

NUMBER

#19-68-01

DATE

January 2, 2019

OF INTEREST TO

County Directors

Social Services Supervisors and
Staff

County Attorneys

Tribal Attorneys

ACTION/DUE DATEPlease read and prepare for
implementation**EXPIRATION DATE**

January 2, 2021

Revised Child Maltreatment Intake, Screening and Response Path Guidelines

TOPIC

January 2019 revision of DHS-5144, "Minnesota's Child Maltreatment Screening Guidelines."

PURPOSE

Provide updated language and revisions to Minnesota's Child Maltreatment Intake, Screening and Response Path Guidelines.

CONTACT

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NIKKI FARAGO

Assistant Commissioner

Children and Family Services Administration

TERMINOLOGY NOTICE The terminology used to describe people we serve has changed over time. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the use of "People First" language

I. Background

[DHS-5144, the revised Minnesota Child Maltreatment Intake, Screening and Response Path Guidelines](#) were developed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (department) in consultation with Intake, Screening, and Response Path Guidelines Work Group members. This work group included multiple and varied stakeholders convened to advise department staff of implementation of recommendations from the Governor's Task Force on the Protection of Children.

Purpose of the guidelines

The purpose of the Child Maltreatment, Intake, Screening and Response Path Guidelines is to:

- Provide direction for local child welfare and tribal agency staff
- Promote statewide consistency in definition and practice
- Inform the public about the types of child safety concerns that should be reported.

Families and communities are best served when child maltreatment screening guidelines are clearly understood and readily available. These guidelines are based on the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act, Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556.

Changes to the guidelines

The revised Child Maltreatment Intake, Screening and Response Path Guidelines include the following changes:

- Added to bulleted list that “youth experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness” should be asked about possible maltreatment in “Intake data collection,” page 18.
- Under “Documentation of multiple reports on the same family,” clarified that similar or different allegations may be added to the Social Service Information System (SSIS) intake workgroup prior to intake disposition, page 20.
- Under “Identify household/caregivers for purposes of Family Investigation or Family Assessment,” language was added to clarify that adults who were residents of a home at the time of alleged maltreatment but no longer reside with the family are considered part of the family unit for purposes of maltreatment reports, page 24.
- Language about homeless children and vulnerabilities of older children was added under the section titled “Older children,” page 27.
- New section added, titled “Homeless youth unaccompanied by a parent or guardian” under the “Older children” section. Language discusses situations involving homeless youth unaccompanied by parents or guardians, or youth at risk of homelessness, pages 27-28.
- Language added to clarify that purchasers may not be charged with sex trafficking, page 40.
- Link added to department's Safe Harbor/No Wrong Door website for additional resources and information on known or suspected sex trafficking reports, page 40.
- Added language about referral to Safe Harbor services for sexually exploited youth, page 42.

- Points of consideration were added under “Failure to protect a child from conditions or actions that present serious endangerment,” discussing reports of firearms in a home when it is unknown if it is loaded or unloaded, page 48.
- Example concerning youth living without adult supervision added under “Failure to provide necessary supervision or child care arrangements,” page 49.
- Language added under “Failure to ensure education” regarding youth who are homeless, page 51.
- Language added under “Physical abuse” clarifying that “unreasonable interference with a child’s breathing” may be characterized as choking, page 54.
- Removed language that in most cases a child must be a witness to incidents of domestic violence for a maltreatment report to meet the statutory threshold for a child protection response, page 57.
- Clarified that in situations of domestic violence, allegations concerning child protection should be made against an alleged offender of the violence, page 57.
- Lethality indicators for risk in domestic violence removed, page 56.
- Language added to the bullet list under conditions of domestic violence that may meet child maltreatment definitions, page 57.
- Added that injuries to parent or caregiver are to the extent they become unable to provide care for their children, page 57.
- Added that child is impacted when objects are used as weapons in the course of a domestic violence situation, page 57.
- Added that sexual assault occurring during the course of domestic violence and is witnessed by a child, page 57.
- Added language regarding collaboration with local domestic violence prevention providers, and link to list of providers, page 57.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory

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