
Family Services Staff Safety Workgroup

PURPOSE

The Family Services Staff Safety Workgroup formed as a result of a request from the Labor Management Committee to focus on staff safety. The Staff Safety Workgroup met for the first time on July 1, 2015. Six meetings have occurred, one of which was a special meeting with Buildings & General Services (BGS) and law enforcement. A future meeting is planned for December 1, 2015.

MEMBERSHIP

The Staff Safety Workgroup is co-chaired by Brenda Gooley, Senior Policy and Operations Manager for Family Services, and Shannon Morton, Investigation and Assessment Social Worker for Family Services. The workgroup includes representation from staff in district offices throughout the state, central office, Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center, Centralized Intake and Emergency Services, Residential Licensing and Special Investigations, UVM's Child Welfare Training Partnership, Human Resources, and BGS. Membership includes a variety of roles – administrative staff, front end social workers, ongoing social workers, supervisors, management – aimed at ensuring that a range of perspectives are included in this work.

POLICY 205: STAFF SAFETY

The Staff Safety Workgroup developed *Family Services Policy 205: Staff Safety*. The policy includes guidance on the following topics:

- Responding to Staff Safety Threats and Incidents
- Documenting Staff Safety Threats and Incidents
- Communication of Staff Safety Threats and Incidents
- Self-Protection Plans
- Personal Safety When Conducting Home or Field Visits
- Teamed Responses for Home or Field Visits
- After-Hours Responses from Centralized Intake and Emergency Services
- Safety Documentation
- Safety-Related Case Transfer within a District Office

A draft of this policy is currently under final revision and will be implemented soon as interim policy with a comment period for staff and community partners.

FS-110 STAFF SAFETY FORM

The FS-110 (staff safety form) was updated to be consistent with policy 205 and offer support to staff in response to safety incidents and threats. The FS-110 is meant to be completed by a supervisor based on a supervisory conference where the affected staff is asked to detail the situation to determine the type of response necessary. The FS-110 collects incident details, the impact resulting from incidents, behaviors and circumstances of the person making the threat, accessibility to the person harmed or threatened with harm, safety precautions and necessary responses, and a checklist of staff, supervisor, director, and central office responsibilities.

FAMILY SERVICES STAFF SAFETY TRAINING

The Staff Safety Workgroup has partnered with UVM's Child Welfare Training Partnership to create a two-day staff safety training for all 12 district offices and their co-located partners and central office. The training curriculum is based on the model developed by New Jersey. The trainings will begin in January 2016.