

Suspense Clerk General Responsibilities

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Overview

This policy guide outlines the general tasks for clerical staff assigned to Suspense in Regional Offices and Emergency Response Command Post (ERCP).

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Version Summary

This Policy Guide was updated from the 08/22/19 version to incorporate current procedures regarding closed referrals/cases in Regional Offices and Emergency Response Command Post (ERCP). Clerical Policy C200-021, Suspense Actions was cancelled, and the information therein was merged and updated on this policy.

POLICY

General Responsibilities

It is the Suspense Clerk's responsibility to maintain accurate records of all cases in Suspense, to process requests for cases, to send cases to storage and file miscellaneous mail in cases stored in Suspense.

"Suspense" is used to define closed referrals/cases that are stored at the Regional Office, which are kept for a period of sixty (60) days. Thereafter, the referrals/cases are sent to storage.

"Historical Cases" are cases that are still open but include multiple boxes that are not being used by the CSW. The extra boxes are stored at the Regional Office.

"Storage" is used to define closed referrals/cases that are stored at GRM Inc., located at 8500 Mercury Lane, Pico Rivera, CA 90660, which are stored at this location indefinitely.

PROCEDURE

Placing a Closed Referral in Suspense

Regional Office Suspense Clerk Responsibilities

For a closed referral in a Regional Office:

1. Receive closed referral from a requestor with the following attached:
 - [DCFS 261](#), Inactive Record Transmittal and Control
 - California Statewide Automated Welfare System (CalSAWS) Case Summary document
 - CalSAWS Child Protective Services Detail page
 - Confirm documentation of the referral/case on the [DCFS 6111](#), Suspense/Historical Log.
2. Enter the date in the "Date Received at Suspense" box of the [DCFS 261](#), make a copy and take the following steps:
 - File a copy in a Suspense Alphabetical file. Pull and shred after [two \(2\) years](#).
3. File the referral/case in the suspense area in alphabetical order.
 - Retain for a maximum of sixty (60) days before sending to storage.

ERCP Suspense Clerk Responsibilities

For a closed referral at Emergency Response Command Post (ERCP):

1. Receive the ERCP referral from the Unit Clerk, with DCFS 261 attached.
2. Search the referral name in Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) to determine if there is an open referral/case at a regional office.

3. If there is an open referral/case, send the closed referral to the office that has the open referral/case. To send, follow step [1.c \(for office to office delivery\)](#) outlined on [Inter/Intra Office Closed Referral/Case Requests](#).
4. If there is no open referral/case at a Regional office, file the ERCP case on a shelf by date order. Retain for sixty (60) days.

Placing a Closed Case in Suspense

Suspense Clerk Responsibilities

1. Receive **closed** referral from a requestor with the following attached:
 - [DCFS 261](#), Inactive Record Transmittal and Control
 - CalSAWS Case Summary document
 - CalSAWS Child Protective Services Detail page
 - Confirm documentation of the referral/case on the [DCFS 6111](#), Suspense/Historical Log.
2. **Confirm that the case was closed on CWS/CMS and discontinued on CalSAWS.**
 - **If these tasks were not completed, return to unit clerk for completion.**
3. Enter the date in the “Date Received at Suspense” box of the [DCFS 261](#), make a copy and take the following steps:
 - File a copy in a Suspense Alphabetical file. Pull and shred after [two \(2\) years](#).
4. File the referral/case in the suspense area in alphabetical order.
 - Retain for a maximum of **sixty** (60) days before sending to storage.

Sending a Closed Referral/Case to Storage

The Department’s permanent case and document storage is a contracted service currently provided by GRM Inc. DCFS employees who are pre-authorized to use this service can send and request files and documents to and from storage. The list of pre-authorized employees can be viewed on LA Kids, under [DCFS Closed Case and Document Storage Service](#).

Instructions to request authorization to access files in storage are located on LA Kids, under [DCFS Closed Case and Document Storage Service](#).

Regional Office Suspense Clerk Responsibilities

To send a closed referral/case to storage from a Regional Office:

1. Complete a [DCFS 6-2](#), Closed Case Transmittal.
 - Include the name and address of the sender.
 - Include the name and address of recipient.
 - GRM Inc.’s address is 8500 Mercury Lane, Pico Rivera, CA 90660.

- List the case name and the 7-digit case number (State ID) of each file.
2. Prepare the box to send closed referral(s)/case(s) to storage:
 - a. Place closed referral(s)/case(s) inside a standard record (banker style) box. The box should be double-walled, measuring no more than ten (10) inches in height, twelve (12) inches wide and fifteen (15) inches long (10"H x 12"W x 15"L).
 - b. Place a copy of the completed transmittal (DCFS 6-2) inside the box, on top of the files, to provide GRM Inc. archiving instructions.
 - c. Boxes must not exceed twenty-five (25) lbs. (see mailroom for scale).
 - d. Seal the box with tape.
 3. Create a barcoded shipping box label for the Internal Services Department (ISD) Mail Courier:
 - Open the [tracking system](#).
 - Create and post the barcoded label. The system will create a triplicate copy form of the shipping label. Secure two (2) copies of the label in the adhesive document protector and attach onto the top of the box; keep the third (3rd) copy for your records.
 - Staff must note "Case Files" in the remarks section of the barcoded label.
 - Staff can track the box via the [tracking system](#).
 4. File and retain the copies of the transmittals for two (2) years, and shred thereafter.

ERCP Suspense Clerk Responsibilities

To send a closed referral to storage from ERCP:

1. After the referral has been in Suspense for sixty (60) days, pull the hard copy of ERCP referral from the shelf. Search CWC/CMS to determine if there is an open referral/case at a DCFS Regional office.
2. If a new referral/case is open at a DCFS Regional office, complete a transmittal and send the ERCP referral to the assigned regional case-carrying CSW.
3. If there is no open referral/case at a DCFS Regional office, send the ERCP referral(s) to storage.
4. Prior to sending the referral to storage, complete a [DCFS 6-2](#) listing referrals going to storage.
 - Include the name and address of the sender.
 - Include the name and address of recipient.
 - GRM Inc.'s address is 8500 Mercury Lane, Pico Rivera, CA 90660.
 - List the case name and the 7-digit case number (State ID) of each file.
5. Prepare the box to send closed referral to storage:

- a. Place one (1) closed referral inside a standard record box (banker style). The box should be double-walled, measuring no more than ten (10) inches in height, twelve (12) inches wide and fifteen (15) inches long (10"H x 12"W x 15"L).
 - b. Place a copy of the completed transmittal (DCFS 6-2) inside the box on top of the files, to provide GRM Inc. with archiving instructions.
 - c. Boxes must not exceed twenty-five (25) lbs. (see mailroom for scale).
 - d. Seal the box with tape.
6. Create a barcoded shipping box label for the ISD Mail Courier:
- Open the [tracking system](#).
 - Create and post the barcoded label. The system will create a triplicate copy of the shipping label. Secure two (2) copies of the label in the adhesive document protector and attach onto the top of the box; keep the third (3rd) copy for your records.
 - Staff must note "Case Files" in the remarks section of the barcoded label.
 - Staff can track the box via the [tracking system](#).
7. File and retain the copies of the transmittals for two (2) years, and shred thereafter.

Requesting Closed Referrals/Cases from Storage

Adoption, Sensitive Case Unit and Revenue Enhancement cases may be retrieved only by the Adoptions Division, Sensitive Case Unit and Revenue Enhancement Division staff. Should a Regional office need to request a file, contact:

- Adoptions Inbox: Adoptioncaserequest@dcfs.lacounty.gov
- Sensitive Case Unit SCSW: SensitiveCaseRequest@dcfs.lacounty.gov
- Revenue Enhancement Inbox: Redlibraryrequestinbox@dcfs.lacounty.gov

Suspense Clerk Responsibilities

1. Send an email with the Subject Line "Record Retrieval" to storage, Lainfo@grmdocument.com.
 - Include the Referral/Case Name and 7-digit case number (State ID).
2. GRM Inc. will verify the name of the requestor against the list of staff authorized to request files and will forward the file to the office location shown on the list.

Processing Requests for Referrals/Cases in Suspense

Suspense Clerk Responsibilities

1. Receive request with the following attached documents:

- [DCFS 6110](#), Request for Closed or Historical Case Retrieval
 - This form is used internally by staff who request closed cases that have been sent to Suspense, but have not yet been shipped to GRM Inc.
- CalSAWS Case Summary document
- CalSAWS Child Protective Services Detail page
 - Confirm documentation of the case on the [DCFS 6111](#), Suspense/Historical Log.

Requesting or Sending an Open Case From/To Historical Case Records

Suspense Clerk Responsibilities

1. Follow office specific protocol to request or send an open case from/to Historical Case Records.

Inter/Intra Office Closed Referral/Case Requests

Suspense Clerk Responsibilities

1. Upon receipt of a scanned and e-mailed [DCFS 6110](#), Request for Closed or Historical Case Retrieval:
 - a. Retrieve the **referral**/case from Suspense or if in storage, request it from storage per [Requesting Closed Referrals/Cases from Storage](#).
 - b. For internal office requests, send an email to the requestor notifying **them** that the case is ready for pick-up.
 - Attach a signed copy of the [DCFS 6110](#), with Part II completed.
 - c. For office-to-office delivery, **create a barcoded shipping box label for the ISD Mail Courier**.
 - i. **Open the [tracking system](#)**.
 - ii. **Create and post barcoded label**.
 - iii. **The system will create a triplicate copy of the shipping label. Secure two copies of the label in the adhesive document protector and attached onto the top of the box; keep the third copy for your records.**
 - **Staff must note pertinent information in the remarks section of the barcoded label.**
 - iv. Attach a signed copy of the DCFS 6110, with Part II completed.
 - v. Attach a completed **ISD Shipping label** to the case.
 - vi. **Place the referral/case in the designated LA County Messenger pick-up area for delivery to the requesting office per existing**

office specific protocols.

- Staff can track the box via the [tracking system](#).

Miscellaneous Mail is Received for Filing

Suspense Clerk Responsibilities

1. Find Referral/Case Name on the piece of mail, perform a search in CWC/CMS to determine if the case still is in suspense at the Regional Office/ERCP, and file mail in appropriate case.
2. When a referral/case has already been sent to storage, request the referral/case from storage by sending an email to Lainfo@grmdocument.com. Upon receipt of the case, file mail and return case to storage by completing a [DCFS 6-2](#) "Closed Case Transmittal".

APPROVALS

None

HELPFUL LINKS

Attachments

[DCFS Closed Case and Document Storage Service](#)

[DCFS Mail Courier Service](#)

[Management Direct \(MD\) 25-01, Cases with Multiple Case Numbers](#)

Forms

CalSAWS

Case Summary

Child Protective Services Detail

LA Kids

[DCFS 6-1](#), Miscellaneous Transmittal

[DCFS 6-2](#), Closed Case Transmittal

[DCFS 261](#), Inactive Record Transmittal and Control

[DCFS 6110](#), Request for Closed or Historical Case Retrieval

[DCFS 6111](#), Suspense/Historical Log