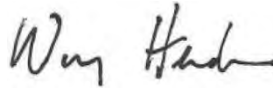


To: DCF/DMCPS Administrator  
DCF Area Administrators  
Child Placing Agency Directors  
Child Welfare Agency Directors  
County Departments of Community Programs Directors  
County Departments of Human Services Directors  
County Departments of Social Services Directors  
Group Home Providers  
Tribal Social Service/Indian Child Welfare Directors  
Private Child Placing Agencies  
Residential Care Center Providers  
Shelter Care Providers  
Tribal Chairpersons

From: Wendy Henderson  
Division Administrator



Re: ***Wisconsin Child Protective Services Access & Initial Assessment Standards and Wisconsin Child Protective Services Safety Intervention Standards Revisions***

## PURPOSE

The intent of this memo is to notify local child welfare agencies of revisions to the *Wisconsin Child Protective Services (CPS) Access and Initial Assessment Standards* and *Wisconsin Child Protective Services (CPS) Safety Intervention Standards*. The revisions to these standards incorporate updates and non-substantive changes to language, the integration of existing stand-alone policies, streamlining redundant information, and recommendations from stakeholder groups such as the [Children with Disabilities in the Child Welfare System](#), Tribal Child Welfare Directors related to integration and refinement of standards and stand-alone Protective Planning policies, and the [2019 Applied Learning Communities](#) (ALCs). The revisions do not represent substantive changes to current policy or practice expectations; additionally, there are no changes to eWisACWIS requirements or documentation.

## BACKGROUND

In April 2016, state legislation 2015 Wisconsin Act 365 was enacted, which focused on the issue of children with disabilities in the child welfare system. Specifically, 2015 Wisconsin Act 365 requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to develop and implement a plan for identifying and addressing areas in which there are needs for improvement in the practices used to investigate reports of suspected or threatened abuse or neglect of a child with a disability. As part of the plan, DCF established a broad-based workgroup composed of key stakeholders with expertise in the child welfare system and/or with children with disabilities. That workgroup developed eight recommendations, including updating child welfare standards to incorporate best practices for effectively responding, engaging, and serving children with disabilities. DCF decided at that time to revise the standards based on those

recommendations. To avoid duplicative work, additional revisions which streamline the standards were completed at the same time.

There are four objectives of revisions to these two sets of standards: (1) to incorporate language updates and corrections, as well as other non-substantive improvements to language; (2) to integrate existing stand-alone policies, including refinements to practices related to Protective Planning with tribal children and their families; (3) to implement stakeholder recommendations from the Children with Disabilities in the Child Welfare System Standards workgroup and 2019 Applied Learning Communities (ALCs); and (4) to streamline information.

Lastly, in order to ensure that the *CPS Access and Initial Assessment Standards* and the *CPS Safety Intervention Standards* are clear and represent only policy and practice requirements and best practice standards, certain unnecessary or redundant information was removed.

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURE REQUIREMENTS**

There are no new practice requirements incorporated within this revised set of standards. There are no changes to eWISACWIS documentations or requirements. See the attached *Summary of Revisions to the Wisconsin Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment and Safety Intervention Standards* for additional information.

## **ACTION SUMMARY**

The standards revisions will be issued in late spring at which time DCF will provide additional outreach and communication on the details of the revisions through meetings with supervisors and directors within DCF regions, the Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services, and through regional county calls.

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT: Child Welfare Program and Policy Section Manager  
Bureau of Safety and Well-Being  
Division of Safety and Permanence  
608-422-6919

MEMO WEB SITE: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/policy>

ATTACHMENTS: Summary of Revisions to the Wisconsin CPS Access & Initial Assessment and CPS Safety Intervention Standards

LINKS: [Wisconsin Child Protective Services Access and Initial Assessment Standards](#)  
[Wisconsin Child Protective Services Safety Intervention Standards](#)

**Summary of Revisions to the  
*Wisconsin CPS Access & Initial Assessment*  
and *CPS Safety Intervention Standards***

The following information is provided to assist in understanding and identifying more specifically where revisions were made.

- **Providing Corrections to Language** - enhancing definitions to provide consistency and clarity.
  - The term “Worker” is changed to “Professional”
  - The terms “Agency” and “County” are changed to “Local child welfare agency”
  
- **Integrating Existing Policies** - incorporating policy that has already been established in statute and in numbered memos. These sections **require little attention** as these are not new expectations and have already been embedded into practice.  
Examples include:
  - Protective Planning and ICWA
  - Safe at Home
  - Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) legislation, related to Unborn Substance Exposure, Infant Substance Exposure, and Safe Haven
  
- **Enhancing Practice Approaches** - revised to incorporate recommendations in certain practice areas. These revisions **require some attention** for the purposes of understanding how stakeholder recommendations were included and support practice. Many of these revisions incorporate the practice approaches our workforce is already attending to with children and families.  
Examples include:
  - Children with Disabilities
  - Case Transition Process
  - Collaboration with Indian Children and Families