



Tennessee Department of Children's Services

Our Mission:

Our mission is to empower families and support community safety and partnerships to help ensure safety, permanency and well-being for children.

Worst Case Scenarios: TIPS FOR OFF-SITE SAFETY

Worst Case Scenarios: TIPS FOR OFF-SITE SAFETY was developed to promote the safety of staff while performing daily tasks out of the office. The booklet gives examples of various situations that might occur while working offsite and how staff should respond. It is not meant to provide a substitution for staff to use their *better judgment* and natural instinct to be cognizant of surroundings, at all times, while in the field. No special considerations were given to what might, or might not happen in any particular region nor was consideration given to weather, time of day or other environmental extremities. When in doubt please contact a Team Leader or Team Coordinator.

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Field Service Programs include:

Child Protective Services (CPS), Family Support Services (FSS), Family Crisis Intervention Program (FCIP), Foster Care, Independent Living, services for Youth placed in Group Homes and Youth Development Centers (e.g. transportation), Family Stabilization Services and after care and probation services

"HOME VISITS"

What should you do if...

1. You can't find a home?

Call referent, contact police department or post office.
NOTE: Once the home is located, staff should remember to strategically park the vehicle (do not park in a drive-way so that the potential of getting blocked in is prevented. If, for any reason, staff feels their safety is at risk, law enforcement should be contacted.



2. A child runs away?

Have family contact police department and file a runaway petition. (Document in TNKiDs – See Absconder Protocol)

3. A family's home has an unpleasant smell? Needs to be cleaned? Parent or Guardian's smoking is bothersome?

Tell family in a tactful way there is an unpleasant smell in the home. Explain the risk of health and safety for children in unsanitary conditions. Explain how the cigarette smoke is affecting you.

4. A dog is intrusive to you?

Ask family to please put the dog up for the time you are in the home. Explain to the family your reasoning, either being afraid, allergic, or they are distracting to your position.

5. Someone tries to touch you or is flirting with you?

Anytime someone is uncomfortable they need to leave the home. If it is not to that extent then, explain

you are in the home on a professional basis and not to interact on a personal level. If the CM requests for the harassment to stop, yet it continues each time a home visit occurs, the immediate supervisor or team leader should be informed about the incidents. Team Leader should follow up, accordingly (which might include consulting with the Team Coordinator and or Regional Administrator.

6. A teenager is pregnant and confronts the staff about having an abortion?

Have them contact their Primary Care Physician, local Health Department or community resources such as Planned Parenthood.

7. You suspect a Methamphetamine lab in a home; how do you know what to look for?

Upon request, Meth lab training can be provided. However, if you suspect anything suspicious you should get out of the home. Be on the lookout for: unusual strong odors, residences with windows blacked out, renters who pay in cash, lots of traffic in the home, excessive trash, and unusual amounts of clear glass containers being brought in the home. Also if you suspect any illegal drug use which makes you uncomfortable, it is in your best interest to exit the home.

8. A child threatens suicide while you are in the home?

Ensure either you or the family contacts Mobile Crisis and await their instructions. The child is not to be left alone. If Mobile Crisis does not respond timely, then the police should be contacted for transportation to the hospital.



"Safety" What should you

do if...

- 1. You walk into a domestic violence fight? The family is physically aggressive? Your cell phone does not work?**

Staff should step out of the home and call 911, depending on the severity of the case stay in your car and lock the doors, and drive away to a safe location. 911 will work even if your cell phone is roaming, out of network, or if you have no service. If a cell phone is not available, go to your car, lock the doors and get to a safe place. Contact law enforcement and your regional office to inform of the current situation. (Document in TNKiDs)

2. A child or family member attacks you?

Staff should defend him/herself in a non-aggressive manner, and leave the home as quickly as possible. Once in a safe place call "911" and your Regional office/team leader and advise of what has taken place. If injuries were incurred and you can drive, get to the nearest hospital or nearest facility where treatment can be provided. An incident report must also be submitted to management who should forward to the Office of the Department Fire and Safety Consideration should also be given to filing a police report. (Document in TNKiDs)

3. There are dogs in the home, which block you from entering or exiting your car? What if the dogs are vicious?

When exiting your vehicle to enter a home if dogs make you feel threatened, honk your horn and ask the family to put the dogs away. When returning to your vehicle, ask the family to separate the dogs and put them away. Once the dogs are locked up go to your car. Ask the family to put the dogs away when they know a home visit will be taking place, in the future. If small children are present in the home and dogs are vicious, contact Central Intake for further instruction about a potential referral. (Document in TNKiDs)

4. You are in a car accident while on duty? What if you were transporting a child?

Any injury or suspected possible injury needs to be reported to the Regional Office, immediately (Team Leader/Team Coordinator or available TL or TC). An Incident Report and Property damage report must be submitted to the Department's Office of Financial Support (Facility Division) within 24 hours. If medical treatment is needed go to the emergency room or nearest treatment/emergency care center. The TL/TC and Law enforcement should also be contacted.

5. You have an accident, or sustain an injury while on a home visit?

Any injury or suspected possible injury needs to be reported to the Regional Office (immediate or available TL/TC) immediately. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, take yourself to the nearest hospital for treatment facility and submit an incident report, accordingly.

6. You are supposed to transport a child who becomes aggressive?

If your safety is at risk, or you become uncomfortable, do not transport the child.

7. A Service recipient is injured?

FSS/FCIP Case Manager

In an instance where a child is injured, the case manager would immediately ascertain if it is necessary for the child to receive medical attention. If medical attention is needed and is life-threatening, staff would ensure that EMS is called by either calling themselves or having the parent call. If the situation is not life-threatening but medical attention is needed, the child should be driven to the nearest emergency room or treatment care facility. If medical attention is not needed, staff would ensure that the parent treats the child's injury.

In events where necessary, staff should apply training techniques learned through other training courses related to safety such as Blood Borne Pathogens training and or first aid training (if received). When necessary refer to the appropriate handbooks (if available) for further information. If staff is involved in the injury, an incident report should be completed, accordingly and all information related to the incident documented in TNKiDs.

8. A service recipient is lost while under your supervision?

While transporting, if a person served is lost when DCS staff has assumed responsibility for their safety, immediately report it to this information to law enforcement and call the parents/guardians.

Case Managers are to submit an Incident Report and document the incident in TNKiDs.

TRAVEL



What should you do if...

1. You get a flat tire? Or your vehicle is stuck in a ditch or yard?

Contact Roadside Assistance and notify Regional Office of your situation and whereabouts. If you have a spare and feel comfortable changing your tire, then that route is ok.

2. You have scheduled home visits or training and the weather is hazardous for driving?

Remember: Safety is paramount. Follow regional protocol to reschedule the visit and clearly document if any timelines were affected. If training is in-house, it should be cancelled.

3. You have an accident while performing duties related to your employment?

Respond how you would if you were not at work. Call law enforcement, swap insurance information, and check on everyone's condition. The only difference is that the Regional Office and Human Resources need to be contacted immediately so that the proper paperwork can be filed within 24 hours (See policy 29.10)

"BEHAVIORAL"

What should you do if...

1. You are faced with a legitimate mental health emergency and Mobile Crisis does not respond to my call?

Call police to take child to Hospital. If appropriate have parents transport child to Hospital. Contact Supervisor for further guidance.



"HEALTH/NURSING"

***Lice* What should you if ... 1. You suspect someone has head or body lice...**

Head lice and body lice, which are different forms (subspecies) of *Pediculus humanus*, are very similar in appearance.

Lice are wingless insects whose legs have claws that grip and hold onto hair shafts. Head lice attach their eggs (nits) to the hair; body lice prefer to live in the seams and linings of unwashed clothing, blankets and sheets from which they periodically crawl onto the skin to feed. Although body lice usually deposit their nits on unwashed clothing fibers, the nits are sometimes found on body hair as well. The most common symptom of a lice infestation is intense itching, usually with injury to the skin caused by scratching or scraping.

Lice are not known to transmit any infectious diseases from person to person; they are more of a nuisance than a health risk problem. While lice can crawl relatively quickly, they cannot hop, fly, or jump. Therefore, direct contact with an infested object or person is required to become infested.

Infestations of head lice can be treated by the use of an effective louse treatment, nit removal from the head (combing), and removal of lice and nits from the household environment by vacuuming, washing items in hot water, or freezing objects suspected being infested.

You are bit by a child?

If there is little or no bleeding, the site should be cleansed with soap and water. If there is significant bleeding, first stop the bleeding by applying pressure.

- The physician should be contacted for further treatment,
- Tetanus vaccine or antibiotics may be necessary
- Contact the Regional Office immediately to report the incident.
- Follow up by submitting a written incident report within 24 hours (or next business day if incident occurs at the end of the work week).



NOTE: In all instances where staff requires medical attention, you may go to an emergency room (Consider assuring, through your insurance, that emergency room visits are covered without the prior approval of your primary care physician). If a determination is made that a situation is a “non-emergency”, be encouraged to schedule an appointment with your primary care physician as a good health and safety precaution. Also follow up with the Department’s Office of Human Resource Development (following policy in Chapter 4) any situations that might involve Workman’s Compensation.

Tips and Preventative Measures for Safety & Good Health

- Remember the simplest way to prevent disease is to wash your hands
- Follow the rules outlined in your Blood Borne Pathogens training and manual when in the presence of blood
- If you believe an environment poses a threat to your health and safety take appropriate precautions or avoid the area

If staff believe they have come in contact with Tuberculosis.....

Important Information About Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis is a highly contagious disease. If you are in close contact with someone who has TB disease, you may inhale the Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the bacterium that causes tuberculosis. TB is a slow progressing disease; the bacterium multiplies only about once every 14 to 24 hours. TB testing can be done any time after exposure; however, it is possible that a person will have a false-negative TB test if it is done too soon. An initial TB test should be performed and then repeated at approximately eight weeks after exposure to provide a better indication of TB transmission. If you have been exposed, contact your PCP or the local health department to start the testing process.

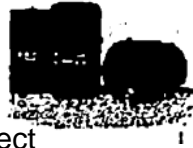
Additional Information TB per policy 20.19:

If a child/youth enters custody and reports they have TB, they should be questioned as to who told them the diagnosis and if they are on TB medications. The Regional Health Nurse can be consulted for assistance. TB is a disease that must be reported to the Department of Health so they are a resource to contact to confirm a report by a child/youth or family member that he/she has TB.

If there is any question about whether or not a child/youth actually has TB, they should be taken to the nearest emergency room for confirmation. The emergency room staff must be notified ahead of time to advise them you are bringing a child/youth in with possible TB to allow them to prepare.

When transporting a child who reports he/she has TB, the child/youth should wear a surgical mask if available. If a surgical mask is not available, transport the child in the car with the windows down to allow fresh air to circulate. If the weather will not allow you to travel with the windows down, turn the air conditioner to fresh air rather than re-circulated air.

“Health/Nursing”



What should you do if:

1, You enter a home, which you suspect to be an active or former lab used for the manufacturing of Methamphetamine?

Tell the family In a tactful manner that you are not able to conduct the home visit at that time, but will contact the referent and ensure someone gets back to the family.

DON'T LOSE YOUR COOL!

LEAVE THE HOME IMMEDIATELY Upon safely exiting the structure and the surrounding area, call 911, or local law enforcement so that they may investigate. Explain what you have witnessed. Be sure to be specific in explaining the presence of any chemicals or apparatuses, which are typically used in the manufacturing of Methamphetamine, Contact your Team Leader, Inform them of what you have witnessed; Also, inform them of where you are in case they need to assist you in locating the NEAREST hospital, Go to the NEAREST Emergency Room, The excessive toxicity of Methamphetamine poses an immediate threat to your physical health. The long-term effects of exposure to the drug are relatively unknown. Be sure to explain your concerns to the health professionals. Once at the hospital explain your exposure to the triage experts so that you can be properly treated, Once treated, please contact your Team Leader again to let them know of your condition.

“HEALTH/NURSING”

What are Universal Precautions?

- Work practices that help prevent contact with blood and certain other body fluids.
- The best protection against AIDS, Hepatitis B and some other infectious diseases is to treat everyone as though they are infected; You can't be sure who is infected.
- These conditions are spread through blood; semen, vaginal secretions, and fluids that surround the heart, joints and tendons.
- Individuals can become infected by injury with a sharp object.
- Proper hand washing helps prevention.
- Cover any broken skin with a bandage or dressing.
- After direct contact with blood or other body fluid, wash hands immediately.
- Don't reach blindly into a trashcan when searching for items; Dump trash and search with your eyes.
- Don't eat or drink in work areas where blood or other body fluids may be present.

Important Numbers in

My County

Name	Phone Numbers
Human Resource Development (Central Office)	(615) 741-9171