



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT
OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

Manual:	CP&P	Child Protection and Permanency	Effective Date:
Volume:	IV	Out of Home Placement	
Chapter:	A	General Placement Considerations	3-9-2009
Subchapter:	2	Child Safety/Safety Assessment	
Issuance:	500	Safety Assessment in Congregate Care Settings	

Tasks to Complete During Assessment

3-9-2009

The Worker conducts a field visit to the congregate care facility, at which time he or she:

- Interviews the youth privately, using CP&P Form [22-10](#), Congregate Care Questionnaire;

Note: When a child is non-verbal, observe the child, document the level of care, appearance, and circumstances of the child.

- Interviews the child's Social Worker/Counselor, in an effort to assure that staff is sensitive to the child's needs and fears while in congregate care;
- Observes the child's room and assures he or she has appropriate sleeping arrangements/a bed; and
- Walks through the facility, making observations about the physical building(s), day-to-day operations of the facility, staff interactions with youth, etc.

No Concerns, Child Safe

3-9-2009

In the absence of safety concerns, the Worker and Supervisor meet within three (3) work days of the on-site visit to the facility, to discuss the results of CP&P Form [22-10](#), Congregate Care Questionnaire, and the Worker's impressions.

The Worker and Supervisor sign the form in the spaces provided, and forward copies of it to CP&P Contract Administration staff and the Office of Licensing - Youth Residential Licensing.

Actions Taken when "Concerns" About a Youth who is "Safe" 3-9-2009

For cases where a youth presents well-being, child welfare, or other concerns (which do not rise to the level of danger/unsafe), the Worker and Supervisor plan, together, how best to provide support and outreach to the youth. Conference the situation with the child's Social Worker, Counselor, or an Administrator from the congregate care facility.

CP&P Placed Child "Unsafe"

3-9-2009

If, during the field visit to the congregate care facility and completion of CP&P Form [22-10](#), Congregate Care Questionnaire, the Worker has concerns that the youth is not safe in the program, proceed as follows to secure the child's safety, as well as the safety of other residents:

- The Worker conferences the case immediately with his or her Supervisor by telephone or cell phone. Contact the Casework Supervisor if the assigned Supervisor is not available.

Note: Consult the Casework Supervisor if the Worker and Supervisor do not agree about whether a child is safe, or to determine specific actions needed to assure that a child in congregate care is safe.

- The Worker contacts State Central Registry, if making a CPS report for IAIU investigation;
- The Worker and Supervisor develop a plan of action, as appropriate, to assure the youth is safe:
 - The Supervisor consults the Casework Supervisor and CP&P managerial or administrative staff, as necessary; and
 - If the determination is made to initiate action to maintain the youth's placement upon assuring the youth is safe in the facility, the Worker (or other CP&P staff) consults the child's Social Worker, Counselor, and/or other direct care, administrative, and supervisory staff at the facility, as necessary and appropriate, to protect the youth and make a plan.
- The Worker takes action, as needed, to effectuate the plan.
- The Worker or Supervisor notifies the Office of Licensing.

Removal of CP&P Placed Child When "Unsafe"

3-9-2009

When the youth's safety cannot be secured in the facility, CP&P initiates action, as necessary, to:

- Return the youth home that day, if possible, safe, and within the case plan; or
- Identify an alternative placement resource, a shelter, or a "vacation home" for the youth, to assure his or her immediate safety until a more permanent placement arrangement can be made. (Consult the RFSW to assure the identified/new home was assessed for safety within the last six months. If the child will be remaining in the vacation home for more than one week, conduct a safety assessment in accordance with policy);
- Notify OOL; and
- When the child is placed out of state, arrange transport back to New Jersey. A new placement may be made out of state if the placement is approved by both OOL and the CP&P liaison to the Children's System of Care (CSOC) (unless return home is possible, safe, agreeable to the Child Placement Review Board, etc.):
 - The Local Office consults the Department's Interstate Services Unit, and the CP&P liaison to the Children's System of Care (CSOC), to secure assistance from the host state in identifying a placement resource for the child until arrangements can be made to return the child to New Jersey.

Note: An immediate report to IAIU, and/or the County Prosecutor may be warranted. Consult the SCR hotline.

Concern for the Safety of Other Residents

3-9-2009

When a Worker determines that a youth is not safe in a congregate care program, and has concerns that other residents may also be unsafe at the facility, he or she immediately contacts a Supervisor. The Supervisor consults with management to determine an appropriate course of action to secure child safety at the facility.

Notification to Office of Licensing (OOL)

3-9-2009

The Office of Licensing (OOL) Inspectors assess the overall safety of congregate care facilities during periodic, routine licensing inspections of programs regulated by the OOL:

- Upon receipt of a complaint, OOL initiates a targeted field response inspection. If a deficiency in a program is identified, OOL specifies

corrective action to correct the problem/violation.

- If SCR, IAIU or CP&P alerts the Office of Licensing of a concern against regulations, the OOL determines a regulatory course of action, as needed, to assure the facility is a safe place for children.
- If a child is determined to be at immediate risk in a congregate care facility, the Office of Licensing immediately notifies SCR, the contracted agency, CP&P, and/or the Children's System of Care (CSOC).
- When a situation is serious, the Office of Licensing conducts or leads a multi-disciplinary team that completes an in-depth review of the entire program.

The DCF Congregate Care Risk Management Team is responsible for initiating action, as needed, to assure that all children in the facility are safe or removed from the facility.

Related Policy

3-9-2009

[CP&P-III-B-6-600](#), Structured Decision Making