

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

County & Agency Name: Madera County Department of Social Services

Date Completed: 02/16/2011

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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.

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

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 Child Welfare Administrative Analyst shall maintain a comprehensive list of all children under the care, custody, and control of the Agency on a weekly basis utilizing a computer-generated report from Business Objects. This list shall be kept in two separate offices, the Child Welfare Administrative Analyst's office and the Child Welfare Program Manager's office, labeled, "ER Disaster Child Contact Roster." This list can be accessed in the event of an emergency wherein CWS personnel are required to contact each foster child to ensure their safety.

	<p>If possible, during normal working hours, all CWS personnel with an assigned caseload will contact the children and/or their care provider on their assigned caseloads via telephone and/or personal home visits utilizing CMS/CWS or the physical case file. If the assigned CWS staff person is not available, the Officer of the Day or another assigned CWS staff person shall make the contacts. Caseload coverage shall be ensured by each CWS Supervisor, Program Manager or Deputy Director, in said order. Vocational Assistants and/or other CWS support staff may be assigned to help contact all of the children.</p> <p>Probation:</p> <p>The probation department will routinely prepare a list of all children in group homes and foster care with names of group homes, addresses, phone numbers and two or more contact personnel. The list will also contain information about special medical or mental health needs of the children in placement and the names, addresses and phone numbers of parents and or guardians. The lists will be e-mailed and printed out by all facility and probation managers and the information will be kept at the four offices. The four offices include the Juvenile Services Division, Juvenile Detention Facility, Adult Services Division and the Administration Offices. In addition, the placement officer, the division supervisor and back up placement officer will retain a copy of the information with them at all times. The officers are responsible for keeping the information in a secure location for confidentiality purposes. Obsolete copies will be periodically mechanically shredded.</p> <p>The placement officer or other designated staff will contact each group/foster home provider by telephone to determine the safety and security status of each child or children in their care.</p>
Essential Function:	<p>2. Communication process with child care providers</p>
Process Description:	<p>If possible, during normal working hours, all CWS personnel with an assigned caseload will contact the child care provider on their assigned caseloads via telephone and/or personal home visits utilizing CMS/CWS or the physical case file. If the assigned CWS staff person is not available, the Officer of the Day or another assigned CWS staff person shall make the contacts. Caseload coverage shall be ensured by each CWS Supervisor, Program Manager or Deputy Director, in said order. Vocational Assistants and/or other CWS support staff may be assigned to help contact all of the child care providers. Contacts must also be done on behalf of all children placed via the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children and children residing in Madera County whereby courtesy supervision services are being provided. Additionally, contacts will be made for all children placed in Madera County upon request by the county of jurisdiction in the event of a disaster.</p>

	<p>Probation: In the event of a disaster, the placement officer or other designated staff will contact each group/foster home provider by telephone to determine the safety and security status of each child or children in their care. If the probation department is satisfied that the safety and security of the child is not in jeopardy, the child/children will remain with the provider.</p>
Essential Function:	3. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event known in advance
Process Description:	In addition to the County Emergency Plan maintained through County Administration, child welfare services will continue to provide services as outlined in this document.
Essential Function:	4. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event not known in advance
Process Description:	In addition to the County Emergency Plan maintained through County Administration, child welfare services will continue to provide services as outlined in this document.
Essential Function:	5. Identification of shelters
Process Description:	<p>Child welfare services (CWS) staff shall be assigned to a designated shelter and/or command post to process the initial intake and registration of unaccompanied minors, as well as make efforts to reunify said children with their parents, legal guardian or responsible relatives in accordance with regulations and legislation governing child welfare practice, if needed.</p> <p>If a child becomes displaced due to a disaster (foster child or unaccompanied minor), CWS personnel will first attempt to locate family members for immediate placement. If no safe relative is located, CWS personnel shall locate foster homes, County and/or Foster Family Agency (FFA), for the child(ren).</p> <p>Should the availability of local foster homes be limited, CWS personnel shall contact their Supervisor or Manager for placement outside the County lines and/or Out of State. The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children Administrator in an adjoining State will be contacted for out of State placement should that become necessary or in the case of relative placement.</p> <p>Probation: Children who cannot be returned to their parent or guardian will be temporarily housed within the juvenile detention facility. Probation staff will provide around the clock supervision.</p>
Essential Function:	6. Parental notification procedures

Process Description:

As soon as possible after ensuring the safety of all children in foster care, CWS personnel will make due diligent attempts to notify parents and/or legal guardians of the safety of his/her child, unless parental rights have been terminated.

Probation:

The placement officer will be responsible for contacting parents and advising of the circumstances and the status of their child, etc.

Essential Function:

7. Alternative processes for providing continued services

Process Description:

CWS staff shall ensure ongoing case management duties are fulfilled on behalf of all dependent children and their families as applicable to current legislation, regulations, and Agency policies guiding child welfare practice. CWS staff assigned to a designated shelter and/or command post will process the initial intake and registration of unaccompanied minors, as well as make all reasonable efforts to provide supportive services to all children under its care, custody and control, those under its temporary care and supervision and the children’s care providers during the disaster.

CWS personnel shall be assigned to rotating shifts for the care and supervision of detained children. The care and supervision site may be in a designated shelter or other facility that is safe and has food, water and proper sanitation for the children in those instances that traditional placements cannot be made.

The Public Health Nurse will keep a record (log) of every child in foster care that has a special need, takes psychotropic medication, and/or has a medical condition that requires special equipment. This log will be updated on a monthly basis and will be provided and attached to the “ER Disaster Child Contact Roster”. The log will be updated by the Public Health Nurse.

Probation:

The probation department will secure a Standing Order for the Juvenile Court to allow for the temporary housing of placement children in the County juvenile detention facilities for the purpose of securing their safety until suitable and safe housing can be established.

The Public Health Nurse will keep a record (log) of every child in placement that has a special need, takes psychotropic medication, and/or has a medical condition that requires special equipment.

Essential Function:	8. Staff assignment process
Process Description:	<p>On the basis of an assessment, the Program Manager, in conjunction with a Deputy Director, will delineate the staff needed to address the unique needs presented by the emergency. CWS staff shall be assigned to a designated shelter and/or command post to process the initial intake and registration of unaccompanied minors.</p> <p>Probation: The probation department will dispatch all available staff, including supervisors, probation officers and facility officers to the locations where children must be retrieved and relocated. The JSD division director and supervisors will be primarily responsible for contacting probation personnel and coordinating this operation.</p>
Essential Function:	9. Workload planning
Process Description:	<p>After ensuring the safety of their own families, CWS staff shall immediately report to their designated work station and conduct their assigned duties and responsibilities, as long as it is safe. If the assigned CWS staff person is not available, the Officer of the Day or another assigned CWS staff person shall ensure caseload coverage. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring all caseloads are covered. Vocational assistants and/or CWS support staff may be assigned to help in this area.</p> <p>CWS personnel shall continue searching for placement on behalf of detained children until safe, suitable and approved/licensed placements are found and made. During the placement search, CWS personnel shall be assigned to rotating shifts for the care and supervision of detained children. The care and supervision site may be in a designated shelter or other facility that is safe and has food, water and proper sanitation for the children.</p> <p>CWS personnel shall assist “unaccompanied minors” resulting from the disaster. These children may be delivered to CWS personnel, sent to emergency shelters and/or must be responded to by CWS personnel in other areas of the County. CWS personnel shall make every effort to locate the children’s parents, legal guardians and/or responsible relatives to release the children to during or after the disaster in accordance with the Welfare and Institutions Code and Agency policies and procedures.</p> <p>Probation: Probation staff will provide around the clock supervision of children.</p>

Essential Function:	10. Alternative locations for operations
Process Description:	CWS staff will utilize one of their five offices: 629 building, 700 building, 720 Building, Oakhurst outstation, Chowchilla Outstation, or command post designated by the Madera County Office of Emergency Services. Probation: The probation department will utilize one of four offices: the Juvenile Detention Facility, Juvenile Services Division, Adult Services Division or the Administrative Offices.
Essential Function:	11. Orientation and ongoing training
Process Description:	All employees receive initial disaster readiness orientation and training. Annual disaster readiness training is also provided. Emphasis is placed on the safety and well being of all youth in foster care.
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:	CWS staff will be assigned to a designated shelter and/or command post and be available for 24 hour, 7 day emergency standby to conduct child abuse and neglect referral investigations as reported to the CPS hotline and/or on behalf of families temporarily located in the shelters, if needed. CWS staff located at the shelters shall accept Suspected Child Abuse Reports (SCARs) and respond in accordance with legislation, regulations, and Agency policies dictation child welfare practice.
Essential Function:	2. Implementation process for providing new services
Process Description:	CWS staff shall provide pre-placement preventative services and/or foster care placement services, as appropriate, and as regulated by current legislation, regulations, and Agency policies guiding child welfare practice. In the event of an emergency, foster care eligibility worker(s) shall be called upon to process funds to foster homes, which can include, but are not limited to, clothing, and special/emergency needs. Budget Issuance Clerk(s) will be called upon to issue payments for foster care funding.

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 disaster plan may only be activated by direct consent of the Madera County Department of Social Services Director or designee. In the event of a disaster, all staff will be contacted by their supervisor and/or Program Manager for emergency assignments. Emergency contact numbers are provided quarterly for this purpose.
Essential Function:	2. Communication structure – child welfare personnel (phone tree)
Process Description:	The Director initiates the Disaster Plan procedures. In the event the Director is unavailable, a Deputy Director or designee may initiate the Disaster Plan. Each Deputy Director will contact their immediate staff (Program Managers and Clerical Staff). Each Program Manager will contact their supervisors, who will contact line staff. Probation: In the event of a disaster, the Juvenile Services Division Supervisor will activate the disaster plan and will coordinate communication. The probation department will utilize the phone tree process already in place to contact all available staff to respond to JSD for implementation of emergency services to children in placement. Should the JSD Director be incapacitated, the chain of command will be adhered to for contact of personnel purposes.
Essential Function:	3. Communication structure – contracted services
Process Description:	The phone tree will be updated quarterly to reflect current staff telephone numbers and emergency phone numbers, including those of other critical county departments who provide essential services to foster care children (e.g. Public Health, Behavioral Health) Probation: The phone tree will be updated every three months. The probation department may also utilize two-way radio equipment in the event of telephone service disruption.
Essential Function:	4. Communication process when all normal channels are unavailable
Process Description:	CWS staff will remain in contact via assigned cell phones. Probation: Those who have cell phones,

paggers, or radios, are to turn them on and keep them available for use as needed.

Essential Function: 5. Communication frequency

Process Description: Staff will be kept abreast of all new information as soon as the information is known to the Director, Deputy Directors or Program Managers.

Essential Function: 6. Communication with media

Process Description: Communication with the media will be utilized and authorized by the Madera County Office of Emergency Services. Specific CWS information will be released by the Director or designee to the OES.

Essential Function: 7. Communication with volunteers

Process Description: Communication will be coordinated through the County's Emergency plan.

Essential Function: 8. Establishment of a toll-free number prior to disaster (include TTY)

Process Description: The Madera County Office of Emergency Services will provide a toll free number to the public.

CWS Disaster Response Criteria D: Preserve essential program records:

Essential Function: 1. Record preservation process

Process Description: All eligibility functions and child welfare services documentation are primarily available on-line. If SAWS systems are not available, written documentation will be completed for later entry into the appropriate system.

Essential Function: 2. Use of off-site back-up system

Process Description: The CMS/CWS system, which also contains probation out of home placements, can be accessed through various computers throughout the county and the State.

Process Description: Probation: The probation data base can be accessed through various probation locations or other county agencies throughout the county.

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:	Contacts must be done on behalf of all children placed via the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children and children residing in Madera County under a courtesy supervision services agreement. The CWS staff person assigned to the case will be responsible for contacting the other County or State with jurisdiction of a child to keep them updated on the whereabouts of their child and to arrange for transportation back to said County or State, if necessary.
Essential Function:	2. Mental health providers
Process Description:	Madera County Behavioral Health may be called upon to provide mental health services during and after a disaster, as appropriate.
Essential Function:	3. Courts
Process Description:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Active efforts to follow all Court Orders made prior to the disaster will be made. 2. In the event of a life threatening situation, the CWS staff will require the approval of a program manager and/or Deputy Director to act in opposition to an existing Court Order and a Court Report will be filed as soon as possible explaining why the applicable Court Order could not be followed. 3. If time allows, a Court Order shall be sought for all emergency situations. 4. All other rights given to caretakers and parents by Statute apply during a disaster situation. 5. In the event of a child death, CWS staff shall contact their immediate Supervisor, Manager, or Deputy Director to notify and get further instruction. 6. CWS personnel shall document all efforts, services, contacts and the results in CWS/CMS when reasonably possible, regardless of which child or family it is they come into contact

	<p>with. Hand written notes shall be kept until entry of the data in CWS/CMs. Any required documents or forms must be filled out by hand, if necessary.</p> <p>7. Welfare and Institutions Code Petitions and Reports must be prepared and filed within statutory guidelines during and after a disaster in the event the Court system is functioning. The Agency is still held to statutory requirements for the detention of children if Court days are being counted in the County. All other legal and civil rights accorded to children and their families will also continue to apply during or after a disaster; therefore, CWS personnel will make active efforts to comply with those regulations.</p>
Essential Function:	4. Federal partners
Process Description:	Federal partners will be engaged through the Madera County Emergency Services Office and CDSS as appropriate.
Essential Function:	5. CDSS
Process Description:	The department will collaborate with the CDSS to ensure the safety and well being of children located in Madera County. Updates will be provided during the disaster episode as appropriate.
Essential Function:	6. Tribes
Process Description:	Tribes will be notified in the same fashion as parents and legal guardians regarding the safety and well being of Indian children. If another home/location is needed for tribal children, the tribe will immediately be contacted for placement options. Whenever possible, preference will be given to the tribe.
Essential Function:	7. Volunteers
Process Description:	All Volunteers will be coordinated through the Madera County Office of Emergency Services plan. Volunteers working directly with children will be screened to safeguard dependent children.