



CDSS

WILL LIGHTBOURNE  
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.cdss.ca.gov



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.  
GOVERNOR

April 24, 2015

ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) NO. 15-41

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL PUBLIC AND LICENSED PRIVATE ADOPTION AGENCIES  
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (CDSS)  
ADOPTIONS REGIONAL AND FIELD OFFICES  
ALL COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENTS

SUBJECT: ANNUAL CHILD WELFARE SERVICES (CWS) DISASTER  
RESPONSE PLAN UPDATE

REFERENCE: CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2006  
PUBLIC LAW (PL) 109-288, ACL13-21

This letter is being sent to all 58 county CWS and Probation Departments to request an annual update to the CWS Disaster Response Plan previously submitted to CDSS in 2014.

Pursuant to the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006, PL 109-288, Section 6 (16); Part B Section 422 of Title IV of the Social Security Act; and Senate Bill 703, Chapter 583, Section 29 (c) Statute of 2007; CDSS as the single state agency is mandated to oversee CWS Disaster Response Plans for California. It is in this capacity that CDSS is requesting each county update current changes, as indicated below, of the CWS Disaster Response Plan by using the template attached to this letter.

Disaster response plans must include the following:

- A. Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children and non-minor dependents under county care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster, including children and non-minor dependents from other states;
- B. Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster and provide services in those cases;
- C. Address and provide care for unaccompanied minors and unaccompanied non-minor dependents;
- D. Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster;

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

- E. Preserve essential program records; and
- F. Coordinate services and share information with other states and counties, include a description of the process utilized by the county to ensure that information regarding children placed pursuant to the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) occurs with both the sending state and CDSS.

Please note that the CWS Disaster Response Plan's Criteria's B and C regarding unaccompanied minors were revised in 2013. The CWS Disaster Response Plan's Criteria's A and F were revised in 2014 to include Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC). The ICPC is governed by federal and state law which requires the disclosure of child fatalities and near child fatalities. The 2015 CWS Disaster Response Plan has been revised to include non-minor dependents.

Probation children in CWS care receiving Title IV-E foster care are to be included in the plan. In order to identify, locate, and continue availability of services for these children, the plan requires that local Probation Departments have an Interagency Agreement and a Memorandum of Understanding in place that permits the sharing of specific information regarding probation children during a disaster. Counties are requested to provide a copy of their updated CWS Disaster Response Plans to CDSS by June 30, 2015.

Copies should be sent to:

California Department of Social Services  
Attention: Stephanie Reed  
Adoptions Services Bureau  
744 P Street, MS 8-12-31  
Sacramento, CA 95814

If you have any questions regarding the submission of the CWS Disaster Response Plan, please contact Stephanie Reed, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, at (916) 651-8170 or by e-mail at [Stephanie.reed@dss.ca.gov](mailto:Stephanie.reed@dss.ca.gov) for an electronic copy of the template. You may also access the template at <http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG1854.htm>.

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By:***

GREGORY E. ROSE  
Deputy Director  
Children and Family Services Division

Attachment

c: County Welfare Directors Association of California  
Chief Probation Officers of California

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

County & Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Person Managing/Overseeing Emergency Plan Implementation

Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

ICPC Liaison \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

This template is intended to be used as a guide to help counties incorporate the 2006 federal disaster response criteria as part of local child welfare plans regarding children and non-minor dependents. Children and non-minor dependents in the probation system must also be included in the plan. County plans must be amended to include Child Welfare Services (CWS) Disaster Response Plans and be operational by September 28, 2007.

In September 2006, Congress passed the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law [PL] 109-288). PL 109-288 amended Part B of Title IV of the Social Security Act to reauthorize the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Among other changes, PL 109-288 established requirements for states on disaster planning in child welfare under section 6 (a)-(16). Accordingly, counties are requested to address the following program areas in developing local disaster readiness plans.

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria A:</b>	<b>Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children and non-minor dependents under state care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster, including children from other states:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Identification and location process of children who may be displaced, including children from other states

Process Description:	
Essential Function:	2. Communication process with child care providers
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	3. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event known in advance
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	4. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event not known in advance
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	5. Identification of shelters
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	6. Parental notification procedures
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	7. Alternative processes for providing continued services
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	8. Staff assignment process
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	9. Workload planning
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	10. Alternative locations for operations

Process Description:	
Essential Function:	11. Orientation and ongoing training
Process Description:	
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria B:</b>	<b>Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Investigation process
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	2. Determine circumstances surrounding the child's potential entrance
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	3. Implementation process for providing new services
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	4. Services emphasizing reunification due to disaster
Process Description:	
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria C:</b>	<b>Address and provide care for unaccompanied minors and unaccompanied non-minor dependents:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Structure – child welfare personnel
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	2. Address language barriers to communicate quickly and effectively
Process Description:	

Essential Function:	3. Determine likelihood of reunification and steps toward reunification
Process Description:	
Essential Description:	4. Assess and make a determination within 30 days
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria D:</b>	<b>Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Communication structure – staff
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	2. Communication structure – child welfare personnel (phone tree)
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	3. Communication structure – contracted services
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	4. Communication process when all normal channels are unavailable
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	5. Communication frequency
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	6. Communication with media
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	7. Communication with volunteers
Process Description:	

Essential Function:	8. Establishment of a toll-free number prior to disaster (include TTY)
Process Description:	
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria E:</b>	<b>Preserve essential program records:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Record preservation process
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	2. Use of off-site back-up system
Process Description:	
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria F:</b>	<b>Coordinate services and share information with other states and counties, include a description of the process utilized by the county to ensure that information regarding children placed pursuant to the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) occurs with both the sending state and CDSS:</b>
Essential Function:	1. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children reporting process must include a process that disseminates information to both the sending state and CDSS
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	2. Mental health providers
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	3. Courts
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	4. Federal partners
Process Description:	

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Essential Function:	5. CDSS
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	6. Tribes
Process Description:	
Essential Function:	7. Volunteers
Process Description:	