

**RESOLUTION 2025 – 361**

**RESOLUTION ---- APPROVING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE SANDUSKY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES (SCDJFS), PUBLIC CHILDREN SERVICES AGENCY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO ADDRESS CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PROCEDURES**

The Board of County Commissioners, Sandusky County, Ohio, met in regular session on the 16th day of December, 2025 at the offices of the Board with the following members present:

Scott Miller

Charles Schwoichow

Russ Zimmerman

Commissioner Zimmerman moved the adoption of the following resolution:

**Whereas**, the Board has been presented with the Memorandum of Understanding between the SCDJFS, PCSA and Local Community Partners to address Child Abuse and Neglect procedures and,

**Whereas**, the Memorandum of Understanding has been reviewed and approved by Prosecuting Attorney, Beth Tischler,

**THEREFORE; Be it Resolved,**

Section 1. The Board of Commissioners approved the Memorandum of Understanding between the SCDJFS, PCSA and Local Community Partners for Child Abuse and Neglect procedures.

Section 2. A copy of this Operational Agreement is on file at the office of the SCDJFS.

Section 3. A final copy of the state approved MOU will be maintained on the Sandusky County, Ohio website.

Section 4. This resolution shall be copied to Bob Anderson, Fiscal Supervisor 2 for the SCDJFS.

Section 5. It is found and determined that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were so adopted in an open meeting of this Board, and that all formal actions, were in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements.

Commissioner Schwoichow offered a second to the motion for the above resolution and the vote upon its adoption resulted as follows:



~~Scott J. Hoff yes~~

Charles Schwochow, yes.

R. Lummus, yes.

Considered and adopted by unanimous vote.

Attest: Theresa Garey

Clerk to the Board

Date: 12/16/2025

File: djfs

copies:

I, the undersigned, Clerk of the Board of Commissioners,  
Sandusky County, Ohio, do hereby certify that the foregoing  
is a true and correct copy from the official record of said  
Board of County Commissioners as recorded in said Journal.

Clerk, Board of County Commissioners



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# **Sandusky County**

**Department of Job and Family Services**

**Public Children Services Agency**

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## **2025 Child Abuse and Neglect Memorandum of Understanding**

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# **Table of Contents**

<b>Chapter 1: Statement of Purpose.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Roles and Responsibilities .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Making a Report and Mandated Reporters.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Case Referrals, Response, Procedures.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Chapter 5: Disaster Preparedness Plan.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Chapter 6: Training, Confidentiality, Terms.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Chapter 7: Signatures, Approval.....</b>	<b>29</b>

## **Statement of Purpose**

This memorandum of understanding (hereinafter MOU) to address child abuse and neglect is required by sections 2151.4220, 2151.4221, 2151.4222, 2151.4223, 2151.4225, 2151.4226, 2151.4228, 2151.4229, 2151.4230, 2151.4231, 2151.4232, 2151.4233 and 2151.4234 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and section 5180:3-1-26 of the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC). It is an agreement among Sandusky County Department of Job and Family Services (SCDJFS)/ Public Children Services Agency (PCSA) and community partners that delineates roles and responsibilities for referring, reporting, investigating, and prosecuting child abuse and neglect cases within Sandusky County.

This MOU sets forth the normal operation procedures to be employed by all concerned officials in the execution of their respective responsibilities pursuant to ORC 5151.421(J)(2).

The MOU also identifies procedures for collaborative service provisions needed to ensure child safety, permanence, and well-being, and the minimum requirements of screening, assessment/investigation, and service planning, to meet mandates included in children services legislation passed by the 134th Ohio General Assembly.

The primary goals of this MOU are:

- Ensure the prompt reporting of incidents of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect;
- Provide protection and aid to victims and their families;
- Bring about prosecution and/or treatment of the perpetrators of child abuse and neglect;
- Educate those persons mandated to report child abuse and neglect, as well as the general public in such a manner as to reduce this problem by early detection and other preventive methods;
- Define roles and responsibilities of each of the mandated participants of the Memorandum;
- Ensure collaboration between the agencies mandated to participate in the Memorandum with regard to the processing of child abuse and neglect incidents;
- Eliminate all unnecessary interviews of children who are the subject of reports of child abuse or neglect; and

- When feasible, conducting only one interview of a child who is the subject of a report of child abuse or neglect.

**Throughout the state each PCSA provides the following services to their communities:**

**Screening:** The capacity to accept and screen referrals of suspected child abuse, neglect, and/or dependency includes but is not limited to the following: Receiving referrals 24 hours/day, 7 days/week; Recording and retaining referral information; Following Ohio's screening guidelines based on Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) and Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and categorizing the child maltreatment type; Adherence to a protocol for making screening and differential response pathway decisions regarding referrals of suspected child abuse, neglect, and/or dependency within 24 hours from the time of the referral; Documenting case decisions; And assigning a response priority of emergency or non-emergency to any screened in report.

**Assessment and Investigation:** The capacity to investigate and assess accepted reports of suspected child abuse, neglect, and/or dependency, includes responding to emergency reports within one (1) hour and non-emergency reports within twenty-four (24) hours; Conducting an initial Safety Assessment using a standardized CAPM (Comprehensive Assessment Planning Model) tool within the timeline prescribed in the Ohio Administrative Code; Completing a more in-depth CAPM Family Assessment including a clinical and actuarial risk assessment within sixty (60) days; Working collaboratively with other investigative agencies when appropriate; Making traditional response case dispositions within required timeframes; Evaluating the need for protective, prevention, or supportive services and/or court involvement; and documenting all activities and case determinations.

**Service Provision:** The capacity to assess and refer for services that ameliorate, eliminate, or reduce future child maltreatment and the conditions which led to abuse, neglect, or dependency includes providing service planning and case management coordination; Identifying and stating the concern and behavior change(s) needed for reunification to occur through the use of the CAPM Family Case Plan; Monitoring the family's case progress, measuring service outcomes, re-assessing safety and risk, and evaluating permanency options by using the CAPM Case Review and Semi-Annual Review tools; And adhering to existing visitation, documentation, and case closure protocols. Case Management Services may be offered on a Voluntary or Court-Ordered basis depending on cooperation of the family and severity of the case.

\*Sandusky County is not served by a children's advocacy center.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **A. SCDJFS/PCSA**

The SCDJFS / PCSA is the lead agency for the investigation of child abuse, neglect, or dependency in Sandusky County. The SCDJFS / PCSA will coordinate and facilitate meetings, establish standards and protocol for joint assessment / investigation with law enforcement, cross-referrals, collection of forensic evidence, confidentiality, and training of signatories as required by statute. Children Services staff and management will also participate in meetings and trainings as deemed appropriate at the discretion of the Director.

### **B. LAW ENFORCEMENT**

The County Sheriff and each Chief of the local political subdivisions, and any other law enforcement officer handling child abuse and neglect cases in the county will have responsibility for: Taking referrals/reports alleging child abuse and neglect from any source within their respective jurisdiction; Referring reports to SCDJFS / PCSA as soon as possible or within 24 hours for investigation of the circumstances; Determining whether allegations of abuse or neglect rise to the level of criminal conduct; Cooperating with SCDJFS / PCSA in a joint and thorough investigation when the information contained in the report lends itself to allege a present danger; Assisting SCDJFS / PCSA in hazardous situations where the provision of protective services or the investigation of child abuse or neglect is impeded; Coordinating with SCDJFS / PCSA on interviews with principals of the case when there are serious criminal implications; Notifying SCDJFS / PCSA of any legal action involving an alleged perpetrator of child abuse or neglect; Responding to SCDJFS / PCSA's requests for information regarding the status of the legal action; Providing police record checks for SCDJFS / PCSA as necessary or requested as permitted by law; Providing written copies of their investigation once all activities are completed to the SCDJFS / PCSA and/or the Sandusky County Prosecuting Attorney if requested; Consulting with SCDJFS / PCSA prior to removal of a child from their home when possible; Handling and coordinating investigations involving a child fatality or near fatality which may have resulted from abuse or neglect.

### **C. JUVENILE COURT**

The Sandusky County Juvenile Court Judge will be responsible for attending meetings concerning the MOU, entering into agreements with the other signatories of the MOU regarding the court's responsibility to timely hear and resolve child abuse, neglect, and dependency matters, signing the MOU, and

updating the MOU or approving any amendment. The PCSA upon consultation with our own in-house attorney will determine which cases to bring before the court for any cases which may require intervention or assistance from the court.

The juvenile court has a duty to exercise jurisdiction over adults and children to hear and decide matters as permitted by the Ohio Revised Code Chapters 2151 and 2152. The court is responsible for issuing orders regarding the care, protection, health, safety, mental and physical best interest of children. The Juvenile Judge shall ensure that due process of law is achieved; Hear evidence and issue findings of fact and conclusions of law as to any abused, neglected, or dependent child; Order timely and safe permanency dispositions for children; Preserve the family environment whenever possible while keeping the child(ren)'s health and safety paramount.

#### **D. COUNTY PROSECUTOR**

The Sandusky County Prosecutor shall report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to SCDJFS / PCSA or appropriate law enforcement agency. The Sandusky County Prosecutor has granted consent for the appointment of In-house PCSA Attorney (s) pursuant to Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Chapters 309 and 305 to represent SCDJFS / PCSA in legal actions to protect a child from further harm resulting from child abuse or neglect.

The prosecuting attorney may inquire into the commission of crimes within the county. The prosecuting attorney shall prosecute, on behalf of the state, all complaints, suits, and controversies in which the state is a party, except for those required to be prosecuted by a special prosecutor or by the attorney general. The Sandusky County Prosecutor is to determine, based upon the facts, whether criminal culpability exists and if enough evidence exists for a matter to be prosecuted. The prosecutor will be available to law enforcement and SCDJFS / PCSA staff for questions or assistance in the investigation of child abuse and neglect cases and eliminate the need for testimony at the municipal court level by allowing for direct presentation to the Grand Jury, when feasible, to minimize trauma to child victims. The prosecuting attorney agrees to aid SCDJFS / PCSA in protecting the confidential nature of children services records and investigations; as well as the special protection afforded to the identity of the reporting source.

#### **E. LOCAL ANIMAL CRUELTY REPORTING AGENCY**

The local animal cruelty reporting agencies are to investigate reports of animal abuse and neglect within the county and, pursuant to ORC 2151.421, report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect that may be observed during the commission of their duties to SCDJFS / PCSA or local law enforcement. The Sandusky County Humane agents are to coordinate efforts with SCDJFS / PCSA and local law enforcement as soon as possible or within 24 hours.

## Making a Report

### Who May Report?

Per ORC 2151.421(B) anyone who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect based on facts that would cause a reasonable person in similar circumstances to suspect that a child less than eighteen (18) years of age or any person under twenty-one (21) years of age with a developmental disability or physical impairment, has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability, or other condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the child may report or cause reports to be made of that knowledge to the Sandusky County DJFS/ Children Services Division or to a peace officer.

#### A. Reporting Abuse and Neglect

Any person wishing to make a report of alleged child abuse or neglect may do so Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. by phone, in writing or visiting the SCDJFS / PCSA at 2511 Countryside Drive, Suite A, Fremont, OH 43420 (419) 334-8708. This number is made available to the public by various methods in writing, social media, and agency website. Reports can also be made to any law enforcement officer with jurisdiction in Sandusky County. After-hours calls will be made to the same number which are answered by the Sandusky County Sheriff's Department dispatch. The scheduled on-call Caseworker will be contacted by the Sheriff's Department to relay after-hour call information and the caseworker will respond as necessary with consultation from the scheduled on-call Supervisor. This agreement is an in-kind partnership with our Sheriff's Department.

When a law enforcement officer receives a report of possible abuse or neglect of a child or the possible threat of abuse or neglect of a child, the law enforcement officer shall refer the report to the appropriate PCSA unless an arrest is made at the time of the report that results in the appropriate PCSA being contacted concerning the alleged incident involving the child.

#### B. Notifying Law Enforcement

When SCDJFS / PCSA **screens in** a report of child **abuse**, SCDJFS / PCSA shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency of the report, unless law enforcement is present, and an arrest is made at the time of the report that results in the appropriate law enforcement agency being notified of the child abuse.

When SCDJFS/ PCSA screens in a report of child neglect, and the PCSA implements a legally authorized out-of-home placement, due to neglect within the first seven days of the assessment/investigation, the PCSA will notify the appropriate law enforcement agency within the first seven days of the assessment/investigation unless an arrest is made at the time of the report that results in the appropriate law enforcement agency being notified of the child neglect.

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## **Mandated Reporters**

The following is a current (subject to change) listing of positions in ORC 2151.421 who may be acting in an official or professional capacity as a mandated reporter: attorney; health care professional; practitioner of a limited branch of medicine; licensed school psychologist; independent marriage and family therapist or marriage and family therapist; coroner; administrator or employee of a child day-care center; administrator or employee of a residential camp, child day camp, or private, nonprofit therapeutic wilderness camp; administrator or employee of a certified child care agency or other public or private children services agency; school teacher; school employee; school authority; peace officer; humane society agent; dog warden, deputy dog warden, or other person appointed to act as an animal control officer; person, other than a cleric, rendering spiritual treatment through prayer in accordance with the tenets of a well-recognized religion; employee of a county department of job and family services; superintendent or regional administrator employed by the department of youth services; superintendent, board member, or employee of a county board of developmental disabilities; investigative agent contracted with by a county board of developmental disabilities; employee of the department of developmental disabilities; employee of a facility or home that provides respite care in accordance with section 5123.171 of the Revised Code; employee of an entity that provides homemaker services; employee of a qualified organization as defined in section 2151.90 of the Revised Code; a host family as defined in section 2151.90 of the Revised Code; foster caregiver; a person performing the duties of an assessor pursuant to Chapter 3107. or 5103. of the Revised Code; third party employed by a public children services agency to assist in providing child or family related services; court appointed special advocate; or guardian ad litem.

### **A. Responding to mandated reporters**

When SCDJFS / PCSA receives a referral from a mandated reporter who provides their name and contact information, SCDJFS / PCSA shall forward an initial mandated reporter notification to the reporter within seven days, in accordance with the mandated reporter's preference. Information shared with the mandated reporter shall include the information permitted by ORC 2151.421(K):

- Whether the agency has initiated an investigation of the report;
- Whether the agency is continuing to investigate the report;

- Whether the agency is otherwise involved with the child who is the subject of the report;
- The general status of the health and safety of the child who is the subject of the report;
- Whether the report has resulted in the filing of a complaint in juvenile court or of criminal charges in another court.

When SCDJFS / PCSA closes an investigation/assessment reported by a mandated reporter, SCDJFS / PCSA shall forward an outcome mandated reporter notification to the reporter. The notification will be provided in accordance with the mandated reporter's preference. Information shared with the mandated reporter shall be that permitted by ORC 2151.421 to include a notification that the agency has closed the investigation along with a point of contact.

A copy of requests for information and any response will be maintained in the case record.

#### **B. Penalty for failure to report**

Persons identified as mandated reporters per ORC 2151.421, while acting in official or professional capacity, shall immediately report knowledge or reasonable cause to suspect the abuse or neglect of a child in accordance with that section.

The failure of a person required to report any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect pursuant to ORC 2151.421 is a misdemeanor of the fourth degree, unless such failure meets the conditions set forth in ORC 2151.421(A)(4) in which case it is a misdemeanor of first degree. Failure to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect may also result in civil liability in the form of compensatory or exemplary damages.

If any PCSA employee has reason to believe a mandated reporter of child abuse and neglect fails to report suspected or known child abuse and neglect, the employee shall notify the Director as soon as possible. The Director of SCDJFS shall refer this information to the County Prosecuting Attorney for consideration of charges. If necessary, the County Prosecuting Attorney will determine if the information must be referred to any other appropriate jurisdiction (i.e. city law director). Documentation shall be maintained in the case record.

#### **C. Immunity**

Any person, health care professional, hospital, institution, school, health department, or agency SHALL BE IMMUNE from any civil or criminal liability for injury, death, or loss to person or property that might be incurred or imposed as a result of participating in good faith in the making of the reports; participating in medical examinations, procedures, tests or photo documentation or injuries; providing

information used in a report; or participating in a judicial proceeding resulting from a report pursuant to ORC 2151.421(H)(1)(a).

## **Case Referrals, Response, Procedures**

### **Referrals to Law Enforcement**

In order to obtain timely assistance in cases where child abuse or neglect is alleged and therefore, help ensure child safety and the completion of investigative activities within the required 60 days, an oral referral to law enforcement shall occur immediately if they involve imminent safety issues for a family, children or PCSA staff. Otherwise, oral or written referrals shall be made within twenty-four (24) hours. The type of assistance shall be decided jointly between the PCSA and law enforcement based on the particulars of that situation and documented appropriately within the case record.

### **Referrals to County Prosecutor/Law Director**

The Sandusky County Department of Job and Family Services shall make all necessary referrals to the Sandusky County Prosecutor's Office or the appropriate Law Director for possible prosecution of cases of child abuse and/ or neglect as determined by case review of the PCSA management team (Supervisor, Administrator, In-House Counsel). These referrals may be made by phone, in writing, or during case consultation meetings held with the prosecutor's Office (Prosecutor's Staffings) to discuss potential pending cases. The Prosecutor's Office or the PCSA management team may coordinate and schedule meetings, as needed. The Sandusky County Department of Job and Family Services shall consult and cooperate with the County Prosecutor to assist in said prosecution. All department records shall be released as required by the ORC and OAC and documented appropriately within the case record.

### **Response Procedure: Law Enforcement Referrals by PCSA**

The following types of circumstances will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency immediately if they involve imminent safety issues for families, children or PCSA staff-

- Investigating the death of a child due to abuse or neglect;
- Completing independent third-party investigations (See Response Procedure: Specialized Assessments);
- Investigating reports on cases involving individuals who aid, abet, induce, cause, encourage or contribute to a child or a ward of the Juvenile Court in becoming an abused, dependent, neglected, unruly or delinquent child or to leaving the custody of any person, department or public or private institution

without the legal consent of that person, department or institution (said cases should also be referred to the SCDJFS / PCSA);

- When requested by the county prosecutor, conducting an independent investigation in cases that involve alleged withholding of appropriate nutrition, hydration, medication or medically indicated treatment from a disabled infant with life-threatening conditions;
- Investigating any in or out-of-home care setting when there is a possibility of criminal charges being filed;
- Investigating reports concerning missing children per ORC 2901.30;

Upon request, law enforcement shall provide a written copy of their investigation once all activities are completed (within 45 to 60 days) to the SCDJFS / PCSA and/or the Sandusky County Prosecuting Attorney as requested by the PCSA or Prosecuting Attorney for cases involving the death of a child or third-party investigation (See Response Procedure: Specialized Assessments).

SCDJFS / PCSA shall orally refer a case to the appropriate law enforcement agency to request the assistance of law enforcement during an assessment/investigation if one or more of the following situations exist-

- An exigent circumstance.
- SCDJFS / PCSA has reason to believe that the child is in immediate danger of serious harm.
- SCDJFS / PCSA has reason to believe that the worker is, or will be, in danger of harm.
- SCDJFS / PCSA has reason to believe that a crime is being committed, or has been committed, against a child.
- SCDJFS / PCSA worker must conduct a home visit after regular SCDJFS / PCSA business hours and a law enforcement escort is requested as a standard operating procedure.
- SCDJFS / PCSA is removing a child from his or her family via an order of the court and the assistance of law enforcement is needed as SCDJFS / PCSA has reason to believe the family will challenge the removal.
- SCDJFS / PCSA is working with a client who has a propensity toward violence and the assistance of law enforcement is needed to ensure the safety of all involved.
- SCDJFS / PCSA is working with a family that has historically threatened to do harm to PCSA staff.

### **Case Procedure: Child Abuse, Neglect, Dependency Emergency**

SCDJFS / PCSA determines that a report is an Emergency, SCDJFS / PCSA shall attempt a face-to-face contact with the child subject/ alleged child victim within one (1) hour of the receipt of the report.

If SCDJFS / PCSA identifies an active safety threat at any point during the assessment/investigation, the caseworker or supervisor shall implement a safety response.

The emergency removal and placement of a child may be necessary when the following conditions exist:

- The caretaker is unavailable, unable or unwilling to provide protection or to care for the alleged child victim(s);
- Supportive services (including friend/relative placements) are not available or are refused by the caretaker or cannot provide adequate protection to the child if they remain in their own home;
- The child is in a life-threatening situation requiring immediate intervention.

In situations where emergency temporary custody must be requested, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall:

- Immediately contact the Juvenile Judge or Magistrate to request the granting of Emergency Temporary Custody (law enforcement may grant Emergency Temporary Custody if court personnel are unavailable);
- Notify the parent, guardian, or custodian of the reasons for the removal; if known, the court date and time; the name and phone number of the court employee whom they can contact to be assigned an attorney, if indigent; the SCDJFS / PCSA phone number, address and name of the caseworker to be contacted regarding the case;
- In situations where the parents are not present at the removal, the same information will be provided within twenty-four (24) hours, if located. If the parents cannot be located, all efforts to do so shall be documented in the case file;
- Whenever possible, the child shall be placed with a relative if custody is granted;
- Petition the court for an order authorizing the continued placement of the child within twenty-four (24) hours or by the next working day.

If a report of child abuse/neglect is received by the SCDJFS / PCSA and warrants an immediate response by law enforcement, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall contact the appropriate law enforcement agency upon learning of the situation. The SCDJFS / PCSA will make available to the law enforcement agency all the information that is available and necessary for them to proceed. If immediate child safety issues exist, SCDJFS / PCSA upon the request of law enforcement, will respond to the scene with them.

## **Case Procedure: Withholding Medically Indicated Treatment**

Withholding of medically indicated treatment means: the failure to respond to the infant's life-threatening conditions by providing treatment (including appropriate nutrition, hydration, and medication) which, in the treating physician's or physician's reasonable medical judgment, will be most likely to be effective in ameliorating or correcting all such conditions. Withholding treatment does *not* include the failure to provide treatment (other than appropriate nutrition, hydration, or medication) to an infant when, in the treating physician's or physician's reasonable medical judgment:

- The infant is chronically and irreversibly comatose,
- The provision of the treatment is futile and would prolong dying,
- The provision of the treatment would not be effective in ameliorating or correcting all the disabled infant's life-threatening conditions,
- The provision of such treatment to the disabled infant is inhumane.

If the SCDJFS / PCSA screens in a report involving alleged withholding of medically indicated treatment, the Department shall engage in the following activities to initiate the report:

- Contact the appropriate health care facility's administrator or designee within one (1) hour of screening in the report, and;
- Obtain information from the health care facility's administrator, or designee, regarding the current condition of the disabled infant as required.

The SCDJFS / PCSA shall involve a qualified medical consultant within twenty-four (24) hours of screening in the report to assist in the evaluation of the disabled infant's medical information, including medical records, obtained during the preliminary assessment.

When the SCDJFS / PCSA screens in a report involving alleged withholding of medically indicated treatment, the Department shall attempt face-to-face contact with the parent, guardian, or custodian within twenty-four (24) hours of screening in the report as detailed in the OAC.

The SCDJFS / PCSA shall interview the alleged perpetrator unless otherwise requested by law enforcement or the prosecutor's office as they may have already conducted the interview.

The SCDJFS / PCSA shall also, in cooperation with the medical consultant, conduct and document interviews with the attending physician and health care facility staff to obtain the information required by the OAC.

The SCDJFS / PCSA shall pursue any legal remedies necessary to prevent the withholding of medically indicated treatment from the disabled infant with life-threatening conditions.

If access is denied to any needed medical records, assistance shall be sought from the county prosecutor or city law director to obtain a court order for the release of said records.

The SCDJFS / PCSA shall notify law enforcement if it is determined that the attending physician failed to provide medically indicated treatment or failed to inform the alleged child victim's parent, guardian, or custodian of the available treatment options. No later than fifteen (15) calendar days from the completion date of the report disposition and case decision, the SCDJFS shall notify the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services that a neglect report involving a disabled infant was assessed/investigated.

Upon completion of the investigation, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall, if requested, submit a copy of their written report to the appropriate law enforcement agency and the county prosecutor or city law director.

When a determination has been made that the child and/or the family is in need of ongoing services, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall, at a minimum, provide support in the following manner:

- Monitoring the case, through regular contact with the health care facility designee, to determine if appropriate medically indicated treatment is being provided. The prosecuting attorney or city law director shall immediately be notified when there is failure to provide treatment to the disabled infant; and
- Assisting the parents, guardian or custodian in contacting agencies that provide services for infants with disabilities and their families. This shall include agencies that provide financial support or reimbursement of costs for medical or rehabilitative services.

All investigative and service provision activities performed shall be documented in the PCSA's case record.

The SCDJFS / PCSA shall be responsible for maintaining the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the health care facilities located in Sandusky County. Furthermore, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall also maintain the name, title and telephone number of each facility's contact person and chairperson of their review committee, if one exists, regarding allegations involving alleged withholding of medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions. This information will be provided upon request.

## **Response Procedure: Coordinating Child Abuse / Neglect Interviews and Activities**

Methods to be used in interviewing the child who is the subject of the report and who allegedly was abused and/or neglected, alleged perpetrators, and other family members and witnesses/collaterals will be discussed and agreed upon in

advance by the SCDJFS / PCSA and the corresponding law enforcement agency.

Coordinated interviews outlined below will be utilized for the following types of cases:

- Allegations of child abuse and/or neglect constituting a crime against a child, including human trafficking, and require a joint assessment/investigation with law enforcement
- Reports of cases involving individuals who aid, abet, induce, cause, encourage, or contribute to a child or a ward of the juvenile court becoming dependent, neglected, unruly, and delinquent child
- Reports involving individuals who aid, abet, induce, cause, encourage, or contribute to a child or a ward of the juvenile court by leaving the custody of any person, department, or public or private institution without the legal consent of that person, department, or institution

When possible and to reduce trauma, signatories of this MOU agree:

- To cooperatively plan investigative interviews by SCDJFS / PCSA and the appropriate law enforcement agency of alleged child victims of reports of abuse and/or neglect where criminal activity is suspected, including reports of human trafficking;
- To prevent or reduce duplicate interviews of victims or witnesses; and
- To conduct only one interview of a child who is the subject of a report of child abuse or neglect.

SCDJFS / PCSA will be the lead agency in scheduling the time, place, and location of joint interviews, as well as notifying all participants when agreed upon.

Before starting the interview, the participants will determine who is to be present in the room, who will be asking the questions, what areas are to be covered, and who will be the scribe for the interview. Audio and video recordings may be used when necessary.

When law enforcement or the prosecutor's office interviews a participant in a criminal investigation and a representative of SCDJFS / PCSA is not present, the interviews conducted by law enforcement or the prosecutor's office may be used by SCDJFS / PCSA to meet the agency investigative requirements set forth in OAC. Law enforcement or the prosecutor's office will forward a written summary of the interview to SCDJFS / PCSA upon request.

The SCDJFS / PCSA agrees not to proceed without the advice and consent of the prosecutor's office when a criminal investigation is being conducted concurrently. SCDJFS / PCSA will not jeopardize a criminal investigation but will work with law enforcement to protect the safety of the child victim or witnesses. Law enforcement will be the lead agency in the collection of forensic evidence

and will coordinate with the necessary facilities to obtain and store such evidence properly.

SCDJFS / PCSA shall follow up with law enforcement to ensure timely assistance and to complete mandated assessment/investigation activities within the time-frame specified by OAC (60 days). SCDJFS / PCSA must make a disposition within the sixty (60) day timeframe.

Those who may conduct interviews of children who are the subjects of reports of alleged abuse, neglect, and/or dependency are limited to the following:

- Casework and supervisory staff of SCDJFS / PCSA
- Law enforcement personnel
- County or city prosecuting attorneys, assistant prosecuting attorneys, In-House JFS legal counsel if applicable, and their investigative staff

## **Response Procedure: Specialized Assessments**

### Out-of-Home Care Investigations

Out-of-Home Care Investigations shall be completed pursuant to the requirements outlined in the ORC. SCDJFS / PCSA conducts an out-of-home care investigation in response to a child abuse or neglect report that includes an alleged perpetrator who meets one or more of the following criteria:

- a. Is a person responsible for the alleged child victim's care in an out-of-home care setting as defined in rule 5101:2-1-01 of the Administrative Code.
- b. Is a person responsible for the alleged child victim's care in out-of-home care as defined in section 2151.011 of the Revised Code.
- c. Has access to the alleged child victim by virtue of his/her employment by or affiliation to an organization as defined in section 2151.011 of the Revised Code.
- d. Has access to the alleged child victim through placement in an out-of-home care setting. SCDJFS / PCSA follows the procedures for conducting out-of-home care investigations as described in section 5180:2-36-04 of the OAC.

The SCDJFS / PCSA shall immediately contact the out-of-home care setting administrator or designee (or the board of directors, county commissioners, or law enforcement if the administrator is the alleged perpetrator) in order to:

- Share information regarding the allegations;
- Determine responsibility for informing the parents, guardian, or custodian of the alleged child victim(s);
- Discuss what actions have been taken to protect the alleged child victim(s); and
- Share the investigative activities that will follow.

The SCDJFS / PCSA shall also contact the required licensing and supervising authorities and share information in accordance with the ORC.

If another agency is required to conduct their own investigation, the SCDJFS / PCSA will attempt to coordinate the interview of the alleged child victim as to decrease the number of times the child is questioned.

Once the investigation is completed, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall contact the administrator of the out-of-home care setting and the appropriate licensing authorities to share information pursuant to the ORC.

### Third-Party Investigations

SCDJFS / PCSA shall request a third-party investigation be conducted in accordance with OAC 5180:2-36-08 by a local law enforcement agency or a PCSA in a contiguous county when there is potential for a conflict of interest because one of the following parties is a principal of the report:

1. Any employee of an organization or facility that is licensed or certified by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY) or another state agency and supervised by the PCSA.
2. A foster caregiver, pre-finalized adoptive parent, adoptive parent, relative, or kinship caregiver who is recommended, approved, or supervised by the PCSA.
3. A type B family childcare home or type A family childcare home licensed by DCY when the CDJFS has assumed the powers and duties of the county children services function per Chapter 5153 of the ORC
4. Any employee, or agent of DCY or the PCSA per Chapter 5153 of the ORC.
5. Any authorized person representing DCY or the PCSA who provides services for payment or as a volunteer.
6. A foster caregiver or an employee of an organization or facility licensed or certified by DCY and the alleged child victim is in the custody of, or receiving services from, the PCSA that accepted the report.
7. Any time a PCSA determines that a conflict of interest exists. The PCSA shall document in the case record if a conflict of interest is identified.

SCDJFS / PCSA shall request that law enforcement serve as the third party when a report alleges a criminal offense. SCDJFS / PCSA must request the assistance of a third party within 24 hours of identifying that a conflict of interest exists.

When completing a third-party investigation, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall orally contact the appropriate law enforcement agency within twenty-four (24) hours of the receipt

of the report to share information in accordance with the ORC and to request their involvement. This oral notice shall be followed up in writing within three (3) days of the receipt of the report.

If at any time the law enforcement agency must decline assisting the SCDJFS / PCSA, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall still be responsible for conducting the investigation. The SCDJFS / PCSA shall address the conflict of interest in these situations by requesting the assistance of another law enforcement agency or another public children services agency as appropriate.

Whenever possible, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall attempt to coordinate the interview of the alleged child victim with law enforcement as to decrease the number of times the child is questioned.

Upon completion of the investigation, both the SCDJFS / PCSA and law enforcement shall share any necessary information with each other. The type of initial contact and type of third party shall be entered into the State computer system within seventy-two (72) hours of determining the case disposition by the SCDJFS / PCSA. A copy of all investigative records shall be maintained in the PCSA case file.

#### Child Fatality / Near Fatality - Suspected cause is abuse or neglect

SCDJFS / PCSA is governed by ORC 307.622 and work cooperatively with and are an active part of the Sandusky County Child Fatality Review Board.

A near fatality includes allegations of known or suspected child abuse or neglect certified by a physician to place a child in serious or critical condition in accordance with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Reauthorization Act of 2010.

When the SCDJFS / PCSA receives a report concerning the death or a near fatality of a child due to alleged abuse or neglect, the following activities shall be attempted within one (1) hour of the receipt of the report:

1. Orally notify the appropriate law enforcement agency (unless they are the referral source). This oral report shall be followed up with written notice within three (3) working days.
2. Determine if there is current or former involvement with the deceased/ injured child, the caretaker, the alleged perpetrator or any siblings of the deceased/ injured child;
3. Determine if any other children currently reside in the same home or out-of-home care setting as the deceased/ injured child; and
4. Determine if other children are receiving care from or are accessible to the alleged perpetrator.
5. Complete the child fatality/ near fatality record in SACWIS within 5 (five) days which will also prompt notification to DCY.

All efforts to obtain the above information shall be documented in the SCDJFS / PCSA case file.

Within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt of the report, or by the next working day, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall contact the Prosecutor's Office to review the information obtained concerning the child's death or near fatality.

The SCDJFS / PCSA shall cease activities when all of the following conditions are present:

- The SCDJFS / PCSA has no current, or has had no former involvement, within the last year, with the deceased child and his caretaker;
- No other children reside in the same home or out-of-home care setting as the deceased child;
- No other children are receiving care from or are within access of the alleged perpetrator; and
- It has been determined that neither abuse nor neglect resulted in the child's death.

When the report is taken as an investigation, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall complete the intake and investigation procedures as set forth in the ORC.

Supportive services shall be made available by the SCDJFS / PCSA for the caretaker of the deceased/ injured child if services are requested and/or deemed necessary or appropriate by the SCDJFS / PCSA.

The SCDJFS / PCSA shall also conduct an internal review when a child's death or near fatality is believed to be the result of alleged child abuse or neglect. This review shall consist of the following:

- A review of all information in the case record;
- Interviews with caseworkers and supervisory staff involved with the child, his caretakers or the alleged perpetrator;
- A review of all information from physicians, hospitals and other medical personnel regarding the child's death;
- A review of all information from the coroner;
- A review of all information resulting from a law enforcement investigation concerning the child's death;
- A review of all information from other children services agencies that had involvement with the child, the caretaker or the alleged perpetrator;
- A review of any other reports from individuals, schools, agencies or organizations involved in the provision of services to the child, his caretaker or the alleged perpetrator; and, if applicable,
- A review of all information prepared by an out-of-home care setting concerning the child's death.

The SCDJFS / PCSA shall also make all records and documentation available to the appropriate law enforcement agency pursuant to ORC. The appropriate DCY staff shall have access to the agency's Ohio SACWIS data and document system (TRAVERSE) to review all entered documentation and data, as needed.

The SCDJFS / PCSA shall maintain a file on each report investigated that concerns the death or near fatality of a child as the result of alleged child abuse or neglect. All activities completed, services offered and any reviews conducted will be documented in the case file.

**Child Fatality / Near Fatality- Child in the custody of SCDJFS / PCSA**  
SCDJFS / PCSA follows OAC 5180:2-33-14 and 5180:2-42-89 following the death of a child in its custody. When the SCDJFS / PCSA receives a report that a child in the SCDJFS / PCSA custody has died or a near fatality occurs, the following actions shall be taken:

1. For a child in temporary custody, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall contact the parent, guardian, custodian, or other relatives upon the SCDJFS / PCSA knowledge of the child's death or near fatality.
2. When deemed appropriate, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall contact the parent, guardian, custodian, or other relatives of a child in permanent custody.
3. The SCDJFS / PCSA shall notify the court and law enforcement agency with jurisdiction upon its knowledge of the child's death or near fatality.
4. Complete the child fatality/ near fatality record in SACWIS within 5 (five) days.

For those children in permanent custody, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall be responsible for funeral arrangements, including exploring all available financial resources for funeral expenses.

For those children in temporary custody, the SCDJFS / PCSA shall assist the family in planning funeral arrangements if requested. The Department may assist the family with the financial cost of the funeral arrangements if such costs pose a financial hardship to the family and funds are available for such purposes within the SCDJFS / PCSA.

If the SCDJFS / PCSA learns that the death or near fatality of a child in custody is a result of suspected child abuse or neglect, the procedures detailed in the death / near fatality of a child due to abuse or neglect section shall also be followed.

**Allegations of withholding medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions**

SCDJFS / PCSA does not have any county-specific procedures in these cases other than what is required pursuant to OAC 5180:2-36-07.

The withholding of medically indicated treatment is the refusal to provide appropriate nutrition, hydration, medication, or other medically indicated treatment from a disabled infant with a life-threatening condition.

Medically indicated treatment includes the medical care most likely to relieve, or correct, the life-threatening condition. Nutrition, hydration, and medication, as appropriate for the infant's needs, are medically indicated for all disabled infants;

in addition to, the completion of appropriate evaluations or consultations necessary to assure that sufficient information has been gathered to make informed medical decisions on behalf of the disabled infant.

In determining whether treatment is medically indicated, reasonable medical judgments made by a prudent physician, or treatment team, knowledgeable about the case and its treatment possibilities are considered. The opinions about the infant's future "quality of life" are not to bear on whether a treatment is judged to be medically indicated. Medically indicated treatment does not include the failure to provide treatment to a disabled infant if the treating physician's medical judgment identifies any of the situations listed in OAC 5180:2-36-07(A)(3)(a-d).

### Receiving and responding to reports of missing children

Upon learning that a minor child has either run away from or is otherwise missing from the home or the care, custody, and control of the child's parents, custodial parent, legal guardian, or non-custodial parent; the following actions will take place:

- When an MOU signatory agency is made aware that a child is missing, they will coordinate with the custodian to report their concerns to the law enforcement agency in the appropriate jurisdiction.
- The law enforcement agency will take prompt action upon the report, including, but not limited to, concerned efforts to locate the missing child.
- The law enforcement agency will promptly enter any additional, relevant information into NCIC.
- The law enforcement agency will promptly notify the missing child's parents, parent who is the residential parent and legal custodian, guardian, or legal custodian, or any other person responsible for the care of the missing child, that the child's information was entered into NCIC.
- SCDJFS/PCSA will contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) if the child is in PCSA custody.
- Upon request of law enforcement, SCDJFS / PCSA shall provide assistance and cooperation in the investigation of a missing child, including the immediate provision of any information possessed by SCDJFS / PCSA which may be relevant in the investigation.
- Law enforcement shall notify SCDJFS / PCSA upon learning that a minor child who is alleged to be in the child services system or who is known or suspected to be abused or neglected has either run away from or is otherwise missing from the home or the care, custody, and control of the child's parents, custodial parent, legal guardian, or non-custodial parent.
- All MOU signatory agencies are to notify the PCSA upon learning that a minor child who is alleged to be in the children services system or who is known or suspected to be abused or neglect has either run away from or is otherwise missing from the home or the care, custody and control of the child's parents, custodial parent, legal guardian, or non-custodial parent.
- SCDJFS/ PCSA and law enforcement will provide notification to each other's agency when the child is located.

## **Response Procedure: Removing and Placing Children**

### **Emergency**

Emergency removal of a child from home is necessary when the child is at imminent risk of harm and in need of protection from abuse, neglect, or dependency. An ex parte order may be issued with or without a complaint being filed. Prior to taking the child into custody the judicial factfinder must decide that reasonable efforts were made to notify the child's parents, guardian, or custodian, or there were reasonable grounds to believe doing so would jeopardize the safety of the child or lead to the removal of the child from the jurisdiction. Juvenile Rule 6 orders can be issued in-person, by phone, video conference, or otherwise. Reasonable grounds must exist to believe the child's removal is necessary to prevent immediate or threatened physical or emotional harm. Findings must be made that the agency either did or did not make reasonable efforts to prevent the removal of the child from their home with a brief description of services provided and why those did not prevent the removal or allow the child to return home, and if temporary custody is granted to the PCSA an additional finding that it would be contrary to the welfare and best interest of the child to continue in the home. If granted, a shelter care hearing must be scheduled the next business day (but not later than seventy-two hours) after the emergency order has been issued. If the ex parte motion is denied the matter must be set for a shelter care hearing within ten days from the filing date.

### **Non-emergency**

Upon receiving a report alleging child abuse, neglect, and/or dependency, SCDJFS / PCSA commences an investigation in accordance with the requirements of ORC 2151.421. If the final case decision rises to the level of court involvement, SCDJFS / PCSA shall approach the juvenile court and file a complaint alleging the child(ren) to be abused, neglected, or dependent per ORC 2151.27. The matter will be set for a shelter care/preliminary protective hearing expeditiously by the juvenile court. Reasonable oral or written notice of the time, place, and purpose of the hearing must be provided to the parents, guardian, or custodian unless they cannot be found. The same parties are also entitled to notification that a case plan may be prepared, the general requirements, and possible consequences of non-compliance with the case plan. The parties will be served with the complaint and summons to appear before the juvenile court. Unrepresented parties are advised by the juvenile court of their right to counsel. Counsel is appointed for children when abuse is alleged. A Guardian Ad Litem or CASA volunteer is appointed to all children subject of abuse, neglect, or dependency proceedings. A separate guardian ad litem may be appointed to minor parents or parents who appear mentally incompetent. The judicial factfinder must determine whether there is probable cause that the child is abused, neglected, or dependent; the child is in need of protection, whether or not there is an appropriate relative or kin willing to assume temporary custody of the child, reasonable efforts were made by SCDJFS / PCSA to prevent the removal or continued removal or to make it possible for the child to return home safely, and

for temporary custody orders to SCDJFS / PCSA that it would be contrary to the welfare and best interest of the child to continue in the home. All other temporary orders should be requested and considered at this time.

### **Case Record/ Documentation**

All reports, case contacts, documentation, and investigative / ongoing activities, distribution of information and documentation received for all case types will be documented in the PCSA record and subject to the rules of confidentiality.

## **Disaster Preparedness Plan**

This Disaster Preparedness Plan is Addendum 1 of the agency Foster Care Manual/ Policy In accordance with rule [5101:2-5-13.1](#) of the Administrative Code.

The Sandusky County Department of Job and Family Services' Children Services Unit (SCCS) recognizes that an emergency or disaster could occur at any time and in any place. The types of emergencies or disasters that we could face include natural disasters like tornados, floods, winter/ice storms and fires, and those of the man-made variety like terrorist attacks, technological failures and hazardous materials incidents. Outbreaks of infectious diseases or epidemic/pandemic outbreaks may also occur. If any of these events were to transpire resulting in a community wide major emergency/ disaster, the following plan would be put into operation.

### **A. Purpose**

This disaster preparedness plan establishes policy and guidance to assist in the execution of the SCCS' essential work activities that must continue in order to ensure the safety of children and the support of caregivers and service providers, including, but not limited to, receiving and investigating child abuse and/or neglect reports in the event of a disaster.

### **B. Essential Personnel**

In order to carry out the disaster preparedness plan, certain key or essential personnel must first be identified. It will be the responsibility of these staff members to make sure that the essential work activities are completed. First and foremost, the Children Services Administrator will have the responsibility for overseeing the entire unit. It will be the duty of the Administrator to make sure that the staff is able to continue to function and that they have the materials and support they need in order to do their jobs.

The Children Services Supervisors are also essential members of the emergency response team. These staff members will be responsible for ensuring that their staff is carrying out the day-to-day essential duties and also for reporting back to the Administrator what needs their staff may have.

The Children Services line staff are also considered essential staff. They are responsible for responding to the new reports, keeping track of their clients and substitute caregivers, and offering services to families at risk.

It is understood that depending on the type and location of the disaster, not all staff members may be able to report to work. It will be the responsibility of the administrative and supervisory staff to ensure that there is a sufficient number of line staff to carry out the essential functions of the unit. All administrative and supervisory staff members have the authority to initiate the disaster plan.

### **C. Alternative Work Location**

If the disaster results in conditions that do not allow for staff to report to work at the agency, they will work from their own homes or from other alternative temporary locations within county facilities such as the courthouse, the health department or the county detention facility.

### **D. Communication Plan**

At the onset of any disaster, communication attempts with staff, substitute caregivers and other team members will occur using telephones (cellular and land lines) and email. If these forms of communication fail, notices may be posted on the agency and/or state web site to inform staff and clients of important information. In addition, the agency will use television and radio announcements in order to disseminate vital information. The agency will also post notices on building entrances if alternate work sites are necessary. Lastly, if all else fails, the agency will, when possible, physically contact staff and clients to provide them with necessary information and services. This may be done directly by staff who have already reported to work or by local area law enforcement per the request of agency staff.

### **E. Essential Work Activities**

The essential work activities performed by the SCCS include the following: the investigation/ assessment of child abuse or neglect; the substitute care placement of at-risk children; and the offering of services to families who have at risk children.

### **F. Procedures for Handling New Reports**

Line and supervisory staff that have reported to work, will be responsible for handling all new reports. Supervisory staff will continue to designate intakes as emergencies or non-emergencies and line staff will initiate these new reports in the required time frames whenever possible. All information will continue to be entered into SACWIS if the system is available. If the system is not working, the information will be kept manually through the completion of forms and logs utilized prior to SACWIS.

Furthermore, on call duties will be handled on a rotation basis insuring 24-hour coverage. Assignment of on call duties will be handled by the administrator and the intake/investigation supervisor.

### **G. Procedures for Tracking Clients and Substitute Caregivers**

If available, SACWIS will be the main system used for tracking clients and substitute caregivers. If the agency was without the assistance of SACWIS or other technical systems in place, the agency would utilize the manual tracking systems that were in place prior to the implementation of SACWIS - many of which are still used today.

For instance, a manual list of all foster and adoptive parents is distributed to all staff as it is updated. A copy of this list is also kept with the "on call" materials. The responsibility to continue to see that this information is tracked and distributed would fall to the Foster Care/Adoption Supervisor or the designee.

Furthermore, each worker is responsible for keeping track of where their clients reside. Although this information is in SACWIS, it is also kept in the hard copy of the file. In an emergency or disaster situation, workers would continue to be responsible for keeping this information. This would include children in the custody of the agency who are residing in placements which may or may not be within the county.

Lastly, substitute caregivers are required to contact the agency within twenty-four hours should they need to relocate due to a disaster.

#### **H. Continuity of Services**

Continuity of services to families receiving in-home services, to children in substitute care and to kinship care placements will be insured by agency administrative and supervisory staff. Administrative staff will make sure that supervisory and line staff obtain the resources needed in order to continue regular contacts with those receiving agency services. Supervisory staff will monitor the day to day activities of their assigned staff to make sure that ongoing contacts are occurring. Efforts will be made to continue to meet ORC mandates; however, at the very least, visits will be made to ensure that the safety of all children is maintained.

#### **I. Maintenance and Security of Agency Records Not in SACWIS**

Hard copies of all child protective services cases, including court documents, are secured and maintained in the agency or a storage facility. Currently the agency is scanning all of their files into a document imaging program. This program will secure an electronic copy of these records if a disaster occurred that resulted in the destruction of the hard file. The original court file and any private child placing adoption court records are maintained in the county courthouse and are the responsibility of the Juvenile/Probate judge.

#### **J. Coordination of Services**

The agency will coordinate services with law enforcement, hospitals/medical providers or other disaster response agencies. For children in custody, the agency will be responsible for contacting service providers to ensure that the children receive the necessary care.

If there are children who have no available parent, guardian, or custodian, the agency will be available to assist in locating the parent, guardian, custodian, or a kinship member. If no parent, guardian, custodian, or kinship provider can be located and no other safe option is available, the agency will take custody of the child and temporarily place the child in foster care.

## **K. Working with Emergency Shelters**

Agency staff will be trained on the agency disaster plan so that they are aware of their responsibilities. If other disaster preparedness trainings become available, staff will be offered the opportunity to attend. Should emergency shelters be opened after a disaster, the agency will coordinate with the emergency shelter staff in order to make sure agency staff is prepared to handle responding to the disaster. Furthermore, coordination of services will occur in order to ensure that families at the shelter in need of agency assistance receive help in a timely manner. Lastly, the agency will work with the shelter to coordinate volunteer duties and assignments.

## **L. Plans of Cooperation/Memoranda of Understanding** eff. 1/19/2017

An MOU is in effect with Allen, Auglaize, Crawford, Defiance/Paulding Consolidated, Erie, Fulton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Huron, Logan, Lucas, Marion, Mercer, Morrow, Ottawa, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Van Wert, Williams, Wood, and Wyandot County Job and Family Services.

As required in 5101:2-5-13.1(C)(13), this plan of cooperation provides information on how neighboring Human Services agencies can assist and/or receive assistance during and/or after a disaster. This cooperative agreement will remain in effect until otherwise terminated or amended by mutual agreement.

- Agency directors or their designees agree to contact neighboring agencies and request or offer assistance to the other agency if and when possible.
- Neighboring agencies, when feasible, agree to share staff, resources, technology, or any other services that can assist a neighboring county in their time of need.
  - Some examples, but not all inclusive, are:
    - Staff to assist in the placement of children
    - Staff to assist in investigating abuse/neglect of children or the elderly
    - Staff to assist in eligibility determinations for public assistance; food stamps; medical; prevention, retention, and contingency program; local, state, or federal declared disaster programs; CSEA (if applicable)
    - Provide technical knowledge and expertise in assisting an agency in need to develop an emergency service delivery system
    - Share expertise in disaster form development
    - Assist with other Child Welfare, WIOA, CSEA, and fiscal operations (if applicable).

## **TRAINING**

Cross system training is to be provided to and a plan developed by all signatories of this MOU to ensure parties understand the mission and goals identified in this MOU and are clear about the roles and responsibilities of each agency. Periodic trainings events will be coordinated by SCDJFS / PCSA as the lead agency and notification of the trainings will be provided to the signatories of this agreement. By agreeing to participate in the county MOU process signatories express a commitment to attend training opportunities when presented and request additional training for their respective departments when needed.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any report made in accordance with ORC 2151.421 is confidential. Both the information and the name of the person who made the report under this section shall not be released for use and shall not be used as evidence in any civil action or proceeding brought against the person who made the report.

Children services records are not public records and are exempt from Ohio's Sunshine Laws under ORC 149.43. Children Services records are confidential in nature and should be treated accordingly.

ORC 2151.423 requires SCDJFS / PCSA to disclose confidential information discovered during an investigation conducted pursuant to 2151.421 or 2151.422 of the Ohio Revised Code to any federal, state, or local government entity that needs the information to carry out its responsibilities to protect children from abuse or neglect. Likewise, law enforcement, and other entities are expected to release information to SCDJFS / PCSA for the purpose of carrying out its responsibility of protecting children from abuse and/or neglect.

Information regarding the report and/or investigation of alleged abuse or neglect may be shared only when dissemination is authorized by OAC 5101:2-33-21 and in accordance with the procedures outlined in OAC 5101:2-33-21. The unauthorized dissemination of confidential information is a misdemeanor in the fourth degree and is punishable by law.

In the event of unauthorized dissemination of information, the party who learns of the breach of confidentiality will notify the Director of SCDJFS / PCSA as soon as possible. The notification will be sent in written form describing the circumstances

surrounding the breach. The notification will specify the confidential information released, who is responsible for disseminating the confidential information, how it was disseminated, and the parties who have access to the information without authorization. The Director of SCDJFS / PCSA shall refer this information to the prosecutor for review.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

This MOU must be retained for a period of at least seven years per the state of Ohio records retention schedule. Please refer to Sandusky County records retention policy for information on forms to be completed and processes to be followed for the destruction of records.

This reviewed and signed, or reviewed, updated, and signed MOU, as applicable, shall go into effect and supersede any previous MOU upon the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services determination that the MOU is compliant under ORC 2151.4220. The county MOU that is in effect in accordance with ORC 2151.4222 shall be posted to the general website of Sandusky County within 30 days from the compliance determination date.

This MOU does not inhibit good faith compliance with a subpoena issued by a Grand Jury or in a criminal case. Dissemination of records pursuant to the State's discovery obligations is authorized. However, work product and other privileges are expected to be upheld.

Failure to follow the procedure set forth in the MOU by the concerned officials is not grounds for, and shall not result in, the dismissal of any charges or complaint arising from any reported case of abuse or neglect or the suppression of any evidence obtained as a result of reported child abuse or child neglect and does not give, and shall not be construed as giving, any rights or any grounds for appeal or post-conviction relief to any person.

This MOU shall be governed by and construed in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulation. In the event any portion of this MOU is inconsistent with state or federal law, that portion shall be without effect as if stricken from the document and the remaining portion shall remain in full force and effect.

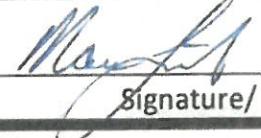
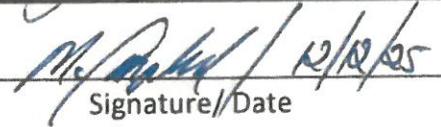
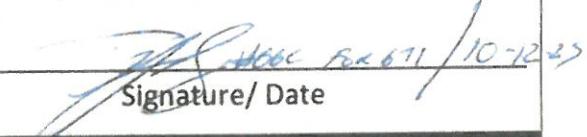
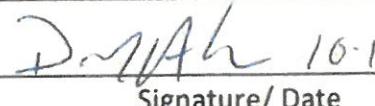
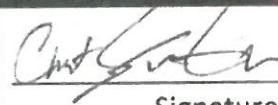
## **Signatures of Each Agency**

The signature section authorizes the participating parties of the agreement to begin enactment of MOU protocols and activities. The participating parties agree to follow the terms of this agreement and to meet at least bi-annually to review, update, and sign a new or amended MOU.

A mandated participant to this agreement may terminate their involvement in the MOU upon retirement, loss of an election, loss of employment, or other agreed upon qualifying event by providing written notice to the other signatories of this MOU. If there is a change to an individual who signed the memorandum, the PCSA is to provide the new individual with a copy of the current memorandum and obtain their signature within a reasonable timeframe (90 days) acknowledging the memorandum. The new individual remains bound by the most recently approved version of the memorandum for the remainder of the biennium.

Every effort will be made to review the MOU and obtain a signature from required participants. If any required official refuses to sign the agreement, the PCSA will document the reason(s) for an official's refusal in the signature section.

If the procedures, process, and contents of a previously approved MOU is revised, the PCSA will obtain all required signatures and submit a copy of the revised MOU to DCY within 90 days of the enacted changes.

SCDJFS / PCSA	Melanie Allen, Director	 12/14/25 Signature/ Date
City of Bellevue	Marc Linder, Police Chief	 12/12/25 Signature/ Date
City of Clyde	Monti Campbell, Police Chief	 12/12/25 Signature/ Date
City of Fremont	Derek Wensinger, Police Chief	 10-12-25 Signature/ Date
Village of Gibsonburg	Don Karr, Police Chief	 10-12-2025 Signature/ Date
Village of Green Springs	Amy Dickman, Police Chief	 12/05/25 Signature/ Date
Village of Woodville	Steve Gilkerson, Police Chief	 12-15-25 Signature/ Date
County Sheriff	Chris Hilton, Sheriff	 Signature/ Date
County Prosecutor	Beth Tischler, Prosecutor	 Signature/ Date
Juvenile Court	Brad Smith, Juvenile Judge	 Signature/ Date
Humane Agent	Kelly Pocock, Humane Agent	 Signature/ Date
Coroner's Office	Dr. Mark Smith, Coroner	 Signature/ Date

Upon attainment of all signatures, the PCSA is to submit the MOU to the Sandusky County Board of Commissioners for approval.

**Board of County Commissioners**

The Sandusky County Commissioners signed below hereby review and approve the Sandusky County Child Abuse and Neglect Memorandum of Understanding.

Russ Zimmerman 12-11-25  
Russ Zimmerman, Date

Charles Schwochow 12-11-25  
Charles Schwochow, Date

Scott Miller 12-11-25  
Scott Miller, Date

2025-361 12/16/2025  
Adopted by resolution/vote and date

The PCSA is to submit a copy of the memorandum to DCY within thirty days from the Board of County Commissioners' approval and before December thirty-first each biennium for compliance determination.

Once the MOU is approved by DCY, the PCSA is required to have the MOU posted on the website for the County of Sandusky and it remains effective until the next biennium review.

If the MOU is not approved by DCY, the PCSA will have 60 days to submit corrected/ compliant MOU to DCY.

