

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN

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CWS Disaster Response Criteria A:	Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for CWS children, Probation children, non-minor dependents, including non-minor dependents residing in foster care, out-of-county placements, children placed in or out of California through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), out-of-state non-minor dependents under county care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster:
Essential Function:	1. Identification and location process of CWS children, Probation children, non-minor dependents, including those in probation residing in foster care, out-of-county placements, ICPC children, and out-of-state non-minor dependents that may be displaced.
Process Description:	<p>Del Norte Department of Health and Human Services Child Welfare Services (CWS) maintains a master file of all Del Norte County children and non-minor dependents (NMD) placed in foster care. Information is updated on a monthly basis to ensure that accurate placement information is available to the Supervisors and Program Managers. Each social worker will maintain current contact information for each child on their caseload, including names of care providers, telephone numbers, mailing and physical addresses.</p> <p>Caregivers are required to keep a current list of emergency telephone numbers, discuss emergency</p>

	<p>situations with children, and have a plan for the child and family/caregiver to get to a safe place. Each caregiver must also provide to their social worker, a list of telephone numbers and possible locations they plan to go in the event of an emergency.</p> <p>In the event of a disaster, the Crisis Team (Attachment 1-A) will contact each employee over whom he/she exercises supervision to inform of the disaster. Social Workers will be asked to contact the placement/residence/school of each child on their caseload to verify the location and condition of each child. The court services supervisor will coordinate with the Probation Department in the location and condition of these minors. Safe Measures® may be utilized by staff with a Safe Measures logon and can be accessed from any computer with internet capabilities.</p> <p>The social worker will report back on the condition and location of each child and this information is then provided to the Crisis Team Leader.</p>
Essential Function:	2. Communication process with child care providers
Process Description:	<p>Social workers are responsible for verifying the location of each child on their caseload. During this process of verification, the child may be at their child care provider's home. Staff would then make contact with the child care provider to obtain pertinent information related to the condition of the child.</p> <p>The primary method of communicating with child care providers will be by telephone or cell phone. If phone contact is not possible, the provider will be contacted by email and/or in-person by a social worker or Probation Department, as appropriate.</p> <p>Neither Child Welfare nor Probation has oversight over family child care providers.</p>
Essential Function:	3. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event known in advance
Process Description:	<p>For events known in advance, such as an approaching Tsunami, Child Welfare Services will follow existing standard evacuation procedures as currently in place and outlined in the Del Norte Operations Area Emergency Operations (OES) plan. The Crisis Team Leader will act when they have been contacted by the Director of Health and Human Services.</p> <p>In the event the Director is unavailable the Crisis Team leader will contact Del Norte County's Emergency Services Coordinator and/or Liaison Officer to coordinate emergency evacuation at the Del Norte County Office of Emergency Services (707) 465-0430 ext. 376. (Contact numbers are</p>

	provided on Attachment 1-B).
Essential Function:	4. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event not known in advance
Process Description:	The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Director or designee will contact the Crisis Team Leader regarding evacuation procedures. In the event the Director is not available, the crisis team leader will contact Del Norte County Emergency Services Coordinator and/or Liaison Officer to coordinate emergency evacuations. (Contact numbers are provided on Attachment 1-B).
Essential Function:	5. Identification of shelters
Process Description:	<p>The Crisis Team Leader or Acting Team Leader will contact Del Norte County Emergency Services Coordinator to obtain information and updates on shelter locations and availability. According to the Del Norte Operational Area Emergency Operators Plan (2005), predetermined shelters will be determined by the Office of Emergency Services (Attachment 1-C).</p> <p>The Crisis Team Leader will coordinate transportation to designated sites if such transportation cannot be provided by the care provider in order to ensure safety to identified children or children and their care providers.</p>
Essential Function:	6. Parental notification procedures
Process Description:	The social workers that are assigned to the specific children/youth will contact the parents and/or legal guardians either by phone or in-person regarding their child's safety and condition. This information will be recorded and available to the Crisis Team Leader in a time frame designated by the Crisis Team Leader.
Essential Function:	7. Alternative processes for providing continued services
Process Description:	Supervisors and social workers are assigned to provide supervision and child abuse or neglect investigations on a rotating schedule. Employee's home, cell, and work phone numbers are to be kept current to ensure that employees can be contacted as needed. The existing 24 hour hotline phone number will be used for the public and emergency personnel to contact Children's Services. Investigations and service delivery shall be triaged and coordinated with first responders and emergency personnel.

Essential Function:	8. Staff assignment process
Process Description:	The Crisis Team will assign available staff to determine priorities of need based on issues including medical, mental health, or other special needs. Del Norte County Child Welfare Services maintains a list of back-up crisis team members (Attachment 1-D) in the event members of the Crisis Team are unavailable.
Essential Function:	9. Workload planning
Process Description:	In the event that members of the Crisis Team or Back-up Crisis Team members are unavailable, the Crisis Team Leader will be responsible for delegating workload responsibilities to include the recruitment of other Social Service Branch staff persons to execute the responsibilities of the Crisis Team.
Essential Function:	10. Alternative locations for operations
Process Description:	In the event that DHHS, Social Services Branch at 880 Northcrest Drive, Crescent City is not accessible or able to sustain operations, the alternate location will be designated by the Director of DHHS. This information will be relayed to the crisis team and other available staff via all available communication methods.
Essential Function:	11. Orientation and ongoing training
Process Description:	<p>A completed disaster plan will be provided to all staff and made available on the X: Drive, which is accessible to all CWS staff. CWS supervisors will review the CWS Disaster Response Plan with staff quarterly and provide training at unit meetings and during new worker orientation. Disaster training will be conducted by the supervisors at unit meetings.</p> <p>A care provider letter will be developed that will include disaster information. This letter will be mailed to current care providers and given to new care providers at the initial placement of a child.</p>
CWS Disaster Response Criteria B:	Respond, as appropriate, to new CWS cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases:
Essential Function:	1. Investigation process
Process Description:	Providing emergency response and essential services will be top priority in the event of a disaster

	and will continue to be provided from current facilities or from alternate locations. CWS investigation policies and procedures will be followed to the extent possible, utilizing available staff. CWS will remain in contact with OES to determine accessibility to the area where the child is located. CWS will coordinate with local law enforcement to gain accessibility or to assist in investigations when necessary.
Essential Function:	2. Determine circumstances surrounding the child’s potential entrance
Process Description:	Each referral will be assessed on its merits to determine if the report of abuse or neglect requires an immediate response or a 10-day response. Crisis Team Member will designate staff to respond to reports of abuse or neglect that are determined to require an immediate response and to conduct investigations in accordance with state regulations.
Essential Function:	3. Implementation process for providing new services
Process Description:	Ongoing case management will be limited to the highest risk, with critical needs until disaster activities have been concluded. Cases will be reviewed by available staff and supervisors to determine those in the greatest need and staff will respond accordingly. CWS will implement new services according to standard policies and procedures to the extent possible during the disaster.
Essential Function:	4. Services emphasizing reunification due to disaster
Process Description:	Depending on the type and location of the emergency, new reunification cases will be assessed and services provided in accordance with Child Welfare Services policies/procedures, court requirements, and state and federal guidelines. The crisis team leader or designee would coordinate new services as needed.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria C:	Address and provide care for unaccompanied minors and unaccompanied non-minor dependents:
Essential Function:	1. Structure – child welfare personnel
Process Description:	During a disaster, CWS will remain as currently structured. In the event an unaccompanied minor is found during a disaster, available staff will respond to the location. During a disaster, all Child Welfare staff are “on-call” as disaster workers and adjustments to our structure will be on an “as needed” basis.
Essential Function:	2. Address language barriers to communicate quickly and effectively

Process Description:	CWS currently has one bi-lingual Spanish speaking social worker. The Department of Health and Human Services has employees who are proficient in Spanish and Hmong. Social workers can also access Telecommunication Device for the Deaf, American Sign Language, and Language Line for translating other languages. If an unaccompanied minor does not speak English, the responding worker can access translators.
Essential Function:	3. Determine likelihood of reunification and steps toward reunification
Process Description:	<p>Child Welfare staff will respond to notification of unaccompanied minors and gather information about where the child lives and names and locations of relatives. Every effort will be made to locate parents/relatives in the local area. If necessary, CWS staff will utilize CWS/CMS and other family finding tools to locate parents/relatives.</p> <p>In the event the parent/guardian/caregiver of the unaccompanied child cannot be located within 48 judicial hours the DHHS will follow the directives of Division 31 Welfare and Institutions /Code for children that have been detained.</p> <p>If Child Welfare staff is unable to identify or locate relatives, the unaccompanied minor will be placed into foster care. If relative/NREFM placements are identified, they will be approved in accordance with Del Norte Department of Health and Human Services policies and state regulations.</p>
Essential Description:	4. Assess and make a determination within 30 days
Process Description:	<p>Del Norte Child Welfare Services will follow federal regulations of Division 31 on assessment and determinations for Child Welfare cases. If the unaccompanied minor is placed into foster care, the minor will be assessed and services will be provided in accordance with policies and state regulations.</p> <p>Child Welfare Services will continue to utilize all available family finding resources to locate parents or relatives until the unaccompanied minor can be reunified with relatives.</p>

CWS Disaster Response Criteria D:	Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential CWS personnel who are displaced because of a disaster:
Essential Function:	1. Communication structure – staff
Process Description:	<p>Each staff person will ensure their phones are charged on a daily basis and maintained in good working order. Master lists containing contact information for all staff including home phone, cell phone and emergency contacts are maintained and updated as changes occur.</p> <p>In the event that a social worker or other essential child welfare services employee is displaced, they will attempt to contact his/her immediate supervisor. If the employee is unable to reach his/her supervisor, he/she will attempt to reach either of the Program Managers. In the event that the displaced employee is unable to reach the either of the Program Managers, the employee will attempt to contact another Social Worker. If necessary the displaced employee will attempt to contact law enforcement to report his/her status and request that the information is forwarded to the Crisis Team Leader.</p> <p>All Child Welfare Services staff home and cell phone numbers are maintained in the after hours bag, as well as a master copy in the office.</p> <p>Depending on the location and type of emergency information may be communicated via telephone, text messages, email, or portable radio. If no other communication system is available, employees should listen to local radio, local television stations, or view the Del Norte County website for reporting instructions.</p>
Essential Function:	2. Communication structure – CWS personnel (phone tree)
Process Description:	<p>All Child Welfare workers home and cell phone numbers are updated and maintained on a master contact list. (Attachment 2-A).</p>
Essential Function:	3. Communication structure – contracted services
Process Description:	<p>Child Welfare Services contracts with an answering service, which has the number of the on-call phone at all times when the office is closed. In the event of a disaster, the Team Leader may designate a member of the team to contact contracted service providers such as Remi-Vista to update service plans on mutual clients. (Attachments 2-B and 2-D).</p>

Essential Function:	4. Communication process when all normal channels are unavailable
Process Description:	If the disaster disrupts all normal channels of communication, the displaced employee will make reasonable ongoing efforts to initiate contact with child welfare personnel through non-conventional channels for purposes of notifying the agency of their displaced status. Additionally, the Supervisors and Program Manager will make reasonable ongoing efforts to initiate contact with employees believed to be displaced.
Essential Function:	5. Communication frequency
Process Description:	Communication with social workers and other essential child welfare personnel whether or not they are displaced because of an emergency or disaster shall be maintained on a daily basis during the emergency.
Essential Function:	6. Communication with media
Process Description:	The Director of Health and Human Services is the contact person between DHHS and any media sources.
Essential Function:	7. Communication with volunteers
Process Description:	Program managers, supervisors, or designated personnel will contact volunteers via the master contact list as appropriate.
Essential Function:	8. Establishment of a toll-free number prior to disaster including Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD)
Process Description:	Del Norte Child Welfare Services has access to a toll-free telephone number. The Del Norte Office of Emergency Services Operations Center which will have access to hotline number and other emergency communication equipment. This equipment is available to CWS staff.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria E:	Preserve essential program records:
Essential Function:	1. Record preservation process

Process Description:	Del Norte Child Welfare Services will maintain both a computerized file (CWS/CMS) and hard copy file for all children and families receiving child welfare services. It is the responsibility of the social workers to ensure all records are secured during an emergency. The program manager will ensure that all closed child welfare cases are secured during an emergency.
Essential Function:	2. Use of off-site back-up system
Process Description:	In the event of an emergency or disaster, Del Norte County Child Welfare Services will make reasonable efforts to utilize a back-up record storage system. Such efforts shall include: utilizing office laptops for record storage during the emergency; accessing CWS/CMS remotely and recording case information during an emergency or disaster; storing identified case records on storage disks or other identified storage systems during an emergency or disaster.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria F:	Coordinate services and share information with other states and counties; include a description of the process utilized by the county to ensure that information regarding children placed pursuant to the ICPC occurs with both the sending state and CDSS:
Essential Function:	1. ICPC reporting process must include a process that disseminates information to both the sending state and CDSS
Process Description:	<p>ICPC placements are identified in CWS/CMS and on the monthly updates of ICPC placement log. The ICPC “courtesy supervision” social workers will check on the safety of the children assigned to them in the affected area by completing the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact the caretakers (which could include parents, relative, and non-related extended family) by telephone or in person (if accessible). 2. Follow up with a face to face visit with the family. 3. Identify, locate and continue services for children under their supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster. <p>The primary ICPC contact person is the Court Services Supervisor (Attachment 2-C) who is responsible for communicating to the ICPC administrators from the placing county and CDSS, on the condition of all children who have been placed in Del Norte County. This information will be provided via telephone or other means, if telephone access is unavailable.</p>

Essential Function:	2. Mental health providers
Process Description:	The primary mental health providers for Del Norte County are: Mental Health Branch and Remi-Vista. DHHS will work collaboratively with Del Norte County Mental Health and Remi-Vista during an emergency. (Attachment 2-D).
Essential Function:	3. Courts
Process Description:	The Court Services Supervisor or designee is responsible for coordinating with County Counsel staff regarding court matters. (Attachment 3-A).
Essential Function:	4. Federal partners
Process Description:	The crisis team will utilize liaisons at California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and other state resources. The County will also follow FEMA and NIMS guidelines for emergency disasters. Department of Health and Human Services existing 24 hours hotline number will be used for the public and emergency personnel to contact CWS. DHHS internet site will be updated with emergency information.
Essential Function:	5. CDSS
Process Description:	The Program Manager and appropriate department staff will be in contact with CDSS. CDSS will be notified of the dedicated phone line.
Essential Function:	6. Tribes
Process Description:	Court records or CWS/CMS will be reviewed for identified children. Social worker/probation officer will contact the appropriate tribe to provide updates on mutual clients. (Attachment 3-B).
Essential Function:	7. Volunteers
Process Description:	Child Welfare will coordinate with the County of Del Norte Office of Emergency Planning and the American Red Cross to obtain volunteers as needed.