



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 9.6

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| Subject: | Organization and Maintenance of DCS File Rooms |
| Authority: | TCA 36-1-125; 36-1-126; 37-1-153; 37-1-409; 37-1-612; 37-2-408; 37-5-105; 37-5-106; 37-1-107; 49-10-608; |
| Standards: | ACA: 4-JCF-6F-01; COA: PA-RPM 2, PA-RPM 5.01, PA-RPM 5.02, PA-RPM 6.01, PA-RPM 7.01, PA-RPM 8 |
| Application: | To All Department of Children's Services Regional Administrators, Facility Managers, Records Clerks and Records Coordinators |
| Policy Statement: | |
| The Department of Children's Services (DCS) shall ensure that all closed records are maintained in a systematic secure order. Child case files and related information are official confidential records and shall be safeguarded in accordance with applicable statutes, rules, policies and ethical standards. | |
| Purpose: | |
| To ensure that all closed DCS records can be retrieved in a timely manner and that records are maintained in a uniform manner in all DCS offices and facilities. | |
| Procedures: | |
| A. Organization of Closed Paper Records | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each office will designate a secured area to store closed records. This will be in either a locked file room or secure file cabinets. 2. Each office will designate a Records Clerk to manage the storage areas. 3. Access to the secure storage areas will be limited to the records clerk or their designee. 4. The secure storage area will be locked at all times to ensure access is limited to <u>AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY</u>. 5. All closed DCS files will be transferred to the Records Clerk or their designee. 6. All DCS Records Clerks and Coordinators will be given access to the DCS Records Management Database. 7. The DCS Records Clerk or their designee will enter the required tracking information into the DCS Records Management Database. 8. The paper records will be filed in the secure storage area in Alphabetical order and separated by Program type (CPS, Home County Case Files, Resource Home Files, Family Case Files). |

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| <p>B. Obtaining Closed Records</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any authorized person wishing to gain access to a record in the secure storage area, must request that file from the Records Clerk or their designee. 2. The Records Clerk will maintain a tracking log that contains the following information: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) RECORD NAME, b) REQUESTOR'S NAME, c) DATE REMOVED, d) DATE RETURNED, and e) NOTES. |
| <p>C. Request of Records</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Records Clerk will ensure the requester is authorized to access the requested file. 2. If it is necessary to send a requested file to another location, the Records Clerk will make a copy of the original case file. 3. The original case file will be returned to the secured storage area. 4. The copy of the original file will be transferred to the requester along with DCS form CS-0422 Transfer, Mail and Acknowledgement of Case Records, Record Materials and Forms. <p>Note: No original case records will be sent to DCS Central Office unless authorized to do so by DCS Legal Counsel.</p> |
| <p>D. Change of Venue</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If a record is being transferred from one county of venue to another, the original file will be transferred to the new county of venue along with DCS form CS-0422 Transfer, Mail and Acknowledgement of Case Records, Record Materials and Forms. 2. The Records Clerk will document the new venue in the file room log. |

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| <p>Forms:</p> | <p><u>CS-0422 Transfer, Mail and Acknowledgement of Case Records, Record Materials and Forms</u></p> |
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| <p>Collateral documents:</p> | <p><i>None</i></p> |
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| Glossary: | |
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| Term | Definition |
| County of Venue: | The county that is considered the “Home County” of the child or family receiving services. |
| Family Case File: | A working case file that contains all of a family’s information that is maintained in a systematic and confidential manner while receiving services from DCS. |
| Locked File Room: | Any area that is accessible only via a locked door with access limited to authorized personnel only. |
| Records Management Database: | A database created by DCS Information Systems to log and track the maintenance and destruction of paper records. |
| Secure File Cabinet: | Any file cabinet that can be locked to ensure limited access to confidential information. |
| Separated by Program Type: | All CPS files will be grouped together. All Home County Case Files will be grouped together; all Resource Home Files will be grouped together and all Family Case Files will be grouped together. |