10-004 Family and Children's Index

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

FIELD OPERATIONS DIRECTIVE

Field Operations Support Services

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S INDEX

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Field Operations Directive is to establish policy and procedures for the use of the Family and Children's Index.

BACKGROUND

On November 28, 2001, Sheriff Baca signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) along with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), the Probation Department, the Department of Mental Health (DMH), the District Attorney's Office (DA), and the Department of Health Services (DHS) regarding the Family and Children's Index (FCI). The FCI is a computerized interagency data information system which is designed to better identify children and families who are at-risk of child abuse and neglect. The data is gathered from existing computer systems within participating County agencies and placed in the FCI data system. The FCI data system ties together basic data about families and children who have had relevant contacts with public agencies and have been identified as at-risk for abuse and neglect. It allows professionals to know when other agencies may have pertinent information about a child or family with whom they are involved. Information may be shared with participating entities through the establishment of Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT). An MDT is three or more persons who are trained in the prevention, identification, and treatment of child abuse and neglect case, as defined in section 18951(d) of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

SPECIAL VICTIMS BUREAU'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Special Victims Bureau (SVB) shall be the Sheriff's Department's central contact for agencies listed in the MOU. SVB shall identify the unit that is handling or has handled the incident and provide the caller with the handling unit's liaison's name and telephone number. SVB shall be responsible for processing all documentation for users of the FCI.

UNIT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Each unit will designate their Detective Bureau Lieutenant as their FCI liaison. If the unit does not have a Detective Bureau Lieutenant, a unit lieutenant will be designated as their FCI liaison.

The liaison shall determine which employees shall have access to the FCI and shall ensure that all users of the FCI assigned to their unit understand that the information discussed is confidential and shall not be discussed

unless pertinent to the case.

The liaison shall be responsible for ensuring that all users at their unit are using the program in accordance with the MOU. A copy of the MOU is available from SVB or on FOSS' website.

The liaison shall receive all routine requests referred by SVB. The liaison shall provide either the requested information themselves, or they may designate someone else to provide the information.

If a DCFS Case Worker contacts a station during regular business hours, the DCFS Case Worker shall be referred to the FCI liaison. During all other hours, the DCFS Case Worker shall be referred to the watch deputy. The DCFS Case Worker shall provide an URN that he/she received from the FCI system. The watch deputy shall enter the URN into LARCIS and provide the information which is indicated on the FCI Response & Contact Sheet form. The watch deputy shall complete the FCI Response & Contact Sheet form and forward it to their station's FCI liaison. The FCI Response & Contact form can be obtained by contacting SVB or on FOSS' website.

USER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Each user of the FCI shall understand that the information discussed is confidential and shall not be discussed unless pertinent to the case. Each user shall use the FCI program in accordance with the MOU.

RELEASE/RECEIPT OF INFORMATION

The unit's FCI liaison, or their designee, shall release information to any individual caller from the DCFS or the DA's Office without forming an MDT. Also, Sheriff's Department personnel should be able to receive information from these agencies as an individual caller without forming an MDT. An inquiry by either DCFS or the DA's Office does not constitute a formation of an MDT and does not require an FCI Response & Contact Sheet form.

If the Sheriff's Department is requesting information from DPSS, the Probation Department, DMH, or DHS, personnel must establish an MDT prior to sharing information.

If another agency requests information from Sheriff's Department personnel, it is that agency's responsibility to determine whether they need an MDT and to provide the personnel necessary for the MDT. When an MDT is formed, an FCI Response & Contact Sheet form shall be completed.

The FCI Response & Contact Sheet form shall be maintained by the unit's FCI liaison.

The MOU states "LASD information will be made available to FCI under the following circumstances: A child or a child's sibling has been named in a suspected child abuse report."

AFFECTED DIRECTIVES/PUBLICATIONS

MPP §2-05/060.00, Special Victims Bureau

MPP §4-28/000.00, Form Numbers and Titles

CITES/REFERENCES

Family and Children’s Index Memorandum of Understanding

ATTACHMENTS

FCI Response & Contact Sheet