

CHILDREN IN NEED OF SERVICES POLICY MANUAL

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Children in Need of Services
Policies and Procedures Manual

Service Chapter 625-01

North Dakota Department of Human Services
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North Dakota Department of Human Services

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Policy Chapter 625-01

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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Children in Need of Services: Eligibility and Referral Policies and Procedures. Provide a description of the change. This document describes the eligibility, policies, and procedures associated with the referral of Children in Need of Services (CHINS) to the Human Service Zones, specifically to the CHINS Unit. Schools, law enforcement, and other stakeholders should use these policies to guide decisions on when and how to make referrals to the CHINS Unit and the protocols for doing so.

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Overview of the CHINS Legal Classification 625-01-01

(NEW 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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In 2021, North Dakota enacted HB 1035 to overhaul and re-structure the juvenile justice system. The legislation established three distinct legal categories for youth referrals: Delinquent, Child in Need of Protection (CHIP), and Child in Need of Services (CHINS). CHINS youth represent youth who have engaged in behavior that was previously identified as 'unruly' and is often known as a status offence. As part of this shift, youth who have solely committed an act which qualifies them as CHINS can no longer be cited and referred to the juvenile court. Instead, responsibility for CHINS was shifted from the juvenile courts to the Human Service Zones (Zones), specifically the CHINS Unit. The CHINS Unit is equipped to provide service connections to children and youth from the ages of 10 – 17 years.

As established in statute, CHINS eligibility includes the following criteria:

- A. Habitually, and without, justification truant from school with at least three unexcused absences in a school year
- B. Habitually disobedient of the reasonable and lawful commands of the child's parent, guardian, or other custodian and is ungovernable or who is willfully in a situation dangerous or injurious to the health, safety, or morals of the child or others
 - o Includes an offense applicable only to a child, such as breaking curfew established at the city ordinance level
- C. Underage use of tobacco by a youth over the age of 10 years and under the age of 14 years
- D. Includes a youth of their own volition running away from the location of the guardian without an intent to return an in known and safe location

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CHINS Eligibility Criteria 625-01-02

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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When is a CHINS Referral NOT appropriate?

Referring a youth to the CHINS Unit is generally NOT appropriate in the following situations:

- A. *In case of a medical emergency:* In the case of a medical emergency, law enforcement or other stakeholders may at their discretion call 911 or transport youth directly to an appropriate medical facility within standard protocol. A CHINS referral can be made later as deemed necessary.
- B. *If there is an immediate concern for the safety of the youth, either through self-harm or harm from others:* In the case of an immediate risk of self-harm, stakeholders should contact 911, transport youth to an appropriate emergency facility, and/or contact 988 to connect with a mobile crisis unit or other behavioral health services.
 1. If a youth can't stay in their home because of family conflict, stakeholders can support the family with identifying temporary housing solutions to allow for time and space to resolve the crisis. Subsequently, a CHINS referral can be made by the referring entity or the shelter care facility as appropriate. For more information on using these alternatives, please see the alternative to detention decision flow chart which highlights available resources.

In Instances in which there is concern of immediate harm coming to a youth from family members that is potentially more systemic in nature, law enforcement, at their discretion and within policy, first prioritize a safe placement for the youth, either through kinship care placement or through a certified shelter case placement, and then make a CHIPS petition with the appropriate steps taken.
- C. *As a result of a behavioral health crisis or when mental health or substance use needs appear to be the primary cause of youth's behavior:* In such situations, stakeholders should contact 988 for potential referral to a Human Service Center for a mental health evaluation and/or so that a mobile crisis unit can be dispatched to youth's home to identify the need for immediate community based or residential services. Additionally, even in the case in which there is not

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an immediate emergency, but a behavioral health issue is seen as the primary driver for needing services, a direct referral to a human service center through 988 can be made without the need for a CHINS referral. For more information on using 988,

https://www.211directory.org/st/north_dakota

- D. *If a youth has committed only a delinquent offense that necessitates a court referral and/or a delinquent offense in addition to CHINS eligible behaviors:* In these instances, law enforcement should make the determination of how to proceed with the delinquency matter in accordance with their policies and standard procedure, including whether an arrest is made, youth need to be taken into custody, and/or detention or an alternative to detention is necessary following the appropriate protocols.
- E. *If a youth is a potential victim of sex/human trafficking:* If law enforcement or another entity determines that a youth is being trafficked, or is at substantial risk of being trafficked, it should be a child protection case and sent to a human trafficking coordinator who will determine if further follow up is needed and take the lead on case management next steps.
- F. *Unruly in-school behavior is deemed ineligible:* A youth who is committing incorrigible or ungovernable behaviors in schools are not CHINS eligible. Rather schools need to follow the appropriate reporting procedures and steps to remedy the situation before referring to Juvenile Court.

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CHINS Referral Criteria 625-01-03

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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Law enforcement, schools, parents, and other stakeholders such as certified shelters or service providers can use the following eligibility criteria to determine when it is appropriate to make a CHINS referral to the CHINS Unit.

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CHINS: Truancy 625-01-03-01

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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Statute sets the baseline truancy definition as missing 3 days of school. However, schools should only make a truancy referral to the CHINS Unit if the following criteria has been met:

- A. *Youth's school absences should be systemic and substantial.* While 3 days is the minimum truancy threshold, schools should only make a CHINS referral truancy when a youth has demonstrated a sustained period of unexcused school absences.
- B. Statute requires that schools *must have attempted to address youth's truancy before make a CHINS referral.* These efforts should include but are not limited to conducting outreach to the parents or guardians, assigning the youth to work with a school counselor, and/or referring youth to programs and services in or outside of school.
- C. If a school has made the appropriate attempts and a youth continues to remain truant with no signs of progress from the interventions, schools may make a CHINS referral. Schools should document previous interventions to address youth's truancy as part of the referral process/form as described below.

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Incorrigibility and Curfew Violations 625-01-03-02

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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It is normative adolescent behavior for youth to occasionally not follow household rules, make impulsive decisions, and not consider the consequences of their actions. Law enforcement, schools, parents, and other stakeholders should only refer youth to the CHINS Unit for this behavior when:

- A. Youth exhibit a pattern of *habitually unruly behavior over an extended period of time* (months); and
- B. Youth's behavior has the *potential to place themselves or others at risk of harm*.

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Runaway 625-01-03-03

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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A run-away is defined as a youth who has been recovered and has no known imminent safety concerns. Youth whose location is unknown, or where there is still reason to believe the youth's safety is at imminent risk, should be treated as a missing youth and law enforcement will be in charge of the case until the youth's location is known and safety is established. When a youth has run away from home*, law enforcement should first establish whether there is reason to believe trafficking is a potential concern. In an instance in which there is a concern of potential trafficking, law enforcement should conduct the appropriate screening, send the CHINS Unit the police report, and if the screening results indicate, connect with a human trafficking coordinator to identify appropriate next steps.

Once an initial determination has been made that trafficking is not an immediate concern, law enforcement will work with the youth to identify an appropriate immediate safe placement. This may include, returning the youth to the home of their guardian, making a kinship care placement, or taking a youth to certified shelter care. In the event that the youth is not cooperating, law enforcement has the ability to take that youth into protective custody and take the youth to the appropriate placement.

When making the determination of whether to file a CHINS referral for a run-away, law enforcement should consider the following factors:

- A. The length of time that youth has been gone -- has the youth been missing for a few hours post curfew or for over a day.
- B. Whether the youth has exhibited a historical pattern of running away or whether this behavior is unusual for them.
- C. Where youth may have run to, including whether they are known to associate with people who put them at risk, as well as their likelihood of returning and by when.

**Out of state runaway*

Youth from out of state is found in North Dakota

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In instances in which a youth has run away from another state to North Dakota, the interstate compact supersedes CHINS legislation. As a result, these youth are the responsibility of the Court and may be detained if necessary. If law enforcement picks up a runaway from out of state, they should contact the Court to identify the appropriate steps. If a person reports an out of state runaway as a CHINS youth, the Zone's staff should contact the Courts and transfer custody of the youth to the Courts to handle all appropriate paperwork and decision making to safely return the youth to their home state.

Youth runs from North Dakota to another state

In instances in which a youth has run from North Dakota to another state, the Court shall be responsible for returning the youth to North Dakota. Court staff will be responsible for communication with the state the youth has been found in, including the completion of any related forms for extradition and organizing the safe return of the youth to North Dakota. As part of this process, the Court is responsible for the identification of the safe housing of the youth upon return to the state. Once the youth has been returned to their placement in North Dakota, Court staff may, if they deem it necessary, make a CHINS run-away referral for services follow up.

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Tobacco Use 625-01-03-04

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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The definition for tobacco use as a CHINS referral is only for youth over the age of 10 and under the age of 14. For youth under the age of 10, a referral can be made to CPS Intake to address concerns, if deemed necessary. For youth over the age of 14, a referral to the city attorney can be made if deemed necessary.

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CHINS Referral Process 625-01-04

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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Any entity can make a CHINS referral to the Zones' CHINS unit, including law enforcement, schools, parents, shelter care sites, and service providers. Referrals may be submitted electronically to the central CHINS referral email inbox chins@nd.gov at any time and will be responded to within the identified time frames. When making a referral, the referral source should follow the following steps:

Step 1: Determine youth meets CHINS referral eligibility criteria

- A. Using the criteria detailed above, the referring entity should determine whether a CHINS referral is appropriate.
- B. If an incident occurs during non-traditional hours requiring more immediate assistance, the referring entity should follow the policies and procedures described above for situations when a CHINS referral is not appropriate. Subsequently, a CHINS referral can be completed.

Step 2: Complete the appropriate referral form

- A. The referring agency should complete the appropriate electronic referral form with the required information to the best of their ability. At this time, Zones will not accept call-in, walk-in, or any other types of referral or form from referral sources other than parents. This form can be found <https://www.nd.gov/dhs/serviceschildfamily/childfamily/>
 1. Parents are eligible to make a CHINS referral to the CHINS unit, and law enforcement, schools, and other entities can request families to do so in lieu of them making the referral directly. Parents also have the option to call their local Zone directly and the Zones staff will help facilitate a referral being made to the CHINS unit. In such cases, Zones staff should conduct an interview with the parent over the phone to collect the appropriate information to complete the referral form.

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- B. The referral form should be submitted electronically to the CHINS unit with instructions for submission detailed on the form. The appropriate email address to send forms to is chins@nd.gov

Step 3: Acknowledge of referral

- A. Once a referral is received, CHINS unit staff will review the information provided to make the determination of eligibility for a CHINS referral. In the event a CHINS referral is established as ineligible, staff will provide the referral source with a written justification as to the reasons for denial, and where appropriate, information on alternative appropriate services and resources. If the referral is accepted, CHINS unit staff should notify the referral source to acknowledge receipt of the referral and that it has been accepted. In both instances, staff must acknowledge receipt and communicate whether the referral meets the CHINS eligibility criteria within two business days of receiving the referral, or in the case of a youth placed in either kinship care or at a shelter, within 24 hours.
1. If the referral form is missing information needed by the CHINS unit to make a determination of whether the referral is appropriate, CHINS unit staff will notify the referring entity of the need for additional information within one business day. Subsequently, once the requested information is received, CHINS unit staff will communicate a decision on referral eligibility within one business day.

Completing the Referral Form

For all referrals, regardless of referral source or reason for referral, the referring entity (other than parents or law enforcement) must complete the standardized referral form. Law enforcement should submit a law enforcement report and/or CHINS referral that is inclusive of the non-school information below.

The following information must be included as part of the referral:

- The name, date of birth, and residence address of the child alleged to be in need of services.

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- The names and residence addresses of the parent, guardian, or legal custodian, any other family members, or any other individuals living withing the child's home.
- The name of any public institution or agency having the responsibility or ability to supply services alleged to be needed by the child.
- Reason for referral.
- Demographic information.
- Whether any of the matters required are unknown.

Specifically for any referral from a school, the referral must include the following information on efforts made by the school to address youth's truancy:

- Information which shows the school district has sought to resolve the expressed problem through all appropriate and available educational and programmatic approaches.
- The efforts made by the school to engage the parent, guardian, or legal custodian of the child in solving the problem and the results of that outreach.

Referring entities should email the completed referral form to the CHINS referral email address. Chins@nd.gov

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Policy Chapter 625-01-05

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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Children in Need of Services: Intake and Family Engagement and Service Connection Policies and Procedures. Provide a description of the change. As mandated by H.B. 1035, the Human Service Zones (Zones) are legally responsible for youth who meet the eligibility criteria for Children in Need of Services (CHINS) (see referral policy for eligibility criteria). This policy establishes a standard set of intake and protocols that all Zones are expected to comply with in the handling of CHINS. For referrals that do not meet the eligibility criteria, Zones should refer to the initial referral policy for the appropriate course of action.

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CHINS Intake Procedures 625-01-06

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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CHINS staff should acknowledge receipt of CHINS referrals and determine whether the referral is appropriate and has all necessary information within two business days of receipt for a standard referral or within 24 hours for a youth not in the home of their parent or guardian (i.e., in a certified shelter care or kinship placement). Once acceptance of the referral has been communicated to the referring entity, CHINS staff should conduct a series of initial information checks to better understand the nature of the referral, including but not limited to the following:

- A. Prior CHINS referrals including referring entity, nature, number, and resolution.
- B. Whether the youth or family is currently engaged with child welfare or the Human service Zones, other services systems, or has a history of previous system involvement.
 1. If the youth/ family is involved with other identified systems, CHINS staff should contact the case manager and/ or probation officer to gain insight into the current status of the case, services being provided, to discuss the referral, and determine appropriate next steps.
 2. If the youth/ family has a recent history, but no current involvement with child welfare, CHINS staff will ideally review the case file and/ or contact the previous case manager/ service provider to determine if a CHINS referral is appropriate.
- C. If there is a reason to believe the primary concern is a behavioral health issue, CHINS staff should recommend the family to the Human Service Center to conduct an integrated assessment. Upon completion of the assessment, CHINS staff will work with the Center staff to determine the appropriate next steps.

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CHINS Determining Intensity of Family Engagement and Service Needs 625-01-07

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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CHINS staff should use the following criteria/guidelines to inform the determination of what level of intensity and type of service intervention is required in response to different types of CHINS referrals. CHINS staff should use these guidelines to make their informed decision with all final determination based on the professional judgement of the unit staff member, on the individual merits of any referral, level of risk youth present to themselves or others, service needs, and Zone capacity. When additional clarity is needed in determining the response level, the CHINS Unit Supervisor will support the staff member in decision-making.

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Truancy 625-01-07-01

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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- A. *Severity:* How many days in the current school year have the youth been marked truant by the school?
 - 1. If less than 15 days, consider a low intensity intervention
 - 2. If 16-30 days, consider a moderate intensity intervention
 - 3. If over 30 days, consider a higher intensity intervention
- B. *Frequency:* Is this the youth's first referral for truancy?
 - 1. If this is the youth's first referral, consider a low intensity intervention
 - 2. If the youth has previous referrals, depending on severity/ resolution of previous referrals, consider whether a moderate or high intensity intervention is warranted

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Habitually disobedient of the reasonable and lawful commands of the child's parent, guardian, or other custodian

625-01-07-02

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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- A. *Severity:* Is the behavior outside of normative adolescent behavior?
1. Does the youth's behavior pose a substantial risk of harm to themselves? To their family? To the community?
 2. If the youth is engaging in primarily normative adolescent behavior, consider a low intensity intervention.
 3. If the youth is engaging in a pattern of extended, and significant, unruly behavior with increasing level of concern about harm, consider a moderate intervention
 4. If the youth pose a substantial risk of harm*, consider a higher intensity intervention.

*If there is a risk of immediate harm, a CHINS referral is not the appropriate determination for a crisis intervention and the youth should be referred to either the mobile crisis unit for behavioral health or law enforcement.

- B. *Frequency:* Is this the youth's first referral?
1. If this is the youth's first referral, consider a low intensity intervention.
 2. If the youth has had more than one referral, consider aggravating/mitigating factors to determine whether a moderate or higher intensity intervention is appropriate.
- C. *System Involvement:* Is the youth or family already involved in other service systems?
1. If the youth/ family are not already engaged in child welfare or the juvenile justice system, consider a low intensity intervention.
 2. If a youth/ family is involved with child welfare or are in custody or on informal or formal active probation, the referral will be screened out to avoid duplication of services.
- D. *Placement:* Was the youth able to stay home with a parent/ guardian?

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1. If the youth returned home to their parent/ guardian, consider a low intensity intervention.
2. If the youth was placed and remains in an informal living arrangement with kin or is in certified shelter care, consider a higher intensity intervention.

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Run-Away 625-01-07-03

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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*In all cases in which the physical safety of the youth is at risk, a CHINS referral is not the appropriate first step. Additionally, a youth is only considered a run-away once their location is known. If a youth's location is unknown, they are considered a missing youth and law enforcement should be contacted and treating the situation as a missing youth.

- A. *Severity:* How long has the youth been missing?
 - 1. If the youth is just missing curfew, consider a low intensity intervention
 - 2. If the youth has been missing for a longer period, consider a moderate or high intensity intervention

- B. *Age:* How old is the child?
 - 1. If the youth is over the age of 15 consider a low or moderate intensity intervention
 - 2. If the youth is between the ages of 12 to 15 consider a moderate or high intensity intervention
 - 3. If the youth is under the age of 12 consider a high intensity intervention

- C. *Frequency:* How often is the youth running away?
 - 1. If this is the first time a youth has run away, consider a lower intensity intervention
 - 2. If the youth has run away before, and there was a large gap in time between incidents, consider a moderate intensity intervention
 - 3. If the youth has run away frequently, and in a short time frame, consider a high intensity intervention

- D. *Precipitating Event:* What is identified as the reason for running away?

- E. *Placement:* Was the youth able to return home to a parent/ guardian?
 - 1. If the youth was able to return home to their parent/ guardian, consider a low intensity intervention
 - 2. If the youth was placed, and remains, in an informal living arrangement with kin or is in certified shelter care for more than 7 days, consider a higher intensity intervention.

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- F. *Who are they with:* Where did the youth run to?
1. If the youth was found at the home of a friend, known family member or trusted friend consider a low intensity intervention.
 2. If a youth was found with no shelter or in the presence of unknown parties* consider a moderate or high intensity intervention

*If there is reason to suspect possible human trafficking or exploitation, refer matter to the appropriate authorities or partners as identified in the eligibility portion of this policy. Inquire with referral source if they have reason to believe there is HT, request supporting information/ documentation if not included in the initial referral. Cases of potential Human Trafficking will be diverted to Child Protection Services Intake, Youthworks, and/ or Law Enforcement for screening to be completed.

- G. *System Involvement:* Is the youth or family already involved in other service systems?
1. If the youth/ family are not already engaged in child welfare or the juvenile justice system, consider a low intensity response for initial referrals.
 2. If the youth/ family are already engaged in youth services programming at a Human Service Center (MST, case management, therapy, etc.), there referral *may be* screened out, or consider a low intensity response to avoid duplication of services.
 3. If a youth/ family are involved with child welfare services (i.e. In Home or in custody); or an informal or formal active probation, the referral will be screened out to avoid duplication of services.

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Underage us of Tobacco 625-01-07-04

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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Information will be provided directing the family and youth to local tobacco/ vaping cessation education and programming.

CHINS Level and Type of Interventions 625-01-08

(New 7/1/2024 ML 3828)

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Low Intensity Interventions

For youth determined to warrant a low intensity intervention, CHINS staff should take one or more of the following actions:

- A. Send a letter to the parent/ guardian and/ or referral entity with acknowledgment of the CHINS referral and information on helpful resources/ services.
- B. Call the referral source and/ or parent/ guardian of the CHINS, discuss the referral in further detail, and discuss/ verbally provide information on available services/ supports.

Moderate Intensity Interventions

Step 1: Conduct intake interview and screening/ assessments as warranted

- A. Contact the family/guardian to conduct an intake interview. Whenever possible, CHINS staff should conduct the interview with the youth and family together and in person; however, as necessary, CHINS staff can employ virtual meeting formats when transportation, resources, schedules, or other barriers exist. Conduct an interview with the youth and when possible, with the parent/guardian. As part of this interview, CHINS staff should utilize the CHINS Assessment tool which highlights and addresses key areas the youth/family life domains, and other documents such as a trauma screening or the MAYSI-2, when identified as necessary.
 - 1. CHINS staff are expected to outreach to families to schedule an intake appointment within 7 business days of accepting the referral. In the case in which a youth is not at the home of their parent/guardian, the initial appointment with the youth should occur by the next business day.
 - 2. Once contact is made, CHINS staff should strive to schedule the intake interview within two weeks of contact.
 - 3. If the family is non engaged following a CHINS referral, CHINS staff should attempt and document at least three separate contact

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attempts (i.e. phone calls, text messages, letters, e-mails) referral as a failed contact in the data system.

Step 2: Identify appropriate intervention/ service referral

- A. Based on the intake interview and assessment findings, CHINS staff, in coordination with the youth and family, should identify the appropriate intervention, including potential services, to best meet the needs of the youth and family.

Step 3: Engage in warm handoff to services

When it is identified that an external referral to services is the appropriate course of action CHINS staff should employ a warm handoff to the appropriate services. This includes:

- A. Working with the youth and family to notify them of the services being referred to, the reason for the referral and identifying any potential challenges to accessing services such as transportation issues.
- B. Pull together a packet of key information to be given to the service provider including the nature of the referral, findings of the interview and assessment, key contact information for the youth and guardian, and any findings on other systems involvement where release of information (ROI) is in place. The packet should also, with the approval of the youth and family, include a release of information to allow for CHINS staff to follow up on service engagement.
- C. Contact the agency being referred to in order to notify them of the service referral.
- D. Engage in a warm handoff that connects the youth and guardian with the service provider, either through facilitating a first phone call, engaging in a face-to-face meeting, or where appropriate, providing the agency being referred to services with the necessary contact information and notifying the youth and family to expect to be contacted.

Step 4: Provide support

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- A. Following the referral, the CHINS staff should follow up with both the service provider as well as the youth and family monthly to identify whether services were utilized, and from the youth and family, whether the services identified were appropriate. The results of these follow ups should be tracked within the data system.
- B. If a service referral is not acted upon, a follow up with the youth/family should be attempted at least once to determine the reason for not engaging. If a family does not respond this should be marked in the file, it is not a reason alone to escalate the case or increase the response.
- C. If a referral is successfully conducted but the youth and family and/or service provider did not report successful completion of programming, an attempt should be made to determine the barriers that prevented successful completion with both the youth/family and service provider and a new service referral may be made as necessary.

High Intensity Interventions

For youth with potentially high service needs, CHINS staff should engage in the following process:

Step 1: Conduct Interview

- A. Conduct an interview with the youth and when possible, with the parent/guardian. Whenever possible this interview should be conducted in person, however as necessary virtual technologies can be used as necessary given transportation or other barriers. As part of this interview, CHINS staff should utilize the CHINS Assessment tool which highlights and addresses key areas the youth/family life domains, and other documents, such as a trauma screening or the MAYSI-2, when identified as necessary.
 - 1. CHINS staff are expected to outreach to families to schedule an intake appointment within 7 business days of accepting the referral. In the case in which a youth is not at the home of their parent/guardian, the initial appointment with the youth should occur by the next business day.

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2. Once contact is made, CHINS staff should strive to schedule the intake interview within two weeks of contact.
3. If the family is nonengaged following a CHINS referral, CHINS staff should attempt and document at least three separate contact attempts (i.e. phone calls, text messages, letters, e-mails) referral as a failed contact in the data system.

Step 2: Identify appropriate intervention/ service referral

- A. Based on the intake interview and assessment findings, CHINS staff, in coordination with the youth and family, should identify the appropriate intervention, including potential services, to best meet the needs of the youth and family.
- B. Schedule and host a Family Centered Engagement meeting with any system partners, including service providers that are engaged with the youth and family.

Step 3: Engage in warm handoff to services

- A. When it is identified that an external referral to services is the appropriate course of action as part of the service plan, CHINS staff should employ a warm handoff to the appropriate services. This includes:
 1. Working with the youth and family to notify them of the services being referred to, the reason for the referral and identifying any potential challenges to accessing services such as transportation issues.
 2. Pull together a packet of key information to be given to the service provider including the nature of the referral, findings of the interview and assessment, key contact information for the youth and guardian, and any findings on other systems involvement where release of information (ROI) is in place. The packet should also, with the approval of the youth and family, include a release of information to allow for CHINS staff to follow up on service engagement.
 3. Contact the agency being referred to in order to notify them of the service referral.
 4. Engage in a warm handoff that connects the youth and guardian with the service provider, either through facilitating a first phone

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call, engaging in a face-to-face connection, or where appropriate, providing the agency being referred to services with the necessary contact information and notifying the youth and family to expect to be contacted.

Step 4: Provide Support

- A. As identified within the case plan developed with the youth and family, CHINS staff should meet with the youth and family at least two weeks after the initial contact, again at one month post initial contact, and lastly, at least monthly for the duration of the CHINS intervention to support the successful intervention of services to meet the needs of the youth and family.
- B. In instances in which a youth is referred to services in addition to high intensity engagement, conduct monthly check ins with the referred service provider to ensure connected services are working together and meeting the needs of the youth and family.
- C. If a referral is successfully conducted but the youth and family and/or service provider did not report successful completion of programming, an attempt should be made to determine the barriers that prevented successful completion with both the youth/family and service provider and a new service referral may be made as necessary.

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CHINS Data Collection, Quality Assurance, and Reporting Data 625-01-09

(New 7/1/24 ML 3828)

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CHINS staff will be responsible for tracking referrals and responses in two ways:

1. Completing required data entry in the TEAMS management system for all referrals. This will include referral information, youth and family demographics, and intake/ programmatic responses.
2. Development and maintenance of the youth's case file.

Teams Management System Tracking

Upon acceptance of a CHINS referral*, CHINS staff are required to complete a referral tracking form, which will include, at minimum, the following demographic and intake information:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Date of Referral
- Custodian/ Guardian/ Parent Information
- Referral Source
- Location (including identified addresses)
- Identified County/ Zone
- FRAME information
- Juvenile Court History
- Copy of Referral and collateral documentation
- Release of Information documentation
- Assessment Tool documentation
- Case notes from discussions/ meetings with youth/ family

As the youth moves through the intake and intervention process, CHINS staff are required to update the form to note service needs, intensity of

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intervention, specific service referrals, and if warranted, follow-up contacts and status updates.

*All CHINS referrals, including those not accepted for intake, must be entered within the Teams system, with a note that no action was taken and the reasons.

Case File

A case file should be created for every youth with an accepted CHINS referral. This file should at minimum include the following documents:

- Referral form
- Intake form
- Findings of any completed assessments
- Case notes on level of intervention and outcomes

Case management files will be maintained pursuant to DHHS standards.

Reporting

CHINS unit leadership will run monthly reports on identified programmatic measures to support ongoing decision making. Additionally, annual reports on total numbers and outcomes (I.e. change in custody, Foster Care, DJS, Formal Probation, youth still in school, youth working, no new referrals in 6 months post initial referral) will be run to support decisions around changes to policy and practice.

Quality Assurance

To support continued best practice, CHINS staff will meet monthly to review data reports and discuss policy and practice. Additionally, there will be quarterly case file reviews. These reviews will include a look at whether the CHINS referral was appropriate, if the level of intervention identified matched the needs of the case, and how service referrals were identified.

In addition to case file reviews, CHINS unit management will solicit feedback from key partners to identify areas of opportunity to improve

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practice. These partners will include youth and families for feedback on the intake and services provided, schools and law enforcement for feedback on the referral process, and service providers for feedback on the service referral process.

Utilizing the findings, the quarterly case file reviews and the annual feedback from partners as well as the data findings, the CHINS staff and leadership will annually review and make updates to the policy and process as necessary.