

# Child Welfare Practice Communication

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December 11, 2024

To: Child Welfare Staff

From: Dorene Perez, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Child Welfare

Subject: When parents are refusing to pick up their children/youth from county detention

## Purpose:

This communication provides guidance to Child Welfare Staff when a call is received from a County Juvenile Court regarding a youth not under DCYF's placement and care authority (PCA), who has been released by the court, but their legal parent or guardian is refusing to pick up the youth.

## Practice Steps:

In cases where the legal parent or guardian is refusing to take custody of their child from the local Juvenile Court and there is no allegation of C/AN or imminent risk, DCYF will screen the intake and respond as follows:

### Intake Screening and Response

- 1) Utilize policy, statute and the SDM tool as a guide to determine if the situation meets the standard for screen-in to CPS or non-CPS response.
- 2) If the family or child is calling to request services, the intake is screened in for FRS (over 12) or FVS (under 12), depending on the age of the child.
- 3) If a hospital/facility is calling regarding a caretaker refusing to take custody of their child and there is no allegation of C/AN or imminent risk, the report is screened in as a **CFWS** Intake.
  - a) In instances where the hospital discharge could require a placement, screen calls in with a 24-hour non-CPS response.
  - b) If a follow-up call is received from the juvenile court inquiring about the response from the field on a prior reported incident, enter a case note and notify the assigned worker via email.
- 4) Notify the Regional Juvenile Court Liaison of the intake and that there is a child who is at the juvenile court or county detention facility with no one to pick them up.

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**FRS, FVS or CFWS Response**

If the child/youth is not under DCYF placement and care authority (PCA), the assigned caseworker will:

- 1) Complete all casework activities required of the assigned program.
- 2) Partner with the juvenile court and family to identify needed and available resources to support the family in caring for their child/youth.
- 3) If the family consents to services, engage with the child/youth and family to:
  - a) Develop a case plan,
  - b) Make appropriate referrals
  - c) Facilitate access and engagement with services, programs and other agencies.
- 4) Attempt to obtain signed consents from child/youth and/or parent(s) or legal guardian to release/share information with the juvenile court. If releases are not obtained, DCYF can only share information allowed by federal or state law.
- 5) Obtain consent to coordinate and facilitate an FTDM or other appropriate shared planning meeting including representatives from the juvenile court, child/youth as developmentally appropriate, family, community supports, other state agencies and community-based providers (e.g. DDA, HCA, Coordinated Care of Washington (CCW) or other Managed Care Organization (MCO), school).
- 6) Provide concrete supports to meet basic needs of a child/youth while at the juvenile court (i.e. clothing and/or other authorized resources) if necessary.
- 7) Provide assistance with coordinating school access/activities if necessary.
- 8) Search for child/youth’s other parent or relative support options for the child/youth that the family can consider, and facilitate accessing other non-treatment placement options, if signed release of information has been obtained. **DCYF does not make placement decisions for children/youth who are not under our placement and care authority.**

**Supports and Resources:**

- A Foundations of Practice will be scheduled in January 2025 to provide additional training and support around this topic. Stay tuned for scheduling.

**DCYF Regional Juvenile Court Liaisons**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Phone</b>
<b>1</b>	Jessica Curry	<a href="mailto:jessica.curry@dcyf.wa.gov">jessica.curry@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	509-953-1414

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<b>HQ</b>	Jennifer Personius	<a href="mailto:jennifer.personius@dcyf.wa.gov">jennifer.personius@dcyf.wa.gov</a>	425-691-0323

**Questions:**

- Contact Jennifer Personius, Systems of Care Administrator, at 425-691-0323 or [Jennifer.personius@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:Jennifer.personius@dcyf.wa.gov).
- View all Child Welfare Practice Communications on the [Child Welfare Intranet](#).

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