the family, the First Nation Band Representative, any other Helpers working with the family, the collateral Service Providers, and a Supervisor. At a minimum, the following criteria must be met:
  - a) There have been no recent occurrences of abuse or maltreatment
  - b) There is no evidence of current or imminent safety threats
  - c) There is no legal basis for continuing to provide mandatory service as the family is refusing voluntary involvement or is receiving Non-protection Services through Mnaasged that meet their needs more appropriately (in which case those services may continue after the closure of the Child Protection File)
  - d) A recent Risk Assessment confirms factors identified as contributing toward risk in the earlier Assessment documents no longer pose direct safety or Child/Youth well-being concerns
  - e) The family and the First Nation Band Representative are agreeable to have their files closed
  - f) A permanent plan has been achieved for the Child(ren)/Youth, and there are no other Children/Youth identified as at risk and in need of protection residing in the Home

- g) The Child/Youth who has been the subject of Mnaasged's involvement is no longer eligible for service due to the Child's/Youth's age
  - h) The family has moved out of the jurisdiction, and a referral and subsequent transfer of service has been achieved
  - i) The Court has ordered the file be closed
  - j) The family cannot be located despite exhaustive efforts (record checks and provincial database child protection alerts)
2. The decision to terminate the provision of Child Protection Services will be reviewed and approved by the Supervisor within the context of a Case Review during a regularly scheduled supervision session.
  3. Once a file has been identified for closure, the Assigned Helper will consider a Circle or Case Conference with the family. This process will help to ensure that all areas concerning safety and risk have been addressed and that any additional supports are identified and accessed for the family as part of the closure.
  4. The Assigned Helper will inform the collateral agencies of the intended case closure date and will request ongoing support to be provided to the family. The plan for ongoing support will be documented.
  5. Prior to the termination of services, the Assigned Helper and the family will develop a plan for accessing services in the community. The Assigned Helper will document the plan in the closing Service Plan. A copy of the Service Plan along with a closing letter will be provided to the family and the First Nation Band Representative.
  6. The Assigned Helper will submit all case closure documentation (case activity, Family and Child/Youth Strengths and Needs Assessment, Service Plan, and Disposition module) to the Supervisor for approval within three (3) weeks of the closing Circle or Family Case Conference. The Supervisor will review and approve all case closure documentation within seven (7) days of receiving the documentation. Once the Supervisor reviews and approves the recordings the file is then closed.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Child Protection Standards: Supervision	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standards, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD PROTECTION STANDARDS: SUPERVISION

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will provide supervision for all Employees. All Employees will be expected to participate constructively in the Supervision Process. Supervision is the process of giving direction, guidance, and support to Mnaasged Child and Family Services Helpers, ensuring Helper activity is consistent with Mnaasged Child and Family Services' Policies and Procedures. The following procedures articulate the requirements with respect to Supervisory review and approval of casework decisions. The Assigned Helper will be the case manager and will have the most direct knowledge of the family. It is not expected that every casework decision is made with a Supervisor. This policy is not intended to replace the daily informal Supervision Process.*

### PROCEDURE

1. When decisions affect the safety or permanency of a Child/Youth the Assigned Helper will review and consult with the immediate Supervisor, any other Helper involved with the family, and the First Nation Band Representative. Case decisions require Supervisory approval prior to implementation.
2. All Helpers assigned to work with the family will document in case notes all case-specific content discussed with a Supervisor (including reviews, approvals, decisions, and rationale for the decisions).
3. All files are to be reviewed with a Supervisor on an ongoing basis within the context of a regularly scheduled supervision session:
  - a) At least once every two (2) weeks during an investigation
  - b) Minimally *once every six (6) weeks* while the case is receiving ongoing Child Protection Services

- c) Prior to case closure or investigation discontinuation
  - d) Cases with a higher degree of risk or complexity will be reviewed more often
  - e) Regularly scheduled supervision sessions will be documented by the Supervisor. The Assigned Helper will obtain approval from the immediate Supervisor when the following decisions are required:
    - i. The review of the Referral Disposition and the response time decisions at the discretion of the Helper or the Supervisor, or both, including the risk and complexity of the referral
    - ii. The review of the Investigative Plan by a Supervisor
    - iii. The Helper Safety Plan (when required) prior to commencing the investigation
    - iv. The adequacy of every new or revised Family Safety Plan will be assessed and approved prior to its implementation
    - v. When no safety factors or concerns are present, the Safety Assessment will be reviewed the next working day
    - vi. The verification decision on a Child/Youth in need of protection, the case disposition, and the “services completed” are reviewed within the context of a regularly scheduled supervision session prior to the completion of the investigation. This process consists of a Comprehensive Case Review and analysis, including the following:
      - Referral information
      - Steps taken during the investigation
      - All relevant information obtained during the investigation
      - Results of the Ontario Safety Assessment and Safety Plan and the Ontario Family Risk Assessment
4. The Assigned Helper will obtain and document Supervisory approval for the following:
- a) Departures from Child Protection Standards, Mnaasged policies and procedures, and protocols including extensions of time frames
  - b) Overrides on the Risk Assessment
  - c) Placement of a Child/Youth in Out-of-Home Care with extended family or community members (in and out of care) or in a Mnaasged placement (with final authorization to launch a court application resting with the Executive Director)

- d) When transferring a case
  - e) The Supervisor will provide ad hoc consultation and direction to the Assigned Helper when decisions are required to be made quickly to ensure the immediate safety of a Child/Youth
  - f) The Supervisor will ensure that signatures on case documentation submitted by the Assigned Helper at the conclusion of an investigation, a Formal Case Review, a case transfer, or a case termination indicate approval of the following:
    - i. The thoroughness, accuracy, and quality of the investigation and the effectiveness of ongoing services (including compliance with relevant standards, protocols, and policies and procedures)
    - ii. The accuracy of the Helper's assessment of safety and risk and the appropriateness of associated decisions and plans
    - iii. Casework decision making (effective, timely, and appropriate)
    - iv. The quality of written documentation
5. Supervisor consultation will be required for the following:
- a) A report to the Child Abuse Register
  - b) A request for Expungement from the Child Abuse Register
  - c) Criminal charges laid against a Client by Staff
  - d) Concerns about the actions of another Agency
  - e) Family referral recommendations for a Parenting Capacity Assessment
  - f) Critical incidents in the case (threats by the Client to the Helper, death of a family member, threats of suicide, new partner moving in, birth of a baby, or addition to members in the household)
6. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of Family Service Files to determine adherence to Supervision Standards.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Procedures, Practices, and Standards of Service for Child Protection Cases	
Subject: Departure from a Child Protection Standard	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standards in Ontario, <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## DEPARTURE FROM A CHILD PROTECTION STANDARD

### POLICY

*The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services established Standards assigned to all Child Protection Interventions, investigations, and service delivery. Mnaasged Child and Family Services is committed to ensuring compliance with all Standards of service delivery. Any non-compliance due to extenuating circumstances will be fully documented with a supporting explanation provided in the file. The primary focus of Child Protection Services will always be the safety and well-being of the Child/Youth. The Standards will always be applied in a manner that protects each Child/Youth who is receiving services from Mnaasged Child and Family Services even if a departure is required to achieve that outcome.*

### PROCEDURE

1. All Assigned Helpers and Supervisors will receive adequate training to ensure that they have sound knowledge of Mnaasged's Policies and Procedures and of Ministry Standards.
2. The Assigned Helper will immediately advise the Supervisor responsible for the case whenever compliance with a Ministry Standard has not been fulfilled.
3. Departures from Ministry Standards beyond the control of the Assigned Helper (e.g., family unavailable for interviews) are acceptable with Supervisory approval; however, departures due to workload issues are not.
4. The efforts made to meet the Standard and the Supervisory approval for the departure will be documented in the Departure section of the relevant recording module. If there is no appropriate section, the departure will be documented in a Supervisory Case Note.
5. The Supervisor in charge will review and approve the recording module.

6. Every effort will be made to ensure that a departure from the Ministry Standard does not leave a Child/Youth at imminent risk of harm.

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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## SECTION 4: MANAGEMENT OF RECORDS AND FILE CONTENT

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Management of Records and File Content	
Subject: Recording	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

### RECORDING

#### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that file documentation for Family Files, Children Circle of Care Files, and Alternative Care Files will be completed in a timely manner to meet Mnaasged Child and Family Services' Policies and Procedures, Ministry Standards, and legislation. All files including those in Protection, Children's Services, and Alternative Care may be reviewed by the Ministry at any time. Certain licenses (e.g., Residential) are dependent on the success of such a review.*

#### PROCEDURE

1. Child Safety Intervention Helpers, Family Circle of Care Helpers, Children's Circle of Care Helpers, After Hours Helpers, First Response Helpers, and other Assigned Helpers (Child Welfare Staff) will be responsible to complete all required documentation in a timely manner as prescribed in Mnaasged's policies and procedures, legislation, Ministry Standards, and directives.
2. Recordings will be completed within the required time frame by the Assigned Helper and will then be submitted to the Supervisor for review (preferably in advance of the final due date).
3. Any corrections or modifications specified by the Supervisor will be completed within 72 hours to achieve compliance.
4. Recordings that do not meet the required timelines will include a Departure from the Standard statement written by the Helper, which will then be approved by the Supervisor.

The departure statement will explain the reason for the late completion of the documents and for non-compliance.

**NOTE:** In accordance with the Child Protection Standards in Ontario, the “date of completion of the transfer or termination documentation is the date on which the transfer recording is submitted to the Supervisor for approval.”

## SUPERVISOR REVIEW

1. Supervisors will be responsible to support Staff in the timely completion of recordings as follows:
  - a) The Supervisor will be responsible to review all recordings submitted by the Helper for content as well as for compliance as per Ministry Standard
  - b) The Supervisor will review recordings as soon as possible and in a timely manner
2. Incomplete recordings or ones requiring changes but are completed will be returned by the Supervisor using the “Modification” option in the database with clearly articulated changes that are required.
3. Recordings not completed will be signed on the review date by the Supervisor with the modification required. Upon receiving the modified document, the Supervisor will sign the document again on the completed date.
4. Investigations will be reviewed and approved by the Supervisor within seven (7) days of receipt of the completed case documentation as per Ministry Standard.
5. Overdue recordings will be monitored and addressed by the Supervisor, and a plan of action will be discussed, implemented, and monitored to ensure that compliance will be achieved.
6. The Supervisors will ensure that Helpers will be able to focus on their recording during the time set aside for that purpose.
7. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review a random sample (10%) of Child Protection Files to determine adherence to the Standards.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Management of Records and File Content	
Subject: Release of Information – Consent Forms	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## RELEASE OF INFORMATION – CONSENT FORMS

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that the Release of Information Consent Forms will be completed to obtain information from, or share information with, outside sources regarding a family or Child/Youth in Care. The Mnaasged Information Management System provides the Release of Information Consent Forms for parents and Children/Youth older than 12 years of age to receive or release information about their family.*

*The "Consent to the Disclosure, Transmittal, or Examination of a Clinical Record" is the official Ministry of Health Form. Completion of this form will be required when information is requested from a medical source.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will request the Parent(s) or the Guardian(s) of Children older than 12 years of age to sign the Release of Information Consent Form as required for all appropriate Service Providers.
2. The Assigned Helper will inform the Parent(s) or the Guardian(s) of the Children older than 12 years of age after signing a Release of Information Consent Form that they may withdraw their consent and invalidate the Release of Information Consent Forms at any time, but the preferred method to invalidate would be in written form.
3. The Assigned Helper will ensure that the Release of Information Consent Form is filed appropriately.
4. The Assigned Helpers will ensure that the Release of Information Consent Forms are up to date, as new Release of Information Consent Forms will be signed and dated yearly for open files.

5. The Release of Information Consent Forms will no longer be valid upon closure of a file; therefore, the Assigned Helper will ensure that new Release of Information Consent Forms will be signed if opening new files or if reopening previous files.
6. The Assigned Helper will obtain copies of other Service Providers' Release of Information Consent Forms the Parents/Caregivers and Children older than 12 years of age have signed, where applicable, in addition to Mnaasged's Release of Information Consent Form.
7. Mnaasged's Release of Information Consent Forms will be provided in a separate Forms section.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Legal Services Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Management of Records and File Content	
Subject: Parent or Guardian Refusal to Sign the Release of Information Form	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## PARENT OR GUARDIAN REFUSAL TO SIGN THE RELEASE OF INFORMATION FORM

### POLICY

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*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will obtain a signed Parent's or Guardian's Consent to Release Information Form prior to obtaining information from, or sharing with, external sources. However, it is recognized that there will be instances when the Parent or Guardian refuses to sign the necessary consent forms. A lack of consent will not be interpreted to represent a barrier to ensuring the protection and well-being of a Child/Youth nor will it interfere with the sharing of information that is permissible or required by law.*

### PROCEDURE

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1. When a Parent or Guardian refuses to sign a Consent to Release Information Form, the Assigned Helper will case note the reasons for this and will then consult with the Supervisor.
2. The Assigned Helper will contact the First Nation Band Representative or designate to report on this situation and to discuss options.
3. The Assigned Helper will case note discussions in the Child's/Youth's File in the Mnaasged Information Management System.

### POLICY REFERENCE

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Legal Services Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Management of Records and File Content	
Subject: Disclosure of, or Access to, Records with Consent	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## DISCLOSURE OF, OR ACCESS TO, RECORDS WITH CONSENT

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that the entire case record/file of a Child/Youth or family being served or has been served remains confidential. The sharing of information or documents in Client Files requires the consent of the Clients, including adults as well as Children/Youth 12 years of age and older.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will request Clients to sign various Release of Information Consent Forms prior to participating in meetings, Circles, Case Conferences, and home visits. Mnaasged Helpers will always inform Clients (including Children/Youth 12 years of age and older) that by inviting and agreeing to have various family members and professionals participate in meetings, Circles, Case Conferences, or home visits will represent a consent to share all information likely to be reviewed and discussed in these meeting forums.
2. The Assigned Helper will inform Clients that the Release of Information Consent Forms will be valid for one year at which time new ones are required.
3. The Assigned Helper will advise Clients that the signed Release of Information Consent Forms are no longer valid when a file is closed. When a file reopens Mnaasged will require new Release of Information Consent Forms be signed and inserted into the files.

### POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Management of Records and File Content	
Subject: Disclosure of, or Access to, Records Permitted without Consent	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## DISCLOSURE OF, OR ACCESS TO, RECORDS PERMITTED WITHOUT CONSENT

### POLICY

*The entire case record/file of a Child/Youth or family being served or has been served by Mnaasged Child and Family Services will be confidential. However, no consent by the family will be needed to permit disclosure or access in some situations.*

*All requests for file information disclosure of, or access to, Mnaasged Child and Family Services records, including those received from Clients requesting disclosure of their own files, will be regarded as a referral and will be forwarded to the Initial Assessment Department.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will complete the People Profile and Referral modules in the Mnaasged Information Management System using the Eligibility Spectrum Code 10.1.H.

The Assigned Helper may provide disclosure of, or access to, records to the individuals in the following situations:

- a) All Mnaasged Employees who are required to provide services to a family
- b) Selective information authorized by the Assigned Helper or the Supervisor to an Alternative Care Provider caring for a Child/Youth in Mnaasged Care
- c) Designated professional consultants under a Mnaasged contract who require file information to perform their duties
- d) The Mnaasged Customary Care Home who has Child(ren)/Youth in Care under a *Child, Youth and Family Services Act Part V* order, a Temporary Care Agreement, or a Special Needs Agreement (Part V)

- e) A Peace Officer (Police Officer or Justice of the Peace) without warrant or subpoena to prevent serious physical or emotional harm to the person or another person only if the need is urgent
  - f) Medical personnel to prevent serious physical or emotional harm and the need is urgent
  - g) A researcher with the approval of the Executive Director
  - h) Any Service Review Committee designated under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* (mandatory)
  - i) The Permanency Planning Committee of the Placement, Planning and Review Committee (may not be mandatory)
  - j) Other Societies/Agencies conducting a Protection Investigation or making a court application
  - k) Any person possessing a Court Order for such access or disclosure
  - l) Disclosure to a First Nation Band Representative when Mnaasged is involved with a family from their First Nation
2. The Assigned Helper will forward Requests for Disclosure for file records, in part or in whole, including requests received from Clients, to the Legal Services Department for processing.
  3. Mnaasged Legal Counsel will review and file the request before authorizing the Release of Information and indicating what information can be released. The Legal Department will be responsible to provide written documentation indicating what content of the file can be released.
  4. Mnaasged Staff will be expected to maintain and to protect the privacy of clients by closing doors, locking away records, destroying paperwork approved for discarding, and ensuring that identifying information will be inaccessible to unauthorized persons.
  5. The Assigned Helpers will obtain the Supervisor's approval prior to the release of another set of copies of Clients' files that have previously been provided. This may include access to Service Plans, Case Conference minutes, and Court documents previously served to them.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Legal Services Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Management of Records and File Content	
Subject: Confidential Service Files (Staff and Board Members)	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE FILES

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services recognizes that a Child Protection Service File may be established relating to an Employee, the Employee's immediate family, or a Board Member when a referral or a report is received. Mnaasged Child and Family Services has a responsibility to provide additional privacy measures for such files and the information contained therein.*

*Once a Child Welfare Staff member has determined that a report will be treated as Staff-/Board-sensitive, the Assigned Helper will inform the immediate Supervisor to follow the procedure outlined for this policy.*

### PROCEDURE

In all instances, the actual identities of persons will be disclosed by utilizing a File Number:

1. The Assigned Helper will inform the immediate Supervisor once a report to Mnaasged is considered potentially Staff-sensitive. The Supervisor will ensure that the Staff receiving the report will complete the People Profiles, all internal and Fast Track record checks, and the Referral module in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
2. The Supervisor will consult with the Director of Services or the Executive Director who will determine whether the matter should be referred to another Agency with jurisdiction, as it may be necessary to avoid a perception of a conflict of interest. The Director of Services will then be responsible to contact the other Agency to arrange for the referral or the transfer to take place.
3. The Supervisor will advise the Systems Administrator that the file is considered Staff-/Board-sensitive and that staff will be permitted access to the file in the Mnaasged Information Management System.

4. The Supervisor will compose and then forward an email to the Senior Manager and the Director of Services to inform them that a Staff-/Board-sensitive file has been activated for service.
5. The Supervisor will ensure that only the Administrative Assistant and the Helper assigned to the family will be permitted access to both the paper and the electronic files to achieve case management development and planning and to complete the required recordings in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
6. The Supervisor will advise the Senior Manager, the Director of Services, and the Systems Administrator once a determination is made that a file no longer requires service.
7. The Administrative Assistant assigned to the file will print the file for the Central Filing Department.
8. The Central Filing Department will be responsible to maintain an index of Staff-/Board-sensitive files that are filed within a separate section of the department.
9. The Systems Administrator will secure the electronic file in the system.
10. The Supervisors and the Senior Managers will obtain a Client list of Staff-/Board-sensitive files from the Systems Administrator on a quarterly basis. The Senior Manager will review Staff-/Board-sensitive files with the assigned Supervisor to ensure that these types of cases are managed and that an accurate list is maintained within Mnaasged.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Management of Records and File Content	
Subject: Previous Wards – Request for Information	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## PREVIOUS WARDS – REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services is committed to providing personal information related specifically to a Child/Youth who has previously been in the Care of Mnaasged Child and Family Services.*

*All requests from former wards for personal information relating to Care will be initially directed to the Assigned Helper for review and processing.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will complete the Referral Module and the applicable record checks in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
2. The Supervisor of the Assigned Helper will review and approve the People Profile and Referral modules before handing over to an Assigned Helper for service completion.
3. If an Assigned Helper on staff is known to the former ward and if both Supervisors agree it is an assignment that can be made within the current workload, the file may be assigned to that Helper as an alternative to being completed by the Child Safety Intervention Helper.
4. The Assigned Helper will arrange a meeting with the Client and will request a signed Consent for Release of Information from the previous ward identifying the information that the Client is requesting.
5. The Assigned Helper will discuss a plan with the Supervisor on the disclosure of information that may be potentially damaging to the Client and will develop a plan to ensure that supports are available to assist the Client in interpreting and understanding that information.

6. The Assigned Helper will arrange a meeting to review the request with Mnaasged's Lawyer. The meeting will include the identification of Mnaasged records to be reviewed to determine what records can be provided.
7. The Legal Department will be responsible to review and provide a copy of the information from the file that can be released to the Client. The Legal Department will also be responsible to provide a copy of this record to the Assigned Helper, who can then request a meeting with the Legal Department if clarification is required or needed regarding the final copy.
8. The Assigned Helper will arrange a meeting to review the information with the Client if required and needed. The Assigned Helper will ensure that Mnaasged's final response to the written request will be copied and filed in the Child's/Youth's File.
9. Every three (3) months the Quality Assurance Manager will review and report on these types of requests. These reports will be provided to the Executive Director and the Director of Service.

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Management of Records and File Content	
Subject: Fast Track Information System	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standards	

## FAST TRACK INFORMATION SYSTEM

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that no Employee will read, discuss, or expose any confidential information accessed from the Mnaasged Information Management System, file server, or Fast Track Information System unless for legitimate Mnaasged Child and Family Services' Child Protection Interventions.*

*Any information contained in Fast Track will be used only for the purposes of carrying out duties and responsibilities within the Child Protection Mandate.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helpers will check the Fast Track system as part of every Child Protection Investigation they conduct. Access to Fast Track is restricted to authorized Helpers and must be completed within three (3) days upon receipt of referrals/reports.
2. The Assigned Helpers who use the Fast Track Information System as a regular part of their duties must complete training on the use of the System. All Helpers trained on the restricted use of the Fast Track Information System will be provided with a password and authorization to use the System.
3. No Employee will read, discuss, or expose any confidential information accessed from the Mnaasged Information Management System, file server, or Fast Track Information System unless for legitimate Mnaasged Child Protection Interventions.
4. Information contained or received from the Fast Track will be used only for the purpose to carry out duties and responsibilities within the Child Protection Mandate.
5. Immediate disciplinary action will be taken against any Assigned Helper who misuses the Fast Track Information System.

6. Authorized Mnaasged Staff operating the Fast Track Information System should be aware that reports will be provided to all Children's Aid Societies on the number of requests, the number of hits, and other statistical information regarding the use of the Fast Track Information System by individuals authorized to access the Fast Track Information System.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Management of Records and File Content	
Subject: Preparing Closed Files for Storage in the Central Storage	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## PREPARING CLOSED FILES FOR STORAGE IN THE CENTRAL STORAGE

### POLICY

*When the Family's File or the Child's/Youth's File has been closed, all duplicate or unnecessary material will be removed prior to being sent to the Central Storage. All documentation considered for destroying/discarding, other than duplications, requires consultation with the Legal Department for approval.*

*The Administrative Assistant for each team will ensure that the file has been reviewed and prepared for closing prior to forwarding to storage.*

### PROCEDURE

The following steps will be followed to maximize file storage space:

1. Court Working Files of the Child Protection/Crown Ward Files will be retained for a period of 20 years after closure, starting with files opened after September 1998. This information is also included in the Court File kept by the Legal Services Department.
2. Scanned and Uploaded Case Notes will be used in occasional situations when handwritten case notes are taken. Once scanned, these will be included in the electronic file while the original copy can be destroyed. For Children in Care Files and Crown Ward Files where more than one Child/Youth from the same family are in Care, a separate file will be maintained containing one copy of all case notes. A notation will be included in each individual Child's/Youth's File cross-referencing the Case Note File.
3. All original Court Orders, photographs, birth certificates, and health cards will be stored in the original forms.
4. All recordings, health records, education records, Court Orders, significant correspondence and documents, and social histories will be kept in the original formats.

5. Use of Mnaasged scanning systems will be used to forward copies of documents to be stored in all related files.
6. Video and audio tapes (e.g., Police interviews, photographs, or DVDs) will be removed from the file and labelled before storing all in one location. A notation will be made in the file regarding this action.
7. Any duplicate documentation approved to be removed will be shredded prior to discarding to maintain confidentiality.
8. Any Mnaasged electronic documentation approved to be removed or deleted is to be completed by the Systems Administration Staff. This will maintain confidentiality and will ensure that the latest and most appropriate technology will be used to remove or delete the information.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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## SECTION 5: PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Alternatives to Admission to Care – Admission Prevention	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## ALTERNATIVES OF ADMISSION TO CARE – ADMISSION PREVENTION

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that prior to the decision to admit a Child/Youth into Care, the Assigned Helper will consider other intervention methods that would ensure the Child's/Youth's protection within the family, extended family, or home community. In all cases, the approach Mnaasged Child and Family Services will take is based on using the Least Intrusive Option that will keep Children/Youth away from needing protection. In all cases, all available options will be explored and fully considered before admitting a Child/Youth into Care. Prior to launching any court application, the Helper and the Supervisor must seek and obtain approval from the Executive Director or the Director of Services within 24 hours of the Involuntary Admission.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will ensure that all alternatives to an Admission to Care are explored and exhausted before finalizing a plan for formal admission of Children/Youth into the Care of Mnaasged. This includes the formal process of consulting and exploring options, such as an Alternative Dispute Resolution with the First Nation Band Representative or the Indigenous community representatives. Any decisions regarding an Alternative Dispute Resolution will be documented in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
2. The Assigned Helper will review the case situation before obtaining approval from the Executive Director or the Director of Services prior to the filing of a Protection Application and within 24 hours of the Involuntary Admission of the Child/Youth.

3. Prior to the decision to admit the Child/Youth into Mnaasged's Care, the following strategies will be utilized to help ensure that the Children/Youth are protected within the family:
  - a) Encourage and support the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) to take the necessary steps to ensure the Child's/Youth's safety and to address the identified risk factors
  - b) Work with the Parents or Guardians, the First Nation Band Representatives, or other Indigenous community representatives in developing Service Plans that will provide the protection of the Child/Youth
  - c) Utilize a Community Circle to enlist the support of the family's First Nation or Indigenous community to reduce the risk to the Child's/Youth's safety and well-being
  - d) Provide support to the family, refer the family for family or individual counselling, and outline specific issues to the family that need to be addressed
  - e) Provide guidance and resource materials to the Parents or Guardians on effective parenting strategies for their Child/Youth in dealing with difficult behaviour
  - f) Educate the Parents or Guardians on acceptable parenting practices
  - g) Help Parents or Guardians do what they can to help their Child/Youth who may be suicidal, provide support to the Child/Youth who is suicidal, and arrange with others in the community to monitor and support that Child/Youth
  - h) Make referrals to other community services for treatment, counselling, and support
  - i) Provide episodic financial assistance if all other areas to seek financial assistance have been exhausted
  - j) Make an agreement with the abusive Parent to leave the home and seek treatment
  - k) Visit and interview the Child/Youth regularly to determine the risk level
  - l) Monitor the family situation to ensure continued protection
4. The Assigned Helper will ensure that support is coordinated with the family when a Plan has been identified and endorsed by the family, the First Nation, the Indigenous representative, and Mnaasged.
5. If a request for financial assistance is made, the Assigned Helper will complete the Request for Purchase Form and will then obtain a Supervisor's approval. (Please see Authorization of Limits to Expenditures for Supervisors and the Ontario Permanency Funding Guidelines.)

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Involuntary Admission of a Child to a Place of Safety	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## INVOLUNTARY ADMISSION OF A CHILD TO A PLACE OF SAFETY

### POLICY

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*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that all least intrusive measures to protect the Child/Youth prior to the Admission into Care have been explored and exhausted.*

### PROCEDURE

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1. Prior to an Involuntary Admission to a Place of Safety the Assigned Helper will consult with and obtain approval from the immediate Supervisor. If the Helper’s immediate Supervisor is not available the situation must be discussed with another Supervisor, a Senior Manager, or the Director of Services. Outside of normal office hours the After Hours Supervisor will be available for consultation and approval.
2. If the Assigned Helper determines that a Child/Youth is at imminent risk of harm, the Helper will immediately intervene to ensure the Child’s/Youth’s safety without the need to consult with a Supervisor. At the earliest opportunity, the Helper will ensure that the Supervisor is informed that an Involuntary Admission has occurred.
3. In either circumstance indicated above, the Helper and the Supervisor must seek and obtain authorization within 24 hours from the Executive Director or the Director of Services to initiate the court application. The Executive Director may give the following directives:
  - a) Authorize the application
  - b) Direct the Helper and the Supervisor to re-engage with the family, the extended family, the First Nation Band Representative, and other relevant parties to seek a consensual solution to maintain the safety and well-being of the Child/Youth without requiring a court application, such as a Voluntary Placement with extended family, Customary Care, or a Temporary Care Agreement

- c) Direct the return of the Child/Youth back to the Parent(s) or Guardian(s)
- 4. All interventions and services developed by Mnaasged and based on assessments must be reviewed regularly by the Assigned Helper and a Supervisor. The Assigned Helper will determine if Out-of-Home Care is the best choice for the Child/Youth.
- 5. In making this determination the following criteria will be observed:
  - a) Whether the immediate physical well-being of the Child/Youth is in question
  - b) Whether there is likelihood of immediate harm through injury or abuse
  - c) Whether the Child's/Youth's circumstances can be modified to eliminate or reduce risk
  - d) Determine if the emotional well-being of the Child/Youth is at risk
  - e) Does the Child/Youth exhibit an attachment or identify with the Parents or Guardians
  - f) Does the Child/Youth exhibit severe mood swings, severe anxiety, continuous unstable behaviour, withdrawal, or no response?
  - g) The ability of the Parents to care for the Child/Youth in meeting the Child's/Youth's basic needs (in the provision of food and shelter).
  - h) The Child/Youth is refusing to return to the Care of the Parent(s) or Guardian(s).
  - i) The Child/Youth is exhibiting out-of-control behaviour in the home of the Child's/Youth's Parent(s) or Guardian(s).
- 6. In addition, the Assigned Helper will place the Child/Youth in Care according to the guidelines and criteria outlined in section 74 of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*:

**Child in need of protection**

- (2) A child is in need of protection where,
  - (a) the child has suffered physical harm, inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person's,
    - (i) failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child, or
    - (ii) pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child;
  - (b) there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer physical harm inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person's,
    - (i) failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child, or
    - (ii) pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child;
  - (c) the child has been sexually abused or sexually exploited, by the person having charge of the child or by another person where the person having charge of the child knows or should know of the possibility of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation and fails to protect the child;
  - (d) there is a risk that the child is likely to be sexually abused or sexually exploited as described in clause (c);
  - (e) the child requires treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide the treatment or access to the treatment, or, where the child is incapable of consenting to the treatment under the *Health*

- Care Consent Act, 1996* and the parent is a substitute decision-maker for the child, the parent refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to the treatment on the child's behalf;
- (f) the child has suffered emotional harm, demonstrated by serious,
    - (i) anxiety,
    - (ii) depression,
    - (iii) withdrawal,
    - iv) self-destructive or aggressive behaviour, or
    - (v) delayed development,and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the emotional harm suffered by the child results from the actions, failure to act or pattern of neglect on the part of the child's parent or the person having charge of the child;
  - (g) the child has suffered emotional harm of the kind described in subclause (f) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) or (v) and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide services or treatment or access to services or treatment, or, where the child is incapable of consenting to treatment under the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996*, refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to the treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm;
  - (h) there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer emotional harm of the kind described in subclause (f) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) or (v) resulting from the actions, failure to act or pattern of neglect on the part of the child's parent or the person having charge of the child;
  - (i) there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer emotional harm of the kind described in subclause (f) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) or (v) and that the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide services or treatment or access to services or treatment, or, where the child is incapable of consenting to treatment under the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996*, refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to treatment to prevent the harm;
  - (j) the child suffers from a mental, emotional or developmental condition that, if not remedied, could seriously impair the child's development and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide treatment or access to treatment, or where the child is incapable of consenting to treatment under the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996*, refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to the treatment to remedy or alleviate the condition;
  - (k) the child's parent has died or is unavailable to exercise custodial rights over the child and has not made adequate provision for the child's care and custody, or the child is in a residential placement and the parent refuses or is unable or unwilling to resume the child's care and custody;
  - (l) the child is younger than 12 and has killed or seriously injured another person or caused serious damage to another person's property, services or treatment are necessary to prevent a recurrence and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide services or treatment or access to services or treatment, or, where the child is incapable of consenting to treatment under the *Health Care Consent Act, 1996*, refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to treatment;
  - (m) the child is younger than 12 and has on more than one occasion injured another person or caused loss or damage to another person's property, with the encouragement of the person having charge of the child or because of that person's failure or inability to supervise the child adequately;
  - (n) the child's parent is unable to care for the child and the child is brought before the court with the parent's consent and, where the child is 12 or older, with the child's consent, for the matter to be dealt with under this Part; or
  - (o) the child is 16 or 17 and a prescribed circumstance or condition exists.
7. In situations where Parents refuse to cooperate or consent to place their Children/Youth in Care, Mnaasged will consider seeking a warrant to bring the Child/Youth to a Place of Safety, which is outlined in **section** 81 of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*. The Assigned Helper will attempt to obtain a warrant from a Justice of the Peace unless there would be substantial risk to the Child's/Youth's health and safety during the time necessary to obtain the warrant.

8. Once the determination is made that a Child's/Youth's need for protection cannot be met in the current home, Admission to Care may occur with or without the agreement of the family. Whenever a Child/Youth is to be admitted into Mnaasged Care, Customary Care is the preferred option.
9. At the time of the Involuntary Admission of a Child/Youth into Care or as soon as possible thereafter, the Assigned Helper will explain to the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) the reasons (Child Protection Concerns) that the Child/Youth is being taken into Mnaasged Care. The Helper will ensure that the First Nation Band Representative has been consulted on this decision before it occurs whenever possible. If it would leave the Child/Youth at risk during the time to consult, the First Nation Band Representative will be notified of the Involuntary Admission immediately after the Child/Youth is taken into Care.
10. At the time of the Involuntary Admission, the Assigned Helper will make every effort to obtain as much information as possible about the Child/Youth:
  - a) Obtain the Child's/Youth's identification (Status card, health card, birth certificate)
  - b) Inquire if the Child/Youth is currently on any medication
  - c) Inquire if the Child/Youth has any medical conditions
  - d) Inquire if the Child/Youth has any special needs, including allergies
  - e) Inquire if the Child/Youth has any fears, habits, or conditions the Caregivers need to be made aware
11. The Helper will also obtain any favourite toys, clothes, and other items belonging to the Child/Youth that the Child/Youth may need or want. The Helper may want to consider giving the Child/Youth, if appropriate and with the Caregiver's consent, an item belonging to the Caregiver. If it is not possible to gather these items at the time of the Involuntary Admission, the Helper will make every effort to gather these after admission.
12. At the time of the Involuntary Admission the Assigned Helper will inquire and ask the Parents and the First Nation Band Representative to identify immediate or extended family who might be a viable option for placement and care. If a family is identified the Helper will obtain consent for the purpose of planning and exploring the placement.
13. The Assigned Helper will provide information to Parents or Caregivers about the Client's rights and Mnaasged's Complaint Procedures.
14. If an Intervention Plan or an Alternative Plan for Care with family cannot be identified, the Assigned Helper will place the Children/Youth with a Mnaasged Alternative Care Provider and will advise the Legal Department. The Legal Department will obtain court time and file a protection application within five (5) days of the Involuntary Admission after obtaining authorization from the Executive Director or the Director of Services.

15. If the matter proceeds to court, the Assigned Helper will ensure that the Parents/Caregivers and the First Nation Band Representative are notified of the court date, and all subsequent court dates, and that they are served the court documents before the initial court date. (Refer to Legal Service Policy and Procedure Manual.)
16. When a Child/Youth has been removed from the home and admitted into Mnaasged Care in an emergency, the Assigned Helper will discuss with the family and the First Nation Band Representative any available options that will address the risk issues so the Child/Youth can be returned home and will be protected within the family. Mnaasged will explore all options for the possibility of returning the Child/Youth prior to the initial court appearance required within five (5) days of the Involuntary Admission. The First Nation may be able to locate a family to provide Temporary Care in a private arrangement. Documentation of the immediate and thorough search for extended family/community placements must be included as part of the Family's File and the Child's/Youth's File.
17. The Assigned Helper will be responsible for the placement of the Child/Youth and completing the Child Admission Form. If the form is not totally completed at the time of placement, the Helper assigned to the Home will ensure that it is completed, signed, and delivered to the Alternative Care Provider(s) the following day. The Administrative Assistant will ensure that the required documentation is filed according to licensing Standards.
18. When immediate medical attention is required, the Assigned Helper will coordinate the examination with the Alternative Care Provider(s). If several Children/Youth require attention, the Assigned Helper and the Supervisor will collaborate to have Mnaasged Staff provide assistance.
19. All necessary medical, dental, and collateral appointments are the responsibility of the Assigned Helper (refer to Children in Care Policy and Procedure Manual). If the Alternative Care Provider(s) is unable to attend, the Assigned Helper will be required to attend.
20. In some instances, Mnaasged will be unable to secure an appropriate local placement at the time of the Involuntary Admission. In these instances, an Outside Paid Resource (OPR) will be required, this search and placement requires the Executive Director's or the Director of Services' approval. If it is the initial placement, it will be the responsibility of the Assigned Helper, who is known to the Child/Youth, to participate in the placement.
21. In some situations, obvious safety concerns will exist when considering the transportation of Children/Youth to placements outside the community. The Assigned Helper will obtain approval from the immediate Supervisor to arrange for alternative transportation that best meet the needs of the Child/Youth and the safety of the Helper.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Legal Services Policy and Procedure Manual

Children in Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Place of Safety	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## PLACE OF SAFETY

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that only the Executive Director will designate a home as a Place of Safety and will also ensure that all legislative requirements and Child Protection Standards will be completed to approve a Place of Safety for placement of Children/Youth that require Care.*

*When a Child/Youth is placed in an approved Place of Safety, Mnaasged Child and Family Services may provide financial assistance to the Kinship or Customary Care Provider until the Child/Youth returns to the Parent or the Guardian, Protection Concerns have been addressed, or a Permanency Plan has been implemented. Support payments to the Place of Safety Caregiver must not exceed the regular Alternative Care rate.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Supervisor and the Senior Manager will provide the Director of Services with all relevant information needed for the purpose of designating a home as a Place of Safety. Once reviewed by the Director of Services the notification for designating a home will be forwarded to the Executive Director for final approval.
2. Immediately following this notification, if the Assigned Helper is requesting a Kinship Care Home designation, the Alternative Care Helper will initiate a SAFE (Structured Analysis Family Evaluation) Home Assessment within 15 days of placement.
3. The Assigned Helper will complete the following steps when a Place of Safety has been identified by the Chief or First Nation Band Representative:
  - a) Interview the proposed Kinship/Customary Care Provider

- b) Private interview with the Child/Youth
  - c) Assessment of the physical home environment
  - d) Internal Records Check for proposed Kinship Providers
  - e) Police Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Check
  - f) Names of every individual 18 years of age or older who reside in the Home and the nature of their relationship with the Child/Youth
4. The Assigned Helper will complete the following steps as soon as possible but within seven (7) days following a Child's/Youth's placement:
- a) Obtain consent to conduct an Internal Records Check relating to any person who is 18 years of age or older that reside in the Home
  - b) Obtain consent from the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) to conduct a more comprehensive background check that will include a Police Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Check and a review of records in Children's Aid Societies or Indigenous Child Well-being Agencies both within and outside the province.
5. Within seven (7) days of a Child's/Youth's placement in a Place of Safety, the Assigned Helper or another person designated by Mnaasged must complete the following:
- a) Conduct a home visit in which the Child/Youth was placed and meet privately with the Child/Youth
  - b) Contact every person in the home who is 18 years of age or older and obtain their consent to conduct a more comprehensive background check, including a Police Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Check and a review of records in Children's Aid Societies or Indigenous Child Well-being Agencies both within and outside the province
6. Within 30 days of the Child's/Youth's placement in a Place of Safety, the Assigned Helper will perform the following:
- a) Conduct an additional home visit in which the Child/Youth was placed and meet privately with the Child/Youth
  - b) Conduct an interview with the Guardian
  - c) Complete a Plan of Care for the Child/Youth
  - d) Conduct a Criminal and Child Welfare Records Check within seven (7) days of obtaining consents

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

1. When a Kinship or Formal Customary Care Place of Safety has been approved by the Executive Director or designate, the Assigned Helper, in consultation with a Supervisor, will determine the financial support that is required by the Kinship Provider to meet the Child's/Youth's needs and to stabilize the placement.
2. When determining the amount and frequency of support Mnaasged will consider the following:
  - a) The Child's/Youth's needs
  - b) Health and safety concerns
  - c) The availability of assistance from extended family members, community programs, or First Nation community services
3. The Assigned Helper will obtain receipts for any financial costs incurred to accommodate the Child/Youth in a Place of Safety arrangement. If receipts are not provided, explanatory notes must be made and maintained within the file. A record of all financial support provided to the Kinship Care Providers and the Child/Youth will be documented in the Kinship Care Family's File in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
4. The Assigned Helper will follow the Alternative Care Policies and Procedures for requesting and submitting requests for reimbursements to the Kinship Place of Safety Provider once approved by the Supervisor.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Financial Policy and Procedure Manual

Kinship Service Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Admission into Care – Legal Documentation	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## ADMISSION INTO CARE – LEGAL DOCUMENTATION

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will assume legal responsibility for the care and custody of the Child(ren)/Youth admitted into Care.*

### PROCEDURE

1. As per the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*, all Children/Youth brought into Mnaasged Care must have a valid legal status within five (5) days of coming into Care.
2. Mnaasged’s Legal Services Policy and Procedure Manual outlines various legal status and options available that are best suited for Children/Youth and families. Consult the Mnaasged Legal Services Policy and Procedure Manual for all procedures and related documentation involved.
3. The Supervisor will have the authority to consult with the Legal Services Department regarding the decision to involuntarily admit a Child/Youth when required.
4. The Supervisor and the Assigned Helper will be required to access the appropriate Community Circle, preferably prior to initiating a Court Protection Application, to determine if any other alternatives for service can be identified before proceeding to court.
5. The Assigned Helpers have a legal obligation to ensure that Parents are aware of the decisions impacting the Case Planning. This relates to, but is not limited to, Involuntary Admissions, notification of court times, and their right to access Legal Counsel, their First Nation Band Representative, or community supports.
6. The Assigned Helpers will also ensure that Parents are aware of Mnaasged’s Case Plans and the expectations and the timelines associated with addressing any service or court plans proposed to the family.

7. As per the Legal Services Policy and Procedure Manual, the Assigned Helper must consult and receive approval from the Supervisor or the Senior Manager prior to the placement of a Child/Youth in Mnaasged Care. The Supervisor will be responsible to notify the Legal Services Assistant that court time is required if an alternative to the court process cannot be identified with the family, and the Executive Director has authorized the court application.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Placement of Children	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that the Child Admission Form will be completed for a Child/Youth admitted into the Care of Mnaasged Child and Family Services.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will ensure that the necessary information will be included in the Child Admission Form (see Child Admission Form Policy).
2. Upon completion of the Child Admission Form, the Assigned Helper will forward the documentation to the Supervisor for review and approval.
3. Once the Child Data Form is completed and approved the Supervisor will assign a Helper to the Child/Youth and will input the information in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
4. Once an Alternative Care placement has been identified the Assigned Helper for the Child/Youth will input the address, location, and contact information of the placement in the Child's/Youth's File in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
5. The completed Child Admission Form will be maintained in the Child's/Youth's File in the Mnaasged Information Management System.

### POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Retrieving a Child’s/Youth’s Identification Documents from the Parent(s) or Guardian(s)	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Mnaasged Child and Family Services Internal	

## RETRIEVING A CHILD’S/YOUTH’S IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTS FROM THE PARENT(S) OR GUARDIAN(S)

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will be responsible to ensure that when a Child/Youth has been in Care for more than 30 days, and the Helper has been unable to obtain identification cards/documents from the Parent(s) or Guardian(s), the Assigned Helper for the Child/Youth will begin the process for obtaining the health card, the status card, the birth certificate, and other identifying cards/documents for the Child/Youth. Consents will be requested by the Assigned Helper from the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) for the appropriate Mnaasged Child and Family Services and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services permissions.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will obtain the Child’s/Youth’s identification cards/documents from the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) at the time of Involuntary Admission or as soon as possible. The Helper will document in a case note that the identification cards/documents were discussed, retrieved, and placed in the Child’s/Youth’s File in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
2. The Assigned Helper will obtain consents from the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) when completing a request for a Child’s/Youth’s identification documentation when appropriate.
3. The Assigned Helper will provide blank forms for the identification documents and assist the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) to complete and submit the forms no later than 14 days from the time of a Child’s/Youth’s admission.
4. The Assigned Helper for the family will assist the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) in seeking financial support, if necessary, to cover costs related to application forms. If required,

Mnaasged will provide financial assistance with prior approval from a Supervisor. If approved the Assigned Helper will complete and send an approved Request for Payment Form to Finance.

5. The Finance Clerk will mail the documentation and fee to the proper organization or Ministry.
6. Upon receipt of the documentation the Finance Clerk will photocopy and forward the identification to the Assigned Helper assigned to the Child's/Youth's File. The Assigned Helper will maintain the original in the Child's/Youth's File, with a copy retained in the Child's/Youth's File in the Mnaasged Information Management System and a copy provided to the Alternative Care Provider.
7. The Alternative Care Provider will be instructed to ensure that the documents are kept safe and that the documents follow the Child/Youth when leaving Mnaasged's Care.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Alternative Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Child Protection Policy and Procedure Manual

Financial Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Child Admission Forms	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD ADMISSION FORMS

### POLICY

*When a Child/Youth is admitted into Care the Admitting Assigned Helper will complete the Child Admission Form within 24 hours. This form, located within the Mnaasged Information Management System forms, describes the Child/Youth and any special needs the Child/Youth may have that will assist with the selection of a placement and that will inform the Alternative Care Providers about the Child/Youth.*

*Once completed, the Child Admission Form will notify the Administration of Mnaasged Child and Family Services that the Child/Youth has been admitted into Care. This form will trigger the process to open the Child in Care File and will ensure the appropriate placement resource will get paid.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Child Admission Form must be sent to the Supervisor at the time a placement request is initiated and a Helper is assigned.
2. The following information will be included in the Child Admission Form:
  - a) The Child's/Youth's Indigenous language and culture
  - b) The family background and kinship ties
  - c) The Child's/Youth's religious background
  - d) The Child's/Youth's developmental, emotional, spiritual, social, medical, and educational needs
  - e) The Child's/Youth's preferences, interests, abilities, strengths, and weaknesses that include any known behavioural problems and previous abuse

- f) The proximity of the placement to the Child's/Youth's family and community
  - g) The expected length of stay plans for parental contact and visiting
3. Upon receipt of this form the Assigned Helper for the Child/Youth will ensure that the following steps are taken:
- a) A preliminary assessment will be completed within 21 days of admission
  - b) An Admission Social History will be prepared to reflect the background history of the Child/Youth and the family within 60 days
  - c) An Admission Medical Examination will be arranged and carried out on admission, or within 72 hours if in an emergency or under exceptional circumstances, or as soon as is practical
  - d) The Assigned Helper will contact the Office of the Registrar General to request verification of birth documentation where applicable (when birth certificates are not provided from the biological family or caregivers)
  - e) The Assigned Helper for the Child/Youth will contact Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) regarding registration of an Indigenous Child/Youth brought into Care to ensure that the Child/Youth is registered or is eligible to be registered. If applicable the INAC Cost Sharing Form will be submitted
4. A copy of the Child Admission Form will be provided to the Alternative Care Providers prior to or at the time of placement.
5. The completed Child Admission Form will be kept in the Child's/Youth's File.
6. A copy of the Child Admission Form will be sent to the Quality Assurance Department to ensure that it is entered into the Mnaasged Information Management System accurately and properly.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Authority for Signing Medical Consents	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## AUTHORITY FOR SIGNING MEDICAL CONSENTS

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services must ensure that the appropriate consents are signed for medical examinations and treatment for Children/Youth in Care.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The intent of this procedure is to clarify who can sign for medical examinations and for medical treatment for Children/Youth in the Care of Mnaasged. This procedure will be used by all Employees including After Hours Helpers. All Medical Consents can only be signed once the person responsible has been made fully aware of the procedures, its implications, and when they can give an informed consent.

**NOTE:** Authority to Sign Medical Consents is based on the legal status of the Child/Youth

Status	Authority to Sign
Crown Ward/Extended Society Care	Mnaasged Child and Family Services
Society Ward/Interim Society Care	Mnaasged Child and Family Services
In Care – Interim Court Order	Mnaasged Child and Family Services and Parents or Guardians
Temporary Care Agreement	Parents or Guardians unless agreement specifies Mnaasged
Special Needs Agreement	Parents or Guardians unless agreement specifies Mnaasged
Customary Care	Authority detailed within each agreement

2. The Assigned Helper will make efforts to involve the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) in the process no matter the status of the Child/Youth or the nature of the treatment required.

3. The following general criteria, which are based on the nature of the medical treatment, will be required to determine which Mnaasged Personnel can sign the consent for a Child/Youth in Care.

Type of Procedure	Authorization	Assigned Helper
Medical Examination	Supervisor	Yes
Treatment – No Anaesthetic	Supervisor	Yes
Treatment – Anaesthetic	Supervisor/ Senior Manager	No
Life-Threatening Procedures	Director of Services	No
Admission to Psychiatric Facility	Director of Services	Yes
Psychiatric Treatment not involving Intrusive Procedures	Director of Services	Yes
Psychiatric Treatment involving Intrusive Procedures (e.g., ECT)	Director of Services	No

4. These guidelines are very general; therefore, all situations must be carefully reviewed. Some procedures not requiring anaesthetic can be life-threatening, whereas others that do may be very minor procedures. All cases having a potential to develop into serious issues must be brought to the attention of the Manager or the Director of Services.
5. Photocopies of all signed consents will be placed in the Child's/Youth's Care Files.
6. When a Child/Youth is being admitted to a psychiatric or mental health facility, several consents will need to be signed.
7. The consent for intrusive procedures, including psychotropic drugs, should be signed when the doctor or psychiatrist is recommending the procedure.
8. Any incidents regarding life-threatening procedures or psychiatric treatment require consultation and approval from the Director of Services. These incidents include the following:
  - a) Admission to a psychiatric facility
  - b) Psychiatric treatment not involving intrusive procedures
  - c) Psychiatric treatment involving intrusive procedures, such as an ECT (electroconvulsive therapy)
  - d) Life-threatening procedures

## POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Children in Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Authorization for Limits for Expenditures for Supervisors	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Mnaasged Child and Family Services Internal	

**AUTHORIZATION FOR LIMITS FOR EXPENDITURES FOR SUPERVISORS**

**POLICY**

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services Community-based Supervisors are required on a regular basis to approve expenditures requested by Assigned Helpers for the provision of financial assistance to families in emergency situations.*

*Community-based Supervisors have the authority to approve up to \$5,000 for these types of emergency situations when they arise. Examples of some expenditures that may be approved include, but are not limited to, groceries, infant necessities (cribs, mattresses, formula, diapers, bottles, and so on), beds (frames, mattresses, bedding, and so on), bus tickets, accommodations, Public Utilities Commission invoices, rent, death or serious accident-related expenses (clothes, travel, food, and so on), and treatment facility-related expenditures.*

*Financial assistance is intended to be a one-time assistance and as a last resort.*

**PROCEDURE**

1. The Assigned Helper will complete a Request for Purchase Form once it is deemed that the family has exhausted all viable resources. The Helper will document the reasons for the request and what support is being requested by the family.
2. Prior to obtaining approval, the Assigned Helper will ensure that the following has been determined:
  - a) The family has exhausted all other resources
  - b) If financial resources to the immediate or extended family would prevent an Involuntary Admission or Admission into Care

- c) If the situation is unusual or unique
- 3. The Assigned Helper will forward the Request for Purchase Form with the immediate Supervisor to review and to seek approval.
- 4. Once approval is obtained, the Assigned Helper will be responsible to ensure that the Request for Purchase Form is sent to the Finance Department for processing. The Assigned Helper will also be responsible to follow-up with the family to ensure that they received what was needed.
- 5. The Assigned Helper will obtain any receipts or documentation required from the family to confirm the purchases. Copies of receipts will be provided to the Finance Department when required and a copy will be placed in the applicable Client File.
- 6. The Supervisor will require the approval of the Senior Manager for expenditures that exceed \$5,000.
- 7. Refer to the Ontario Permanency Funding Policy Guidelines.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Financial Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Rights of a Child in Care at Admission	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Children in Care Standards	

## RIGHTS OF A CHILD IN CARE AT ADMISSION

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that the Assigned Helper will review the Rights in Care Handbook with the Child/Youth entering Care.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will review the Child's/Youth's rights upon admission to the new placement and will provide the Child/Youth with a copy of the Rights in Care Handbook.
2. The Assigned Helper will request that the Child/Youth in care sign the Rights in Care signature page upon each review. Should the Child/Youth refuse to sign the signature page, the Assigned Helper will document on a case note the reasons in the Child's/Youth's File in the Mnaasged Information Management System and will inform the immediate Supervisor.
3. The Supervisor will provide direction to the Assigned Helper on alternative methods to encourage compliance. For example, if the rights were reviewed in the presence of the Alternative Care Provider, the Helper can have the Alternative Care Provider sign the form with a handwritten explanation.
4. In cases of Infants, Toddlers, or developmentally disabled Children/Youth the Assigned Helper will inform the Child's/Youth's Alternative Care Provider of these Rights and obtain the Alternative Care Provider's signature on the signature page for the Rights in Care Handbook.
5. The Assigned Helper will document each time the Child's/Youth's rights are reviewed in a case note for the Child's/Youth's File in the Mnaasged Information Management System.

6. The Assigned Helper will obtain the Supervisor's signature for approval and will document any departures from Standards with a clear explanation of why a Standard was not met along with other additional steps that may have been taken.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Alternative Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Child in Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Orientation for Children in Care	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Mnaasged Child and Family Services Internal	

## ORIENTATION FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

### POLICY

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*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that Children/Youth are provided with an orientation before and after Admission into Care.*

### PROCEDURE

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1. The Assigned Helper will provide a Child/Youth an orientation during a private visit within seven (7) days of being placed into Care.
2. The Orientation to Alternative Care for a Child/Youth will cover the following topics:
  - a) Coming into Care, what was it like before placement? (Why am I coming into Care and where is my family?)
  - b) Information about the Alternative Care Home
  - c) What it is like to be a Child/Youth in Care?
  - d) What can I expect from professionals while in Care?
  - e) What does the Assigned Helper do and what is their role?
  - f) What is the Alternative Care Provider(s) responsible for?
  - g) What about school?
  - h) What about the neighbourhood?
  - i) What are my rights and responsibilities?
  - j) How can I voice my concerns or complaints?

- k) What is the complaint process?
  - l) What about my future?
  - m) Who is the Provincial Advocate and how do I reach them?
  - n) What about issues related to long-term placements?
  - o) For my cultural integrity, is it okay to express my culture?
3. The Assigned Helper will inform the Child/Youth of the need for Care, will answer any questions and concerns voiced by the Child/Youth and will offer continued opportunities for the Child/Youth to voice any other concerns. Any outstanding issues will be noted and addressed in the Child's/Youth's Plan of Care.
  4. The Assigned Helper may refer the Child/Youth to a support group for Children/Youth in Care or any other available resources and supports that will assist the Child/Youth in the transition into Care.
  5. The Assigned Helper will case note information shared during the orientation in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
  6. The Assigned Helper will engage in an ongoing collaborative conversation with the First Nation Band Representative regarding orientation and transition into Care.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Alternative Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Child in Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Ontario Child Advocate <b>TO BE UPDATED WHEN NEW REQUIREMENTS AVAILABLE</b>	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Children in Care Standards <a href="http://provincialadvocate.on.ca/main/en/rights/">http://provincialadvocate.on.ca/main/en/rights/</a>	

## ONTARIO CHILD ADVOCATE

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that Children/Youth are provided with a pamphlet and phone number for the Ontario Child Advocate: Office of the Provincial Advocate at admission and every six (6) months thereafter.*

*A Child/Youth receiving service under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act will be entitled to approach the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children to assist if their rights are violated and if they cannot resolve the difficulty without recourse from the Advocacy Office.*

### PROCEDURE

1. Mnaasged's Assigned Helpers will ensure that the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children will intervene on behalf of the Child/Youth if a Serious Complaint or service problem cannot be resolved at the local level, such as the following cases:
  - a) Children/Youth require services that are not within the scope of the particular Service Provider
  - b) Children's/Youth's Parent(s) or Guardian(s) has come into serious conflict with the system
  - c) Children/Youth are alleged to be in extraordinary jeopardy within the service system
  - d) Children/Youth complain that their rights are being violated and their concerns have not been adequately addressed through Complaints Procedures established by the service provider or the regional level of the Ministry (the system of advocacy through the Advocacy Office as set forth by the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* will have as its foundation)

- e) Crisis intervention on behalf of a Child/Youth whose safety or well-being is in jeopardy within the residential care system
  - f) The monitoring of Children/Youth who, as a result of multiple placement transfers within a short period of time, appear to be moving around too much within the residential care system
  - g) Support to the Inter-Ministerial Placement Action Committee on behalf of individual Children/Youth whose service requirements have not been resolved at the area level and have thus been referred to the committee for consultation and resolution
  - h) Consultation at Case Conferences in Treatment Planning meetings to assist the Service Provider in coordinating services to ensure that the needs of the Child/Youth are met
  - i) Assistance for Parents and Guardians in making appropriate contacts within the service system to achieve special needs planning for a Children/Youth and in providing support in negotiations
  - j) Provision of a procedure for receiving complaints from Children/Youth in residences licensed by the Ministry
  - k) Working with Staff in other Ministries in co-operative projects designed to identify and study issues of joint concern in service delivery
  - l) Liaise with other provinces to facilitate interprovincial cooperation in the provision of services to Children/Youth and families
  - m) Liaise with advocacy organizations such as the Children's Foundation for Children and the Law and the Advocacy Resource Centre for the Handicapped
  - n) Training and provision of information to Service Providers on behalf of difficult-to-serve Children/Youth
2. When a Child's/Youth's complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the Mnaasged level, the Assigned Helper will assist the Child/Youth to access the following external measures:
- a) Any Child/Youth 12 years of age or older who objects to being in a residential or treatment placement may request a review of the placement through the Residential Placement Advisory Committee (*Child, Youth and Family Services Act*, #36, 6[b]). The Child/Youth may also request that the Residential Placement Advisory Committee conduct a review or re-review of a proposed residential placement (*Child, Youth and Family Services Act*, #34 [7]). The Child/Youth must be residing in the Residential Placement Advisory Committee's jurisdiction.
  - b) Any Child/Youth may make a complaint to the Child and Family Services Review Board (CFSRB)

3. Any complaint or objection to a placement by the Child/Youth, Parent, or someone else representing the Child/Youth will be recorded by the Assigned Helper in the case notes in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
4. The Assigned Helper will immediately inform the immediate Supervisor of the complaint and its first-stage response.
5. Objections to placements will be investigated by the Supervisor and the Alternative Care Supervisor and will be resolved, if possible, at the direct service level with all investigations and attempts at resolution being recorded.
6. The Assigned Helper will assist the Child/Youth with Mnaasged's Service Complaint Policy and Procedure.
7. If the objection cannot be resolved at the service level the Assigned Helper will again advise the Child/Youth of the right to approach the Residential Placement Advisory Committee, the Child and Family Services Review Board, and the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children.
8. The Assigned Helper and the Supervisor will assist and cooperate with any review process that they are required to attend and participate on behalf of Mnaasged.
9. The Assigned Helper will obtain a Supervisor signature for approval to depart from a Standard(s) and record why the time frame was not followed as well as steps that may have been taken to ensure compliance.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Alternative Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Child in Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Rights of a Parent or a Guardian	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## RIGHTS OF A PARENT OR A GUARDIAN

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that Parents or Guardians of Children/Youth are aware of the rights and responsibilities of Children/Youth in Care. This can be in an advocacy role or in clarifying what to expect while a Child/Youth is in Care. At Admission to Care, the Assigned Helper will be required (except when prohibited by the Court) to contact the Child's/Youth's family or person with lawful custody to inform them of their rights and responsibilities, as well as those of the Children/Youth in Care, and the Mnaasged Complaint Procedure.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will inform and document the following:
  - a) The Parent(s) or Guardian(s) of their parental rights within five (5) days of the Child's/Youth's Admission into Care. If a Court Order has removed parental rights, the Child's/Youth's Parent(s) or Guardian(s) will retain certain rights under chapter 106 of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*, as follows:
    - i. The right to direct the education of the Child/Youth
    - ii. The right to recommend and have input into the Plan of Care
    - iii. The right to direct the religious and spiritual upbringing of the Child/Youth
    - iv. The right to give or refuse consent for medical treatment
  - b) The Parent(s) or Guardian(s) of being a signing party to the Customary Care Agreement if applicable
  - c) The Child/Youth of having rights and responsibilities while in Care

2. The Complaint Procedure will be provided to the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) and the Child/Youth.
3. The Team Administrative Assistant will mail a form letter and the Child's/Youth's Rights in Care Booklet to the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) within five (5) days of a Child/Youth coming into Care.
4. The Assigned Helper will document the date and time of when the Parent(s) was informed of what rights the Parent(s) has and will record this in the Parent/Guardian File in the Mnaasged Information Management System.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Reintegration Planning	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## REINTEGRATION PLANNING

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that a plan for reintegration will be developed for Parents or Guardians to be supported and that the best interest of the Child/Youth will be taken into account when being reunited with the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) following a period of time in the Care of Mnaasged Child and Family Services. The reintegration will proceed in an efficient and consistent manner in a good way to benefit the Child/Youth, the family, the extended family, the Alternative Care/Customary Care Family, the First Nation, and all applicable Service Providers.*

*All the procedures in the Risk Reassessment/Reunification Tools will apply as well as the procedures for Reintegration Planning.*

### PROCEDURE

1. A Reintegration Plan will be developed by the Assigned Helper in consultation with the family, First Nation Band Representative, the Alternative Care/Customary Care Family, the Parent(s) or Guardian(s), and other Community Service Providers approved by the Supervisor and documented in a case note titled "Reintegration Plan."
2. The Reintegration Plan will include a Circle or Case Conference. At the family's request, the Assigned Helper will consult with the family and the First Nation Band Representative to select an approved Elder or other designated person to facilitate the Circle.
3. The selection process must follow Mnaasged's policies and procedures. The Helper will ensure that the family, the First Nation Band Representative, the Community Service Providers, Elders, the Alternative Care/Customary Care Family, the Parent(s) or Guardian(s), and any other supports identified by the family are invited to participate in the Circle or Family Case Conference.

4. All current case information will be reviewed during the Circle or Family Case Conference, including the family's success in achieving the goals they identified in the Service Plan, the family's strengths and weaknesses, all community services the family will continue to access or need in the future, and any other important issues or concerns identified by the Child/Youth. The Reintegration Plan will also include a plan to transition the Child(ren)/Youth back into the full-time care of the Parent(s) or Guardian(s). The plan may consist of a gradual transition with increasing visits or an immediate return. (Please refer to the Children in Care's Circle Policy.)
5. The Assigned Helper will develop the Reintegration Plan and obtain signatures from the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or Caregiver(s), the Child/Youth (if aged 12 years or older), the Community Service Providers, and anyone having a role within the Agreement/Plan.
6. The Assigned Helper will ensure that a copy of the Reintegration Plan will be filed in the Family's and Child's/Youth's Files, along with copies of case notes from the Circle/Family Case Conference.
7. The Assigned Helper will ensure that consents are obtained to complete referrals to any ongoing services required for the family and the Child/Youth before and after the Child/Youth is returned to the Parent(s) or Guardian(s).

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Stability Planning	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## STABILITY PLANNING

### POLICY

*Stability planning will begin at the time of a Child's/Youth's Admission into Care. When Children/Youth must be brought into Care, Mnaasged Child and Family Services will assist the Child/Youth to feel secure and to gain a sense of stability. All efforts will be made to place a Child/Youth in a setting familiar to them, with the priority given to extended family and the Child's/Youth's Parent(s) or Guardian First Nation.*

*When permanent care cannot be provided by the Child's/Youth's own family, Mnaasged Child and Family Services has the responsibility to provide an alternate plan for the Child/Youth through Alternative Care.*

*Stability planning is the careful development of long-term goals for a Child's/Youth's future to ensure that the best choices are made in relation to the Child's/Youth's needs and the family's ability or willingness to care for the Child/Youth. When a Child/Youth has been admitted into Care on several occasions because of the same issues, long-term Care may be considered to protect the Child/Youth from ongoing risk. A Child/Youth in Care has the right to a permanency plan designed to meet the Child's/Youth's particular needs.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will consult with the First Nation Band Representative to search for family or other community members willing and able to care for the Child/Youth. If unsuccessful and a search outside the family or community is needed, a referral is also made to the Mnaasged Family Finder.
2. The Assigned Helper, in consultation with the Supervisor, will determine legal status and type of arrangement that will take place. Customary Care, Alternative Care placement, or private arrangements with family may be sought by the Assigned Helper. If there is the

possibility of the Child/Youth remaining in Care for the long term, then a permanent placement will be arranged as soon as possible.

3. The Assigned Helper will complete the Child's/Youth's Social History, comprehensive assessment, and Service Plans and will provide important information about the Child's/Youth's family to assist in determining an appropriate placement.
4. The Assigned Helper will address Stability Planning in the Child's/Youth's Plan of Care. The Child/Youth (if 12 years of age or older) will be invited to participate in the development of the Plan of Care, taking into consideration the Child's/Youth's verbal ability and level of comprehension.
5. The Assigned Helper will select a home based on the ability of the Alternative Care Providers to make an ongoing commitment to the Child/Youth in their care. Discussions with the Child/Youth should also encourage the Child/Youth in Care to commit to the placement if it is needed.
6. The Assigned Helper may request that the Plan of Care be reviewed by the Children's Planning Committee.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Alternative Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Serving Children in Care	
Subject: Preserving the Identity of a Child in Care	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Mnaasged Child and Family Services Internal	

## PRESERVING THE IDENTITY OF A CHILD IN CARE

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services is determined to establish or maintain the identity of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Children/Youth in Care by completing the following:*

- a) Explore a Child's/Youth's cultural connection, heritage, community history, and ancestry*
- b) Develop a Plan of Care to promote the Child's/Youth's Indigenous identity*
- c) Make applications to pursue membership or entitlements*
- d) Honour and follow the placement priorities for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Children/Youth in Care*

*It is essential to work in collaboration with the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities toward establishing and preserving a Child's/Youth's identity and connection to culture, land, and heritage.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services Helpers will work proactively with Service Providers, extended family, and Elders in the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities. This will include decisions and actions related to planning living arrangements, arranging social and recreational activities for the Child/Youth, and developing a culturally appropriate Plan of Care. It will also include finding ways to help the Child/Youth explore and understand the history, geography, language, customs, and spiritual beliefs of the Child's/Youth's community and to develop lifelong relationships.*

### PROCEDURE

1. When a Child/Youth is in care of Mnaasged or under a Customary Care Agreement the Assigned Helper will ensure that the process listed below is followed:

- a) Provide the Caregiver with information about the Child's/Youth's cultural heritage
- b) Ensure that a Child/Youth in Care has the following:
  - i. Registered under the *Indian Act*, where entitled
  - ii. Registered with the First Nation membership, where entitled
  - iii. Considered for membership within the appropriate Child's/Youth's First Nation, Métis, or Inuit community
2. Regardless of a Child's/Youth's placement, a Plan of Care will be developed in cooperation with the Child/Youth, the Parent(s) or Guardian(s), the community, and the Alternative/Customary Care Provider.
3. The Assigned Helper will refer to Policy #3010, Child and Family Identification, for registering a Child/Youth for First Nations Status and Membership to help with the following:
  - a) Identify the Child's/Youth's community and the nature of that contact
  - b) Provide information about the Child's/Youth's cultural heritage
  - c) Identify actions to facilitate the Child's/Youth's access to the community's oral history, language, songs, dances, and involvement in ceremonial activities, arts and crafts, sport events, and other activities
  - d) Identify opportunities for the Child/Youth to participate in cultural instruction and events of the Child's/Youth's choice
4. The Assigned Helper will develop the Plan of Care, which may include the following:
  - a) The identification and involvement of a person from the Child's/Youth's First Nation or Indigenous Community or designated Resource Person to be the Child's/Youth's cultural contact or mentor
  - b) Ways in which the Child's/Youth's participation in culturally specific activities, such as Traditional customs and cultural activities unique to the community, will be promoted or maintained
  - c) The identification of actions to facilitate the Child's/Youth's access to the First Nation community's oral history (including storytelling), language, songs and dances, and involvement in ceremonial activities, arts and crafts, sports events, and other activities
  - d) The Assigned Helper may refer to the Cultural Services Policy and Procedure Manual or make a referral for Cultural Services

- e) One-time funding should be reviewed and considered for Customary Care placements as per 2016 Ontario Permanency Funding Policy Guidelines Questions and Answers – June 15, 2016

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Alternative Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Cultural Services Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Maintaining Parental Involvement	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## MAINTAINING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services recognizes the importance of the Child's/Youth's Parent(s) or Guardian(s) and kinship ties and will, wherever possible and practical and in the Child's/Youth's best interests, encourage the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) to be involved with decisions regarding their Child's/Youth's Admission to Care and the Plan of Care.*

*The Parent(s) or Guardian(s) of the Child/Youth in Care will be signing parties to Mnaasged Child and Family Services' Customary Care Agreement or Temporary Care Agreement and will be involved in planning for the Child/Youth in Care. Mnaasged Child and Family Services will endeavour to provide the Child's/Youth's Parent(s) or Guardian(s) with the opportunities to increase their capacity to parent and to demonstrate their commitment to resume care of their Child/Youth if this is part of the Plan of Care.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Helper will be required to explain and discuss the following issues with the Parent(s) or Guardian(s):
  - a) Is this a Voluntary Placement or an Involuntary Admission?
  - b) What type of care is the Helper considering?
  - c) What will be the legal status?
  - d) What rights and responsibilities will the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) have while the Child/Youth is in Care?

- e) When can the Child/Youth be returned home?
  - f) What is the plan for family visits?
  - g) How can the Parent/Caregiver maintain support and reassurance while their Child/Youth is in Care?
2. The Parent's(s') involvement with their Child/Youth may include the following:
- a) Ensure that the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) is involved by signing the Customary Care or Temporary Care Agreement
  - b) Involve the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) in pre-placement activities (select the type of placement, obtain pre-admission medicals, and accompany the Child/Youth on pre-placement visits where appropriate)
  - c) Maintain contact with the siblings and ensure these are followed up in the planning for care process
  - d) Encourage the Parent's(s') or Guardian's(s') attendance at Case Conferences or Circles and participation in the Plan of Care
  - e) Enter into counselling with the Child/Youth aimed at resolution for the family either through the return of the Child/Youth or the acceptance of the separation
  - f) Involve the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) in the planned visiting schedule, which may or may not be supervised
  - g) Transport the Child/Youth to and from visits where appropriate
  - h) Arrange for or accompany the Child/Youth to special events
  - i) Provide visits for special events (e.g., birthdays and Christmas)
  - j) Assist in the development of a Life Book for the Child/Youth that contains descriptions of the Child's/Youth's family background history, pictures, and so on
3. Arrangements will be made by the Assigned Helper to include the family in the decision-making process, the assigned Helper for the family will liaise with the Assigned Helper for the Child/Youth to review, consider, and document decisions and outcomes of this policy in the Child's/Youth's Plan of Care and the family's Service Plan. This will include, but is not limited to, the following:
- a) Involvement in the Child's/Youth's Plan of Care
  - b) Attendance at Case Conferences, Circles, or planning meetings

- c) Involvement in selecting a placement for the Child/Youth
- d) Involvement in all preparatory steps toward placement (e.g., pre-placement visiting)
- 4. There will be opportunities for the Child's/Youth's own family to have regular involvement with the Child/Youth. This can include the following:
  - a) Planned visits
  - b) Arrangement for the parent to accompany the Child/Youth to special events
  - c) Arrangement for the parent to accompany the Child/Youth to medical and dental appointments
  - d) Joint counselling with the Parent(s) and the Child/Youth aimed at resolution for the family, either through the return of the Child/Youth to the Child's/Youth's family or the acceptance of separation
  - e) Permission for the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) to make significant purchases for the Child/Youth (e.g., clothing and toys)
  - f) Parent(s) or Guardian(s) making payments for components of the Child's/Youth's care
  - g) Regular contact through phone and letters
  - h) Regular contributions to the Child's/Youth's Life Book
  - i) Gifts purchased for special events (e.g., birthdays and Christmas)

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Collaborative Approach to Identify and Remove Barriers for Family Access to Services	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO IDENTIFY AND REMOVE BARRIERS FOR FAMILY ACCESS TO SERVICES

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services recognizes there are various barriers (involving transportation, day care, isolation, lack of telephone, travel assistance to programs, access to food banks, and so on) that often prevent families from participating in important programs and services, which have been identified as requirements within Family Service Plans. Mnaasged Child and Family Services will make every effort to identify and eliminate or reduce barriers for the families that are being served.*

*The issue of barriers requires mandatory regular reviews at all Case Planning Meetings, Circles, or Family Case Conferences.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will ensure that the issue of barriers will be a topic of discussion at every Case Planning Meeting, Circle, and Case Conference.
2. The Assigned Helper will work cooperatively and in collaboration with the family, the First Nation or Indigenous community, other Service Providers, the extended family, and the community members to assist in the development of a plan that will eliminate or reduce all barriers identified and documented on case notes.
3. The Assigned Helper will include a section on barriers identified as current or may be possible in all Plans (e.g., Service Plans and Plans of Care) to be completed and kept up to date when the situation changes and to ensure that the information is shared with the family, the First Nation, other Service Providers, and extended family/community members as appropriate.

4. The Assigned Helper will document barriers identified as current or may be possible, as well as the steps taken to reduce the barriers, in case notes and within all Plans.
5. The Assigned Helper will consult and obtain approval from the immediate Supervisor for requests that result in long-term costs associated with Case Planning.
6. Mnaasged will strive to work cooperatively with each individual First Nation and Indigenous community to address common barriers that families may be faced with on a regular basis.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Child in Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Placement of Children	
Subject: Child Tax Credit	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## CHILD TAX CREDIT

### POLICY

*When Children/Youth are placed in the care of an Alternative Care Provider, Mnaasged Child and Family Services will apply for the Ontario Child Tax Equivalent Benefit.*

### PROCEDURE

The following steps will occur whenever a Child/Youth is placed in the care of Mnaasged:

1. The Assigned Helper who brings a Child/Youth into Care will notify the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) that the Child Tax Credit will be diverted to Mnaasged within five (5) days of coming into Care if the Child/Youth is not returned to the Parent(s) or Guardian(s).
2. The Assigned Helper will review the Child Tax Credit Policy and Procedure at a meeting with the Parent(s) or Guardian(s).
3. Following the notification to the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) the Assigned Helper will notify the Supervisor who will then inform the Finance Department of an Admission into Care.
4. The Finance Clerk, upon the monthly review of the Mnaasged Information Management System Admission Report, will advise Revenue Canada of the date that Mnaasged “started to maintain the child.”
5. The Assigned Helper will advise the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) via a letter that Mnaasged has applied for the Child Tax Benefit for their Child(ren). A copy of Mnaasged’s Appeal Pamphlet will be included with the letter.
6. When the Child/Youth is discharged from Care, the Finance Department, upon the monthly review of the Mnaasged Information Management System Discharge Report, will advise Revenue Canada of the date that Mnaasged “ceased to maintain the child.”

7. During the Reunification Circle/Case Conference, the Assigned Helper will inform the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) that they must apply for the Child Tax Credit. The forms will be provided to the Parent(s) or Guardian(s), and the Assigned Helper will assist in completing the forms, as necessary.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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## SECTION 6: LEGAL STATUS

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Legal Status	
Subject: Temporary Care Agreements	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## TEMPORARY CARE AGREEMENTS

### POLICY

*The Temporary Care Agreement is a legal agreement through which the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) voluntarily agrees to place the Child/Youth into the Care of Mnaasged Child and Family Services and placed in an appropriate placement as determined by Mnaasged Child and Family Services.*

*For Indigenous Youth who are not members of a First Nation, Customary Care is not an option. Even within First Nations there are some who do not practice Formal Customary Care. For Children/Youth and families from such communities, the Temporary Care Agreement is the only option to a court application when a Child/Youth must enter into Care.*

*The Temporary Care Agreement may also be used when a Customary Care Agreement is not appropriate or immediately available. The Helper will plan to formalize a Customary Care Agreement, and the Temporary Care Agreement would terminate once the Customary Care Agreement is completed.*

*If a Child/Youth 12 years of age or older refuses to participate in or sign a Temporary Care Agreement, it will not be valid and other options will be explored.*

*A Temporary Care Agreement may be signed for up to six (6) months, and it can be further extended for another six (6) months. The total combined length of consecutive Temporary Care Agreements may not exceed 12 months when younger than six (6) years of age and 24 months when older than six (6) years of age.*

*If a Child/Youth under a Temporary Care Agreement needs to be in Care for more than the allowable time, and there is no possibility of entering into a Customary Care Agreement, the matter will be taken to Family Court through an Involuntary Admission*

*and filing of a Protection Application once approval is given by the Executive Director or designate (Director or Services).*

*No Temporary Care Agreement will be made or extended that would result in a Child/Youth being in Mnaasged Child and Family Services' care and custody for a period exceeding the following:*

- a) Twelve (12) months, if the Child/Youth is younger than six (6) years of age or older on the day the Temporary Care Agreement is confirmed or extended*
- b) Twenty-four (24) months, if the Child/Youth is six (6) years of age or older on the day the Temporary Care Agreement is confirmed or extended*

*In calculating the period during which a Child/Youth has been in Mnaasged Child and Family Services' care and custody will be counted as follows:*

- a) As a Society Ward under paragraph 2 of subsection 57(1) of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act*
- b) As an Interim Ward under section 122(1) of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act*
- c) Under a Temporary Care Agreement under subsection 29(1) or 75(1) of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act*
- d) Under a Temporary Order made under clause 51(2)(d) of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act*
- e) Under an order for custody during adjournment under subsection 94 (2)(d) of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act*

*The period referred to above will include any previous periods the Child/Youth was in a Society's care and custody other than periods that precede a continuous period of five (5) or more years the Child/Youth was not in a Society's care and custody.*

*Under a Temporary Care Agreement, legal custody remains with the Parent(s). The Parent(s) or Guardian(s) may terminate the Agreement, giving a 14-day notice. The Parent(s) or Guardian(s) retains the right to sign medical consents unless specifically stated otherwise in the Temporary Care Agreement.*

*No Temporary Care Agreement will be made in respect of a Youth who is 12 years of age or older, unless the Youth is a party to the Temporary Care Agreement. (This does not apply when it has been determined from an assessment done not more than one (1) year before the Agreement is made that the Child/Youth does not have the capacity to participate in the Agreement because of a developmental disability.)*

*Once the Temporary Care Agreement is signed by all parties, it will signify that the temporary responsibility of care and custody will transfer to Mnaasged Child and Family Services. Mnaasged Child and Family Services will retain responsibility until the Agreement is terminated, unless otherwise detailed in the Temporary Care Agreement. The Parent(s) or Guardian(s) will maintain legal custody and rights for medical authorization and for the signing of medical consents.*

*An agreement for the temporary care and custody of a Child/Youth entered into under **subsection 75 (1)** of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act will be in a form provided by the Minister and available on the website of the Government of Ontario Central Forms repository at [www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca) under the listing for the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services O.Reg. 121/11, s.1. Copies of this form will also be available in the Administrative Filing Cabinets and After Hours (on call) Kits.*

## PROCEDURE

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1. The Assigned Helper will complete the Temporary Care Agreement and will ensure that it is signed by the Child's/Youth's Parent(s) or Guardian(s)/Legal Guardian, the Child/Youth who is 12 years of age or older, and Mnaasged.
2. Prior to executing the Temporary Care Agreement with the Child/Youth and the Parent(s), the Assigned Helper will consult with the First Nation Band Representative to obtain their agreement with the plan.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Legal Status	
Subject: Formal Customary Care Agreement	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Mnaasged Child and Family Services Internal	

## FORMAL CUSTOMARY CARE AGREEMENT

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services' Mission and Mandate is to place Children/Youth with family and community first, with a preference to utilize Customary Care above all other permanency options.*

*It is the desire of Mnaasged Child and Family Services that Formal Customary Care Agreements are reached for Children/Youth who are eligible before any court applications are required.*

*Respecting that each community has their own values and beliefs and ways of doing things, Mnaasged Child and Family Services has developed protocols with each member First Nation outlining the specific steps necessary when proceeding with a Formal Customary Care Agreement.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will discuss Formal Customary Care options with the biological family and the First Nation Band Representative when a Child/Youth is deemed in need of protection and an alternative placement is required.
2. There is no limit to the number of times that a Formal Customary Care Agreement can be extended. The Agreement can be in effect until the Child's/Youth's 18th birthday. On the Youth's 18th birthday, a Continued Care Support for Youth Agreement (CCSY) can be negotiated.
3. When potential Customary Care Families have been identified, the Assigned Helper will discuss the options with the Supervisor. Referrals to Mnaasged's Family Finder may also be initiated where there are insufficient options available as identified by the family.

4. The Assigned Helper may place the Child/Youth in the home as a Place of Safety for up to 60 days when no immediate safety risks have been identified. During this time, a Home Assessment must be started if the proposed Customary Care Parent(s) or Guardian(s) and the First Nation Band Representative are in agreement to a Customary Care Agreement. (Refer to the Place of Safety Assessment Policy.)
5. Prior to the 60-day term has ended, the Assigned Helper must initiate and complete the Home Assessment Process.
6. The Assigned Helper will complete the steps for processing a Resource Inquiry and Application Report as follows:
  - a) Open an Alternative Care Provider File and input all information in the Mnaasged Information Management System
  - b) Cross-reference all names on the Client Data Base
  - c) Forward to the Supervisor for approval
7. The Supervisor will complete the following:
  - a) Review Resource Inquiry and Application Report and data base
  - b) Assign a Helper if approved
  - c) Forward a letter stating Mnaasged will not proceed, within five (5) business days, and place a copy on file if not approved
8. The Assigned Helper will complete the following:
  - a) Contact the family and the First Nation Band Representative to arrange a meeting to begin the Home Assessment Process prior to the end of the 60-day term of the Place of Safety
  - b) Collect identifying information on all persons 18 years of age and older residing in the Home
  - c) Obtain consents from all persons 18 years of age and older residing in the Home to complete the checks for the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) and Children's Aid Societies or Indigenous Child Well-being Agencies involvement
  - d) Conduct an internal Children's Aid Society or Indigenous Child Well-Being records check and files in the Mnaasged Information Management System, along with an Ontario Provincial Fast Track scan for each person 18 years of age and older residing in the Home

- e) Contact the local Police to complete the Police Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Check for each person 18 years of age and older residing in the Home within seven (7) days of securing the consents, review the information within seven (7) days of receipt, and document in case notes any decisions or actions taken with respect to this information
  - f) Determine the nature of the relationship between the Child/Youth and with each person 18 years of age and older residing in the Home
  - g) Conduct a personal interview with the proposed primary Customary Care Caregiver
  - h) Conduct a private interview with the Child/Youth depending on the Child's/Youth's age and developmental capacity
  - i) Conduct a physical assessment of the home environment
  - j) Complete, in case note format, an evaluation of the proposed Customary Care service home based on the Customary Care Family's strengths, needs, resources, and possibility of offering a permanent plan, if needed, no later than 30 days after receiving the referral. The evaluation will include any procedures not followed (including reasons) and any additional steps taken
  - k) Record all information on the proposed Customary Care Caregiver's File in the Mnaasged Information Management System
9. Other references will be sought if deemed necessary and after obtaining appropriate releases from the applicants.
10. In addition, the Assigned Helper will discuss the importance of references as an integral part of the assessment process and will request consents and contact information for the following:
- a) Medical reference
  - b) Three personal community references
  - c) Employer reference
  - d) Other references as deemed necessary
11. The applicant is required to complete the following:
- a) Consent to an Internal Protection File Check and Ontario Provincial Fast Track scan to be completed before the initial visit
  - b) Complete a Police Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Check

- c) Provide a Consent to Release for a medical reference
  - d) Provide three personal community references
  - e) The Assigned Helper will contact the references by mail or telephone
12. Within 30 days of receiving notification that a Child/Youth is living in a Customary Care Home, the Assigned Helper or a person designated by Mnaasged will visit the Home, meet in private with the Child/Youth as appropriate to the Child's/Youth's age and developmental capacity, interview the Guardian(s), and obtain a Supervisory review and approval of the Customary Care Service Plan.
13. If a Child/Youth has been moved by the family into a Customary Care Home before screening and assessment could occur, and it is determined that the Child/Youth needs protection in the Customary Care Home, immediate action as per the Ontario Child Protection Standards (2016) must be taken to ensure the safety of the Child/Youth.
14. When a complaint is received regarding the care provided to the Child/Youth by the Customary Care Caregiver, the information will be provided immediately to the Assigned Helper, and the appropriate assessment and investigation steps will occur.
15. The initial interview with the Guardian(s) as well as interviews with all other persons living in the Home (other Children/Youth/adults) focus on the primary needs of the Child/Youth and the ability of the Caregiver to meet these needs. To complete the assessment, the interviewer will gather the following information related to the Caregiver(s):
- a) Relationship to the Child/Youth
  - b) Relationship to the Child's/Youth's Parent(s); understanding of the circumstances and perspective of the Caregiver(s) on the circumstances that led to the Child's/Youth's need for an Alternative Home
  - c) Understanding of the Child's/Youth's need for safety, well-being, and stability
  - d) Understanding of the Child's/Youth's immediate needs and challenges and of the ability to manage the Child's/Youth's day-to-day care in a supportive and informed way
  - e) Openness to participating in planning for the Child/Youth and willingness to manage the Child's/Youth's day-to-day care
  - f) Parenting skills and intended disciplinary Child/Youth management techniques
  - g) Health status, including drug or alcohol use and smoking habits
  - h) Physical and mental capacity of the Customary Care Provider to care for the Child/Youth considering the Child's/Youth's age, behaviour, and developmental status

- i) Anticipated impact of the Child/Youth on family dynamics, routines, finances, and so on
  - j) Family or community supports to assist in the care of the Child/Youth
  - k) Ability to take on the care of the Child/Youth without undue hardship
  - l) Understanding of the time frames proposed for the Customary Care and willingness/ability to be flexible should the situation change
  - m) Need for immediate supports and what these might be
  - n) Ability of the Customary Care Family to manage conflict among extended family members and put the safety and well-being of the Child/Youth first
  - o) Motivation for offering to provide Customary Care and any conditions or reservations expressed
16. The initial screening of a Customary Care Home will include an assessment of the physical characteristics of the Home and a determination as to its safety and suitability. Among the factors to take into consideration include the following:
- a) General condition of the Home: space, cleanliness, privacy, sleeping arrangements, adequacy of furnishings (including Infant equipment and adequacy of childproofing if the Child is a toddler)
  - b) Heat source and any safety issues pertaining to this
  - c) Functioning smoke detectors installed to current provincial fire safety standards (one on each level of the house and in each sleeping area)
  - d) Water source and any safety issues pertaining to this
  - e) Pets and their care and temperament
  - f) Any obvious hazards or safety issues (e.g., weapons storage, smoking, swimming pools, or ponds) inside or outside the home
17. If significant safety issues reflecting a moderate or severe risk to the Child/Youth are identified during the Home Visit, these will be discussed with the Caregiver(s) and a plan will be developed to address the concerns. The Helper and the Supervisor will review any issues that are not resolved between the Caregiver(s) and the Helper to seek a solution to any ongoing or potential safety issues.
18. The purpose of the interview with the Child/Youth is to ascertain the Child's/Youth's openness to the prospective Customary Care living arrangement. This is critical in the planning and decision-making process. The interview with the Child/Youth will be held in

private and will take into account the Child's/Youth's age and developmental ability to participate to allow the Child/Youth the freedom to express any concerns or misgivings about the Customary Care Home. Areas of concern or misgiving will include the following:

- a) Familiarity with or relationship to the Customary Care Provider(s), including experience with the other Children/Youth in the Home
- b) Understanding of the circumstances necessitating an out-of-home living arrangement
- c) Specific feelings and wishes respecting living options, if able to articulate a preference
- d) Perception of the benefits of the Customary Care living arrangement
- e) Perception of any disadvantages or risks anticipated in the Customary Care living arrangement
- f) Perception of supports needed to promote stability and success of the Customary Care living arrangement
- g) Understanding of the anticipated time frame for the Customary Care living arrangement
- h) Wishes related to contact with the Child's/Youth's family
- i) Wishes related to contact with community and cultural heritage
- j) General comfort level with the Plan

19. The assessment concludes with a decision by the Helper in addressing the following:

- a) Whether the plan is realistic, safe, and viable
- b) When the Customary Care living arrangement could reasonably commence if it has not done so already
- c) What level of supervision and support by Mnaasged is anticipated on an ongoing basis
- d) An indication about the possibility of permanency (e.g., obtaining custody) within the Customary Care Family, if needed
- e) If applicable, the reasons the Customary Care Home is not recommended for the continued care of the Child/Youth

20. The assessment process can be discontinued at any time during the process as recommended by the Assigned Helper and approved by the Supervisor when the following occurs:

- a) The Child/Youth is being returned home

- b) The Customary Care Family is not cooperating with the assessment process
  - c) Child Protection Concerns are identified through the record checks or assessment process
  - d) Inappropriateness of the home environment, including the physical state of the Home and lack of follow-through to improve the situation
21. Once all information has been gathered, entered, and reviewed the Assigned Helper will make a recommendation and will forward the completed assessment to the Supervisor for review.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Alternative Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Legal Status	
Subject: Special Needs Agreement	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## SPECIAL NEEDS AGREEMENT

### POLICY

*The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services has discontinued the use of Special Needs Agreements without its approval.*

- 1. If a case decision is made to consider the use of a Special Needs Agreement, the assigned Senior Manager will review the plan with the Director of Services.*
- 2. The Senior Manager will prepare a report for review with the Director of Services.*
- 3. If a decision is made to proceed to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for review and approval, the Director of Services will advise the Executive Director of the case and rationale for the Special Needs Agreement.*
- 4. The Director of Services will forward the request to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for review and consideration.*

*As per **section 30** of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, Mnaasged Child and Family Services may enter into a Special Needs Agreement as required. There are two (2) types of Special Needs Agreements noted in the Child, Youth and Family Services Act. The first is for Children/Youth with developmental or physical handicaps and the second is for Youth between 16 and 17 years of age.*

*Special Needs Agreements for Children/Youth with developmental or physical handicaps will consider the following:*

- a) The Special Needs Agreement for Children/Youth with developmental or physical handicaps enables Mnaasged Child and Family Services to provide Voluntary Care for Children/Youth who may not need protection but whose Parent(s) cannot provide for the Child's/Youth's special needs*

- b) The Special Needs Agreement is a legal agreement through which the Parent(s) agrees to place the Child/Youth into Mnaasged Child and Family Services Care in an appropriate placement*
- c) The Special Needs Agreement is signed by the Child's/Youth's Parent(s), the Child/Youth if 12 years of age or older, and Mnaasged Child and Family Services*
- d) There is no time limit for a Special Needs Agreement; it may be in effect on the date of the Youth's 18th birthday. However, the Agreement will need to be reviewed with all the signing parties at least once a year. Any extension of the Special Needs Agreement requires the written approval of the Executive Director*

*Special Needs Agreements for Youth between 16 and 17 years of age:*

- a) A Special Needs Agreement may also be signed with a Youth between 16 and 17 years of age who is requesting Voluntary Care for special needs. In this case, the Special Needs Agreement is signed by the Youth requesting Mnaasged Child and Family Services Care*
- b) The Youth's First Nation must be consulted on all Special Needs Agreements*
- c) All Special Needs Agreements require the written approval of the Executive Director*

## PROCEDURE

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1. The Assigned Helper will complete the Special Needs Agreement and will ensure that it is signed by the Child's/Youth's Parent(s)/Legal Guardian, the Child/Youth if 12 years of age or older, and Mnaasged.
2. If the Youth is between 16 and 17 years of age, only the Youth and Mnaasged will sign the Special Needs Agreement.
3. The Assigned Helper will consult and obtain the First Nation Band Representative's signature on the Special Needs Agreement.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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## SECTION 7: SERVICE COMPLAINTS

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Service Complaints	
Subject: Service Complaints	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Mnaasged Child and Family Services Internal, Alternative Care Standard	

### SERVICE COMPLAINTS

#### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services recognizes that from time to time an individual may not be satisfied with the service they receive. The individual has a right to express this concern so it may be heard and addressed appropriately through a constructive method of problem resolution consistent with legislation (Child, Youth and Family Services Act, section 18) and Mnaasged Child and Family Services' Vision, Mission, Code of Ethics, and Philosophy.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will respond to all Client Complaints except for the following:*

- a) Complaints regarding issues decided by the Court*
- b) Complaints regarding issues currently before the Court*
- c) Complaints regarding issues subject to another decision-making process under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act or the Labour Relations Act, 1995*
- d) Complaints where the matter is currently before a First Nation or has been decided by a First Nation through a First Nation Council Resolution*

*Mnaasged provides Prevention and Child Welfare Services, along with its Complaint Process, for all Mnaasged Child and Family Services Clients, regardless of the service area. A Client Complaint Pamphlet that outlines the Complaint Procedure will be made available to all Clientele at the point of first contact and at all times on the Mnaasged Child and Family Services website.*

## PROCEDURE

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### COMPLAINTS

1. A person may make a complaint to Mnaasged relating to one of its services sought or received by that person in accordance with the regulations (*Child, Youth and Family Services Act*, [section 18\[1\]](#)).
2. The Complaint Procedure will involve the following levels:
  - a) Complaints reviewed by the Helper, the Supervisor, the Senior Manager, the Director of Services, and the Executive Director at the Service Level
  - b) Complaints reviewed at the Board Level
  - c) Complaints reviewed at the Ministry Level
3. Alternative Care Providers, Kinship Caregivers, Formal Customary Care, and adoptive Caregivers are not Clients. However, there are times when they may be dissatisfied with the service provided to them. Alternative Care Providers, Parent(s) or Guardian(s), and adoptive Parent(s) or Guardian(s) with a complaint will follow all three (3) steps of the Complaint Process with the following exceptions:
  - a) Alternative Care Providers who had a Crown Ward removed from their care when the Crown Ward has lived continuously with them for two (2) years ([section 109\[7\]](#))
  - b) Adoptive Parent(s) or Guardian(s) who refused an application for adoption ([section 188\[5\]](#))
  - c) Adoptive Parent(s) or Guardian(s) who had a Child/Youth placed with them for adoption and Mnaasged made the decision to remove the Child/Youth after placement for adoption ([section 192](#)). (Note: Mnaasged does not have a current plan to offer adoption services.)

In these situations, the Alternative Care Providers and the adoptive Parent(s) or Guardian(s) may appeal directly to the Child and Family Services Review Board.

### THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES WILL BE REFLECTED IN MNAASGED'S RESPONSE TO THE COMPLAINT

1. Disagreement or dissatisfaction are normal components of any relationship and it is appropriate for a person to voice a complaint.
2. Clients have a right to voice a complaint and should be encouraged to do so.

3. Complaints should receive a response in an informal manner if possible. It is recognized that the client may see cumbersome procedures as an obstacle to resolution.
4. Complaints will receive a prompt response and Mnaasged Personnel will endeavour to find a speedy resolution.
5. Whenever possible, complaints by Clients and others should receive a response by Mnaasged Staff who is directly involved with the situation.
6. Mnaasged Staff has the right to know a complaint has been made about them or their behaviour and to be an active participant in resolving the circumstances of the complaint.
7. Clientele and members of the community will be encouraged to present any concerns at an early stage.
8. A Complainant may appear personally at each step of the Internal Review.
9. Mnaasged will ensure that all complaints will receive a response and will be considered when planning service delivery.
10. Suggestions for new services when there is no specific grievance will not be considered as a complaint and should be referred to the Executive Director or the Senior Management for consideration.

#### COMPLAINTS REVIEWED BY THE HELPER, THE SUPERVISOR, THE SENIOR MANAGER, THE DIRECTOR OF SERVICES, AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1. A verbal or written complaint will be received by Mnaasged Staff from a Client.
2. If the complaint is not received by the person who will address it, the complaint will be forwarded to the appropriate person(s). This could be the Helper, the Supervisor, or at times the Senior Manager, the Director of Services, or the Executive Director.
3. The Director of Services and the Executive Director will discuss the complaint to determine who will address it.
4. The concern will be discussed with the Client within two (2) working days.
5. The Client will be advised of the following:
  - a) The Client Complaint Process
  - b) The Client may have an advisor or friend accompany the Client when meeting with Staff to discuss the complaint

6. Staff will be sensitive to the issues of literacy and will assist the Client with the completion of a formal written complaint if necessary.
7. The concern must be resolved within 10 working days.
8. The Helper should always consider the potential for a complaint resolution to escalate; if that is a potential concern, the Helper should bring the Supervisor to the Complaint Resolution Meeting with the Client.
9. The concern and its outcome are recorded in the Helper's case notes within one (1) working day.
10. The Executive Director or the Director of Services will determine the following:
  - a) Whether the complaint and its outcome should be recorded on the Complaint Tracking Form
  - b) Who will record the complaint and its outcome on the Complaint Tracking Form
  - c) If the complaint is to be recorded on the Complaint Tracking Form, the form must be completed within two (2) weeks of the outcome of the complaint

#### COMPLAINTS REVIEWED AT THE MNAASGED OR THE MINISTRY LEVEL

1. When a complaint cannot be resolved at the front-line level it may proceed to the Mnaasged Level or the Ministry Level for review at any time.

#### CHILD WELFARE

1. If the complaint is a Child Welfare Complaint, the following committees may review and decide on the resolution of the complaint:
  - a) At the Mnaasged Level: Internal Complaints Review Panel
  - b) At the Ministry Level: Child and Family Services Review Board
2. All complaints to the Internal Complaints Review Panel must be written and sent in care of the Executive Director. All complaints sent to the Child and Family Services Review Board must be written.

#### PROCESS OF REVIEW AT THE MNAASGED LEVEL

1. A complaint that is made to Mnaasged Child and Family Services must be in writing and must be signed by the Complainant.

2. Within seven (7) days, Mnaasged will decide whether the complaint is eligible for review using the following criteria:
  - a) The complaint must relate to a service currently being sought or received by the Client
  - b) The complaint must involve that Client
  - c) The Client must have made attempts to resolve the complaint informally
  - d) The subject of the complaint is an issue not before the Court or has not been decided by the Court
3. If the complaint is NOT eligible for review, Mnaasged will notify the person lodging the complaint within 10 working days of making the decision:
  - a) In writing
  - b) Regarding the decision
  - c) The reason for the decision
4. If the complaint is eligible for review, the Executive Director will establish an Internal Complaints Review Panel within 10 working days to review the complaint. The Internal Complaints Review Panel will ensure the following:
  - a) Include a Senior Manager from Mnaasged
  - b) Include other Mnaasged Staff as required
  - c) Include at least one person who is external to Mnaasged and who may be a member of Mnaasged's Board of Directors
  - d) Ensure that members of the Panel do not have any direct involvement with the complaint being reviewed
  - e) Offer the Complainant either a "Talking Together Circle" or the Internal Complaints Review Panel
5. The person lodging the complaint will be notified within 10 working days:
  - a) In writing
  - b) Provided the date and time for a meeting with the Internal Complaints Review Panel
6. The meeting will include the following:
  - a) Is scheduled at a mutually convenient time for the Complainant and the Panel

- b) Will be held within 14 days after the date the written notice is sent to the Complainant
  - c) The Complainant may request a meeting date later than 14 days after the date the written notice was sent to the Complainant
  - d) Reasonable efforts will be made by the Panel to accommodate the Complainant's request
  - e) The meeting will take place in person
7. The Panel will determine who will attend the meeting. However, the Complainant may bring the following:
- a) A representative of the Complainant's First Nation or community
  - b) One other person
8. Within 14 days after the meeting, the following will occur:
- a) The Panel will send a written summary of the meeting and its decision to the Complainant and to the Executive Director
  - b) The summary will include the next steps if any
9. If the complaint is resolved to the satisfaction of the Complainant, Mnaasged will write a letter to the Complainant confirming the resolution within 14 days of the meeting.
10. Decisions made by the Internal Complaints Review Panel will be considered final decisions except for Child Welfare Complaints that may be heard by the Child and Family Services Review Board. (Please see the Process of a Formal Complaint at the Ministry Level for details.)
11. The complaint and its outcome will be recorded on the Complaint Tracking Form within 14 days of the decision of the Internal Complaints Review Panel.

## PROCESS OF REVIEW AT THE MINISTRY LEVEL

1. The review of a complaint at the Ministry Level will involve a review of the complaint by the Child and Family Services Review Board. After reviewing the complaint, the Child and Family Services Review Board will determine whether the complaint is eligible for review and will then decide on a response to the complaint.
2. The following is the process of a complaint heard by the Child and Family Services Review Board. The complaint can be made at any point and must relate to one of the following matters:

- a) Alleged inaccuracy in Mnaasged Files regarding the Complainant
  - b) An allegation Mnaasged refused to proceed with a complaint
  - c) An allegation Mnaasged failed to respond within the time frame to a complaint
  - d) An allegation Mnaasged failed to comply with the Complaint Review Procedure
  - e) An allegation Mnaasged failed to provide the Child/Youth and the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) with the opportunity to be heard and represented
  - f) Allegations Mnaasged failed to provide the reasons for a decision that affects the Complainant's interests
  - g) Mnaasged decided to remove a Crown Ward from an Alternative Care Provider when the Child/Youth has lived continuously with the Alternative Care Provider for two (2) years
  - h) Mnaasged refused an application for adoption
  - i) Mnaasged removed a Child/Youth after placement for adoption
3. A request for a review by the Child and Family Services Review Board regarding allegations Mnaasged failed to hear a complaint appropriately will be made in writing on the form titled "Request for Review of Children's Aid Society – Child and Family Services Review Board Application."
  4. A request for a review by the Child and Family Services Review Board from an Alternative Care Provider(s) and or a Parent(s) or Guardian(s) regarding **section** 61 of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* will be made in writing on the form titled "Removal of a Crown Ward – Child and Family Services Review Board Application."
  5. A request for a review by the Child and Family Services Review Board from an adoptive Parent(s) or Guardian(s) regarding **section** 144 of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* will be made in writing on the form titled "Refusal of Adoption – Child and Family Services Review Board Application."
  6. Requests for the withdrawal of an appeal to the Child and Family Services Review Board will be made in writing on the form titled "Withdrawal of Application Form."
  7. Staff will be sensitive to the issues of literacy and will therefore assist the Client with the written complaint whenever necessary. An Administrative Assistant may assist the Client to prepare the written complaint in that circumstance.
  8. Within seven (7) days, the Child and Family Services Review Board will decide whether the complaint is eligible for review and will then notify the Complainant in writing.

9. If the complaint is eligible for review, the Child and Family Services Review Board must review the complaint and decide on its outcome.
10. The Child and Family Services Review Board may hold a Pre-Hearing Conference.
11. Mnaasged should always have legal representation in any proceedings before the Child and Family Services Review Board.
12. Within 10 days of the conclusion of the Pre-Hearing Conference, the Child and Family Services Review Board must send a summary of the results of the Pre-Hearing Conference in writing to the Complainant and to Mnaasged. If a hearing is to occur, the package must include a notice of the date and locations of the hearing.
13. When a hearing is to proceed, it must occur within 20 days after the Pre-Hearing Conference.
14. Within 10 days after the conclusion of the hearing, the Child and Family Services Review Board will provide, in writing, its decision and the reasons for the decision to the complainant and to Mnaasged.
15. The Child and Family Services Review Board may instruct the following:
  - a) Order Mnaasged to proceed with the complaint made by the Complainant in accordance with the Complaint Review Procedure established by regulation
  - b) Order Mnaasged to provide a response to the Complainant within a period specified by the Board
  - c) Order Mnaasged to comply with the Complaint Review Procedure established by regulation or with any other requirements under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*
  - d) Order Mnaasged to provide written reasons for a decision to a Complainant
  - e) Dismiss the complaint
  - f) Make such other order as may be prescribed

#### INFORMING CLIENTS OF THE CLIENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

1. Mnaasged has prepared a Client Complaint Pamphlet entitled "Service Complaint Process," advising Clients of the Complaint Procedure. The Client Complaint Pamphlet will be given to all Clients by Helpers responsible for direct service, specifically to the following:
  - a) Parent(s) or Guardian(s) by the Assigned Helper

- b) Alternative Care Provider and Parent(s) or Guardian(s) by the Assigned Helper supporting the Home
  - c) Outside Residential Resources by the institution's Helper
  - d) Adoptive Parent(s) or Guardian(s) and Child/Youth to be adopted (if the Child/Youth is on an adoption placement) by the Agency contracted to provide this service. (Note: Mnaasged has no present plan to offer adoption services.)
2. Client Complaint Pamphlets will be available during normal business hours at the Reception area and on the website of each Mnaasged Office or for mailing purposes upon telephone or written request.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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All Service Policy and Procedure Manuals

Legal Services Policy and Procedure Manual

Governance Policy and Procedure Manual

## SECTION 8: SERIOUS OCCURRENCE

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Serious Occurrence	
Subject: Serious Occurrence Reporting and Process	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Mnaasged Child and Family Services Internal, Serious Occurrence and Enhanced Occurrence Reporting Guidelines, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, 2013	

### SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING AND PROCESS

#### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will report all Serious Occurrences to the Ministry within 24 hours with the start time of when any of the Assigned Helper Staff members first becomes aware of an incident or deems an incident to be a Serious Occurrence.*

- 1. All Serious Occurrences must be reported within 24 hours to the Regional Office. The Initial Notification Report and the Serious Occurrence Inquiry Report will be contained within the same form. The Assigned Helpers will be required to submit to the Ministry by Fax #####.*
- 2. The Initial Notification Report portion of the form will be submitted within 24 hours*

*The Serious Occurrence Inquiry Report portion of the form will be submitted within seven (7) days of an initial Serious Occurrence Notification.*

*The following terms and definitions are provided to facilitate Serious Occurrence reporting:*

#### **24 Hours**

- 1. Clock starts when any of the Service Provider's Staff becomes aware of an incident or when the Service Provider deems the incident to be serious.*

#### **Children (Child Welfare)**

- 1. Ages 0–21 years.*

2. *Child/Youth must be in Mnaasged Child and Family Services Care (except for Category 1 – Death) or receiving services pursuant to a Continued Care Youth Support Agreement.*
3. *Does not include Children/Youth on Home Access Visits with Parent(s) or Guardian(s) unless it involves the death of the Child/Youth or the Parent(s).*
4. *Includes the Client on Continued Care Youth Support (CCYS), Formal Customary Care, or Independent Living (IL).*

### **Client**

1. *Refers to a Child/Youth in Care.*

**Note:** *The exception is Category 1 "Death of a Client" when the death of a Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of a Child/Youth in Care or Customary Care receiving services at the time of their death will be reported as a Serious Occurrence.*

### **Serious Occurrence**

*Serious Occurrences that are brought to the attention of a Senior Manager for review and input prior to submission to the Ministry include the following:*

1. *Considered to be contentious*
2. *Potential to be extreme high risk*
3. *All Alternative Care and Foster Parent investigations*

### **Definition of Serious Occurrence**

*Serious Occurrences to be reported by the Assigned Helper to the Ministry are defined as follows:*

1. *Any death of a Client that occurs while participating in a service, including all Clients receiving community-based support services funded or licensed by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, will include the following:*
  - a) *Any Child/Youth receiving service from Mnaasged Child and Family Services at the time of their death or in the 12 months immediately prior to their death*
  - b) *Death of a Parent who is receiving services and whose Child/Youth is in Care*
2. *Any serious injury to a Client that occurs while participating in a service. A factor to consider is whether a substantial course of treatment is recommended, not in-house first aid. In deciding whether an injury is a Serious Occurrence, the Assigned Helpers should consider both the severity of the injury and how it was received*

*(e.g., accident while playing soccer, due to physical altercation between Clients, or caused by maintenance issues), such as the following:*

- a) Any injury caused by the Service Provider, such as a lack of or inadequate Staff supervision, neglect/unsafe equipment, improper/lack of Staff training, or medication error resulting in injury*
  - b) A serious accidental injury received while in attendance at a Service Provider setting or in receiving service from the Service Provider*
  - c) An injury to a Client that is non-accidental, including self-inflicted or unexplained, and that requires treatment by a medical practitioner, including a nurse or dentist*
- 3. Any alleged abuse or mistreatment of a Client that occurs while participating in a service. This includes all allegations of abuse or mistreatment of Clients against Staff, Alternative Parent(s) or Guardian(s) or their biological Children/Youth, or volunteers. If the Client discloses historical abuse it should only be reported as a Serious Occurrence if the Client was participating in a funded service at the time of the abuse.*
  - 4. Any situation where a Client is missing and is in accordance with Ministry requirements for applicable program sectors and legislative requirements; otherwise, where the Assigned Helper considers the matter to be serious. A Client is not considered missing if the Client's whereabouts are known. The Assigned Helper should follow the internal procedure to provide for the safe return of the Client to Residential Care.*
  - 5. A Child/Youth in the Care of Mnaasged Child and Family Services who has been missing for 24 hours or more must be reported to the Police, and the Ministry if appropriate*
  - 6. All Serious Occurrence Reports should describe whether the Client poses a serious risk to self or others, any attempts made to locate the Client, previous Client history of leaving without permission, Client's state of mind before leaving, precipitating events, and so on.*

**Note:** *The Assigned Helper must advise the Ministry once the Client has returned regardless of the date/time, via telephone (1-###-###-###) Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.*

### **Early Alert System**

*Evenings and Overnight from Sunday to Monday, 9:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.; Monday to Friday, 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.; telephone (1-887-444-0424); fax 1-866-262-8881*

*Weekends and Government Holidays from Friday 5:00 p.m. to Sunday 9:00 p.m., via telephone (1-877-444-0424), fax 1-866-262-8881 follow-up with enhanced Initial Notification Report/Inquiry Report to email **CHECK ALL NUMBERS WITH REGIONAL OFFICE** [nergan.sors@css.gov.on.ca](mailto:nergan.sors@css.gov.on.ca)*

1. *Any disaster on the premises where a service is provided that interferes with daily routines, such as fire, flood, power outage, gas leak, carbon monoxide, infectious disease (where public health officials are involved).*
2. *Any complaint concerning the operational, physical, or safety standards of the service considered by the Assigned Helper to be of a serious nature. This includes notification of adverse water quality, missing or stolen files that include a breach of the Mnaasged Information Management System, or vehicle accident.*
3. *Any complaint made by or about a Client, or any other Serious Occurrence concerning a Client, considered by the Assigned Helper to be of a serious nature or may affect the Client's Child/Youth Well-being Plan, such as the following examples:*
  - a) *Police involvement with a Client (Client charged by Police)*
  - b) *Serious assault by a Client against Staff, peers, or community members*
  - c) *Serious assault by a non-caregiver against a Client, such as a friend, another client, or a stranger*
  - d) *Hospitalization (excluding regular occurring doctor visits related to an ongoing medical problem and any medical ailment occurring as part of the aging process), such as pneumonia, suicidal ideation, drug or alcohol overdose, or medical ailment*
  - e) *Inappropriate Disciplinary Techniques that are excessive or non-sanctioned*
  - f) *Complaints arising from sexual contact between Clients*

**Note:** *Within the parameters of the preceding definitions, the Assigned Helper, in consultation with the Supervisor, will be responsible for determining whether an incident is deemed to be a Serious Occurrence as defined by these procedures and whether it should be reported to the Ministry.*

## PROCEDURE

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Actions to be taken if a Serious Occurrence has occurred or is suspected include the following:

1. The Assigned Helper will ensure that the Client is provided with immediate medical attention when warranted.

2. Appropriate steps will be taken to address any continuing risks to the Client's health or safety. (Note: the need for the same or similar steps to address the health and safety of other Clients should also be considered, as appropriate.)
3. The Director of Services or designate will ensure that the local Coroner is notified immediately in *all cases involving death*, regardless of location (e.g., hospital) or circumstances (e.g., "Do Not Resuscitate" order was in effect or death not considered questionable).
4. The Child Welfare Staff will notify the Supervisor immediately of any incident suspected to be a Serious Occurrence.
5. The Child Welfare Staff or any other person witnessing or having knowledge of the occurrence will report the matter to the Client's Helper to conduct preliminary inquiries.
6. The Assigned Helper will immediately begin a Serious Occurrence Inquiry. The purpose of the inquiry is to gather information regarding the actual or alleged occurrence(s).
7. All persons having knowledge of the occurrence should remain on the premises until they have been interviewed by the Assigned Helper.
8. The Assigned Helper will determine whether the incident is a Serious Occurrence and should be reported to the Ministry. The Helper can consult with the immediate Supervisor if required.
9. The inquiry information gathered will form the basis of the later Serious Occurrence Report, the Initial Notification Report (INR), and will be written by the Helper to be submitted to the Supervisor.
10. The report should be typed using the template and should include details of the following:
  - a) Identify any Clients involved by their first name and the first initial of their last name only. Any other party should also be referenced as non-identifying terms as possible (i.e., first and last initials only, staff "A"/staff "B")
  - b) Provide date of birth
  - c) Identify the site and the service/program
  - d) Description of the occurrence
  - e) Client's allegation (if applicable)
  - f) Date, time, and place where it occurred
  - g) Time of the reported occurrence

- h) Reason for the occurrence (if known)
- i) People involved
- j) Whether the Client poses a serious risk to self or others
- k) Action taken (e.g., any attempts to locate the missing Client)
- l) Current status
- m) Client's state of mind prior to leaving the premises (if Client missing)
- n) History of leaving the premises without permission
- o) Parties notified (Police, Coroner, Parent as applicable)
- p) Further action recommended

### SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING PROCESS

Where a Serious Occurrence has taken place, the following reporting process will be completed:

1. The Director of Services or designate will inform the Regional Office within 24 hours by completing and submitting the Serious Occurrence Initial Notification Report (INR), identifying clients only by their first name and first initial of their last name and referring to others involved in non-identifying terms, such as first and last initials only or staff "A," staff "B," and so on.
2. The Assigned Helper will inform the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and, if applicable, the person or Agency who placed the Client, unless the person to be notified is alleged to have abused the Client.
3. Where abuse by a Staff member is alleged, the allegation will be reviewed by the Senior Manager and the Director of Services or their delegate. The Ministry will be informed of the outcome of the review.
4. Within seven (7) business days of submitting the Initial Notification Report, the Serious Occurrence Inquiry Report (IR) will be completed and submitted, even if information or actions have yet to be completed. This will include an explanation that for a further follow-up report will be provided.

**NOTE:** Mnaasged may submit a completed Inquiry Report, along with an Initial Notification Report, within 24 hours of the occurrence if all necessary action has been taken and documented. Mnaasged may also phone in a Serious Occurrence, in lieu of an Initial Notification Report, if circumstances dictate, such as there is no fax machine available.

5. After the review, the Supervisor will forward the report to the Senior Manager. The Senior Manager will then forward the report to the Director of Services or designate. The Director of Services or designate will submit the Serious Occurrence Inquiry Report to the Executive Assistant for signature by the Executive Director. If any questions arise while reviewing the report, the Executive Director will follow up with the Director of Services.
6. Following the signing of the report, the Executive Assistant will send the original report back to Data Management.
7. Data Management will scan the document and will place the original report in the Child's/Youth's File. A copy of the report will be sent to the Senior Manager.

#### OMBUDSMAN ONTARIO – CHILDREN AND YOUTH UNIT

1. The Senior Manager will inform the Ombudsman Ontario – Children and Youth Unit without reasonable delay after Mnaasged becomes aware of the death of, or serious bodily harm incurred by, a Child/Youth where the Child/Youth or the Child's/Youth's family has sought or received services from a Society within 12 months of the death or incurrance of harm. This will be done in writing using the template on the Ombudsman Ontario website <https://www.ombudsman.on.ca/have-a-complaint/make-a-complaint/complaint-form-notification-of-death-or-serious-bodily-harm>
2. The Senior Manager will provide the Ombudsman Ontario – Children and Youth Unit a summary of circumstances surrounding the death or serious bodily harm.
3. The Senior Manager will inform the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) and the Child/Youth about the Ombudsman Ontario – Children and Youth Unit and provide contact information.

**NOTE:** The primary focus of the Serious Occurrence Inquiry Report is the record of the Assigned Helper's actions from an accountability perspective (i.e., were the actions taken appropriate, complete, consistent with legislation/policy, and so on). However, there is the potential for not all desired information to be obtained or incident review/follow-up actions completed within the required seven-day period. As such, the Assigned Helpers will be requested to always submit the Serious Occurrence Inquiry Report within the seven-day period, even if they have incomplete information or actions yet to be completed. In such cases, an explanation should be included, along with a clear indication that a supplementary follow-up report to the Ministry will be forthcoming.

#### ENHANCED SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING

1. An Enhanced Serious Occurrence will be reported to the Ministry by the Director of Services or the Executive Director or their designate.

2. When a significant incident involving a Client is likely to result in significant public or media attention, *Enhanced Serious Occurrence Reporting* is required. Some examples include murder, arson, severe neglect or abuse resulting in death, incidents involving high-profile public figures, or any other situation deemed by an authorized person to be contentious in nature.
3. When a Serious Occurrence takes place that is contentious in nature or may get media coverage, the Helper will consult with one of the following authorized people:
  - a) Supervisor
  - b) Senior Manager
  - c) Director of Services
  - d) Executive Director
  - e) After Hours Supervisor if the incident occurs after normal working hours
4. The Helper will consult with a Supervisor immediately if there is uncertainty about whether the situation is contentious. The authorized person will determine whether Enhanced Serious Occurrence Reporting is needed.
5. Within three (3) hours of deeming the incident enhanced, the designated authority, using the Enhanced Serious Occurrence Report, will notify the Ministry via facsimile. The Assigned Helper must also call the early alert system and leave a voicemail message with the date and time the Initial Notification Report was faxed and the name and contact number for the designated authority.

**NOTE:** The Designated Authority must advise the Ministry once the Client has returned regardless of the date/time, via telephone (#####) Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Early Alert System:

Evenings and Overnight from Sunday to Monday 9:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m., Monday to Friday 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m., telephone 1-887-444-0424, fax 1-866-262-8881

Weekends and Government Holidays Friday 5:00 p.m. to Sunday 9:00 p.m. via telephone 1-877-444-0424, fax 1-866-262-8881, follow up with enhanced Initial Notification Report/Inquiry Report to email [nergan.sors@css.gov.on.ca](mailto:nergan.sors@css.gov.on.ca)

6. When providing a report by phone, the person reporting must ensure the following information is given:
  - a) Caller's name and contact number

- b) Assigned Helper's name and location site
  - c) Client's first name and last initial
  - d) Date of birth and age
  - e) Date and time of the incident
  - f) Brief description of what happened
7. This procedure will apply around the clock on weekdays, weekends, and holidays.
  8. If the early alert system cannot find the fax, the Helper will be contacted by phone and asked to resend the report.
  9. If the report is done by phone, the person reporting will either speak to a Ministry official or will leave the report on the early alert voicemail system.
  10. Regional Offices will follow up with Mnaasged to ensure any issues are managed appropriately as needed.

#### SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING PROCESS – FURTHER REVIEWS

1. After a review of the Serious Occurrence Inquiry Report, the Ministry office may request additional information or a further review of the Serious Occurrence incident.
2. Once the Serious Occurrence Follow-up Report is returned to Mnaasged by the Ministry, the report will be reviewed by the Executive Director and forwarded to the Executive Assistant.
3. The Serious Occurrence Follow-up Report will state "no action required" or there will be recommendations for follow-up. If follow-up is required, a copy of the directives will be given to the Director of Services who will direct the Senior Manager to address the recommendations.
4. When the Ministry requires a further review of a case, the Executive Director, the Director of Services, and the Senior Manager will be responsible for Mnaasged's involvement, depending on the nature of the incident.
5. The Executive Assistant will place a copy of the report in a Corporate File.
6. The Executive Assistant will forward a copy of the report to the Administrative Assistant.
7. The Administrative Assistant will ensure that a copy is placed in the relevant Service File and will provide a copy to the Supervisor of the Helper handling the file.

8. The Senior Manager and the Supervisor will be responsible to ensure that follow-up on the recommendations is completed within five (5) working days and that a report is written in reply to the recommendations.
9. The written Follow-up Report will be forwarded to the Director of Services or designate.
10. Once reviewed, the Director of Services or designate will forward the Follow-up Report to the Executive Assistant for the Executive Director's signature.
11. The Executive Assistant will send the original Follow-up Report to the Ministry.
12. The Executive Assistant will place a copy of the Follow-up Report in a Corporate File, will send a copy to the Director of Services or designate, and will forward a copy to the Administrative Assistant who will ensure that a copy is entered into the relevant Service File.

#### SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING PROCESS – ON CALL PROCEDURES

1. In the event of a Serious Occurrence, the Ministry must be contacted within 24 hours of the incident.
2. If the Serious Occurrence happens After Hours, the on call Helper will follow the on call procedures listed below:
  - a) The client will be provided with immediate medical attention when warranted
  - b) The on call Helper will notify the on call Supervisor of the incident
  - c) Appropriate steps will be taken to address any continuing risks to the Client's health or safety. (Note: the need for the same or similar steps to address the health and safety of other Clients should also be considered, as appropriate)

**NOTE:** The Designated Authority must advise the Ministry once the Client has returned regardless of the date/time, via telephone 1-613-531-5747, Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Early Alert System:

Evenings and Overnight from Sunday to Monday 9:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m., Monday to Friday 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m., telephone 1-887-444-0424, fax 1-866-262-8881

Weekends and Government Holidays from Friday 5:00 p.m. to Sunday 9:00 p.m. via telephone 1-877-444-0424, fax 1-866-262-8881 follow up with enhanced Initial Notification Report/Inquiry Report to email [nergan.sors@css.gov.on.ca](mailto:nergan.sors@css.gov.on.ca)

- i. Caller's name

- ii. Mnaasged name
  - iii. Name of the program/Supervisor
  - iv. Location of Mnaasged
  - v. Phone number
  - vi. Nature of the Serious Occurrence
- d) Fax the Initial Notification Report to the local Ministry office on or before the first business day following the Serious Occurrence
  - e) Complete the Serious Occurrence Inquiry Report and provide to the Ministry within seven (7) business days

#### SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING PROCESS – ANNUAL SUMMARY

1. An Annual Summary and Analysis Report of all Serious Occurrences will be provided by the Director of Services and the Senior Managers to the Ministry.
2. This report will be submitted annually, reflecting the Serious Occurrence record from the previous fiscal year period.
3. The report will be submitted by May 15th using the Annual Summary and Analysis Report Form.
4. Even if there have been no Serious Occurrences during the reporting period, it will be required that an Annual Summary and Analysis Report be submitted.
5. When there have been Serious Occurrences during the reporting period, the Director of Services will provide the following information:
  - a) Number of Serious Occurrences by type
  - b) Degree of compliance to Serious Occurrence reporting timelines
  - c) Number of Serious Occurrences requiring additional action or information, at the request of the Ministry, after submission of the Serious Occurrence Inquiry Report
  - d) An analysis of all Serious Occurrences, including a description of any patterns or trends in the Serious Occurrences that relate to Clients, Staff, equipment, physical plant, and so on that may have caused or contributed to the Serious Occurrence
  - e) An outline of the actions taken (including ones in progress) by Mnaasged in response to any identified issues or needs

6. In the event of any follow-up action being requested after review of the Annual Report by the Ministry, the Executive Director, the Director of Services, the Senior Managers, and the Quality Assurance Manager must submit an Outcome Report on completion of the identified action.
7. The Executive Director, The Director of Services, the Senior Manager, and the Quality Assurance will coordinate and monitor the performance on an ongoing basis with respect to the reporting, management, and follow-up of Serious Occurrences.
8. The Annual Report will be reviewed by the Regional Office, noting any patterns that would suggest a need for training or support and for steps to address these needs. The Regional Office may also identify possible issues or actions requiring possible follow-up by the Assigned Helper or the Child Welfare Staff. If follow-up action is requested, the Director of Services will be required to submit an Outcome Report to the Regional Office once the necessary action has been taken.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Alternative Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Children in Care Policy and Procedure Manual

After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure Manual

Child Protection Policy and Procedure Manual

Child in Care Death Review

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Serious Occurrence	
Subject: Death of a Child Receiving Services Requiring Enhanced Serious Occurrence	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Mnaasged Child and Family Services Internal, Joint Directive – Child Death Reporting and Review 2006	

## DEATH OF A CHILD RECEIVING SERVICES REQUIRING ENHANCED SERIOUS OCCURRENCE

### POLICY

*When Mnaasged Child and Family Services has been advised that a Child/Youth who was receiving service from Mnaasged Child and Family Services at the time of the Child's/Youth's death, or in the 12 months immediately preceding the Child's/Youth's death, has died, Mnaasged Child and Family Services must take specific action as outlined in this Standard (also reference Serious Occurrence Reporting).*

*Due to the potential implication of such a situation, the Police may wish to suspend or amend the existing protocol. The decision and rationale will be reviewed with the Supervisor and documented in the Mnaasged Information Management System to ensure there is no contamination of evidence or conflict of interest. This action may be appropriate or necessary; however, Mnaasged Child and Family Services must maintain its role of ensuring no other Children/Youth need protection. It will be vital at the onset of such an investigation that the roles of the Police and the Child Protection Helper be clearly identified.*

*The Director of Services will be responsible for approving the plan of investigation on any such cases.*

*Joint Directive: Child Death Reporting and Review 2006*

*The following procedures have been developed because of the Joint Directive issued March 31, 2006, by the following:*

- a) The Ministry of Children's and Youth Services\**
- b) The Ministry of Community and Social Services. \*Now combined as the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services*

*c) The Office of the Chief Coroner for the Province of Ontario*

*The Directive is in effect as of March 31, 2006, and it also supplements the Ministry's Serious Occurrence Reporting Procedures and Enhanced Serious Occurrence Reporting Procedures. The following documents form an addendum to this policy:*

*a) Joint Directive: Child Death Reporting and Review*

*b) Joint Directive: Child Death Reporting and Review – Questions and Answers*

*c) Child Fatality Case Summary Report*

*d) Society Internal Child Death Review*

*All Staff involved with such a case may be required to go through a Critical Incident Debriefing Process. Professional services from an external Agency may be requested to assist with this process.*

## PROCEDURE

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1. The following people will be notified immediately upon receipt of the information:
  - a) Assigned Helper
  - b) Supervisor
  - c) Senior Manager
  - d) Director of Services
  - e) Executive Director
  - f) Local Coroner
  - g) Ministry's Regional Office
2. When the Coroner or the Police notifies Mnaasged of the death, the above procedure will be followed.
3. The Supervisor of the Assigned Helper will ensure that the identifying information and the referral are recorded in the Mnaasged Information Management System. The Senior Manager will be responsible to review and approve the recording documentation in the system.
4. The Supervisor of the Assigned Helper will make immediate contact with the Police to complete the following:

- a) Obtain details regarding the death
  - b) Confirm that an investigation is being conducted regarding the death
  - c) Determine if charges will be laid because of the death
5. The Director of Services or designate will notify the local Coroner and the Ministry's Regional Office immediately when Mnaasged has knowledge of the following:
- a) Child/Youth who has received service up to the time of the Child's/Youth's death
  - b) Child/Youth received service from Mnaasged at any time in the 12 months prior to Child's/Youth's death
  - c) Child/Youth received service, either directly or indirectly, as a member of the family receiving service
6. The Director of Services or designate will ensure that the following is completed:
- a) Serious Occurrence Report as set out in the Ministry's Serious Occurrence Reporting Procedures
  - b) Copies of the report immediately sent to the Regional Office, the Regional Supervising Coroner, and the Deputy Chief Coroner (or delegate)
  - c) Ministry's Enhanced Serious Reporting Procedures is followed if appropriate
7. The Senior Manager and the Supervisor will ensure that the file is complete and ready for seizure by the Coroner or the Police.
8. The Director of Services or designate will complete a Case Summary, using the Child Fatality Case Summary Template ([Appendix 3](#)). The Office of the Chief Coroner may be contacted directly for information regarding the cause of death. The Case Summary will include Mnaasged's determination of whether the Child/Youth died under questionable circumstances or because of abuse, mistreatment, or parental neglect or negligence. Within 14 days of the Child's/Youth's death or within 14 days of learning that the Child/Youth has died, Mnaasged will forward copies of the report to the following:
- a) Regional Office
  - b) Chair of the Pediatric Death Review Committee
9. Mnaasged will receive written notice from the Chair of the Pediatric Death Review Committee regarding the decision whether Mnaasged must conduct an Internal Child Death Review. When Mnaasged receives written notice that an Internal Child Death Review must be conducted, the Director of Services will ensure that the following occurs:

- a) The Director of Services will lead, coordinate, and conduct a full review of the case using the "Society Internal Death Review" document (which is attached)
  - b) Mnaasged will establish a Review Team
  - c) The Review Team will include an External Reviewer who has the appropriate clinical experience. Once a contract has been signed, the Reviewer and the Director of Services will determine who should lead the review process. This is particularly relevant when there may be questions about the actions of Mnaasged Staff or Service Providers having possibly played a role in the Child's/Youth's death. Therefore, it is most like that the External Reviewer will take the lead to ensure a perception of impartiality is maintained throughout the review process
  - d) The full Internal Child Death Review will be completed within 90 days of notice from the Chair of the Pediatric Death Review Committee
  - e) Copies of the Internal Child Death Review Report will be forwarded to the Regional Office and the Chair of the Pediatric Death Review Committee
10. The Director of Services will submit written progress reports every six (6) months to the Regional Office when the Internal Child Death Review includes recommendations for further follow-up or action.
  11. The Office of the Chief Coroner will determine, within seven (7) days of receipt of Mnaasged's Internal Child Death Review Report, whether the Pediatric Death Review Committee will undertake a further review and how detailed it will be.
  12. The decision to conduct a further review by the Pediatric Death Review Committee will be based on the Internal Child Death Review Report.
  13. If the Pediatric Death Review Committee conducts a review, it must be completed within one (1) year of the Child's/Youth's death. A copy of the Pediatric Death Review Committee Report must be forwarded to Mnaasged's Executive Director.
  14. Once received, Mnaasged will consider the Pediatric Death Review Committee Report.
  15. The Director of Services, the Senior Manager, and the Quality Assurance Supervisor will coordinate the following:
    - a) Implement the recommendations as appropriate
    - b) Incorporate the recommendations into the written progress report to the Regional Office
  16. If Mnaasged is unable to comply with the timelines as per the Joint Directive issued March 31, 2006, this will be considered as non-compliance and will be documented.

17. In circumstances where Mnaasged knows it will not be able to meet the timelines, the Director of Services will notify the Regional Office and the Office of the Chief Coroner in writing to explain why the timelines cannot be met and what will be the anticipated timelines.
18. Bill 117 amended the *Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth (PACY) Act* to include an obligation of Service Providers to perform the following:
  - a) Inform in writing and without unreasonable delay after they become aware of the death of, or serious bodily harm incurred by, a Child/Youth, if the Child/Youth or the Child's/Youth's family has sought or received services from a Society or Indigenous Child Well-being Agency within 12 months of the death or incurrence of harm
  - b) Provide Ombudsman Ontario – Child and Youth Unit with a summary of the circumstances surrounding the death or serious bodily harm when reporting
  - c) Inform the Parent(s) of a Child/Youth who has died or suffered serious bodily harm about Ombudsman Ontario – Child and Youth Unit and provide contact information
  - d) Inform a Child/Youth who has suffered serious bodily harm about Ombudsman Ontario – Child and Youth Unit and provide contact information
19. Ombudsman Ontario – Child and Youth Unit must be informed without unreasonable delay after becoming aware of the incident of serious bodily harm to a Child/Youth or the Child's/Youth's death. Service providers must report the death of a Child/Youth or incurrence of serious bodily harm to Ombudsman Ontario – Child and Youth Unit using the corresponding reporting template form located at <https://www.ombudsman.on.ca/have-a-complaint/make-a-complaint/complaint-form-notification-of-death-or-serious-bodily-harm>

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Alternative Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Children in Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Staff Orientation and Training Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Serious Occurrence	
Subject: Emergency Procedures – Sexual Assault	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Other Society	

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES – SEXUAL ASSUALT

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services has a responsibility to ensure that Children/Youth placed in Mnaasged Child and Family Services Care are safe, and their needs are met both emotionally and physically. Any Child/Youth in Care who reports a sexual assault or a traumatic event requires immediate assistance in processing this crisis.*

### PROCEDURE

In the event a Child/Youth in Care reports a sexual assault or traumatic event has occurred, the following steps will be taken:

1. The Assigned Helper and the Supervisor will be contacted immediately.
2. The Supervisor will immediately assign a Helper if the Child's/Youth's Helper is unavailable.
3. A determination will be made as soon as possible of who will be responsible to provide support to the Child/Youth. This should be a Helper known to the Child/Youth, the Child's/Youth's First Nation Band Representative, or another adult of the Child's/Youth's choosing that is not the Helper charged with conducting the investigation.
4. The Assigned Helper, in consultation with the Supervisor, will develop an investigation plan as per the Ontario Child Protection Standards 2016, which will include notifying the Police for assistance and conducting interviews if required and needed.
5. The Assigned Helper will arrange a meeting with the Police if they will be conducting the investigation. The Assigned Helper will work in collaboration with Police Services when conducting and completing the steps for the investigation.

6. The Assigned Helper will arrange for the Child/Youth to see a physician or authorized medical practitioner as soon as necessary, taking into consideration the time since the sexual assault occurred.
7. This Serious Incident will be processed in accordance with the Serious Occurrence Reporting procedures.
8. The Children/Youth and family will be referred for ongoing treatment and support to deal with the trauma.
9. The Assigned Helper will request all information/tests from the medical practitioner, and case notes will be kept and recorded in the Child's/Youth's File.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Serious Occurrence	
Subject: Notification of Serious Occurrence Procedure to the Alternative Care Provider	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Ministry Directive	

## NOTIFICATION OF SERIOUS OCCURRENCE PROCEDURE TO THE ALTERNATIVE CARE PROVIDER

### POLICY

*The Assigned Helper will advise the Alternative Care Providers of the definition of Serious Occurrences and the procedures related to reporting Serious Occurrences to Mnaasged Child and Family Services. The policies and procedures will be reviewed with the Alternative Care Providers at every Annual Review. The review with the Alternative Care Providers will be documented in the Alternative Care Files.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will inform the Alternative Care Provider(s) of the policies and procedures and the responsibilities in relation to reporting Serious Occurrences during the Home Assessment Process. Documentation indicating an annual review of the Serious Incidents/Occurrences policies and procedures will be placed in the Alternative Care File.
2. On notification of a Serious Occurrence, the Assigned Helper will inform the Alternative Care Providers to follow the steps outlined below:
3. In the event of an “After Hours” Serious Occurrence, the Alternative Care Provider(s) will contact Mnaasged’s on call service that will notify the After Hours Supervisor, who will then notify the After Hours Helper, and complete the following:
  - a) Determine if the Child/Youth requires medical attention. If so, call the emergency phone number, 911, and request assistance (e.g., Ambulance).
  - b) Once the Child/Youth has received the appropriate assistance, contact Mnaasged and report the following:
    - i. Child’s/Youth’s name

- ii. Nature of occurrence
  - iii. Time of occurrence
  - iv. Action taken
  - v. Status and location of the Child/Youth
  - vi. Location of occurrence
4. If the Alternative Care Provider(s) is uncertain if the incident involving a Child/Youth in Care is a Serious Occurrence, the Alternative Care Provider(s) should contact the Helper or the After Hours Helper for clarification.

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Serious Occurrence	
Subject: Debriefing Support for Parents, Guardians, and Alternative Care Providers Following Crisis Situations	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Mnaasged Child and Family Services Internal	

## DEBRIEFING SUPPORT FOR PARENTS, GUARDIANS, AND ALTERNATIVE CARE PROVIDERS FOLLOWING CRISIS SITUATIONS

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that immediate support is provided to those affected within 48 hours of a crisis, based on their needs and wishes. When requested or required, a follow-up debriefing Circle or Family Case Conference will occur within 10 days following the initial contact.*

*In addition to, or an alternative to, a Mnaasged Child and Family Services Helper, other supports for the family could include extended family, neighbours, First Nation Band Representative, Violence Against Women Shelter, Crisis Intervention Services (including mobile services available in some areas), and so on.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will offer to provide or arrange immediate supports for the family (for Involuntary Admission, serious injury, illness of Child/Youth or partner, death in the family, and so on). This may involve attending at the home, having another Helper attend at the home, contacting family or community members to attend at the home or arranging a Circle of support immediately or arranging other types of Circles.
2. The Assigned Helper will document in a case note that the Helper offered to provide or arrange support if the family was receptive and what action the Assigned Helper took based on the family's wishes.
3. The Helper will document in a case note if the support was made available to the family within the required 48 hours or a detailed explanation as to why not.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Alternative Care Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Serious Incidents/Occurrences	
Subject: Debriefing Support for Staff Following Crisis Situations	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

**DEBRIEFING SUPPORT FOR STAFF FOLLOWING CRISIS SITUATIONS**

**POLICY**

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will offer debriefing opportunities for Employees following crisis situations and at any time when requested by Staff.*

**PROCEDURE**

1. As part of the regular Supervisory consultation, the Supervisor will check in with Staff on how they are handling situations and more so when an Employee is dealing with a difficult Child/Youth maltreatment situation.
2. The Supervisor will provide debriefing opportunities in a safe environment, being aware of the possibility of vicarious trauma among Employees.
3. The Supervisor will document all debriefing sessions along with suggested follow-up and direction given. A copy of the document will be provided to the Human Resources Department for the Employee’s Personnel File.
4. Department- or Mnaasged-wide debriefing will be provided following major incidents.
5. Mnaasged will develop protocols with other Children’s Aid Societies or Community Agencies to establish reciprocal arrangements in order to draw upon the Staff and the additional resources from those organizations for crisis support should a catastrophic or serious circumstance affect most or all Staff. Examples of these circumstances may be a death of a Child/Youth in Care or an unexpected death of an Employee while at work.

**POLICY REFERENCE**

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Serious Occurrence	
Subject: Expunction Hearings	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## EXPUNCTION HEARINGS

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will assist Clients who request information or assistance in preparing for Expunction Hearings from the Child Abuse Registry.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will be required to respond to Expunction Hearings when notified by the Child Abuse Registry. The response from Mnaasged Child and Family Services will primarily be to provide case-specific information about the basis for registering a person on the Child Abuse Registry.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will complete the People Profile and the Referral modules in the Mnaasged Information Management System data base as a request for assistance.
2. The Supervisor will review and approve the People Profile and Referral modules and will assign a Helper to complete the service.
3. The Assigned Helper will obtain consent to complete a Fast Track Record Check confirming the Client's name is on the Child Abuse Registry.
4. The Assigned Helper will contact the Applicant and request a meeting to discuss the request and to determine what information or assistance will be required or received. At this time the Applicant will receive further information and general procedures of the Child Abuse Registry and Expunction Hearings.
5. Once the information has been provided to the Client, the file can then be closed.

6. Mnaasged responses to Expunction Hearings require the involvement of the Assigned Helper, the Supervisor, the Senior Manager, the Director of Services, and the Legal Services Department.
7. The Assigned Helper and the Supervisor will coordinate an internal Case Conference to review and discuss the response and to define the planning required for the Expunction Hearing. The Case Conference to formalize a plan will include the Assigned Helper and the Supervisor involved, the Senior Manager, the Director of Services, and the Legal Services Department.
8. Any planning and attendance at Expunction Hearings require the involvement of the Legal Services Department.
9. All case notes and correspondence will be documented in the Client's File.

#### EXPUNGEMENT OR OTHER COURT HEARING REQUEST

1. Mnaasged will be required to attend an Expungement Hearing or some other court hearing (e.g., Criminal trial) on a previously closed case (Eligibility **section** 101F).

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Serious Occurrence	
Subject: Child Abuse Registry	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i>	

## CHILD ABUSE REGISTRY

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services has a statutory responsibility to report all verified child abuse situations to the Child Abuse Registry. Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that there is a consistent process throughout the Jurisdiction or the verification and reporting of child abuse to the Child Abuse Registry.*

### PROCEDURE

1. On completion of investigations involving allegations of abuse, the “Investigation of Allegations/Concerns” Report the Supervisor deems reportable will be forwarded to the Senior Manager who will then forward it to the Director of Services.
2. Once the Director of Services receives the report, the Assigned Helper will review and discuss with the immediate Supervisor the need for the perpetrator to be added to the Child Abuse Registry. The decision to process a perpetrator on the Child Abuse Registry should be made collectively by the Assigned Helper and the Supervisor.
3. The Supervisor will then discuss the decision with the Alternative Care Supervisor (as appropriate) and the Senior Manager. If the Senior Manager, the Alternative Care Supervisor (as appropriate), and the Supervisor confirm that a perpetrator needs to be added to the Child Abuse Registry, the Senior Manager will then forward the recommendation and relevant documentation to the Director of Services.
4. The Director of Services will inform the Executive Director of the decision to Register.
5. The Director of Services will then send the report to the Senior Administrative Assistant who will track all cases of reportable abuse and the necessity for Child Abuse Registry Forms 1 and 2. The Administrative Assistant will then forward the report to the appropriate Supervisor requesting that Form 1 be completed.

6. Once Form 1 is completed it will be sent back to the Administrative Assistant who will then forward it to the Director of Services for signature.
7. The Director of Services will complete a cover letter and together with Form 1 will be sent to the Child Abuse Registry. The Administrative Assistant will forward a copy of the letter and Form 1 to the Team Administrative Assistant for the Client File.
8. The Director of Services will ensure that the perpetrator has been informed by written correspondence that Mnaasged has applied to have the perpetrator's name added to the Child Abuse Registry. The letter will also identify options available to the perpetrator to consider for an Expungement Hearing to have the perpetrator's name removed from the Child Abuse Registry if applicable.
9. The Assigned Helper will inform the First Nation Band Representative of the Mnaasged's decision to place the perpetrator's name on the Child Abuse Registry.
10. If Mnaasged receives a request from the Child Abuse Registry to provide clarity regarding documentation provided by Mnaasged, the Director of Services will work in collaboration with the assigned Senior Manager to provide the information.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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## SECTION 9: GENERIC SECTION

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Alerts with Other Children’s Aid Societies	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies – Accreditation Standards	

### ALERTS WITH OTHER CHILDREN’S AID SOCIETIES

#### POLICY

*Alerts are referrals that are completed by Child Welfare Agencies that identify a family is missing and unresolved Child Protection Concerns are current within the family unit that require a Child Protection Investigation.*

*When Mnaasged Child and Family Services receives an alert from another Children’s Aid Society or Child Protection Agency from within Canada or in the United States, the Child Welfare Alert Report will be shared with all investigation and Community-Based Teams throughout Mnaasged Child and Family Services.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services Staff will issue alerts to other Children’s Aid Societies and Child Protection Agencies in Ontario, Canada, and the United States when required.*

#### PROCEDURE

1. Child Welfare Alerts received by Mnaasged from other Children’s Aid Societies or Child Protection Agencies will be documented by the Assigned Helper or After Hours Helpers by completing the People Profile and Referral modules in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
2. The Administrative Assistant will distribute the alert to the Supervisors of the Assigned Helper and then to Community-Based and After Hours Teams once it has been approved by the First Response Supervisor.

3. The Supervisor of the Assigned Helper and the Community-Based and After Hours Teams will review the Child Welfare Alerts within their teams to ensure that Helpers are aware of the referral concerns and action plans identified. Regular reviews of Child Welfare Alerts will be completed to ensure that reports are updated on a regular basis.
4. The Administrative Assistant will be responsible for distributing Child Welfare Alerts to other Children's Aid Societies and Child Protection Agencies after the alert has been approved by a Supervisor. Fax is the most efficient means of distributing alerts; however, other modes of communication may also be used but require prior approval of the Supervisor.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Case Coverage During Planned Absence	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Mnaasged Child and Family Services Internal	

## CASE COVERAGE DURING PLANNED ABSENCE

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services has an obligation to ensure that ongoing Case Planning and management continue for families when the Assigned Helper is absent during planned or emergency absences.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Supervisor will not approve planned absences—including vacation, compensatory time, and any other planned absences—unless all the Helper’s investigations, recordings, court documents, and case notes are up to date. Departure from this will require detailed documentation by the Supervisor that identifies which Assigned Helper will be completing these tasks in the Helper’s scheduled absence.
2. The Assigned Helper will ensure that requests for planned absences are made to their respective Supervisor at least four (4) weeks prior to the requested date, unless exceptional circumstances occur that will render this impossible.
3. The Assigned Helper will be required to arrange for case coverage from colleagues on the Assigned Helper’s Team when away from the office for vacation, compensatory time, training, or any other planned absences. They will identify specific Helpers to cover each case and will ensure that the person is aware and available to cover the case during the period of the Assigned Helper’s absence.
4. The Assigned Helper will complete a Case Coverage List documenting all the cases currently open to the Helper with details regarding the nature of the concern and the action to be taken in the Helper’s absence and who will be covering each case.

5. The Case Coverage List will then require Supervisory approval before the leave is approved. The Case Coverage List will be reviewed with the Supervisor prior to the last business day of the planned absence to confirm any updates or changes.
6. The Case Coverage List will be provided to the Supervisor, the Administrative Assistant, and the Team Members on the last business day prior to the planned absences. The Supervisor will review the Case Coverage List individually with each Team Member to ensure each is aware of the case requirements and action plans identified. The Case Coverage List will be created for all planned absences of five (5) days or more in duration.
7. For all planned absences, the Assigned Helper will update their voicemail indicating the period of absence and will direct the caller to press zero for assistance.
8. For all planned absences, the Assigned Helper will activate the electronic calendar and the automatic email reply to indicate the period they will be away.
9. When the leave is for five (5) days or more, the Assigned Helper will inform the families and the First Nation Band Representatives of who the covering Helper will be during the Assigned Helper's absence.
10. Should the Assigned Helper be assigned to complete an After Hours shift during a planned absence after the completion of the After Hours schedule, the Assigned Helper will be responsible for finding a replacement for this shift.
11. When a Helper is absent due to an unplanned or emergency event (such as sudden illness, accident, or personal situations), case coverage will be assigned/redistributed by the Supervisor immediately or within three (3) business days to ensure that there will be no disruption in services to Clients due to the Helper's absence.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	Policy #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Case Management Between Offices	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## CASE MANAGEMENT BETWEEN OFFICES

### POLICY

*There are times when a Child/Youth is in another area of Mnaasged Child and Family Services' jurisdiction who requires services from two offices. When this occurs, services should be planned with the best interest of the Child/Youth taken into consideration. File information and case reports must be up to date and the established Case Planning for the family and the Child/Youth must be followed until such time the changes in the Case Plan are justified. The Assigned Helper who is the Parent's(s') or Guardian's(s') Helper will remain the Case Manager.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The initiating Supervisor will advise the receiving Supervisor of the Child's/Youth's move and location. The receiving Supervisor will then assign a Helper to the Child/Youth.
2. Both Assigned Helpers will be responsible for coordinating a meeting or teleconference to share information, including any Child/Youth recordings, and ensure a coordinated approach to the co-management of the file. The initial meeting or teleconference will occur within five (5) days of the Child's/Youth's move.
3. The initiating Assigned Helper will maintain regular contact with the receiving Assigned Helper.
4. The transferring Supervisor will advise the receiving Supervisor of the planned transfer. If unable to assign a Helper to the file immediately, the receiving Supervisor will assign a Helper to assume the transfer within at least three (3) working days.
5. The receiving Helper will contact the transferring Helper within five (5) days to review the details of the case and conclude the remaining details associated with the transfer.

6. The transferring Helper will complete the necessary paperwork (transfer recording, change in Helper, district office, address, school, and so on) within 14 days.
7. The transferring Helper will ensure that the file is orderly, complete, and up-to-date prior to the Supervisory review.
8. The receiving Supervisor will review the file once it is received within two (2) working days before forwarding it on to the receiving Assigned Helper.
9. The Assigned Helper will contact the Child/Youth and the family within five (5) working days of receiving the transferred file. (Ideally, a transfer visit will occur with the families, depending on geographical constraints, staffing issues, and degree of risk to the Child/Youth.)

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Case Notes	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## CASE NOTES

### POLICY

*Case notes are a detailed record of case-related information that support clinical decisions and Case Planning throughout the life of a case. They are written by any person providing service to Children/Youth and families and will contain facts as well as assessments, opinions, and a plan for follow up. The content of case notes include, but are not limited to, communication with Clients, other collaterals (e.g., Service Providers), and colleagues both in person and on the telephone.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services Staff will ensure that time is set aside for the purpose of case noting to balance the provision of direct Client service and documentation requirements.*

*Case noting will be completed at the same time with the tasks or immediately thereafter or within 24 hours (as per Ministry Standards) using either the provided case notepad or electronic case notes in the Mnaasged Information Management System. Written case notes will be completed in ink and must be legible.*

### PROCEDURE

1. Mnaasged Helpers will ensure that case notes contain the following facts concerning a contact:
  - a) **When** – date, time, and length of contact
  - b) **Where** – location (i.e., home visit, office interview, or telephone contact)
  - c) **Who** was present – the individuals in attendance, using full names and titles
  - d) **Why** – the purpose of the interview/meeting (i.e., investigation of a referral, private interview, or Case Conference)

- e) **What** – the content of the meeting in accordance with best practice principles, ongoing assessment, and Case Planning (i.e., topics discussed, Client responses, significant quotes, and observations of physical surroundings)
  - f) **Plan** – goals, commitments, and next steps
2. The Helper will sign their name at the end of each entry.
  3. The Helper will ensure that the information contained in the case note is factual and purposeful. The language of the case note will be objective and non-judgmental.
  4. The Helper will clearly distinguish between facts and the Helper’s own professional opinion and assessment.
  5. The Helper will use quotation marks when documenting direct quotes.
  6. Case notes will be filed chronologically.
  7. When multiple entries on one case note sheet is required the Helper will sign their name at the end of each entry. Helpers whose signatures are not legible must print their name below their signature.
  8. Electronic case notes will be used whenever possible to keep Mnaasged in compliance about case notes being completed immediately or within 24 hours. Paper case notes will only be used in circumstances where it is not possible to create an electronic case note within 24 hours of the event.

#### CASE NOTES AND SUPERVISION

1. Case-specific content that are discussed and decisions that are made in supervision will be documented by the Helper as per Ministry Standard and should include reviews, approvals or decisions, and the rationale for the decisions.
2. Supervisors will document the discussion held within supervision.
3. Helpers will mark each electronic case note concerning supervision as “SUPERVISION CASE NOTE” to allow it to be located quickly through a search query.

#### CASE NOTES AND LEGAL CONSULTATION

1. Helpers will mark each case note documenting a legal consultation as “LEGAL CONSULTATION CASE NOTE” to allow it to be located quickly through a search query.

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Correspondence	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## CORRESPONDENCE

### POLICY

*All outgoing correspondence will be reviewed and approved by a Supervisor before being sent.*

*All outgoing correspondence by an Assigned Helper will be reviewed, approved, and countersigned by a Supervisor.*

*All outgoing correspondence by a Supervisor will be reviewed, approved, and countersigned by a Senior Manager.*

*All outgoing correspondence by a Senior Manager will be reviewed, approved, and countersigned by the Director of Services.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will maintain originals or copies, or both, of all incoming and outgoing correspondence in the Family's and Child's/Youth's Files in the Mnaasged Information Management System.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper and the Supervisor, the Senior Manager, and the Director of Services must sign all outgoing correspondence to Clients except for routine communications (e.g., confirming an appointment or enclosing a copy of a Court Order).
2. When a file is transferred to another Assigned Helper, letters will be sent to all collaterals involved with the file, informing them of the change in Helpers, by the Team Administrative Assistant and approved and signed by the Supervisor and the Assigned Helper.

### POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Family Case Conference	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## FAMILY CASE CONFERENCE

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that a Family Case Conference will be utilized in a variety of situations, including a crisis, Involuntary Admissions, Service Plan development, Child/Youth Well-being Plan (Plan of Care), Exiting or Reunification Planning.*

### PROCEDURE

1. For families who decline to use Circles, Family Case Conferences will occur within timelines as outlined in the Timelines Policy as follows:
  - a) Occur within 24 to 48 hours of an Involuntary Admission or crisis
  - b) Date for next Family Case Conference to occur within 10 days of the Family Case Conference as requested
  - c) Regular Family Case Conference will occur every six (6) weeks OR at any time the family or the First Nation Band Representative requests one, whenever a crisis occurs, or at a change in the situation
  - d) As part of all Reunification Plans, within seven (7) days prior to Children/Youth leaving the Care of the Alternative Care Provider or returning to the care of the Parent(s) or Guardian(s)
2. The Assigned Helper will explain the necessity and purpose of Family Case Conferences to the Parent(s) or Guardian(s).
3. The Assigned Helper will inform the following people of the date, time, location, and purpose for each Family Case Conference:

- a) Parent(s) or Guardian(s)
  - b) Extended family (grandparents or guardian, aunts, uncles, close friends, and other support people)
  - c) The Child/Youth 12 years of age or older
  - d) Community Service Providers (i.e., mental health counsellors, addictions Helpers, and Elders)
  - e) Alternative Care Providers
  - f) First Nation Band Representative
4. On the day of the Family Case Conference the Assigned Helper will complete the following:
- a) Explain to participants about the duty to report and required follow up on any disclosures of child abuse or threats of self-harm because of any disclosures made during Family Case Conferences
  - b) Discuss importance of confidentiality
  - c) Inform that everyone has equal opportunity to participate and speak
  - d) Prior to the conclusion of the Family Case Conference, the date, time, and location for the next scheduled one
  - e) Attempt to keep the Case Conference within a two-hour time limit, and discuss with the participants the best way to complete the meeting if more time is required
  - f) Offer closing comments, thank the participants for attending, ask if anyone needs clarity, and ensure any follow-ups are scheduled
  - g) Request signatures from all participants on attendance sheet
  - h) Keep minutes of discussions and case note in the Child's/Youth's and Family's Files in the Mnaasged Information Management System.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Alternative Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Circle	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## CIRCLE

### POLICY

*Circles will be incorporated in all Child Welfare Service practices and will be recommended to all families. Every community and family have their own interpretation and uses for Circles and Mnaasged Child and Family Services respects this diversity.*

*Circles will be an option to assist in Case Management for families that request them.*

*Circles will occur as follows:*

- a) Initial Circle to occur within 24 to 48 hours of an Involuntary Admission or crisis*
- b) Within 10 days of the initial Circle as requested*
- c) Once every six (6) weeks OR at any time it is requested by the biological family or the First Nation Band Representative*
- d) Whenever a crisis occurs or there is a change in the situation*
- e) When developing Child/Youth Well-being Plans*
- f) Exiting Circle with the Alternative Care Provider*
- g) Reunification Circle within seven (7) days prior to Children/Youth leaving Care to develop Reunification Plans*
- h) Within seven (7) days of the Children/Youth returning to the care of the Parent(s) or Guardian(s)*

*The following people will be included to participate in the Circle:*

- a) Parent(s) or Guardian(s)*

- b) Extended family (grandparents, guardian, aunties, uncles, close friends, other support people)*
- c) The Child/Youth 12 years of age or older*
- d) Community Service Providers (i.e., mental health counsellors, addictions Helpers, and Elders)*
- e) Alternative Care providers*
- f) First Nation Band Representative*

#### *Circle/Elder/Facilitator*

*The selection process must follow cultural protocols and Ministry guidelines when selecting an Elder or Circle Facilitator.*

#### PROCEDURE

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1. The Assigned Helper will obtain signed Consents to Release Information from the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) and the Child/Youth 12 years of age or older for the referral to request a Circle.
2. The Assigned Helper will complete a Referral Form, attach the signed consents, and submit these to the Indigenous Knowledge Coordinator.
3. In coordination with the Assigned Helper, the Indigenous Knowledge Coordinator will meet with the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) to discuss and explain the benefits of a Circle for the family and the process for selecting an Elder to facilitate the Circle.
4. Upon selecting an Elder, the Indigenous Knowledge Coordinator will approach the Elder following the cultural protocol.
5. If the family does not choose an Elder, the referral will go to Mnaasged's internal Circle Facilitator.
6. The Assigned Helper will make all arrangements for the Circle, including time, place, and informing participants of anything else that may be identified.
7. On the day of the Circle, the Assigned Helper will perform the following:
  - a) Obtain signed Consents to Release Information from the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) and the Child/Youth 12 years of age or older if not already completed

- b) Document plans and outcomes for the Wellness Agreement/Service Plan, the Child/Youth Well-being Plan (Plan of Care), Customary Care Service Plan, Kinship Service Plan
  - c) Obtain signatures from all participating parties upon completion of the Circle
8. The details of the plans developed at the Circle will be recorded in the Mnaasged Information Management System in the appropriate Family's and Child's/Youth's Files, recordings, and forms.
  9. The Assigned Helper will provide copies of the plans to the Parent(s) or Guardian(s), the Alternative Care Provider, and the First Nation Band Representative within seven (7) days of the completed plans, which will be reviewed and approved by the Supervisor prior to distribution.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Frequency of Home Visits/Contact with Families	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## FREQUENCY OF HOME VISITS/CONTACT WITH FAMILIES

### POLICY

*In addition to complying with all Ministry Standards pertaining to the frequency of home visits, Mnaasged Child and Family Services will offer every family more frequent home visits and meetings to meet their needs and to ensure they are receiving the appropriate level of support. More frequent home visits may be necessary regularly or occasionally during times of crisis, duress, stress, or anytime the family requests more frequent contact with their Helper.*

### PROCEDURE

1. When a Helper meets with a family, the Helper will indicate when Ministry Standards require the next visit to be scheduled, if applicable. This will vary depending on the situation. Whether Ministry Standards are applicable, the Helper will offer to meet more frequently with the family.
2. The Helper will document in a case note the family's decision on the offer of more frequent contact.
3. A request by the family for more frequent contact with the Helper will confirm that the family is receptive to Mnaasged and will be viewed and documented as a positive/cooperative response.
4. The Helper will make every effort to ensure that contact with the family is scheduled in advance.
5. If the family requests immediate contact with the Helper (e.g., attending at the office unannounced and requesting to meet with the Helper), the Helper will make every attempt to meet with them; however, if that Helper is not available to address sudden unscheduled

contact, a covering or alternative Helper will be made available to the family to address their concern or to schedule a meeting for them as soon as their regular Helper is available.

6. The First Nation Band Representative will be informed of the frequency of home visits or contact.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: High-Risk Pregnancy Referrals on Closed or New Files	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Other Society	

## HIGH-RISK PREGNANCY REFERRALS ON CLOSED OR NEW FILES

### POLICY

*All referrals for services pertaining to high-risk pregnancies received by Mnaasged Child and Family Services are to be forwarded to the First Response Department.*

*Several situations could be an indicator that deems a pregnancy to be high risk, including if it has been reported that the mother has substance abuse issues or is known by the Children's Aid Society or an Indigenous Child Well-being Agency as not having her previous Children/Youth in her care due to Child Protection Issues, for example. The file will then be assigned to an Assigned Helper or a Community-Based Child Welfare Team for assessment and planning.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will complete the People Profile and Referral modules and the Internal and Fast Track Record Checks in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
2. The Assigned Helper will then contact the mother or the Child's/Youth's First Nation Band Representative, or both, to share the referral information and initiate a plan.
3. The Assigned Helper will work cooperatively with the First Nation Band Representative in meeting with the mother, identifying risk, making any appropriate community referrals, and confirming that an appropriate plan is in place for the baby immediately following the birth. During the prenatal period, the file would be opened voluntarily as a Non-Protection File 10K.
4. The Assigned Helper will consult with a Supervisor to determine the need for ongoing Protection Services at birth.

### POLICY REFERENCE

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Investigations Involving Board Members	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## INVESTIGATIONS INVOLVING BOARD MEMBERS

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services is mandated to investigate allegations of abuse or neglect throughout its designated jurisdiction. When allegations of abuse or neglect involving Mnaasged Child and Family Services Board Members are made, steps will be taken to ensure that the referral concerns and the investigation process are handled as objectively as possible.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services has developed service protocols with external Societies or Indigenous Child Well-being Agencies to manage investigations involving Mnaasged Board Members.*

### PROCEDURE

1. Mnaasged will follow the approved protocol relating to the management of Child Protection Investigations involving Board Members.
2. Reports concerning allegations of abuse or neglect involving Mnaasged will be immediately forwarded to the First Response Supervisor. The Supervisor will be responsible to gather all information regarding the report and complete the People Profile and Referral modules in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
3. The Supervisor will immediately advise the Senior Manager that a report concerning an allegation of abuse or neglect has been received. The Supervisor will meet with the Senior Manager to review the report. The Senior Manager will then meet with the Director of Services or designate to develop a plan based on approved protocols to access the external Society or Indigenous Child Well-being Agency to complete the investigation.
4. The Senior Manager will be responsible to review and approve the People Profile and Referral modules in the Mnaasged Information Management System.

5. The Director of Services or designate will call the Director of Services at the appropriate Children's Aid Society that will plan and coordinate the investigation.
6. The Director of Services or designate will ensure that all files related to the case will be secured, and only external Staff members handling the investigation will have access to them via the Senior Manager or designate.
7. The Senior Manager will contact the Systems Administrator to advise of a "staff sensitive" file and who can have access to it.
8. At the conclusion of the investigation, Mnaasged's Executive Director and the Director of Services will meet with the Director of Services or designate of the investigating Society or Indigenous Child Well-being Agency to receive the outcome of the investigation. The Society that handled the investigation will ensure that the Consents to Release Information are signed before sharing the case information.
9. The Executive Director, in collaboration with the Board Chair, will review and determine whether remedial plans may be required depending on the outcome of the investigation.

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Investigations Involving Staff	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## INVESTIGATIONS INVOLVING STAFF

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services is mandated to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect throughout its designated jurisdiction. When reports of allegations of abuse or neglect involving Mnaasged Staff are made, steps will be taken to ensure that the referral concerns and the investigation process are handled as objectively as possible.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services has developed service protocols with external Societies and Indigenous Child Well-being Agencies that will manage investigations involving Mnaasged Staff.*

### PROCEDURE

1. Mnaasged will follow the approved protocol relating to the management of Child Protection Investigations involving Staff.
2. Reports concerning allegations of abuse or neglect involving Mnaasged will be immediately forwarded to the First Response Supervisor. The Supervisor will be responsible to gather all information regarding the report and to complete the People Profile and Referral modules in the Mnaasged Information Management System.
3. The Supervisor will immediately advise the Senior Manager that a report concerning allegations of abuse or neglect involving Mnaasged has been received. The Supervisor will meet with the Senior Manager to review the report. The Senior Manager will then meet with the Director of Services or designate to develop a plan based on approved protocols to access the external Society or Indigenous Child Well-being Agency that will carry out the investigation.
4. The Senior Manager will be responsible to review and approve the People Profile and Referral modules in the Mnaasged Information Management System.

5. The Director of Services or designate will call the Director of Services of the appropriate Children’s Aid Society or Indigenous Child Well-being Agency that will plan and coordinate the investigation.
6. The Director of Services or designate will ensure that all files related to the case are secured and that only external Staff members handling the investigation have access to them via the Senior Manager or designate.
7. The Senior Manager will contact the Systems Administrator to advise of a “staff sensitive” file and to advise who can have access to it. Only the Senior Manager will be permitted access to the staff-sensitive file.
8. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Senior Manager will meet with the Director of Services or designate from the investigating Society or Indigenous Child Well-being Agency to receive the outcome of the investigation. The Society that handled the investigation will ensure that the Consents to Release Information are signed before sharing the case information.
9. The Director of Services or the Manager of Human Resources will meet with the Staff person if any remedial planning may be required relating to the investigation.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Placement Priorities	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## PLACEMENT PRIORITIES

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that Mnaasged's priority is to always place a Child/Youth within the Child's/Youth's family or in a First Nation, Métis, or Inuit home. If there are no homes available, the following placement priorities will be followed:*

- a) Extended family in the Child's/Youth's home community*
- b) Extended family in another community*
- c) Another Indigenous family within the Child's/Youth's home community*
- d) An Indigenous family outside of the community*

*If such a placement is not available or appropriate to meet the Child's/Youth's needs, one of the following Alternative Care placements may be considered:*

- a) A non-Indigenous family in the Child's/Youth's home community; and*
- b) A non-Indigenous family outside the community.*

*When a suitable caregiver home cannot be found, placement may be considered into one of the following:*

- a) Mnaasged Child and Family Services-operated home*
- b) Another Indigenous-operated group home or treatment centre that meets the Child's/Youth's needs*
- c) A non-Indigenous group home or treatment centre that meets the Child's/Youth's needs, supervision, and support*

*Placement within Mnaasged Child and Family Services jurisdiction will be considered before exploring external resources.*

*Connections will be maintained with the Child's/Youth's First Nation, Métis, or Inuit family and local Indigenous organizations and services to support the Child's/Youth's continued awareness of a connection to a First Nation, Métis, or Inuit heritage in cases where it is not possible to place a Child/Youth in a First Nation, Métis, or Inuit home.*

## PROCEDURE

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1. The Assigned Helper will consult with the family and the First Nation Band Representative to determine a suitable placement. The Assigned Helper will ensure that the following criteria will be used when determining a placement for a Child/Youth:
  - a) Child's/Youth's cultural, racial, linguistic, and socio-economic background
  - b) Child's/Youth's age and gender
  - c) Child's/Youth's wishes
  - d) Child's/Youth's religious or spiritual background
  - e) Child's/Youth's interests, abilities, strengths, problems (including any psychiatric or psychological information available), therapeutic needs, and accessibility to treatment facilities
  - f) Any medical or disabling condition
  - g) School placement, current academic needs, and accessibility of appropriate schools
  - h) Developmental, emotional, behavioural, and social needs that include peer relationships, ability to function in the community, reaction to authority figures, and availability of recreation
  - i) Expected length of stay
  - j) Access to special services
  - k) Family constellation, feelings about family relationships, and geographical closeness to family
  - l) Family's wishes
  - m) Plans for parental contact
  - n) Least restrictive but appropriate alternative

- o) Feasibility of placement with a member of the Child's/Youth's extended family or community
  - p) Previous placement history (where applicable)
2. The above information will be recorded by the Assigned Helper on the Placement Request Form prior to the Child/Youth being placed in an Alternative Care Provider's(s') Home.
  3. The Assigned Helper selecting the Home will take into consideration the following when selecting a suitable placement:
    - a) How the personalities of the Alternative Care Family and their Children/Youth will affect the Child's/Youth's adjustment to the Home
    - b) Alternative Care Provider(s) employment situation
    - c) Availability to the Child/Youth and attitudes toward child-rearing and behaviour management
  4. A copy of this information will be kept in the Child's/Youth's and the Alternative Care Provider's(s') Files in the Mnaasged Information Management System.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Protocol Policy	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## PROTOCOL POLICY

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will develop and revise Child Welfare Service protocols on an annual basis to ensure effective service coordination, planning, and service delivery for the management of Child Protection Investigations with external services.*

*The main Child Welfare Service protocols will be reviewed and completed with the following Agencies:*

- a) Police Services*
- b) Hospitals*
- c) Healthy Babies and Healthy Children*
- d) Violence Against Women*
- e) Education*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Quality Assurance Manager will maintain protocols in the Mnaasged Information Management System. The Director of Services or designate and the Quality Assurance Manager will develop and review formal and informal protocols with First Nations, Children's Aid Societies, Indigenous Child Well-being Agencies, as well as other Community Agencies and Service Providers.
2. The Quality Assurance Manager will initiate annual reviews of protocols with assigned Mnaasged Personnel and will compile a report to identify recommendations for changes.

3. The Director of Services will review the report and will work in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Manager to prepare a plan that will address the identified recommendations. The plan will be shared with the Supervisors and the Senior Managers for further review and planning with external Service Providers if revisions are needed. The Senior Manager and the Supervisors will be responsible to advise the Assigned Helpers of any changes to existing protocols.
4. The Quality Assurance Manager will advise the Manager of Human Resources of any changes to Mnaasged protocols. The Manager of Human Resources and the Senior Manager will ensure that protocols are part of the on-board training for new hires.
5. The Quality Assurance Manager will ensure that copies of all protocols can be accessed through the assigned Community-Based Team Administrative Assistants.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure Manual

Human Resource Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Service Plans to be Shared	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## SERVICE PLANS TO BE SHARED

### POLICY

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*Mnaasged Child and Family Services Assigned Helpers must share all Service Plans with Parents, Guardians, and First Nation Band Representatives (e.g., 30-Day Service Plan, Child/Youth Well-being Plan, Legal Plans of Care, Access Plans, and Reintegration Plans).*

### PROCEDURE

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1. The Assigned Helper will provide copies of all plans to the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) and the First Nation Band Representative within seven (7) days of completion of each plan.
2. The Assigned Helper will document in case notes of when the plans were developed, who participated, who signed the plans, and who received copies of the plans. Copies of plans will be filed in the Child's/Youth's Care File.

### POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Supervision	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard	

## SUPERVISION

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will provide supervision for all its Employees. All Employees are expected to participate constructively in the supervision process.*

*Supervision is the process of giving direction, guidance, and support to Mnaasged Child and Family Services Helpers and of ensuring Helper activity is consistent with Mnaasged Child and Family Services' policies and procedures.*

*Supervisors will ensure that their Staff always have access to them (Supervisors) or their designate, but it is not necessary that every casework decision is made with a Supervisor. The Assigned Helper will be the Case Manager and will have the most direct knowledge of the family.*

*This policy is not intended to replace the informal supervision process that occurs daily.*

### PROCEDURE

1. When any decision affects the safety or permanency of a Child/Youth, the Assigned Helper will review and consult with the immediate Supervisor. These case decisions will require a Supervisor's approval prior to implementation.
2. The Assigned Helper will document in case notes all case-specific content discussed with a Supervisor (including reviews and approvals or decisions and the rationale for them).
3. Supervision for new hires, probationary (less than six months), employees with identified performance issues, or Helpers who have transferred to a new position will receive supervision on a bi-weekly basis until they have demonstrated the required competencies.

4. All files will be reviewed with a Supervisor on an ongoing basis within the context of a regularly scheduled supervision session:
  - a) At least once every month during an investigation
  - b) Minimally once every four (4) weeks while the case is receiving ongoing Child Protection Services
  - c) Prior to case closure or investigation discontinuation
  - d) Cases with a higher degree of risk or complexity will be reviewed more often
5. Regularly scheduled supervision sessions are to be documented by the Supervisor. The Assigned Helper will obtain approval from the immediate Supervisor when the following decisions are required:
  - a) Review of the disposition of a referral and response time at the discretion of the Helper or Supervisor, or both, and the risk and complexity of the referral
  - b) Review of the investigative plan by a Supervisor
  - c) Helper Safety Plan (when required) prior to commencing an investigation
  - d) Adequacy of every new or revised Family Safety Plan is assessed by the Supervisor and approved prior to its implementation
  - e) When no safety factors or concerns are present, the Safety Assessment will be reviewed with the Supervisor on the next working day
  - f) Verification if a Child/Youth needs protection, the case disposition, and the “services completed” prior to the completion of the investigation. This process consists of a comprehensive case review and analysis that include the following:
    - i. Referral information
    - ii. Steps taken during the investigation
    - iii. All relevant information obtained during the investigation
    - iv. Results of the Ontario Safety Assessment and Safety Plan and the Ontario Family Risk Assessment
6. The Assigned Helper will also obtain Supervisor approval for the following:
  - a) Departures from Child Protection Standards, Mnaasged’s policies, procedures, and protocols as well as extensions of time frames

- b) Overrides on the Risk Assessment
  - c) Placement of a Child/Youth in Out-of-Home Care with extended family or community members (in and out of care) or in a Formal Customary Care placement
  - d) Prior to the return home of Child(ren)/Youth
  - e) Any court decisions contrary to Mnaasged's application
  - f) Serious Occurrences or Enhanced Serious Occurrences
  - g) Placement breakdowns
  - h) Specialized services or supports required
7. The Supervisor will also provide ad hoc consultation and direction to the Assigned Helper when decisions are required immediately to ensure the safety of a Child/Youth.
8. The Supervisors will ensure that there are signatures on case documentation submitted by the Assigned Helper at the conclusion of an investigation, a Formal Case Review, a Case Transfer, or a Case Termination that will indicate the approval of the following:
- a) Thoroughness, accuracy, and quality of the investigation or quality and effectiveness of ongoing services (including compliance with relevant standards, policies and procedures, and protocols)
  - b) Accuracy of the Helper's assessment of safety and risk and the appropriateness of associated decisions and plans
  - c) Casework decision making (effective, timely, and appropriate)
  - d) Quality of written documents
9. Supervisor consultation is also required for the following:
- a) Report to the Child Abuse Register
  - b) Request for Expungement from the Child Abuse Register
  - c) Criminal charges laid against a Client by Staff
  - d) Concerns about the actions of another Agency
  - e) Recommendations for the referral of the family for a Parenting Capacity Assessment

- f) Critical Incidents in the case (threats by the Client to the Helper, death of any member of the family, threats of a suicide, new partner moving in, birth of a baby, or addition of new members to the household)

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Timelines	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## TIMELINES

### POLICY

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*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will provide services promptly and efficiently as possible.*

### PROCEDURE

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1. The Assigned Helpers will follow the services and timelines outlined below:

### CIRCLES

1. An Initial Circle may occur within 24 to 48 hours of a Child/Youth coming into Care or at a crisis at the request of the family.
2. Further Circles may occur at the request of the family.

### FAMILY CASE CONFERENCES

1. The Initial Family Case Conference must occur within 24 to 48 hours of an Involuntary Admission or crisis.
2. The date for the next Family Case Conference will be determined at the conclusion of the Initial Family Case Conference but within 10 days as required or requested.
3. A Regular Family Case Conference will occur once a month OR at a time the family or the First Nation Band Representative requests one OR whenever a crisis occurs or a change in the situation requires one as part of all Reunification Plans and within seven (7) days prior to the Children/Youth leaving the Care of the Alternative Care Provider(s) or within seven (7) days of the Children/Youth returning to the Care of the regular Caregivers.

## SERVICE PLANS

1. The appropriate Helper will ensure that the family, the First Nation Band Representative, other Service Providers, and appropriate supports receive a copy of all Service Plans within seven (7) days after each have been completed and approved by the Supervisor.

## ACCESS VISITS

1. When Children/Youth have been separated from their regular Caregivers, regardless of the circumstances (e.g., Involuntary Admission, Customary Care Arrangement, Temporary Care Agreement), an initial visit of the Children/Youth with their Parent(s) or Guardian(s) or extended family and community members will be arranged within the first five (5) days following the separation.
2. Weekly access visits will occur thereafter until a Regular Access Schedule can be developed with the family, the First Nation Band Representative, the Alternative Care Provider(s), the Parent(s) or Guardian(s), and the community.

## ELDERS

1. When a request or referral for access to an Elder is received, the Helper will forward this to the Indigenous Knowledge Coordinator or First Nation Band Representative, as per protocol, within 72 hours of receiving it. Access to the Elder will occur as soon as possible pending selection, contact, and availability of the identified Elder.

## CEREMONIES

1. When a request or referral for access to a Ceremony is received, the Assigned Helper will forward this to the Indigenous Knowledge Coordinator or First Nation Band Representative, as per protocol, within 72 hours of receiving it. Access to a Ceremony will occur as soon as location, selection, contact, and availability of the identified Elder are confirmed as well as the availability of items that some Ceremonies require.

## IDENTIFICATION FORMS

1. When an Assigned Helper becomes aware of the need to assist families with completing and submitting Identification Forms (e.g., birth certificates and Status cards), the Assigned Helper will provide the necessary Mnaasged Information Management System forms and offer to assist in completing and submitting these within 10 days once the family gives consent.
2. For Children/Youth in Care who do not have all appropriate documentation and the Assigned Helper was unable to obtain these from the Parent(s) or Guardian(s), the Assigned

Helper will apply for all the appropriate documentation within 30 days of the Child/Youth coming into Care.

3. The Assigned Helper will document in the case notes the following details when any of the above situations occur:
  - a) Where
  - b) Who is involved
  - c) If departure from timelines was necessary and reasons why
4. Any departure from timelines will require a Supervisor consultation and will be documented.
5. The Assigned Helper will ensure that the above information is included in Service Plans and that the Parent(s) or Guardian(s), the First Nation Band Representative, and all applicable community members/Service Providers are informed of the timelines for all services.

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Transferring a Case	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference: Child Protection Standard	

## TRANSFERRING A CASE

### POLICY

*All Children/Youth and families have the right to receive quality service provided to them on a continuous basis and delivered with the least disruption possible.*

*A case transfer from one Helper, department, or Society to another will occur within 10 days of submitting the transfer documentation to the Supervisor for approval.*

*The completion date for the transfer documentation will be the date the transfer recording is submitted to the Supervisor for approval. The case transfer will be effective on the date of the transfer visit of the family with the new Assigned Helper.*

*If the family relocates to another area within the Mnaasged Child and Family Services jurisdiction the Assigned Helper must complete the following:*

- a) Request monitoring and assistance from the receiving office/team*
- b) Determine if this is a temporary or permanent relocation for the family*
- c) For a permanent relocation, the Transfer Policy Process must be followed*

*For cases transferred from one jurisdiction to another, the Inter-Agency Protocol will be followed, and the transfer is effective on the date the receiving Child Protection Helper has the first face-to-face contact with the family.*

*It is the responsibility of the receiving Assigned Helper to ensure that notification is sent to all other Service Providers of the receiving Assigned Helper's identity and contact information within seven (7) days of assuming case responsibility.*

*The transferring Helper, in collaboration with the receiving Helper, will also plan a Circle or Family Case Conference with all family members within seven (7) days of the transfer.*

*Any existing Safety Plans will continue without interruption during the transfer from one Helper to another. Until the case transfer is completed, the transferring Assigned Helper will assume responsibility for managing the Safety Plan and addressing emergency family needs, unless the family has moved to another jurisdiction.*

*When a file is before the Court, the transfer will continue and will not be held up by the court process.*

*When it is in the best interest of the family, the Assigned Helper will maintain and carry out the family service duties.*

*This policy applies for case transfers at any phase in the Case Management Process.*

## PROCEDURE

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1. Once a case has been identified for transfer, the referring Supervisor will email the receiving Supervisor to arrange a time to present the case. The referring Assigned Helper and the Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that all relevant documentation is complete, including case notes, the case activity, record checks, updated Eligibility Code, transfer recording (Comprehensive Assessment and Service Plan), and supervision note.
2. The Assigned Helper will complete a summary update of significant events for cases that are receiving ongoing services three (3) months or less unless the existing assessments are relevant.
3. The Assigned Helper will complete a full Case Review for cases being transferred that are more than three (3) months from the completion of the last full Case Review.
4. The receiving Supervisor will assign a Helper to the case. The receiving Assigned Helper and the Supervisor must read the file within three (3) business days. The newly Assigned Helper will contact the previous Helper directly if clarity is required regarding the content of the file.
5. The receiving Supervisor and the Assigned Helper will schedule the File Transfer Meeting with the previous Helper and Supervisor. The transfer of the file must be completed within 10 days.
6. The Assigned Helper will arrange the transfer of the case within seven (7) days at a Circle or a Family Case Conference with the family and the Assigned Helper. The first face-to-face transfer meeting with the family is when the primary case management responsibilities will be transferred.
7. The transferring Assigned Helper will assume responsibility for managing the Safety Plan and for addressing emergency family needs until the case is transferred.

8. The Assigned Helper will notify the First Nation Band Representative and the Service Providers in writing within seven (7) business days of assuming Care responsibility of the new Assigned Helper.
9. The Assigned Helper transferring the case must ensure that all court documentation for the next scheduled court appearance is completed or in draft form.
10. The receiving Supervisor will be responsible to transfer the file in the Mnaasged Information Management System to the receiving Assigned Helper who will commence service to the family.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Unannounced Home Visits	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## UNANNOUNCED HOME VISITS

### POLICY

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*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that Helpers will inform families at the initial Circle, Case Conference, or meeting about the possibility of the need from time to time for Assigned Helpers to attend at the home unannounced.*

### PROCEDURE

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1. The Assigned Helper will inform the family and the First Nation Band Representative that unannounced visits to the home may be required, depending on the reason for service and the case circumstances.
2. Upon first contact, the family involved with Mnaasged will be advised of their rights (need to clarify when and why Mnaasged will be coming to the home unannounced) and the Client's right to refuse unannounced home visits.
3. The Assigned Helper will inform the family that the purpose of unannounced home visits is not an attempt to obtain negative information about the family but to provide the Assigned Helper with the opportunity to observe the family and the home and to complete a concise and thorough assessment of the family. Unannounced home visits may also occur if the Helper has received concerning information affecting the family and the current Service Plan.
4. The Assigned Helper will ask the family how they feel about unannounced home visits and will make every attempt to respect the family's wishes.
5. The Assigned Helper will obtain a Supervisor's approval before coordinating and completing unannounced home visits.

6. Once it is decided to perform unannounced home visits, this service requirement will be included in the family's Service and Court Plans.
7. The Helper will inform the First Nation Band Representative, as per protocol, in advance before attending at a home unannounced, including the reason for the unannounced home visit.

#### POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Initial Assessment and Family Services	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Use of Customary Care	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## USE OF CUSTOMARY CARE

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services Mission and Mandate are to place Children/Youth with family and community first with a preference to utilize Customary Care above all other permanency options.*

*It is the desire of Mnaasged Child and Family Services that Customary Care Agreements be reached before any court applications are required.*

*Respecting each community's own values and beliefs and ways of doing things, Mnaasged Child and Family Services has developed a Protocol with each First Nation outlining the specific steps necessary when proceeding with a Customary Care Agreement.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper will discuss Customary Care options with the biological family and the First Nation Band Representative when a Child/Youth is deemed to need protection.
2. When possible, the Assigned Helper will discuss the options with the Supervisor of the Customary Care Families that have been identified.
3. The Assigned Helper may place the Child/Youth in the Home as a Place of Safety for up to 60 days if no immediate safety risks have been identified. During this time a Home Assessment must be started if the proposed Customary Care Provider Parent(s) or Guardian(s) and the First Nation Band Representative agree to a Customary Care Agreement (refer to Place of Safety Assessment Policy).
4. Prior to the end of the 60-day Place of Safety, the Assigned Helper must initiate the Home Assessment Process (refer to Alternative Care Policy and Home Assessment Process).

POLICY REFERENCE

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Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Use of Police	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## USE OF POLICE

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services will ensure that consultations are completed with the Police before attending any home or situation in which spousal violence, Child abuse, physical assault, or drug activity is alleged to have occurred or where the Helper's safety may be unknown or compromised.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The After Hours Kit contains the phone numbers of the Police units that service each jurisdiction and the respective First Nation communities. The Police should be called in any situation if the Helper is concerned about physical safety or does not feel comfortable proceeding unaccompanied on a call.
2. Assigned Helpers and After Hours Assigned Helpers will contact their immediate Supervisor and obtain approval before contacting the Police for assistance. The Assigned Helper has the right to ask for Police assistance in any situation if such assistance is considered necessary. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - a) Transporting a Child/Youth who is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs or other substances
  - b) Transporting a Child/Youth in Care who has committed an assault and requires placement in another facility
  - c) In any instance when a Child/Youth has threatened the Assigned Helper with physical harm
  - d) When anticipating removal of a Child/Youth from a Home in which spousal violence has occurred

- e) When anticipating removal of a Child/Youth from persons who are known to be or suspected of being intoxicated
- f) In any situation in which the Helper fears for personal safety

## POLICY REFERENCE

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After Hours Policy and Procedure Manual

Department: Child Protection	POLICY #:
Section: Generic Section	
Subject: Vulnerable Infants	
Date Approved:	Date Revised:
Board Resolution #:	
Source Reference:	

## VULNERABLE INFANTS

### POLICY

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services believes that every Child, in accordance with Traditional Indigenous Teachings, is a sacred gift from the Creator. As an Indigenous entity, Mnaasged Child and Family Services has a shared responsibility to ensure the safety, care, nurture, and development of every Child/Youth.*

*Infants are the most vulnerable of all our Children and deserve special consideration. Therefore, in addition to the compliance with Mnaasged Child and Family Services' Frequency of Home Visits Policy, Unannounced Home Visits Policy, and Ministry Standards, the Assigned Helpers will implement the following additional measures for all cases involving Vulnerable Infants.*

*Mnaasged Child and Family Services Helpers will ensure that Infants under the age of six (6) months will be seen weekly and that referrals for "well baby" visits are completed with local First Nation Nurses, Healthy Babies Healthy Children, Public Health Nurses, or Nurse Practitioners. The "well baby" visit may occur at the home or at the medical care facility of the family's choice. The purpose of the "well baby" visit is to ensure that the family has access to current and future resources for the Infant, to confirm and document the Infant's Wellness Plan, and to identify and reduce any barriers that may prevent the family from accessing routine medical care for the Infant.*

### PROCEDURE

1. The Assigned Helper, during Case Planning with the family and the First Nation, will review Mnaasged's policy on providing additional visits for Vulnerable Infants.
2. The Assigned Helper will inform the family and the First Nation Band Representative that the Helper will need to observe the Infant less than six (6) months of age a minimum of once every week.

3. The Assigned Helper will obtain a consent from the Parent(s) to complete a referral for all Newborn Infants as well as all Infants under six (6) months of age to be seen by a nurse or a nurse practitioner for a “well baby” visit within one (1) month of the Infant’s birth or one (1) month of the file opening. The Helpers will regularly observe the Infant awake and undressed, including the Infant’s diaper area, so that the Helper can accurately document if the Infant appears healthy and meeting developmental milestones. Observing the Infant will also allow the Helpers to assist the family in determining if any concerns have developed indicating the Infant would benefit from immediate medical care or further examination by a licensed medical professional. If it appears the Infant requires immediate medical care, the Helper will ensure that the family calls an ambulance or the Helper will offer to transport the family to the nearest medical facility, confirming the Infant has been assessed by a medical professional.
4. The Assigned Helper will review regularly with Parents, Guardians, And Caregivers safe sleeping for Infants that will include, but not be limited to, crib safety, playpens, bed sharing, infant carriers, car seats, and so on.
5. The Assigned Helper’s knowledge of Infant Safety information will be based on up-to-date information available from Health Canada as well from the family’s First Nation Health Services Providers.
6. All Infant Visits will be documented appropriately in case notes with details, including the Infant’s birth weight, discharge weight, and weekly weight up to six (6) months of age; description of the Infant’s complexion, including skin colouring, rashes, or other conditions; and the Infant’s breathing pattern, eye contact, and so on.

## POLICY REFERENCE

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