



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT
OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

New Jersey Department of Children and Families Policy Manual

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Overview

3-9-2009

- The State Central Registry screens all IAIU-related calls coming to its attention any and all hours of the day and night.
- The Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit is not staffed for after-hours emergency response.
- The CP&P Special Response Unit (SPRU) Worker, assigned to the county where an alleged institutional abuse/neglect incident occurred, responds after hours for IAIU, when necessary.
- An IAIU Supervisor, serving on a statewide basis, is on call, to direct SPRU staff handling of institutional abuse/neglect reports and other IAIU-related matters after hours.
- The SPRU Worker is required to contact the on-call IAIU Supervisor for all CPS-IAIU reports assigned to him or her after hours.

The CP&P Special Response Unit, SPRU (acting for IAIU after hours) is responsible for addressing allegations of institutional abuse/neglect in non-DCF facilities only. To avoid a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest, the Public Defender Conflict Investigation Unit (PDCU) is responsible for investigating allegations relating to DCF-operated facilities and staff, including Office of Education facilities. SCR contacts the PDCU upon receipt of an allegation about a DCF-run facility after hours. See [CP&P-II-C-1-300](#), Limiting Conflicts of Interest.

Calls which pertain to programmatic or life-safety issues at child care facilities or adoption agencies - but not alleging institutional abuse or neglect or posing immediate risk to a child - are referred to the DCF Office of Licensing for follow-up during regular work hours.

The Role of the On-Call IAIU Supervisor After Hours

3-9-2009

Institutional abuse/neglect investigations - particularly those involving allegations against facilities - differ somewhat from other child protective service investigations handled by CP&P field staff. The majority of SPRU Workers and Supervisors throughout the state are not as versed in the specific dynamics of IAIU activities, functions and procedures as IAIU staff who routinely work in this area. As a means of seeking consistency in case handling of institutional abuse/neglect allegations on a statewide basis, and in an attempt to avoid duplication of efforts, an IAIU Supervisor (i.e., an IAIU Supervisor from day operations) is available to the After-Hours Response System (SCR and SPRU) at all times, to provide guidance, direction, support, and a link to daytime IAIU operations.

On call IAIU Supervisors serve the After-Hours Response System in a supervisory and consultative capacity only: While on call, an IAIU Supervisor may not accompany a SPRU Worker into the field.

The on-call IAIU Supervisor is responsible for:

1. Assessing information from the SPRU Worker, to determine whether the given situation can and should wait until IAIU day staff can intervene the next work day, or whether interim or emergency action is needed by SPRU to assure the child's care and safety after hours;
2. Guiding the SPRU Worker's response to allegations of institutional abuse/neglect; and/or
3. Identifying case work concerns for follow-up by SPRU after hours (whether afield response is to be conducted by SPRU or held for IAIU day staff), including but not limited to coordinating notifications in institutional abuse/neglect-related child deaths, critical incidents, and other crisis or unusual situations.

The SCR Screener advises the SPRU Worker to contact the SPRU Supervisor on call for the given county SPRU operation (rather than the on-call IAIU Supervisor) about any non-protective service-related crisis or other emergency affecting youth in out-of-home placement. The SPRU Supervisor also directs the SPRU Worker when a Safety Protection Plan is needed, to maintain a foster child in a resource family home. See [IAIU-I-A-1-400](#), Assessing Child Safety During the Investigation.

IAIU Chain of Command After Hours

7-31-2008

The chain of command for institutional abuse/neglect case handling after hours is as follows:

- The SCR Screener initiates an assignment to the SPRU Worker on duty in the county in which the facility/home/other out-of-home care setting is physically located.
- The SPRU Worker contacts the on-call IAIU Supervisor.
- The on-call IAIU Supervisor reports to the Assistant Regional Supervisor (or Regional Supervisor) responsible for the case/institution based on its location.
- The Assistant Regional Supervisor reports to the Regional Supervisor.
- The Regional Supervisor reports to the Director of IAIU.
- The Director of IAIU reports to the Executive Director, Community Services.

The on-call IAIU Supervisor may notify the Regional Supervisor (or Assistant Regional Supervisor), to advise him or her of the nature of the report and the status of the investigation - particularly a critical incident - to facilitate prompt follow up the next business day.

If the after-hours report concerns an open IAIU investigation, the on-call IAIU Supervisor may call the assigned Regional Supervisor or Assistant Regional Supervisor as a collateral contact, to determine the status of that investigation.

Home telephone numbers for Assistant Regional IAIU Supervisors, Regional IAIU Supervisors, the Director of IAIU, and other IAIU staff may be obtained from SCR, if necessary.

SPRU Investigation - Children in Facilities 10-27-2008

The assigned SPRU Worker proceeds as follows:

- Consult the on-call IAIU Supervisor (SCR can assist in establishing contact). Proceed only as directed:
 - Contact the County Prosecutor, when criminal activity is alleged or suspected, in accordance with the DCF/Law Enforcement Model Coordinated Response Protocol. See [IAIU-I-A-1-2100](#).
 - Stabilize the immediate crisis (through telephone contacts or field response, as instructed by the on-call IAIU Supervisor).
 - Initiate face-to-face contact with the child victim(s).
 - Assess child safety; complete CP&P [Form 22-10](#), the Congregate Care Questionnaire, with the child, in accordance with form instructions:

- Contact the on-call IAIU Supervisor immediately, with any safety concerns about the child victim or other children in the facility/program (see [IAIU-I-A-1-400](#), "Assess Child Safety in Congregate Care Setting"). Proceed as instructed by the on-call IAIU Supervisor.
- Document the presence or absence of reported or found injuries; fully describe any injuries found.
- Secure medical attention for the child, if warranted (may be provided by the facility nurse or doctor).
- Assure that the child victim is separated and protected from the alleged perpetrator.
- Separate residents (if the allegations concern negative interactions between children/lack of supervision by staff).
- Interview other children, staff members, the alleged perpetrator, witnesses, and/or the Administrator of the facility/designee/staff member in charge at present.
- Institute safeguards to assure that other children in the facility are not at risk, pending further investigation by IAIU.
- Remove the child victim(s), if necessary (only as a last resort).

If the on-call IAIU Supervisor has reason to believe that a facility staff member(s) needs to be reassigned or promptly relieved from duty to assure the safety of a child, he or she consults his or her immediate superior or a Deputy Attorney General, to determine whether the SPRU Worker can act to remove the staff member, as authorized by N.J.S.A. 9:6-3.1, Institutional Employee, Temporary Suspension of Alleged Offender, Due Process Rights, Single Act, Several Incidents, Remedial Plan, Changes, and Sanctions.

The SPRU Worker takes action to stabilize the situation and protect the child victim(s) until IAIU intervenes the next work day.

First thing the next work day, the responding SPRU Worker or the County SPRU Coordinator forwards electronically or faxes the SPRU Worker's investigation report to the respective IAIU Regional Office.

SPRU Investigation - Children in Resource Family Homes 10-27-2008

The assigned SPRU Worker proceeds as follows:

- Consult the on-call IAIU Supervisor (SCR can assist in establishing contact). Proceed only as directed.
- Stabilize the immediate crisis (through telephone contacts, field response, and/or service provision, as instructed by the on-call IAIU Supervisor).
- Contact the County Prosecutor, if warranted, in accordance with the DCF/Law Enforcement Model Coordinated Response Protocol. See [IAIU-I-A-1-2100](#).
- Initiate face-to-face contact with the child victim(s) and any other child residing in the home.
- Conduct a child safety assessment; devise a Safety Protection Plan, if necessary (through consultation with the SPRU Supervisor). Introduce safeguards/emergency services to assure the safety of all children in the home. See the section "Assess Child Safety in Resource Family Homes" in [IAIU-I-A-1-400](#).
- Document the presence or absence of injuries, and fully describe any injuries found.
 - Secure medical attention for the child victim(s), if warranted.
- Separate children in the home (if the allegations concern negative interactions between children).
 - Interview the resource family parent(s) and other adults in the home.
- Remove and re-place the child victim(s), if necessary (only as a last resort).

The SPRU Worker takes action, as necessary, to stabilize the immediate situation and protect the child until IAIU intervenes the next work day.

Birth parents are not routinely contacted by SPRU staff under these circumstances, except in unusual or extreme situations (e.g., serious harm to a child, or a need for parental consent to medical treatment). IAIU day staff (i.e., the assigned Investigator and/or Supervisor) consult the assigned CP&P Worker or Supervisor, when necessary, to coordinate notification to the birth parents, as appropriate. (Generally, the assigned CP&P Worker, who has an established working relationship with the parent(s), advises the parent(s) of the allegation, particularly if the child is injured or in distress.)

First thing the next work day, the responding SPRU Worker or the County SPRU Coordinator forwards electronically or faxes the SPRU Worker's investigation report to the respective IAIU Regional Office.

At the start of the next work day, the SCR Designee at the IAIU Regional Office 1) obtains the SPRU Worker's report, 2) obtains input from the on-call IAIU Supervisor, and 3) assigns the report (printable as DCF [Form 1-1](#), the Screening Summary, as documented at SCR after-hours), to an IAIU Investigator for investigation. The SCR Designee contacts SCR and/or SPRU staff, if additional or clarifying information is needed about the screening of the intake, the SPRU Worker's response, or the status of the investigation.

The Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit is subsequently responsible for completing the investigation in accordance with agency policy.