Search, Attach, Assign, and Merge Specialist (SAAMS) Unit Responsibilities

C300-051 | Revision Date: 11/20/2025

Overview

This policy guide outlines the general tasks for SAAMS clerical staff.

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Version Summary

This policy guide was updated from the 03/16/05 version to update SAAMS Clerk responsibilities, including the use of the California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS. A procedural section for processing State IDs was updated. Clerical Policy C300-011, Referral Assignment Timeframes was cancelled, and the information therein was merged and updated on this policy. This includes the addition of Assignment Desk responsibilities for SAAMS clerical units. The title was changed from

Search, Attach, Assign, and Merge Specialist (SAAMS) Clerk Responsibilities to Search, Attach, Assign, and Merge Specialist (SAAMS) Unit Responsibilities.

POLICY

SAAMS Clerk General Responsibilities

A SAAMS Clerk is a specialist in, and responsible for the following tasks:

- Searching, adding and/or correcting client information on the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and on the California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS).
    - CalSAWS, formerly known as LEADER Replacement System (LRS), replaced both Welfare Case Management Information System (WCMIS) and its successor the Los Angeles County Eligibility, Automated Determination, Evaluation and Reporting System (LEADER).
- Completing a thorough search on CalSAWS and CWS/CMS for every client on a referral or case, including Family and Children Index (FCI).
- The (re)activation of CalSAWS case numbers (State ID number) and/or separate family segments.
- Merging duplicated clients in CWS/CMS and creating new and/or attaching existing clients in CWS/CMS and CalSAWS.
- Identifying and correcting duplicate case records on open and/or closed cases on CalSAWS and CWS/CMS.
- Processing DCFS 0264, SAAMS Data Inquiry and Action Request forms submitted by CSWs. These requests consist of:
    - Adding clients
    - Attaching and/or merging any client(s) that are found to already exist on CWS/CMS
    - Correcting client information
    - Issuing new State ID numbers
    - Activating State ID numbers in CWS/CMS and CalSAWS
    - Relating clients
- Recording CalSAWS case numbers (State ID numbers) and case names on the ID Num Page of the Client Notebook in CWS/CMS for clients with allegations of abuse and their siblings under the age of nineteen (19).
- Reviewing and completing requests for DCFS 265, SAAMS Request to “Add Mother as Primary Applicant” in CalSAWS.

- Completing Assignment Desk duties, when assigned to the assignment desk.

The SAAMS Clerks may be asked to provide additional duties at the discretion of their administration.

Assignment Desk General Responsibilities

When assigned to complete Assignment Desk duties, the Assignment Desk SAAMS Clerk is responsible for the following tasks:

- Processing and completing clearances on all Expedited Referrals, Immediate Response (IR) Referrals, Five-Days Referrals, Due-by Referrals, and/or Follow-Up Referrals.
- Receiving the Expedited Response Alert forms from the Child Protection Hotline (CPH) and immediately forwarding the Alert to the Duty ER SCSW.

Referral Assignment Timeframes

Immediate Response Referrals:

- Must be assigned within two (2) hours of the original receipt.

Five-Day and Follow-up Referrals:

- Must be assigned within four (4) business hours of the original receipt.

Receipt Time:

- The receipt time is determined by the date and time of assignment to the regional office shown on the Assignment Page of the CSW/CMS referral. If the referral was generated manually, the date and time of the email sent (or fax, when email is unavailable) to the regional office will determine the date and time of receipt. If the receiving office does not e-mail the CPH Re-Map Liaison (RML) for re-assignment within the specified time frames, the receiving office must assign the referral to a CSW in the office to initiate the investigation or request a courtesy home call from the regional office that serves the area where the family is located.

Referrals That Have Been Assigned in Error

The CHP is responsible for the assignment of referrals to emergency response units. Regional offices are responsible for the correction of referrals that have been assigned to a particular office in error. Referrals with an “Immediate Response Time” will be assigned to the regional offices during business hours (8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday, except for County holidays) and to Emergency Response Command Post (ERCP) after business hours and all County holidays. Referrals that have a “Five-day” response time will be assigned to regional offices.

A referral is considered to have been assigned in error when it does not meet the referral assignment criteria (e.g., the referral was assigned to the wrong office). If a referral is assigned in error to a regional office, the receiving office must take action.

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PROCEDURE

Processing the State Identification Number (State ID)

SAAMS Clerk Responsibilities

When performing the following searches, complete a DCFS 263, Case Clearance Worksheet to document the findings and to indicate what actions are taken.

1. Search CalSAWS for each person listed on the referral.
    a. When a closed record is found, reactivate the existing CalSAWS State ID number.
    b. When there is no record of a previous State ID, activate a new CalSAWS State ID number.
2. Search CWS/CMS for each person listed on the referral.
    a. When a duplicate client is identified, perform a client merge.
    b. When prior referrals/cases are found with additional people other than those listed on the referral, annotate the DCFS 263 with this information.
    c. Enter the CalSAWS State ID and Case Name on the ID Number Page of the Client Notebook.
3. Sign and date the DCFS 263.
    - If appropriate, include any CalSAWS, FCI, and/or CWS/CMS screen printouts.
4. Staple the DCFS 263 and any other documentation to the referral and return to the requesting CSW.

Processing an Expedited Response Alert Form from the Child Protection Hotline (CPH)

SAAMS Unit- Assignment Clerk Responsibilities

1. Receive and confirm receipt of the Expedited Response Alert form from the Child Protection Hotline.
2. Annotate the Expedited Response Log with the following information:
    a. Referral number
    b. Case name
    c. CSW file number (if there is an open referral/case)
    d. Time email was received (or fax, when email is down)
    e. Time SCSW received the Expedited Response Alert form
    f. Signed by
    g. Date
3. Photocopy and file in designated office file.

4. If the Expedited Response Alert form has enough information, perform a preliminary search on CWS/CMS, CalSAWS, and FCI.
    a. If there is an open referral/case, forward alert to the appropriate SCSW, and the duty SCSW.
        - Annotate on the DCFS 263.
    b. If there is no open referral/case, forward the alert to the duty SCSW.

Processing Immediate Response (IR) Referrals, Five-Day Referrals, Due-by Referrals or Follow-Up Referrals Received at a Regional Office

SAAMS Unit- Assignment Clerk Responsibilities

1. Retrieve the referral from the designated CWS/CMS in-box.
2. Verify that the referral was correctly assigned. If incorrectly assigned, refer to section "Addressing Referrals That Have Been Assigned in Error".
3. Complete the CSW assignment based on referral type time frames, the referral assignment criteria, IR/5-day/Due-by/Follow-up Rotation Schedule determined by each office.
    - If a prior record is found and services were terminated within the past thirty (30) days, assign the referral to the previously assigned CSW, unless the family no longer resides in the offices' service area. In this situation, the referral is to be routed to the office in which the family now resides.
4. Complete a clearance on CalSAWS, CWS/CMS, and FCI for every client on a referral or case.
    - When there is no record of a previous State ID, activate a new CalSAWS State ID number.
        - Also annotate the "no record" finding on the DCFS 263.
    - When there is an open record, annotate the "Comments" section of the DCFS 263 with the State ID number and File Number of the CSW to which the referral/case is open.
    - When the referral is regarding abuse in Out-of-Home care (i.e. Resource family home, small family home or other placement facility), annotate at the bottom of the Emergency Response Referral Document that it is an Out-of-Home Care investigation.
5. If the clearance indicates that there is a closed service case/referral in storage or suspense, complete the DCFS 6110 and forward it to the Suspense Clerk, who will request the case records.
6. Provide a copy of the clearance to the assigned CSW/SCSW. Maintain one copy for assignment desk records.

Addressing Referrals That Have Been Assigned in Error

SAAMS Unit- Assignment Desk Clerk Responsibilities

1. Consult with the office Duty SCSW regarding the erroneous referral assignment. If the SCSW agrees with the current referral assignment, process the referral per existing procedures.
2. If the referral has been assigned in error, request a remap for the referral by emailing the completed Remap Request Form to referralremap@dcfs.lacounty.gov.
3. If remapping request efforts are not successful, advise the duty SCSW in your office at once.

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APPROVALS

None

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HELPFUL LINKS

Attachments

Management Directive (MD) 25-01, Cases with Multiple Case Numbers

Forms

LA Kids
Expedited Response Form
DCFS 0264, SAAMS Data Inquiry and Action Request
DCFS 263, Case Clearance Worksheet
DCFS 6110, Request for Closed or Historical Case Retrieval
Remap Request Form

Referenced Policy Guides

0050-503.15, Child Protection Hotline (CPH) Referrals: Screening Decision and Response Priority
0050-503.65, Child Protection Hotline (CPH) Referrals Regarding Children in Surrounding Counties
0050-503.85, Sensitive/Sealed Referrals/Cases
0050-504.05, Referral Assignment Criteria

0070-515.10, Changing Response Times, Evaluating Out, and Re-Mapping Emergency Response Referrals by Regional Staff
1000-504.10, Case Transfer Criteria and Procedures
C100-091, Verifying Referral Assignments Within Time Frames

Statutes

Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 16504 – States in part that any child reported to the county welfare department to be endangered by abuse, neglect, or exploitation shall be eligible for initial intake and evaluation of risk services. Each county welfare department shall maintain and operate a 24-hour response system. An immediate in-person response shall be made by a county welfare department social worker in emergency situations in accordance with regulations.

Welfare and Institutions Code Section 16501(f) **–** states "Emergency response services consist of a response system providing in-person response, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, as required by Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 11164) of Chapter 2 of Title 1 of Part 4 of the Penal Code for the purpose of investigation pursuant to Section 11166 of the Penal Code and to determine the necessity for providing initial intake services and crisis intervention to maintain the child safety in his or her own home or to protect the safety of the child. County welfare departments shall respond to any report of imminent danger to a child immediately and all other reports within 10 calendar days. An in-person response is not required when the county welfare department, based upon an evaluation of risk, determines that an in-person response is not appropriate. This evaluation includes collateral, contacts, a review of previous referrals, and other relevant information, as indicated."

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