

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

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Name/Title: Wendy Kinnear-Rausch, Social Services Program Manager III Telephone #: (408) 975-5623
 Person Managing/Overseeing Emergency Plan Implementation

E-mail Address: wendy.kinnear@ssa.sccgov.org

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.

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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:	Emergency contact information is recorded on all children, families and caregivers in CWS/CMS. A weekly "Emergency Contact Placement" Report lists children with special medical needs (medically fragile), their conditions, caregiver, address and phone number, etc. This report include 4 tabs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Tab - Priority 1 is for Extreme Condition • 2nd Tab - Priority 2 is for Considerable Condition • 3rd Tab - Priority 3 is for Moderate Condition

- 4th Tab for All Conditions

The Department will use the "All Children in Out of Home Placement" report, which contains information about each foster child's social worker, caregiver, address and phone number, etc. The "All Active Cases" report is being enhanced to include not only children in foster care placements of various kinds, but also children with parents and legal guardians, receiving Family Maintenance Services. Additionally, all social work supervisors have been trained to use the SafeMeasures[®] "disaster map" that displays the location of children in placement in a county, overlaid with current natural disasters (wild fires, earthquakes, and flood and tornado warnings). There are two versions of the map: one that displays all children currently placed within a county (regardless of the assigned county); and one that displays all children in currently open cases assigned to a county, no matter what county in which they are placed.

Assuming a disaster locally or within California, social workers will be assigned the task of following-up to determine the status of each child, beginning with medically fragile children and children residing in any severely/acutely impacted area(s) (whether in placement or with a parent/legal guardian), followed by all other children in foster care locally and in California, children with parents and legal guardians, and then children in out-of-state placement (if applicable). (Children in placement out-of-state would be the highest priority if the disaster occurs out-of-state and has little or no substantial impact locally.) Once the social worker makes contact, each child's safety and well-being will be assessed, and if necessary, the family will be direct to disaster relief resources, or if necessary, the child will be removed to a safe living situation.

A. Medically fragile children and those with special needs will be the first priority for SW contact. Staff will first attempt to make direct contact with each child to assess safety, need for emergency assistance and the need for alternative placement arrangements. If telephones are operational, clients will be assessed in the following order: those with Extreme (E) conditions, then Considerable (C), followed by Moderate (M).

B. Staff unable to contact the client by phone will try to contact someone on the caregiver's emergency contact list to assess the client's situation.

C. Staff unable to make direct contact with the client, or the client's relatives or emergency contacts, will notify the police or fire department to request a welfare check on the client. Staff will provide the appropriate client information (name, address, phone, etc.) and report this action back to the office as soon as possible.

2. Communication process with child care providers

Essential Function:

Using the aforementioned placement and active case lists, social workers will contact all foster care providers to ensure the safety and well-being of the foster children. Contact foster care providers for medically fragile child will be given first priority, as will contact with foster care providers living in any area(s) most

Process Description:

	<p>severely/acutely impacted by the disaster. Initial contact with foster care providers will be by telephone using GETS and WPS access, if necessary. If telecommunications are down or if repeated attempts to reach the family are unsuccessful and the provider's designated emergency contact cannot be reached, a social worker will make home visits to verify the status of the foster child.</p> <p>Foster families evacuating the area are instructed to notify the Agency as soon as possible and to continually provide information about their whereabouts and how to contact.</p> <p>DFCS has placed its Online Policies and Procedures (OPP) on the Internet and is updating its Home Page. Disaster Response Plan Information presented on the DFCS Home Page and linked from the OPP. Information will include a general DFCS email address as an alternate for contacting DFCS in case telephone systems are overloaded or inoperative. This will help enable the department to receive messages unit the telephone system is again in operation.</p>
<p>Essential Function:</p>	<p>3. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event known in advance</p>
<p>Process Description:</p>	<p>DFCS staff members will also make certain that all foster care providers possess and practice evacuation plans for the household (e.g., Emergency Plan for Foster Homes – LIC 610B or equivalent).</p> <p>DFCS staff members will be organized to contact children's caregivers by telephone or in person, if necessary and feasible, to ascertain that the caregiver is aware of the pending event and has the means to take protective measures to ensure the safety of children in their care. Contact will be made according to these priorities: 1) caregivers of children with medical special need or special needs that should be accommodated in view of the anticipated event, 2) relatives, 3) non-relative extended family members, 4) county licensed foster parents, 5) FFA certified foster parents, 6) group home providers, 7) parents and legal guardians, 8) ICPC placements (this may be a higher priority if the disaster is expected to more strongly impact another region in the country).</p> <p>All agency buildings will be assessed for potential structural damage in view of the anticipated event. If the Julian Campus Building II site is habitable, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be located on the 5th Floor, California Conference Room with support facilities in nearby conference rooms. If the Julian Campus Building II is not anticipated to be habitable and/or evacuation has been ordered, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be located in the Julian Campus Building I pending Building II being deemed inhabitable. Should the entire Julian Campus remain uninhabitable for an extended period of time, the DFCS EOC will be moved to the Receiving/Assessment/Intake Center).</p> <p>All staff members have been educated about their roles as Disaster Service Workers and will be alerted to the anticipated event and reminded to immediately report to their supervisor or the next available higher ranking manager at pre-designated alternative work locations if the anticipated event occurs. Some staff members may</p>

Essential Function:	be released from duty in view of family or other emergency circumstances.
Process Description:	4. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event not known in advance DFCS staff members will also make certain that all county licensed foster families and approved relative and non-relative extended family member families possess and practice evacuation plans for the household (e.g., Emergency Plan for Foster Homes – LIC 610B or equivalent).
Essential Function:	All agency buildings will be assessed for structural integrity following an event. Santa Clara County is implementing <u>ALERTSCC</u> (http://www.alertscscc.com/), a public and employee emergency notification system that enables the county to contact staff by cell phone, work phone, home phone, work email and home email. Updated employee information will be downloaded into the <u>ALERTSCC</u> system. This system may have the potential to make automatic calls or emails to caregivers to ask them to respond to a survey about the status of their families. All staff are expected to immediately report to their supervisor or the next available higher ranking manager at pre-designated alternative work locations if their worksite is not habitable. Some staff members may be released from duty to check on their families. If the Julian Campus Building II site is habitable, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be located on the 5th Floor-California Conference Room with support facilities in nearby conference rooms. However, if the Julian Campus Building II is not habitable and/or evacuation has been ordered, the EOC will be located, on a short-term basis, in the Julian Campus Building I. Should the entire Julian Campus remain uninhabitable for an extended period of time, the DFCS EOC will be moved to the Receiving/Assessment/Intake Center.
Process Description:	5. Identification of shelters Santa Clara County's Children's Shelter was converted to a Receiving/Assessment/Intake Center (RAIC) on October 1, 2009. Following a disaster, the RAIC will primarily be the site for triaging emergency placement plans for children. The facility is capable of providing for the basic needs of children in temporary custody who cannot be safely placed in the community will relatives or other placement providers. The CCL license capacity of the facility is 132 children, but as many as 50 additional children could be housed at the Shelter if necessary (i.e., using cots, floors, etc.). The Social Services Agency will develop a protocol with the Red Cross to utilize their emergency shelter facilities, if necessary. During a major emergency, the DFCS will process the intake of unaccompanied minors and provide emotional support, nourishment, medical assessment/treatment, and crisis intervention/mental health assessment as needed. When parents, legal guardian or relatives are identified and available (e.g., grandparents, aunts, uncles, adult siblings and other relatives within the 5th degree of relatedness), the children will be released to their custody.

	<p>The Director or designee of the RAIC will identify additional staffing and other resources needed to expand operations. Emergency Satellite Home foster families will be contacted to determine their ability to care for additional children. If the number of displaced children exceeds capacity, the Department will work with the Red Cross to identify additional sites. Sites will be operated by Department staff with Red Cross training in shelter operations, if necessary.</p> <p>DFCS has a core of staff volunteers trained in shelter operations who may be dispatched to assist the Red Cross if the need for care and shelter services exceeds Red Cross capacity.</p>
Essential Function:	6. Parental notification procedures
Process Description:	Following a disaster, the Department will make reasonable efforts to contact the biological parents of the Agency's foster children and provide information about the status of their children as it becomes available.
Essential Function:	7. Alternative processes for providing continued services
Process Description:	<p>Following a disaster, CWS offices will likely be unable to meet all State and Federal regulations within mandated timeframes, and the courts may be temporarily closed and thus unable to issue orders and waivers needed by local CWS agencies. Furthermore, multiple counties are likely to be affected by the disaster and it would be inefficient for them to independently issue separate waivers. The California Department of Social Services should have a set of waivers and orders – e.g. a standing order to allow CWS to authorize medical treatment for children with no parent or guardian available to authorize treatment, orders temporarily extending legal timeframes for response to referrals, etc. – ready for the Governor to sign immediately after a disaster event.</p> <p>Immediately after a disaster, DFCS will dedicate available resources as needed to continue all State and Federal mandated services. The essential functions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving/Assessment/Intake Center • Child Abuse and Neglect Center (CANC) and Emergency Response (ER) • Dependent Intake Investigations (DI) • Family Maintenance Services (FM) • Family Reunification Services (FR) • Permanency Planning Services (PP) <p>8. Staff assignment process</p>
Essential Function:	
Process Description:	An assessment will be made of the number of staff needed to perform essential functions. Staff performing non-essential functions will be reassigned to essential functions. Assignments to essential functions have been established and prioritized in the departments Continuation of Operations Plan.

	<p>All DFCS staff members are designated as "Disaster Service Workers." When a disaster is declared, Disaster Service Workers may be assigned to perform activities outside of department operations that promote the protection of public health and safety or the preservation of lives and property. DFCS staff responsibilities may change as reasonable and necessary to help fulfill the Agency's City, State, and Federally mandated response roles. In addition, DFCS has a core of staff volunteers trained in shelter operations who may be dispatched to assist the Red Cross if the need for care and shelter services exceeds Red Cross capacity.</p>
<p>Essential Function:</p>	<p>9. Workload planning</p>
<p>Process Description:</p>	<p>Immediately following a disaster, ensuring the safety and well-being of the Agency's current foster children – especially the medically at-risk – and unaccompanied minors will be the highest priority. Otherwise, DFCS will assign available staff as necessary to fulfill the agency's disaster response functions and maintain continuity of services to existing and new clients.</p>
<p>Essential Function:</p>	<p>10. Alternative locations for operations</p>
<p>Process Description:</p>	<p>If the Julian Campus Building II site is habitable, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be located on the 5th Floor-California Conference Room with support facilities in nearby conference rooms. However, if the Julian Campus Building II is not habitable and/or evacuation has been ordered, the EOC will be located, on a short-term basis, in the Julian Campus Building I. Should the entire Julian Campus remain uninhabitable for an extended period of time, the DFCS EOC will be moved to the Receiving/Assessment/Intake Center.</p>
<p>Essential Function:</p>	<p>11. Orientation and ongoing training</p>
<p>Process Description:</p>	<p>A. Introduce Staff to the emergency plan and Train Essential Function Managers on Assigned Roles and Responsibilities.</p> <p>All SSA staff will be introduced to the Continuation of Operations Plan.</p> <p>B. Promote and Coordinate Cross-Training Planning by Essential Functions</p> <p>Each essential function manager has identified non-essential staff who could be cross-trained to carry out the necessary activities and tasks required to carry out essential functions. Managers will identify the need for additional staff resources and promote and coordinate cross-training planning for the essential functions in their respective areas with the Social Service Agency's Staff Development Department.</p> <p>C. Coordinate and Monitor that All Employees Have Received Disaster Service Worker (DSW) Training</p> <p>All DFCS staff members have been trained regarding their roles as Disaster Service Workers. General DSW</p>

	training is conducted on an ongoing basis for all SSA employees and includes a video describing the role of the DSW.
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:	New child welfare investigations will be conducted in accordance with State and Federal law; however, under extreme circumstances DFCS may seek permission from the court to extend some State and Federal mandated deadlines.
Essential Function:	2. Implementation process for providing new services
Process Description:	Unaccompanied/displaced children will be taken into temporary custody, per Welfare and Institution Code section 300 (b) and/or (g), and those remaining in the care of DFCS for 48 judicial hours will be petitioned to the Juvenile Dependency Court for protection. Unaccompanied/displaced children will be assisted to reunite with parents, legal guardians or responsible adults with in the 5th degree of relatedness, as well as non-relative extended family members. Media will be used to advertise the phone numbers and assistance center(s) identified geographically and staffed by DFCS staff with GETS and WPS telephone access. Emergency placement planning will be triaged by DFCS staff at the RAIC, utilizing parents, relatives, and Emergency Satellite Home foster families whenever possible and the RAIC facility for emergency shelter, if necessary. Per a protocol to be established, DFCS will also work with the Red Cross to ensure emergency shelter for children, if necessary.
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:	Once the emergency operations plan is activated by the Director of the DFCS, the phone tree will be activated immediately. DFCS emergency staff with GETS and WPS telephone access will contact staff. If staff cannot be reached in person, managers will leave a message and call the next person on the list. If phone service is interrupted or inoperable, managers will try cellular or pay phones if available. If no essential line of communication is available DFCS will establish runners for dissemination of information. If all attempts fail in contacting the Social Services Agency, then Agency personnel at the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) should be contacted. All County employees are designated "Disaster Service Workers."

	SSA may use email alerts and voice messaging system alerts to announce changes in work assignments.
Essential Function:	2. Communication structure – child welfare personnel (phone tree)
Process Description:	See above.
Essential Function:	3. Communication structure – contracted services
Process Description:	All the contractor's will be notified through an email distribution process in the event of an emergency. If Internet access is not available, DFCS will work with Contracts to contact essential contractors by telephone or in-person as indicated.
Essential Function:	4. Communication process when all normal channels are unavailable
Process Description:	In the event of an emergency or disaster situation staff will be instructed to turn their radios to any of the following list of radio stations who will be broadcasting emergency information to and for the General Public: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. KSJO – FM band – 92.3 2. KQED – FM band – 88.5 3. KCBS – AM band – 740 4. KGO – AM band – 810
	SSA has obtained four (4) satellite phones to communicate if all other communication channels are inoperable.
Essential Function:	5. Communication frequency
Process Description:	Staff will be apprised daily with updates and more frequently as circumstances indicate.
Essential Function:	6. Communication with media
Process Description:	Media communications will be handled by Social Services Agency Office.
Essential Function:	7. Communication with volunteers
Process Description:	Recruitment and assignment of emergency volunteers in Santa Clara County is coordinated by CADRE and the Emergency Managers Association. The SSA Disaster Service Worker Coordinator will be the primary point of contact between SSA and the Emergency Operation Center.
Essential Function:	8. Establishment of a toll-free number prior to disaster (include TTY)
Process Description:	We are in the process of establishing a toll-free number that includes TTY.

CWS Disaster Response Criteria D:	Preserve essential program records:
Essential Function:	1. Record preservation process
Process Description:	<p>Julian Building I is the “Super Hub,” which means the computer room at Julian is the “heart of all other systems”. There are routers and T-1’s in the various offices that are connected to the main system and network at Julian. In the event the site at 333 W. Julian Street goes down all offices lose access to systems. IS will have a plan of action in place which prioritizes various systems and in which order they should become available. This prioritization will be derived from what the Agency defines as business priorities. Business operations will function manually, without systems to sustain them for some period of time.</p> <p>Depending on the nature of the disaster or outage the systems could be unavailable for several days. This will necessitate the business operating in back up mode until the systems become available.</p> <p>Backup records can be obtained from: SSA Information Services 333 W. Julian Street, San José, CA 95110 Phone: (408) 491-6500</p> <p>Caseload Listing Reports are available from CWS/CMS and DFCS Supervisors print them on a regular basis to monitor staff’s progress on pending cases.</p> <p>Closed case files are stored in the DFCS clerical area and at the SSA’s Record Retention Center. The building’s fire suppression equipment safeguards against destruction of records by fire.</p> <p>2. Use of off-site back-up system</p>
Essential Function:	2. Use of off-site back-up system
Process Description:	<p>The alternate/preferred option for access to CWS/CMS is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1 - server based (Citrix) access established in Santa Clara County via the local network • Option 2 - MOU with other county or counties for server based access via the internet and designated laptops via internet or users working in the other county • Option 3 - VPN access via state adopted CWS/CMS program if nothing else is available • Active case files are stored at each social worker’s desk and are on-line with CWS/CMS.
CWS Disaster Response Criteria E:	Coordinate services and share information with other states:
Essential	1. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children reporting process

Function:	
Process Description:	Children placed in Santa Clara County through the ICPC from other states will be provided the same essential functions and process as described in the section on "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:	In the event of a disaster in another state(s), DFCS social workers will contact receiving state's social workers to ensure that Santa Clara County children placed in other states through the ICPC are provided the same essential functions and process as described in the section on "Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster." 2. Mental health providers
Process Description:	DFCS and Private and Public Mental Health providers will work together to ensure coordination of services. Interagency agreements and Memoranda of Understanding will be developed in conjunction with County's Continuity of Operations Plan. 3. Courts
Essential Function:	DFCS will follow the protocol established by the Juvenile Dependency Court to ensure continuation of necessary judicial oversight and compliance with laws and rules of court. 4. Federal partners
Process Description:	Coordination with Federal partners will be conducted through the CDSS. 5. CDSS
Essential Function:	DFCS will follow the requirements established by CDSS to maintain essential services dependent upon CDSS involvement. 6. Tribes
Process Description:	DFCS will follow the requirements of the ICWA to maintain essential services for American Indian Children. 7. Volunteers
Essential Function:	
Process Description:	DFCS will explore the anticipated availability of volunteers from community-based organizations.