I'm working off my phone today, and was just provided these responses. Please let me know if any questions were not answered to your satisfaction.

Mr. Fertig, Ms. Freed,

Please see the additional questions regarding ongoing KORA request below. In order to make my questions more clear, as the below text includes many original questions, responses from DCF and follow up questions, I have typed my most recent questions in BOLD. I have taken my original follow-up questions and placed them in ITALICS. The responses I have received from DCF are in QUOTATION MARKS. I have also attached a PDF with all the prior communication regarding this KORA request.

Given the continuing confusion (thus the need to try to differentiate questions, answers and follow-up questions) I feel an on-camera interview would be the best way to help give us clear answers to our questions.

In response to my original KORA, I requested response times for the past 5 years. After for several clarification emails back and forth, I received an email with data for FY2014 and FY2015 for initial assessment and timely contact with victim/family. (See continued questions about those definitions below and whether those details are a direct response to the data I requested in the KORA.) I have not yet seen any documentation for years prior to 2014. Please provide me with the data for the past 5 years.

In response to question 2a below:

I am still unclear about what “timely contact with the victim/family” means. Is it the same thing as “Reasonable efforts to determine safety” and “Safety determination at initial contact?” I was pointed to those policies (2310 and 2312) for my answer. Do I assume that “timely contact with the victim/family” is the same thing? I spoke with Brittany Glas, who did a pre-interview Friday in Topeka, and she indicated that she was also unclear about the definition. She said she was told several times that things are determined on a "case-by-case basis." Is there a standard?

Timely has to do with timeframe: did the worker respond within the timeframe assigned? the KPRC assigns each abuse/neglect event as either a "same day" or "72 hour". When a worker makes contact and determines initial safety within the assigned timeframe, it is considered timely.

Safety determination at initial contact has to do with assessing safety at initial point of contact: when the worker made initial contact, did worker determine safety? The initial safety decision must be made within the assigned timeframe of same day or 72 hours.
Reasonable efforts to determine safety, has to do with risk/safety assessment and protective action: Once a worker has determined immediately safety of a child, the worker must also complete a comprehensive risk/safety assessment; did the worker obtain sufficient information to make an assessment? What did the worker do with that information? (such as conduct safety planning, request services, request out of home removal, etc.) This should be ongoing throughout the life of the case.

I also asked for an explanation of what constitutes “timely contact” – is it in hours? The same day assignment is literally, "same day". So if a social worker gets a "same day" at 4:59 pm on a Friday afternoon, the social worker has to respond on Friday afternoon on the same day. It is not 24 hour.

How many hours? Is it different for a 24-hour response time case and a 72-hour response time case? Is the “timely contact” in fact 24 and 72 hours? 72 hours, is 72 working hours, excluding weekends and holidays. There is no 24 hour response...it is a "same day" response.

What are the specific requirements to be considered “timely”? Worker must respond within the same day or 72 working hours as assigned.

In PPM2310 it discusses how a social worker determines the initial safety of the child who is the subject of the report, contacting a parent, caregivers, siblings, alleged perpetrators, etc. may be needed to determine the safety of the child. It all says this should be done “within the response time.” Is this within 24 or 72 hours? Is that the specific time that is allowed? This policy also does not specify a time frame for what is “timely contact” with the family and these other individuals. "Response time" always refers back to the case assignment response time, of either "same day", "72 hour" or 20 (working) days.

To be clear: Can I assume, after my multiple questions on this issue, that this is the meaning: After a call comes in to the office, a social worker or other DCF worker has 24 hours SAME DAY, not 24 hours (or 72 hours depending on the case) to speak with parents, siblings, caregivers, alleged perpetrators, etc. to determine if that child is in immediate danger. YES. Is that in fact the the requirement for a 24-hour (SAME DAY, not 24 hours) (or 72) response time? YES.
*If that is the case, then is it correct to say (given the details I was given in one of the responses from DCF) that of the reports that are assigned for further assessment of abuse neglect concerns in 2015 thru Jan., in 97% of cases, social workers contacted these individuals within 24 (SAME DAY) or 72 hours (as permitted) to determine whether the child was in a safe place. Is that an accurate assumption? YES, our data show 97% compliance

The answer I was given to my question was:

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

My question listed in 2b below goes to the same question. What are the requirements that need to be met on cases with a “same day or 72 hour” response time. Are the requirements the entirety of the PPS PPM2310 – discussing “Safety determination at initial contact.” Is that safety determination the requirement to have an on-time response time? Are there other factors that go into the requirements of meeting that response time? Do they have to discuss more with the reporting party?

Sent from my Windows Phone

From: Rachel Sommerfeld
Sent: 4/30/2015 10:18 AM
To: Theresa Freed
Subject: RE: follow-up questions

Hi Ms. Freed,

Checking in again this morning – any estimated time for when the DCF staff will have answers to our questions?

Thanks.

Rachel Schrag Sommerfeld
Executive Producer
KSN | ksnc.com
833 North Main St. Wichita, KS 67203
Newsroom: 316-292-1111
Direct: 316-292-1141   Cell: 316-
I’ll check.

Ms. Freed,

I’m just following up on the additional questions I had regarding DCF. I also left you a voicemail this morning asking on the status of these questions. We last communicated a week ago, last Tuesday, April 21, when you indicated staff was still working on answering those questions. Do you have an estimated time for a response on those questions? Are there any further follow-up questions for me, to further explain my initial questions? If there is anything I can do, please let me know.

Thank you for your help.

Rachel

Rachel Schrag Sommerfeld
Executive Producer
KSN | ksn.com
833 North Main St. Wichita, KS 67203
Newsroom: 316-292-1111
Direct: 316-292-1141   Cell: 316-