April 17, 2015

Rachel Sommerfeld
Rachel.Sommerfeld@ksn.com
316-852-

Dear Ms. Sommerfeld:

Below are responses by one of our staff to several of your follow-up questions. Your words are in blue, the DCF staff person’s words are in red.

1) You indicate that “of all child and adults reports received through the Kansas Protection Report Center (KPRC),” 97% of initial assessment decisions were completed by the end of the next half working day. Do all reports go through the KPRC? Would this include reports from the public, reports from law enforcement, etc.? Are there other ways that DCF receives reports? If that is the case, what is the percentage of on-time responses for initial assessment to those cases that do not go through the KPRC?

Yes all reports regarding suspected child and adult abuse/neglect come to the KPRC. There are no other ways for DCF to receive a report.

2) You indicate that in both 2014 and 2015 through January, “of all reports assigned for abuse/neglect concerns with either a same day or 72 hour response time,” 97% had a timely contact with victim/family. What is the response time for reports that were *not assigned for abuse/neglect concerns with either a same day or 72 hour response time?

All abuse/neglect concerns either have a Same Day or 72 hour response time. 20 working day is only allowed for non-abuse/neglect reports.

   a. Additionally, I would like further clarification on what “timely contact with the victim/family” means. I have looked through the policy manual online and have been unable to locate the policy that states what the timeframe is to be considered “timely.” Is this 24 hours, 72 hours, etc.? I presume the requirements are different for a same-day response time and a 72 hour response time. What are those specific requirements to be considered “timely” contact with the victim or family?

   Please see PPM 2310 for Safety Determination at Initial Contact and 2312 Reasonable Efforts to Determine Safety.
   http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/PPSpolicies.aspx

   b. Additionally, what are the requirements to be met for the deadline of “same day” or “72 hour” response time? Is contact with victim/family the only thing considered to ensure that the reports are being handled in a timely matter? Are there other factors that are included in that same day/72 hour response time? If so, what are the on time responses for those other factors, beyond contact with victim/family?
PPS PPM 2310: Determining the safety of the child requires an in-person contact with the child, at a minimum. Telephone or letter contact with the child is not sufficient. The parent/caregiver of the child(ren) shall be notified the same day as the interview with the child or, as soon as practical and an explanation provided for the interview. Additional contacts and observations with caregivers, siblings, alleged perpetrators and others may be required to gather sufficient information to determine the safety of the child. In-person contact may be made by a DCF social worker or authorized collateral, i.e., child protective service special investigator, law enforcement officer or licensed child welfare case management provider assigned case responsibility. If authorized collateral makes the in-person contact the DCF social worker shall request the information needed to determine the safety of the child within the response time. If the DCF social worker determines additional information is needed to make a safety determination, the DCF social worker shall follow-up to gather the additional information to determine the safety of the child within the response time. The date and time of the safety determination is when the DCF social worker has reviewed the information and determines the child is safe.

http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/PPSpolicies.aspx

c. In reference to question 2) above, would cases that do not meet the criteria for same day or 72 hour response time, be applicable for a 20-day response time? What is the on-time percentage and documentation for those CINC/NAN with a 20-day response time?

A 20 working day response time is only on non-abuse/neglect reports. A report for timeliness on non-abuse/neglect reports is not readily available.

3) I would also like to see documentation of the response times listed, for preliminary inquiry, initial assessment and reports assigned for abuse/neglect. I would like to formally request the documentation process for how DCF tracks these policies. Our system tracks the time reports are received and the time the initial assessment decision is completed. Our system does not track the time a report is determined to need a preliminary inquiry.

4) The original response to my KORA said “DCF does not track the time from the beginning of the report to the completion of each step.” It is unclear to me how DCF does not track this time, but has percentages on how many are done on time. Can you better explain to me the process of how DCF tracks its policies on timely responses? What documentation exists that shows the progression of timely responses?

Each step in the process has a time frame set in policy. The system tracks each step separately per intake. We do not track the time from the report received to safety determination in one time frame.

5) You state in a previous email that “The maximum time allowed to make an Initial Assessment decision or request a Preliminary Inquiry is the end of the next half work day from the time the report is received.” You have also previously stated that “The Preliminary Inquiry information shall be obtained as soon as practical and should not exceed three (3) working days from the date the report is received by the agency.” What is the on-time percentage and documentation regarding when Preliminary Inquiries are completed? I would like to also formally request the documentation for determining the response time for Preliminary Inquiries.

Our system does not capture the completion of a preliminary inquiry. For more details regarding the practice and policy for preliminary inquiries see PPM 1320 and 1330.

http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/PPSpolicies.aspx
6) There are places in the DCF policy manual that make reference to PPS forms. A google search led me to this link: http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/PPSFormsandAppendices.aspx Am I correct in understanding that these are blank copies of the forms required to document various stages of an investigation/inquiry, etc.? Yes these are blank forms for viewing, but actual forms used are system generated versions.

We hope this information will help you. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Theresa Freed
Director of Communications
Kansas Department for Children and Families
785-296-0537
Theresa.freed@dcf.ks.gov

Todd Fertig
Public Information Officer
Kansas Department for Children and Families
785-368-6613

This message and accompanying documents are covered by the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. 2510-2521, and contain information intended for the specified individual(s) only. This information is confidential. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this document in error and that any review, dissemination, copying or the taking of any action based on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by e-mail and delete the original message.
Dear Ms. Sommerfeld:

Below are responses by one of our staff to several of your follow-up questions. Your words are in blue, the DCF staff person’s words are in red.

1) You indicate that “of all child and adults reports received through the Kansas Protection Report Center (KPRC),” 97% of initial assessment decisions were completed by the end of the next half working day. Do all reports go through the KPRC? Would this include reports from the public, reports from law enforcement, etc.? Are there other ways that DCF receives reports? If that is the case, what is the percentage of on-time responses for initial assessment to those cases that do not go through the KPRC?

Yes all reports regarding suspected child and adult abuse/neglect come to the KPRC. There are no other ways for DCF to receive a report.

2) You indicate that in both 2014 and 2015 through January, “of all reports assigned for abuse/neglect concerns with either a same day or 72 hour response time,” 97% had a timely contact with victim/family. What is the response time for reports that were *not assigned for abuse/neglect concerns with either a same day or 72 hour response time?

All abuse/neglect concerns either have a Same Day or 72 hour response time. 20 working day is only allowed for non-abuse/neglect reports.

   a. Additionally, I would like further clarification on what “timely contact with the victim/family” means. I have looked through the policy manual online and have been unable to locate the policy that states what the timeframe is to be considered “timely.” Is this 24 hours, 72 hours, etc.? I presume the requirements are different for a same-day response time and a 72 hour response time. What are those specific requirements to be considered “timely” contact with the victim or family?

Please see PPM 2310 for Safety Determination at Initial Contact and 2312 Reasonable Efforts to Determine Safety.

http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/PPSpolicies.aspx
b. Additionally, what are the requirements to be met for the deadline of “same day” or “72 hour” response time? Is contact with victim/family the only thing considered to ensure that the reports are being handled in a timely matter? Are there other factors that are included in that same day/72 hour response time? If so, what are the on time responses for those other factors, beyond contact with victim/family?

PPS PPM 2310: Determining the safety of the child requires an in-person contact with the child, at a minimum. Telephone or letter contact with the child is not sufficient. The parent/caregiver of the child(ren) shall be notified the same day as the interview with the child or, as soon as practical and an explanation provided for the interview. Additional contacts and observations with caregivers, siblings, alleged perpetrators and others may be required to gather sufficient information to determine the safety of the child. In-person contact may be made by a DCF social worker or authorized collateral, i.e., child protective service special investigator, law enforcement officer or licensed child welfare case management provider assigned case responsibility. If authorized collateral makes the in-person contact the DCF social worker shall request the information needed to determine the safety of the child within the response time. If the DCF social worker determines additional information is needed to make a safety determination, the DCF social worker shall follow-up to gather the additional information to determine the safety of the child within the response time. The date and time of the safety determination is when the DCF social worker has reviewed the information and determines the child is safe.

http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/PPSpolicies.aspx

c. In reference to question 2) above, would cases that do not meet the criteria for same day or 72 hour response time, be applicable for a 20-day response time? What is the on-time percentage and documentation for those CINC/NAN with a 20-day response time?

A 20 working day response time is only on non-abuse/neglect reports. A report for timeliness on non-abuse/neglect reports is not readily available.

3) I would also like to see documentation of the response times listed, for preliminary inquiry, initial assessment and reports assigned for abuse/neglect. I would like to formally request the documentation process for how DCF tracks these policies.

Our system tracks the time reports are received and the time the initial assessment decision is completed. Our system does not track the time a report is determined to need a preliminary inquiry.

4) The original response to my KORA said “DCF does not track the time from the beginning of the report to the completion of each step.” It is unclear to me how DCF does not track this time, but has percentages on how many are done on time. Can you better explain to me the process of how DCF tracks its policies on timely responses? What documentation exists that shows the progression of timely responses?

Each step in the process has a time frame set in policy. The system tracks each step separately per intake. We do not track the time from the report received to safety determination in one time frame.

5) You state in a previous email that “The maximum time allowed to make an Initial Assessment decision or request a Preliminary Inquiry is the end of the next half work day from the time the report is received.” You have also previously stated that “The Preliminary Inquiry information shall be obtained as soon as practical and should not

Strong Families Make a Strong Kansas
exceed three (3) working days from the date the report is received by the agency.” What is the on-time percentage and documentation regarding when Preliminary Inquiries are completed? I would like to also formally request the documentation for determining the response time for Preliminary Inquiries.

Our system does not capture the completion of a preliminary inquiry. For more details regarding the practice and policy for preliminary inquiries see PPM 1320 and 1330.

http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/PPSpolicies.aspx

6) There are places in the DCF policy manual that make reference to PPS forms. A google search led me to this link: http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Pages/PPSFormsandAppendices.aspx Am I correct in understanding that these are blank copies of the forms required to document various stages of an investigation/inquiry, etc.? Yes these are blank forms for viewing, but actual forms used are system generated versions.

We hope this information will help you. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Theresa Freed  
Director of Communications  
Kansas Department for Children and Families  
785-296-0537  
Theresa.freed@dcf.ks.gov

Strong Families Make a Strong Kansas