

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

County & Agency Name: Colusa County Dept. of Health and Human Services Date Completed: December 1, 2008

Name/Title: Donna Dennis, Program Manager II Telephone #: (530) 458-0290
 Person Managing/Overseeing Emergency Plan Implementation

E-mail Address: dennida@cws.state.ca.us

This template is intended to be used as a guide to help counties incorporate the 2006 federal disaster response criteria as part of local child welfare plans. Minors in the probation system must also be included in the plan. County plans must be amended to include Child Welfare Services (CWS) Disaster Response Plans and be operational by September 28, 2007.

In September 2006, Congress passed the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law (PL) 109-288). PL 109-288 amended Part B of Title IV of the Social Security Act to reauthorize the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Among other changes, PL 109-288 established requirements for states on disaster planning in child welfare under Section 6 (a) (16). Accordingly, counties are requested to address the following program areas in developing local disaster readiness plans.

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CWS Disaster Response Criteria A:	Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster:
Essential Function:	1. Identification and location process of children who may be displaced
Process Description:	The Program Manager and/or Social Worker Supervisor will obtain reports through the CWS/CMS system listing dependants currently placed in the area affected by disaster. These reports can list placements by county, city, or zip code. The placement probation officer will check his/her placement list to identify wards placed in the disaster area.
Essential Function:	2. Communication process with child care providers

Process Description:	The Program Manager and/or Social Worker Supervisor will ensure that the social worker assigned to the minor makes every effort to locate the minor's provider to ascertain their location and assess for their immediate needs. The placement probation officer will contact care providers of their wards to ascertain their location and assess for their immediate needs.
Essential Function:	3. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event known in advance
Process Description:	The Department of Health and Human Services and the Probation Department will follow the evacuation procedures as given by the Colusa County Office of Emergency Services. Social Workers and Probation Officers will make every effort to provide this information to our families.
Essential Function:	4. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event not known in advance
Process Description:	Department of Health and Human Services and the Probation Department will follow the evacuation procedures as given by the Colusa County Office of Emergency Services.
Essential Function:	5. Identification of shelters
Process Description:	The Colusa County Fairgrounds has been identified as the main shelter for the county. Other sites have been pre-identified in each town through-out the county. Department of Health and Human Services is the department assigned as a first responder to open and man shelters in the event of a disaster until the Red Cross can respond. Shelters are opened in a coordinated effort between Department of Health and Human Services and Colusa County Office of Emergency Services.
Essential Function:	6. Parental notification procedures
Process Description:	The child welfare worker/probation officer assigned to the minor will make every effort to contact the minor's parents in the event of a disaster.
Essential Function:	7. Alternative processes for providing continued services
Process Description:	For persons remaining in county, information regarding the relocation of service providers affected by the disaster will be provided. For those families relocated out of the county, referrals to appropriate services in their area will be provided.

Essential Function:	8. Staff assignment process
Process Description:	Each social worker will be responsible for the minors on their caseload. In the event that a social worker is not available, the Social Worker Supervisor will reassign the caseload. Other duties, to be determined at the time of the disaster will be assigned by the Department's Director or the Office of Emergency Services commander.
Essential Function:	9. Workload planning
Process Description:	The Department of Health and Human Services is the designated agency in Colusa County to set up shelters when necessary. The Department works with the Office of Emergency Services to determine what roles personnel will fill. Management and supervisory staff within the Department receive SEMS training, first aid, and CPR. Probation Officers will work as assigned by their superior.
Essential Function:	10. Alternative locations for operations
Process Description:	The Department of Health and Human Services has three building that could be used as alternative locations for operations. Should these building be unavailable in the event of a countywide disaster. Neighboring counties not affected by the disaster would be consulted for possible alternative locations. The Probation Department would also utilize neighboring counties for assistance should the disaster be countywide. In county alternative locations for the probation department include law enforcement buildings and sub-stations.
Essential Function:	11. Orientation and ongoing training
Process Description:	Management and supervisory staff are provided SEMS training from the Office of Emergency Services. Department of Health and Human Services staff has the opportunity to receive first aid training, CPR, car seat training, and satellite phone training.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria B:	Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases:
Essential Function:	1. New child welfare investigation process
Process Description:	All new investigation referrals made during the disaster will be handled as an immediate response referral. Child welfare workers will coordinate with law enforcement to gain access to those areas affected and make every attempt to locate the family so that the safety of the

	minor(s) can be assessed.
Essential Function:	2. Implementation process for providing new services
Process Description:	Families and minors relocated will be referred to services in the county that they are placed. Following a disaster, those affected will be referred to services available locally.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria C:	Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster:
Essential Function:	1. Communication structure – staff
Process Description:	The department will utilize employer issued cell phones, personal cell phones, hand held radios, satellite phones and if possible email to remain in contact with one another. The Probation Department will utilize cell phones and radio communication through central dispatch at the Sheriff’s Office. Broader communications will include use of the emergency broadcast system, websites, broadcast fax system, and local radio stations.
Essential Function:	2. Communication structure – child welfare personnel (phone tree)
Process Description:	All child welfare workers and probation officers have department issued Nextel phones with cell and radio-to-radio capability. Child welfare line staff will report to their supervisors, supervisors will report to managers and managers to directors. Probation officers will report to the Deputy Chief Probation officer and the Deputy will report to the Chief Probation officer.
Essential Function:	3. Communication structure – contracted services
Process Description:	The child welfare social worker or placement probation officer will contact the contracted service provider to advise them of the status of minors in their care.
Essential Function:	4. Communication process when all normal channels are unavailable
Process Description:	Should the normal channels of communication be rendered unavailable, in person meetings will be held at intervals to be determined at the time of the disaster. A central meeting location such as the main office for Department of Health and Human Services or the Sheriff’s office will be utilized.

Essential Function:	5. Communication frequency
Process Description:	During a disaster, child welfare workers will be available at all times. Communication will occur as frequently as necessary given the severity of the disaster. Communication will follow the chain of command set in the department's organizational chart.
Essential Function:	6. Communication with media
Process Description:	Colusa County Department of Health and Human Services currently has in place procedures regarding communication with the media. All requests for information are to directed to the Deputy Directors and/or the Director of the agency. Disbursement of information necessary to the public is handled by coordinated effort between our Health Department and the Colusa County Office of Emergency Services. The Chief of the Probation Department will handle all media regarding wards.
Essential Function:	7. Communication with volunteers
Process Description:	Any individual wanting to provide assistance will be directed to the Emergency Operation Center Logistics for handle coordination of volunteer services.
Essential Function:	8. Establishment of a toll-free number prior to disaster (include TTY)
Process Description:	Toll-free numbers or those that accept collect calls include: Child Welfare: (530) 458-0280 (24 hours); Colusa County Public Health: (800) 655-3110; Colusa County Sheriff's Office: 911; (530) 458-0200; and Colusa County Probation Department: (530) 458-5871. The Probation Department is available 24 hours a day by contacting the Sheriff's Office. TTY capability is available at the Sheriff's Office.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria D:	Preserve essential program records:
Essential Function:	1. Record preservation process
Process Description:	In the event of a disaster every attempt will be made to secure our records. Data collection in the field will be done through the use of a lap top computer or kept manually.
Essential Function:	2. Use of off-site back-up system

Process Description:	In the event of a disaster that renders our office site as inaccessible, we will utilize our lap top computer as a back-up system. If the lap top computer is also unavailable, this department would coordinate with neighboring counties unaffected by the disaster to utilize their CWS/CMS computers to maintain program records.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria E:	Coordinate services and share information with other states:
Essential Function:	1. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children reporting process
Process Description:	The Social Worker Supervisor is responsible for contacting the California ICPC Administrator regarding any relocation of a dependant/ward to another state during a disaster.
Essential Function:	2. Mental health providers
Process Description:	The vast majority of mental health providers in Colusa County work for the Colusa County Behavioral Health Department. They will be vital players in providing crisis and other services during a disaster. Department of Health and Human Services and Probation will communicate with Behavioral Health by utilizing the Probation Officer assigned as the Behavioral Health liaison.
Essential Function:	3. Courts
Process Description:	The Court will immediately be notified of all court hearings that will be disrupted due to the disaster. Any continuances will be requested in the proper legal format so that all timelines will be maintained.
Essential Function:	4. Federal partners
Process Description:	The Program Manager for Department of Health and Human Services will keep the Deputy Director/Director up to date on the status of the department's dependents. By doing so the Deputy Director/Director can adequately communicate with Federal partners to share information and local needs.
Essential Function:	5. CDSS

Process Description:	As in communication with Federal partners, the Program Manager will provide necessary information to the Department's Deputy Director/Director so they in turn can communicate information and relay local needs to CDSS.
Essential Function:	6. Tribes
Process Description:	The Social Worker Supervisor will contact the ICWA coordinator of all recognized tribes who may have an identified Indian Child displaced due to a disaster. The Social Worker Supervisor will also contact the ICWA coordinator in any county receiving a displaced Indian Child so that any available services can be provided to the child and family.
Essential Function:	7. Volunteers
Process Description:	Should the situation deem it necessary the American Red Cross is called in to respond to the affected area and provide trained volunteers. Any other volunteers offering assistance will be directed to the OES Commander on scene for instruction.