

**Policy Name:** Process for Locating Families

**Policy Number:** IA 8.00

**Subject:** Missing Families, Locating Families, Diligent Efforts to Locate Families

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**Contact Div/Bur/Sec:** Division of Safety and Permanence, Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW)

**Contact Name/Phone:** Mary Pat Bohn, 414-220-7048  
MaryPat.Bohn@wisconsin.gov

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*Any information referenced within this document is considered to be a part of this policy with the exception of the "related resources" section.*

**Summary:**

This policy establishes the Initial Assessment Social Worker's minimum diligent efforts when a family is unable to be located following a CPS report or when there is an open CHIPS order.

**Related Resources:**

[Ongoing Services Standards](#); [Referral to Father Advocate Services](#); [Obtaining and Executing a Pick-Up Order](#). On the web: [www.whowhere.com](http://www.whowhere.com) [www.switchboard.com](http://www.switchboard.com) [www.excite.com/peoplefinder](http://www.excite.com/peoplefinder) [www.bigfoot.com](http://www.bigfoot.com) [www.ci.mil.wi.us/citygov/assessor/assessments.htm](http://www.ci.mil.wi.us/citygov/assessor/assessments.htm) [www.555-1212.com](http://www.555-1212.com)

**Policy:**

When a family is unable to be located after a Child Protective Services (CPS) referral has been made or there is an open CHIPS order, the Initial Assessment Social Worker (IASW) shall make diligent efforts to find them in accordance with the minimum standards detailed in this policy.

**Procedures:**

1. Carefully review all information provided in the Access report.
2. Check the family's previous CPS history for prior address(es) and contacts. Also check for the names/addresses of any known relative and contact each for information regarding the family's current location. The IASW must also check eWiSACWIS history for alleged or adjudicated fathers and must contact any identified paternal relatives for information about the location of the family. If unsuccessful, the IASW must make a referral to the Father Advocate program to assist in locating the father of the children.
3. If one of the parents is thought to be incarcerated or recently released from incarceration, call (608) 240-3750 for the location where the offender is imprisoned

- or the name of the probation officer. The social worker will need the offender's corrections case number or date of birth.
4. Contact the referral source to attempt to obtain updated information regarding the family's whereabouts.
  5. Obtain information regarding alleged or adjudicated fathers, contact any that are identified and request that they notify the IASW of any current location of the family. The IASW must also check eWiSACWIS history on alleged or adjudicated fathers and contact any identified paternal relatives for information about the location of the family. If unsuccessful, the IASW must make a referral to the father advocate to assist in locating the father of the children.
  6. Visit the last known address, as well as any other addresses identified for the parent(s) at various times during the day including early morning and late in the afternoon. Other efforts to locate a current address include, but are not limited to:
    - Check Milwaukee Public Schools as well as suburban, Archdiocese and private schools nearest to the parental address to determine if any child named in the referral is registered.
    - Check the last known school attended by the child(ren) to find out which, if any, other school sent a records request. That school may also have a recent emergency card with a relative's name; if so, contact the relative for information regarding the family's current location.
    - Send a certified letter, return receipt requested, to the family at the last known and/or most recently reported address.
    - Check the CARES and KIDS systems on a weekly basis for addresses, as well as all listed fathers of all children in an attempt to locate the family and collect information.
    - Check CCAP for any possible address information and any open cases for pending court dates and/or whether a probation agent is assigned to any family member. If an agent is assigned, contact the agent for address information and collaboration.
    - Contact the W-2 agency for a last known address. Request that the W2 worker notify the IASW of any pending or scheduled appointments.
    - The IASW must check the EDS system for addresses or lists of the family's medical providers. Contact the identified medical providers and request that they notify the IASW of any scheduled appointments for either the child(ren) or the parent(s).
    - Check with Children's Hospital to see if there had been contact with the child(ren) and whether there is an address on file. Additionally inquire whether an HMO or other insurer is listed; an insurance company may have the family's location.
    - If the parent was at any time a foster child, contact the previous foster parents to request any recent location information.
  7. Talk to the neighbors/landlord at the last known address.
  8. Contact the City's Housing Authority to obtain the landlord's name and contact information. Make contact with the landlord for additional information (active lease or not, forwarding address, etc.)
  9. If it is believed the family moved out of the City of Milwaukee, re-contact the last known school to see if a records request has come in from another district.

10. Use a variety of Web sites to obtain information, including social media and/or talk to any known friends of the child(ren).
11. Document all efforts made and their results in the eWiSACWIS case notes.
12. All of the above tasks must be completed within 30 days of receiving the Access report to allow time for requesting a pick-up order (where there is supporting information to do so.) If the family is not located within the first 30 days and all efforts have been exhausted, the IASW should also contact the ADA's office to request investigator assistance in locating the family.
13. The case will remain open in IA until the family is located or for the full 60 days, whichever occurs first. An additional conversation with the Service Manager, Region Manager and the ADA should occur prior to closing the case. A case note or a comment in the closing summary of the initial assessment must be entered noting the region manager's approval to close the case.

**Responsibilities:**

IASWs and their Service Managers