



## Office of Children and Family Services

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### Local Commissioners Memorandum

**Transmittal:** 17-OCFS-LCM-02

**To:** Local District Commissioners

**Issuing**

**Division Office:** Child Welfare and Community Services

**Date:** April 5, 2017

**Subject:** After-Hours Transmission Procedure for Reports of Suspected Child Abuse and Maltreatment Registered by the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment

**Contact Person(s):** Brian Kelley (518) 474-1567, [Brian.Kelley@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:Brian.Kelley@ocfs.ny.gov)

**Attachments:** None

#### I. Purpose

The purpose of this Local Commissioners Memorandum is to alert local commissioners that the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) will no longer verbally transmit reports of suspected child abuse or maltreatment after hours but will only support the electronic transmission of such reports.

#### II. Background

The Child Protective Services Act of 1973 established the SCR as the primary receiver of calls regarding the suspected abuse and/or maltreatment of children in New York State.

When a call is registered as a report, the SCR's Child Protective Services (CPS) specialist enters information obtained from the caller into the CONNECTIONS system and then assigns jurisdiction by immediately transmitting the report electronically via CONNECTIONS to the appropriate local CPS. Historically, for districts that do not operate on a 24-hour basis, reports received after hours are transmitted either by fax or telephone to an on-call person designated by the local CPS.

In 2008, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) began deploying laptops and other mobile technologies to local CPS to assist with work in the field and to allow the local CPS to receive after-hours reports electronically. Use of such technology supported best practices at the local CPS. OCFS is now finalizing the transition to the use of such technology for transmission of after-hours reports.

#### III. Program Implications

##### Report Assignment and Acceptance

During after hours, the on-call worker will be notified by the SCR that a report has been assigned. The on-call worker has the obligation to review the reports in CONNECTIONS and determine whether the reports will be accepted. It is vital to either accept or reject a CPS report as soon as possible and, if accepted, move the case to the next stage of the investigation process.

The SCR monitors the acceptance or rejection of all reports in CONNECTIONS. If there has been no action within 30 minutes of the notification to the on-call worker, the designated person from the SCR will call the on-call local CPS assigned as primary. When the SCR sends a report to a district, the SCR also adds it to an assignment log and monitors it until the local district has accepted it. Accepting an assignment, in effect, serves as acknowledgment to the SCR that you have received the new stage and are beginning work on it.

There are instances in which you would reject a new assignment, but these are rare. Speak to your supervisor about guidelines for determining when "rejecting" an assigned report is appropriate (e.g., the jurisdiction is incorrect).

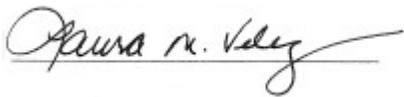
#### After-Hours Report Assignment and Acceptance

Effective May 1, 2017, the above procedure will be used by the SCR for transmissions of all registered reports 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for all local CPS.

Should widespread power outages or other disasters impact the functionality of CONNECTIONS, alternative transmission methods such as verbal transmission will be used.

#### Exceptions

District by district exceptions will be considered. Each commissioner requesting an exception must send such request to the attention of Brian Kelley, at Brian. [Brian.Kelley@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:Brian.Kelley@ocfs.ny.gov).

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Laura M. Velez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Name: Laura M. Velez

Title: Deputy Commissioner

Division/Office: Division of Child Welfare and Community Services