

## **INTAKE/AFTER HOURS PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Sandy Bay CFS ("the Agency") maintains as primary its legally mandated responsibility to ensure the safety and protection of children throughout its work with families in the community.

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Agency has a service structure in place that ensures prompt and appropriate responses to reports or referrals concerning children in need of protection. The intake/after hours unit is an emergency service responding to crisis situations and emergent protection matters outside the regular day time hours of the Agency.

The mandate of the service is to ensure the safety of children in the short term, until the assigned worker or a new worker is assigned to the case. The service philosophy is to make every effort to keep families intact. When this is not possible, as evidenced by the risk factor inherent in the referral, the Agency will seek out family, friends or community as a resource to avoid apprehension. The role of the intake/after hours service is to provide emergency services to children and families after regular business hours. It is not the role of this service to provide services to families that is not emergent or that falls within the regular duties of the assigned worker.

All agency staff who carry out intake/after hours investigations are officers of the Agency, with the authority of the legislation to take whatever actions are necessary to ensure the safety of the child(ren) believed to be in need of protection.

### **PROTOCOLS FOR THE ASSIGNMENT OF WORKERS TO THE INTAKE/AFTER HOURS**

All the agency staff involved in the provision of child and family services are assigned one week on the on-call schedule. The staff are provided with a vehicle, a satellite telephone and a schedule of back up personnel they can contact. The on-call staff also have a list of the emergency homes which could be utilized if a child has to be removed from his/her home on an emergency basis.

The workers involved in the intake/after hours have a working knowledge of the *Child and Family Services Act* and regulations, intake policies and procedures and a registry of the community resources related to services for children and families.

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### **TRAINING**

The workers involved in the intake/after hours service will be trained to develop skills in crisis intervention, child abuse risk assessment, interpersonal communication and multi-disciplinary teamwork. Staff are also encouraged to work in an integrated service framework with other community resources to ensure that critical services are delivered in a timely manner.

### **HOURS OF THE INTAKE/AFTER HOURS SERVICE**

The intake/after hours service are available 24 hours per day, seven days a week.

### **REMUNERATION**

All agency staff, excluding administrative staff, are required to assist in the provision of on-call duties as part of their job responsibilities. This is compensated by time off; two (2) days off for every week of on-call duty. One week of on-call duty consist on a weekend, from 8:30 AM Friday to 8:30 AM Monday, and each workday from 4:30PM to 8:30AM the following morning. Procedures are outlined in the On-Call Duty Book. If a statutory holiday occurs during the week, the worker on-call will be allowed one (1) additional day off for each statutory holiday.

Time off in lieu of weekend duty must be taken prior to the next on-call duty period. The time off cannot be taken with holidays and must be negotiated with the immediate supervisor.

### **SERVICE REQUESTS FOR INTAKE/AFTER HOURS SERVICE**

- The agency worker on-call will be available to receive requests for service as per his/her schedule for on-call;
- The hours for the service is from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 a.m.;
- If the call is received between the hours of 4:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. the worker is expected to respond by telephone or by a home visit;
- If the call is received after 9:00 p.m., the on-call worker will request back up from another staff person and/or DOPS (See Personnel Policies and Procedures Policy Manual on Health and Safety-Sec.24);
- If a significant issue arises on an open case, the on-call worker may consult with the assigned worker or the worker's supervisor. Every effort will be made to ensure that the work response of the intake/after hours worker is consistent with the on going case plan. The decision, however, regarding case investigations, apprehensions and placements is the responsibility of the intake/after hours worker during the hours of its operation. The more information available to the intake/after hours worker, the more informed the decision will be in the response to the call; and

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- The on-call worker will respond to the call and will assess the validity of the call and take the required action to resolve the issues which necessitated the call.
- The case referral will be reviewed with the supervisor at the opening of the business hours the following day.

### **RECORDING**

All information pertaining to the call will be recorded on an intake document. The information will be placed on the child/family file (if open to the Agency) or will require a new file to be opened to ensure that the follow up work will be done. The intake information will be forwarded to the appropriate supervisor the following day. In the case of a weekend, the information would be provided Monday morning.

### **SERVICE REQUESTS FOR MONITORING A FAMILY**

The intake/after hours on-call worker may receive a service request to check on a family due to concerns of neglect or associated issues over the course of the weekend. The on-call worker will make one visit to the home and complete an assessment. The exceptions will be as follows:

- The on-call worker will continue to return to the home if on the first visit no one is home;
- The on-call worker will make subsequent visits if the children are in the care or under a supervision order and the concerns are substantial;
- The on-call worker may make a second visit if in the initial assessment the situation raises some concerns but not presently sufficient enough to warrant the removal of the children.

### **SERVICE REQUESTS FOR FOOD VOUCHERS**

The on-call worker will provide food vouchers to families on an emergency basis. The guiding principle will be that the voucher will assist the family and the Agency will not have to bring the child(ren) into care.

### **SERVICE REQUESTS FOR TRANSPORTING CHILDREN**

These requests will be arranged with the assigned worker. However, it should be noted that the assigned worker should make every effort to arrange for transportation during the regular hours of work. These after hour requests are often difficult for the on-call worker as other matters may take a higher priority. The on-call worker will review the escort policy if a trip is being made outside the community.

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### **SERVICE REQUESTS TO SEARCH FOR AWOL WARDS**

The on-call worker will accommodate requests to search for AWOL wards if the level of risk is high. If the on-call worker is to carry out a search, a physical description and a picture of the ward should accompany the service request.

### **SERVICE REQUESTS TO PLACE CHILDREN**

The on-call worker will only place children on an emergency basis as a response to the call that they received. The safety of the child is critical to any plan. The on-call worker may also have to respond to a breakdown of a placement in a foster home. The assigned worker will be notified the following day of the action taken. Again, the safety of the child must be addressed.

### **SERVICE REQUEST FOR TAXI AUTHORIZATION**

The assigned worker is encouraged to pre-arrange the use of a taxi during the regular office hours. The intake/after hours staff person will assess each request by a client for a taxi and/or bus tickets on an individual basis.