



Arizona Department of Child Safety

MEMORANDUM

TO: DCS Staff All

FROM: Robert Bell, Bureau Chief, Field Investigations

DATE: November 5, 2014

SUBJECT: Investigation Practice Initiatives¹

It is with great excitement that I announce two additional practice initiatives that will improve our ability to deliver best outcomes to our children and families. The two initiatives are the **Pending Closure** process and the **Administrative Closure** process. These two initiatives, outlined below, take effect immediately, are now reflected in policy and are accompanied by the attached reference documents.

I. Pending Closure

The Pending Closure process is to be used by all investigative Specialists for reports where the investigation has been completed and the case has not been transferred for ongoing services. Investigators, when they have ensured the proper completion of their CSRA, will place the case in the pending closure status. The attached reference document titled "**How to Put a Case in Pending Closure Status**" outlines step by step the process on how to complete this task. Once the case is put in this status, the report will automatically be removed from the Specialist's directory and will then be found in the pending closure section of CHILDS.

This process will allow Supervisors to see an organized report of which cases are ready for their review for closure. Supervisors will have the ability to see in real time the pending closure cases for their unit as well as for an individual Specialist. The attached reference document titled "**How to Find Your Unit's Pending Closure Cases**" outlines how Supervisors and Assistant Program Managers can access this information. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring the pending closure cases and ensuring the reports are reviewed in a timely manner. Assistant Program Managers are responsible for monitoring the pending closure cases in their section and ensuring that Supervisors are reviewing and closing the cases in their units. The implementation of this process will also allow the agency to better identify where a report is in the life of an investigation, enabling a more strategic response to our capacity issues.

¹ This memo includes the Initiatives previously sent via e-mail in November 2014.

II. Administrative Closure

The Administrative Closure process will enable Supervisors to approve cases for closure without conducting Clinical Supervision. The attached Departmental Form titled "**Administrative Closure Tool**" will now be used to close cases that do not meet any of the following criteria:

1. **Child in home under the age of 4**
2. **Proposing to substantiate the Allegation Findings**
3. **Family has prior DCS history within the last 24 months**
4. **Report contains criminal conduct allegations**

If any of the listed criteria is met, clinical supervision must be completed prior to case closure.

The Administrative Closure Tool must be completed and uploaded into CHILDS for each case that has been closed using this method. Once uploaded, Supervisors simply document in the Clinical Supervision section of the CSRA that the Administrative Closure Tool has been completed and uploaded into the case. The case will then be ready for closure. Included with the Administrative Closure Tool are detailed instructions for Supervisors on how to complete this process.

While it is anticipated that the addition of the Administrative Closure process will provide Supervisors with a more efficient practice for closing a significant portion of cases, this is not a practice which promotes cutting corners or not conducting our work in a thorough manner. The Administrative Closure Tool mirrors policy and the CSRA Practice Guide. Supervisors can feel confident that when the tool has been used correctly, a thorough investigation has been completed. It remains critically important that Specialists and Supervisors document their actions thoroughly throughout the course of the investigation. Also included is the attachment titled "**Simple Documentation Examples**" which Specialists and Supervisors may use as a guide to correctly yet concisely document actions at key points in an investigation.

To support the practice changes detailed above, a special email account has been created where questions can be answered and guidance can be provided. Please feel free to direct any questions regarding these initiatives to **+DCS Field Support**. We have also scheduled 3, one hour conference calls to provide an overview of these initiatives and to answer any questions you may have. Please refer to the attached document titled "**Field Support Conference Calls**" for times and dial in information for these calls.