

CIRCULAR

Date: November 1, 2021

CIRCULAR NUMBER: CFS: 2021-11

To: Authorities, CFS agencies and CCPs

Subject: **Missing Child in Care Response Plan Procedure**

Program(s): DIAs, ongoing service and abuse investigations.

Type: Policy Standards Amendment For Internal Use Only
 Procedure Regulatory Amendment For Information

Effective Date: November 30, 2021

The Child and Family Services (CFS) Branch, in partnership with representatives from the four CFS Authorities, is implementing a provincial wide procedure that responds to missing children in care. This protocol has been done in response to best practice and a Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth recommendation from the Tina Fontaine report. The Missing Children in Care Procedure is a joint response plan to be implemented consistently across the province of Manitoba to increase the safety of children in care in both rural and urban settings. An individualized response plan is to be created for all youth in care aged 12 years and older for the purpose of communication between agencies, caregivers, law enforcement and other supports.

The procedure and use of the response plan form allows for a joint response to missing youth. The response plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of all parties and can be shared between CFS, placement and law enforcement.

All CFS agencies are to begin implementation of the procedure beginning November 30, 2021.

Documents Attached

The following documents are attached to the circular for reference:

1. Missing Children in Care Procedure

2. Missing Child in Care Response Plan Form
3. FAQ – Missing Children in Care Response Plan and Procedure

Requirements

The first time the form should be filled out is within 30 days of the youth first entering agency care and/or once a child in care reaches the age of 12.

The form should be completed for any current child over the age of 12 whom is in care of CFS regardless of their legal status.

The form is required to be reviewed every 90 days during the CIC 90 day review (may be known as Quarterly Review in-group care settings); and updated when applicable.

A gradual roll out of the requirements is occurring to ensure all youth in care have an attached response plan. The roll is occurring in three phases:

Phase 1: Completion of response plan for any high risk youth that are frequently reported as missing.

Phase 2: Completion of response plan for any youth placed in a group care facility.

Phase 3: Completion of all remaining response plans for youth in care.

It is expected that within 3 months (by February 28, 2022) the requirement will be met for every child in care over age 12.

Changes to Standards

Revisions to the CFS standards and Child Care Facility Standards are underway to reflect the requirement of including a response plan for every child in care over age 12.

CFS Standards

1.1.3 - Child in Care Plan

Proposed standard: *All children in care over the age of 12 are required to have a Missing Child In Care Response Plan completed within 30 days of entering care.*

Child Care Facility Standards

2.4.3 – Absences

Proposed change to the standard: *As per CFS standard 1.1.3 every child in care over the age of 12 is required to have a Missing CIC Response Plan completed by the*

agency; Group care facilities are responsible for having a copy of the plan available on site and readily accessible.

CFSIS

Modifications to the CFSA have been completed to allow for easy storage and location of the response plan. Within the CIC file on CFSIS, the Service Planning Window now allows for the selection for Assessment Type: Missing CIC Response Plan. Completed plans are to be posted in this location. This allows the assigned agency and/or DIA to have easy access to the plan after hours if required.

Additional Information

To assist CFS agencies, group care facilities, caregivers, law enforcement and other supportive organization, an information webinar will be held on November 26, 2021. A virtual invite will be sent out to the CFS Authorities.

For further information on the webinar, please contact Strategic Operations Specialist Laura Friesen at Laura.Friesen@gov.mb.ca.

Thank you,



Lorna Hanson | Deputy Director
Child Protection Branch
Child and Youth Services Division