



June 30, 2023

Suzy Wischmeyer, Director
Putnam County Job and Family Services
575 Ottawa Glandorf Road
Ottawa, Ohio 45875

RE: Child Abuse and Neglect Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Compliance Notification

Dear Director Wischmeyer:

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Office of Families and Children (OFC) received Putnam County Job and Family Services' (PCJFS) MOU on April 25, 2023. The review determined that PCJFS's MOU is compliant, effective June 30, 2023, with the requirements in Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) rule 5101:2-33-26 *The County Child Abuse and Neglect Memorandum of Understanding*.

PCJFS is required to post the MOU to the general website of the county within thirty days from June 30, 2023. If there is a change to an individual who signed the MOU, PCJFS is to provide the new individual with a copy of the current MOU and obtain their signature acknowledging the MOU. Revisions made to the previously approved MOU are to be submitted to the PCJFS assigned ODJFS Technical Assistance Specialist (TAS) within ninety days.

Please do not hesitate to contact Kate McGrain at kathryn.mcgrain@jfs.ohio.gov, with any questions.

Sincerely,

Vincent Ciola, Bureau Chief
Bureau for Systems and Practice Advancement
Office of Families and Children
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Enclosure

cc: Gina Speaks-Eshler, OFC
Sally Buccieri, OFC
Kate McGrain, OFC
File

30 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215
jfs.ohio.gov

PUTNAM COUNTY, OHIO

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING regarding Child Abuse and Neglect

Effective January 2002

Reviewed and Amended April 2005

Amended February 2006

Amended May 2006

Reviewed and Amended April 2007

Reviewed and Amended April 2008

Amended November 2008

Reviewed and Amended January 2011

Reviewed and Amended July 2011

Reviewed and Amended June 2014

Reviewed and Amended July 2016

Reviewed and Amended March 2022

Reviewed March 2023

INTRODUCTION:

Child maltreatment is a community concern. Each community has a legal and moral obligation to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, which includes responding effectively to child maltreatment. At the State and local levels, professionals assume various roles and responsibilities ranging from prevention, identification, and reporting of child maltreatment to intervention, assessment, and treatment. Child protective services (CPS) agencies, along with law enforcement, play a central role in receiving and investigating reports of child maltreatment. To protect children from harm, CPS also relies on community members to identify, and report suspected cases of child maltreatment, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and psychological maltreatment. Many community professionals (including health care providers, mental health professionals, educators, victim advocates, and legal and court system personnel) are involved in responding to child abuse and neglect and providing needed services. In addition, community-based agency staff, substance abuse treatment providers, domestic violence victim advocates, clergy, extended family members, and concerned citizens also play important roles in supporting families and keeping children safe. No single agency, individual, or discipline has the necessary knowledge, skills, resources, or societal mandate to provide the full scope of assistance needed by abused and neglected children and their families. Because there is no single cause, there is no one service or intervention which effectively prevents or treats child maltreatment. Therefore, the expertise and resources of all agencies and professionals who work with children and families are needed if the community's prevention and treatment efforts are to be successful.

To optimize the effectiveness of the multi-disciplinary response to child maltreatment, it is important that all participants respect and preserve the distinct role of each group involved while forging a functional team to address this complex problem. All relevant professionals must be aware of their role in child protection and the unique knowledge and skills they bring to their community's prevention and intervention efforts. They must also understand the roles, responsibilities, and expertise of other professionals. All community professionals and agencies must collaborate to form a complete child protection system.

PURPOSE:

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is designated to set forth the normal operating procedures by all concerned officials of the reporting and assessment/investigation of child abuse and/or neglect within Putnam County.

Failure to follow procedures set forth in the MOU by the concerned officials is not grounds for, and shall not result in the dismissal of any charges of complaints arising from any reported case of abuse or neglect or the suppression of any evidence obtained as a result of any reported child abuse or neglect and does not give, and shall not be construed as giving, any rights or grounds ill for appeal or post-conviction relief to any person.

AUTHORITY:

This MOU has been prepared in accordance with Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 2151.421 and Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 5101:2-33-26.

PROCEDURES:

- A. MANDATED OFFICIALS TO THIS COUNTY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ARE THE FOLLOWING:**
1. The Juvenile Judge
 2. The County Peace Officer (Sheriff)
 3. The Chief Municipal Peace Officers
 4. The Law Enforcement Officer who Handle Child Abuse and Neglect Cases in Putnam County
 5. The County Prosecuting Attorney
 6. The Director of County Job and Family Services
 7. The County Humane Society (Dog Warden)

B. GOALS:

1. General Goals

The goal of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is designated is to set forth and establish the normal operating procedures to be employed by the above officials in the collaborative execution of their responsibilities pursuant to the aforementioned Sections of the ORC and the OAC. This will facilitate communication and procedures between Putnam County Job and Family Services (PCJFS), various law enforcement agencies throughout the County, the office of the Prosecuting Attorney, and the Juvenile and Probation Judge of Putnam County. It is agreed that the primary purpose of the referring of suspected child abuse and/or neglect shall be to protect the child and to engage the family in the social service functions of Putnam County Job and Family Services (PCJFS or Agency) designed to reduce the risk to the child. It is PCJFS' philosophy and agreed upon by the officials that children should be safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.

2. Specific Goals

- (a) To define the roles and procedures of each official subscribing to this Memorandum of Understanding;
- (b) To ensure the prompt referring and investigating of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect in order to ensure child safety and complete the investigative activities within the 45-day time frame (60 days maximum) as prescribed by OAC 5101:2-36-03, OAC 5101:2-36-09, OAC 5151:2-36-20
- (c) To promote the elimination of all unnecessary interviews of the alleged child victim (ACV) and to coordinate inter-agency planning to encourage one interview of the ACV when feasible
- (c) To define the methods which will be utilized in interviewing the ACV and describe who may interview the ACV; and
- (d) To provide protection and aid to the ACV's and their families.

C. GENERAL REPORTING PROCEDURES:

Any person wishing to make a report of child abuse or neglect may do so by telephone, writing, sending an email, or visiting Putnam County Job at 575 Ottawa Glandorf Rd. Suite 1, Ottawa Ohio 45875 phone 567-376-3777 or 1-800-523-5799 during regular business hours Monday through Friday 7:00-4:30 p.m.

After regular business hours, reports shall be received with the dispatcher at the Putnam County Sheriff's Office (419) 523-3208. The dispatcher or a deputy will take the necessary referral information and contact the children services worker that is on call during that period of time. Depending on the circumstances, the on-call worker will determine the next step and act appropriately per OAC 5101:2-36-01.

MANDATED OFFICIALS' RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES:

A. The Putnam County Juvenile Court Judge shall:

1. Accept referrals of both emergency and non-emergency child abuse/neglect, out-of-home care abuse or neglect, disabled infants with life-threatening conditions, and deserted infants and refer them immediately to PCJFS;
2. Cooperate and assist PCJFS in its efforts to complete its investigative responsibilities;

3. Receive any information referrals of missing children and refer that information to the appropriate law enforcement agency;
4. Receive any referrals involving the death of a child which may have resulted from child abuse or neglect and refer them to the appropriate law enforcement agency and PCJFS;
5. Receive referrals from any person and refer to the prosecuting attorney all reports involving persons who:
 - a. Aided, abetted, induced, caused, encouraged, or contributed to a child or ward of the juvenile court to become a dependent, abused or neglected child;
 - b. Aided, abetted, induced, caused, encouraged or contributed to a child or a ward of the juvenile court to become an unruly or delinquent child; and/or
 - c. Aided, abetted, induced, caused, encouraged, or contributed to a child or a ward of the juvenile court to leave the custody of any person, department or private or public institution without the legal consent of that person, department, or institution
5. Hear cases concerning child abuse/neglect/dependency, out-of-home care child abuse or neglect, child abuse/neglect cases requiring third party investigations, missing children, cases involving withholding of appropriate care or medically indicated treatment from disabled infants, death of a child which may have resulted from child abuse or neglect, interference of custody, and cases of persons aiding, abetting, inducing, causing, encouraging or contributing to a child becoming dependent, abused, neglected, unruly or delinquent or leaving the custody of any person, department, or public or private institution without the legal consent of that person, department, or institution.
6. Determine if audio or videotapes made of the interview of an ACV are appropriate for the court proceedings.
7. Request and receive reports and information from the prosecutor, law enforcement, and PCJFS concerning an open case, as necessary.

B. RESPONSIBILITY OF PUTNAM COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

1. Accept complaints, emergency, and non-emergency, regarding child abuse and neglect from any source, 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.
2. Immediately refer by phone, in person, any report concerning the possible abuse or neglect of a child in imminent risk (emergency) to PCJFS. All non-emergency reports should be reported to PCJFS within 24 hours.
3. After hours complaints will be referred to PCJFS by contacting the Sheriff's Department to contact the On-Call Worker.
4. Cooperate and assist PCJFS in its efforts to complete their assessment /investigation requirements of a maximum of 60 days as per OAC 5101:2-36-11.
5. Interview alleged perpetrators of a child abuse or neglect assessment/investigation as requested by PCJFS or when the case may involve criminal prosecution.
6. Contact PCJFS in the event of a death of a child.

7. Conduct an independent third-party investigation at the request of PCJFS.
8. Prepare, present, and refer cases for court action.
9. Investigate missing children. Officers may access all pertinent information from PCJFS concerning cases of missing children that may be relevant
10. Will assist PCJFS with performing welfare checks on children as requested
11. Provide a copy of this MOU to all law enforcement officer who handle child abuse or neglect cases.
12. Law enforcement shall provide a written summary of their investigative activities to PCJFS within 30 days of date the report was screened in.

B. PUTNAM COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

1. Upon receipt of an emergency or non-emergency report of a dependency, abuse or neglect, will immediately forward the information by telephone, or in person, to the Sheriff's Office.
2. Provide legal advice and interpretation to the Child Protective Unit.
3. Provide legal representation in Juvenile Court on cases pertaining to child abuse, neglect, or dependency.
4. Make a determination as to any charging decisions.
5. Cooperate and assist with PCJFS in its efforts to complete their investigation requirements of a maximum of 60 days as per OAC 5101:2-36-11.
6. Provide copies of this MOU to all assistant prosecutors who handle child abuse and neglect and dependency cases.
7. In the county courts, prosecute misdemeanor cases arising from their respective village or city limits, pertaining to child abuse or neglect or dependency.

C. Putnam County Job & Family Services shall:

1. Accept referrals of alleged child abuse and neglect 24 hours per day, seven days per week from any source.
2. The agency will assess each case per OAC screening guidelines and determine if the case is a screen-in, or a screen-out.
3. In accordance with ORC 2151.42.1 (K)(1), inform a mandated referent, at the time the referral is received, (if the referent provides his/her name, address, and telephone number of the time the referral is made) that he/she may make a reasonable number of requests of PCJFS to provide him/her with the following information, pending verification of his/her identity:
 - a. Whether PCJFS has initiated an investigation of the referral;
 - b. Whether PCJFS is continuing to investigate the referral;
 - c. Whether PCJFS is otherwise involved with the child who is the subject of the

- referral;
 - d. The general status of the health and safety of the child who is the subject of the referral; and
 - e. Whether the referral has resulted in the filing of a complaint in juvenile court or of criminal charges in another court.
4. Initiate investigation within one (1) hour of each emergency complaint (when it is determined that there is an imminent threat to the child's safety) and within 24 hours of each non-emergency complaint.
 5. Enter all reports of child abuse/neglect into SACWIS (Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System) upon the receipt of a report and all required information during the assessment/investigation.
 6. Interview alleged child victims, principals of the case, collateral and witnesses as deemed necessary during the assessment/investigation in compliance with OAC 5101:2-36-03 and 5101:2-36-20.
 7. Conduct assessment/investigation in cooperation with appropriate law enforcement agencies when criminal activity is suspected.
 8. Notify the County Prosecuting Attorney in writing within three (3) working days when there is an unauthorized dissemination of confidential PCSA information.
 9. Notify the County Prosecuting Attorney in writing within three (3) working days when any mandated reporter of child abuse or neglect fails to report suspect or known child abuse or neglect or dependency.
 10. In addition to all mandated assessment/investigation activities, request a third-party investigation from the appropriate law enforcement officer and/or another CDJFS when a report of abuse/neglect or dependency involves:
 - (a) Any institution, facility, foster or pre-finalization adoptive home which is licensed or certified by Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) and operated or supervised by PCJFS;
 - (b) Any employee, or agency of ODJFS or PCJFS; or
 - (c) Any authorized person who is representing ODJFS or PCJFS and who is providing services for payment or as a volunteer.
 - (d) Conflict of interest

Upon determination a third-party investigation is warranted, PCJFS shall immediately contact the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction by phone in order to initiate the assessment/investigation within the mandated time frames. The Officer and caseworker will make necessary arrangements on how to proceed.

11. In cases with receipt of reports concerning missing children:
 - (a) Immediately contact the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction and provide assistance and cooperation in the case; and
 - (b) Issue a Protective Service Alert with ODJFS if the missing child is the subject of a child abuse/neglect assessment/investigation per OAC 5101:2-36-14.

12. When a report of a death of a child due to alleged abuse or neglect is received, PCJFS shall do the following:
 - (a) Immediately contact the law enforcement with jurisdiction, Sheriff's Department, the County Coroner and follow assessment/investigation procedures and law enforcement.
 - (b) Complete mandated assessment/investigation activities per OAC 5101:2-36-03 and
 - (c) Contact the ODJFS Toledo Field Office immediately upon receipt of the report if during office hours. After hour reports shall be referred to the ODJFS Toledo Field Office the next working day.
13. When there is a death of a child in custody, we follow procedures in accordance with OAC 5101:2-33-14.
14. When a report involved alleged withholding of appropriate nutrition, hydration, medication, or medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions, PCJFS shall do the following:
 - (a) Contact the health care facility's administrator or designee to obtain information regarding the condition of the infant within one (1) hour of receipt of a report
 - (b) Determine if there is a need for an investigation based on the information obtained; and
 - (c) Follow procedures as outlined in OAC 5101:2-36-07
15. When an investigation involves a report of out-of-home care child abuse/neglect, PCJFS shall do the following:
 - (a) Immediately contact the out-of-home care setting administrator or designee to discuss allegations, procedures and actions to protect the alleged child victim;
 - (b) Proceed with mandated investigative activities OAC 5101:2-36-04.
16. PCJFS will contact the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction within 24 hours concerning reports involving individuals, who aid, abet, induce, cause, encourage, or contribute to a child or a ward of the juvenile court:
 - (a) Becoming a dependent, abused or neglect child;
 - (b) Becoming an unruly or delinquent child; or
 - (c) Leaving the custody of any person, department, or public or private institution without the legal consent of that person, department, or institution.
17. In the event there is imminent threat to the child's safety, PCJFS will consider the following options:
 - (a) Assist the caretaker in placing the child with a relative or non-relative, via a safety plan;
 - (b) Contact Supervisor;
 - (c) Obtain an ex-parte order from Juvenile Court;
 - (d) Remove the child with the assistance of law enforcement pursuant to ex parte order, and the next court day file the emergency complaint for the case to be heard before the Juvenile Court; and

- (e) File an emergency complaint in the Juvenile Court requesting a court order to remove a child.
18. Procedures for removing a child (ex parte or court order):
- (a) PCJFS will request the assistance of law enforcement
 - (b) PCJFS will provide the caretaker with:
 - 1. A "notification of Child Removal"
 - 2. Time and place of court hearing, when known and applicable
 - 3. An explanation of the reasons for removal
 - 4. Agency name, address and phone and contact person
 - (c) When a removal of a child occurs in the absence of a caretaker, PCJFS shall provide or attempt to provide the caretaker with the information stated above within 24 hours. The "Notification of Child Removal" form may be left at the residence of the caretaker in the absence of the caretaker.
19. Procedure for placement with relative and non-relative substitute caregivers:
- (a) Collect identifying information (name, aliases, social security number, address, phone number, place of employment) on a prospective caregiver and others residing in the home.
 - (b) Complete an agency Children Service records check, and other Children Service checks if potential caregivers have resided outside Putnam County.
 - (c) Complete local law enforcement checks, and other law enforcement checks if potential caregivers have ever resided outside of Putnam County.
 - (d) Complete FBI and BCI checks.
 - (e) If placement is determined safe for the child, follow procedures outlined in OAC 5101:2-42-18.
20. PCJFS may request the assistance of law enforcement, which may include, but not limited to the following:
- (a) The PCSA has reason to believe the child is in immediate danger of serious harm.
 - (b) The PCSA has reason to believe the worker is or will be in danger of harm.
 - (c) The PCSA has reason to believe that a crime is being committed or has been committed against a child.
 - (d) An exigent circumstance exists.
 - (e) The PCSA is removing a child from her/his family via an order of the court and the assistance of law enforcement is needed as the PCSA has reason to believe the family will challenge the removal.
 - (f) The PCSA must conduct an assessment/investigation at a known drug house and law enforcement escort is needed
 - (g) The PCSA is working with a client who has propensity toward violence and the assistance of law enforcement is needed to ensure the safety of all involved.
 - (h) The PCSA is working with a family that has historically threatened to do harm to PCSA staff.
21. In cases referred for a child abuse or neglect assessment/investigation in which there is a concern of drug involvement, the case worker shall contact the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction for assistance and/or referrals.
22. Provide copies of this MOU to all PCJFS employees who handle child abuse and neglect cases.

D. CITY LAW DIRECTORS AND VILLAGE SOLICITORS

1. Cooperate and assist with PCJFS in its efforts to complete their investigation requirements within a maximum of 60 days as per OAC 5101:2-36-11.

E. PROCEDURES FOR INTERVIEWING THE CHILD

1. Depending on the allegations, the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction will determine whether to conduct a primary interview or to even attend the child's interview.
2. Interview will take place in a "neutral" setting whenever possible and not in the presence of the parents if parents, other children, or other relatives are the alleged perpetrators.
3. The PCJFS case worker will be the primary interviewer and the law enforcement representative will be the secondary interviewer.
4. The PCJFS caseworker shall provide a copy of the dictation or recording of the interview of the child (victim) to the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction to assist them in their interview of the alleged perpetrator.

F. PROCEDURES FOR SEX ABUSE INTERVIEWS

1. PCJFS will take the primary role in the interview unless it is otherwise decided jointly by law enforcement and PCJFS as to who interviews the ACV and who assists with the interview.
2. Detailed pictures may be used to aid the child in telling what happened.
3. The alleged child victim shall be interviewed prior to any medical examination being completed, if possible. The child shall be emotionally prepared for the medical examination by the PCJFS case worker. The PCJFS case worker shall explain the necessity of the examination and be supportive of the child.
4. If the abuse has occurred recently, the child must be taken for a physical examination, if abuse has not occurred recently, but the nature of the abuse is such that, in the social worker's professional judgement an examination is warranted, an exam may be requested.
5. If possible, examination should be referred to a Pediatric SANE Nurse which specializes in child abuse and neglect examinations and has a specialized team to assist the child.
6. If the Pediatric SANE Nurse is not available or the examination warrants immediate attention, all efforts should be made to contact a practitioner who does sex abuse exams, if the child's family doctor does sex abuse exams, this should be the first priority for the child.
7. Utilizing the team approach will reduce the number of times a child will need to be interviewed.
8. Family may be referred to Victim Assistance by PCJFS or the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction, as appropriate.

G. PROCEDURE FOR INTERVIEW OF THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR

1. If a disclosure is made by the child, the law enforcement agency representative will be primarily responsible for locating and interviewing the alleged perpetrator. PCJFS staff will be the secondary interviewer in regard to the perpetrator, Law enforcement will have the option of allowing the PCJFS case worker to be present during the interview.
2. Law enforcement will prepare the crime summary.
3. The law enforcement agency representative will determine if the case needs to be referred to the Prosecutor's Office for further consideration.

H. ENDORSEMENTS OF THE CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT COUNTY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING


It is the responsibility of the PCJFS Director, or their designee, to request the written endorsement of all mandate officials to the county Memorandum of Understanding. The subscribers by signing this document do hereby express a commitment to share information to facilitate the investigation, prosecution, treatment and/or case management of suspected child abuse or neglect or dependency.

I. AMENDING THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This memorandum of understanding will be reviewed annually and amended by agreement of the mandated subscribers if significant changes are necessary.

The signatures on this page stand as affirmation of consensus regarding the goals, objectives, and cooperative response agreements of this plan.

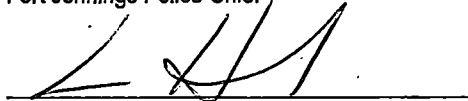
MANDATED OFFICIALS' SIGNATURES:


Putnam County Juvenile Judge

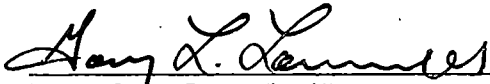

Putnam County Sheriff


Putnam County Sheriff's Office Detective


Fort Jennings Police Chief


Ottoville Police Chief

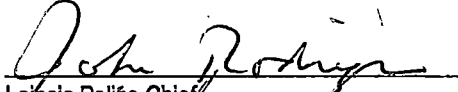

Kalida Police Chief



Putnam County Prosecuting Attorney

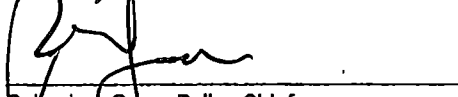

Putnam County Commissioner



Putnam County Commissioner



Glandorf Police Chief

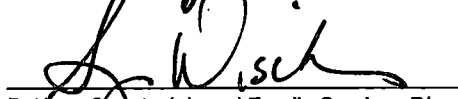

Leipsic Police Chief


Ottawa Police Chief


Columbus Grove Police Chief

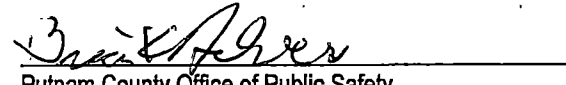

Continental Police Chief



Pandora Police Chief


Putnam County Job and Family Services Director

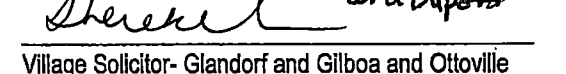

Putnam County Commissioner

OTHER INVOLVED OFFICIALS' SIGNATURES:


Putnam County Office of Public Safety

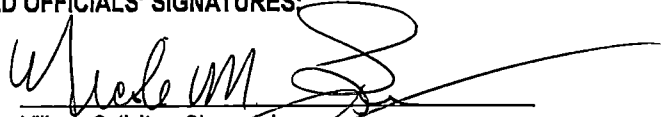

St. Rita's Ambulatory Care Center

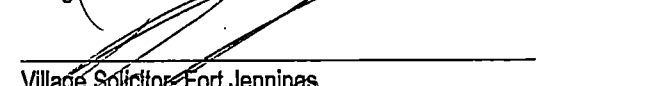

Village Solicitor- Columbus Grove and ~~Kalida~~
and Dupont

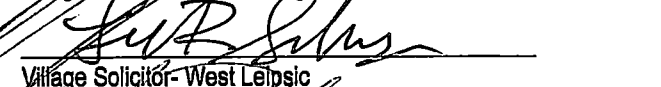

Village Solicitor- Glandorf and Gilboa and Ottoville



Village Solicitor- Ottawa


Village Solicitor- Leipsic


Village Solicitor- Cloverdale


Village Solicitor- Fort Jennings


Village Solicitor- West Leipsic


Village Solicitor- Continental


Village Solicitor- Kalida