

Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services Delinquency and Court Services Division POLICY & PROCEDURE	Date Issued: 2/01/2014	Reviewed: 12/03/2013 By: MG/KP Last Revision: 07/10/2015 By: DP	Section: ADMINISTRATION	Policy No: 012	Pages: 1 of 2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Delinquency and Court Services Division Children’s Court Services Network Purchase of Service Agencies	Effective Date: 07/15/2015	Subject: <p style="text-align: center;">Case Note Policy</p>			

I. POLICY

It is the policy of Delinquency and Court Services Division (DCSD) that all client-related activities provided by Human Service Workers (HSW) be documented in Synthesis. The Case Note, as defined in Synthesis, consists of the date of the note, the note text and the writer’s signature. Furthermore, Chapter 938.54 of the Wisconsin Juvenile Code provides that the juvenile justice department maintains complete records on each juvenile with all available data on the court, personal and family history, test results, placement history, etc. while under the supervision of the department [See Wisconsin Code Chapter 938 – Juvenile Justice Code: 938.54 Records].

II. PROCEDURE

- A. Case Notes must provide a description of what occurred during the course of the contact. Every case note must include the following elements:

WHO – Who did event/contact involve, i.e. who was present and/or spoken to and their relationship to the youth. Identify the parties involved in the event/contact, e.g. youth, parent, collateral, etc. Type out the full name of the individual one time and then you may use just the last name to identify the individual thereafter within that same case note.

*Abbreviations can only be used in a case note after the abbreviated term has been completely spelled out in the note, with the abbreviation for the word indicated. For example, the first time you write the word branch in a note, you must enter the word “branch (br)” with the abbreviation identified immediately following in parentheses. Each time thereafter, you can use the abbreviation identified. Do not assume that the reader of the notes entered by the HSW will understand the terminology used.

WHAT – Discuss the details of what occurred during the contact. Provide a description of what occurred during the course of the contact as well as the content and interaction of the discussion. The content of each case note, or the “what” section can be framed in accordance with the Youth Assessment & Screening Instrument (YASI), Case Plan and Court Report that are also required. Each area of the content will not require updating every time you enter a case note, however using this format to frame your notes entry will assist with organizing thoughts, entering duplicate information into other places and will streamline the process of information collection.

WHEN – Note the date and time that the contact occurred.

WHERE – Note the location that the contact occurred in, e.g. office, home, school, court, etc. Include address if appropriate.

WHY – Note the general reason for the contact. This could include follow-up with a provider, consultation with your supervisor, meeting contacts standards, court hearings, phone contact, school/home/office/detention visits, collaterals, Wraparound meeting, intake meeting, day treatment, Administrative Review Board (ARB) hearings,

etc. All contact standards made or attempted to be made with the youth and families are required to be documented. If a youth and or family refuse to meet, this must be referenced in a case note, along with a statement containing what steps are being taken to address the issue of not having met with the youth and/or family.

HOW – What method/mode/type of contact was used? Types of contact include Face-to-Face, Written Letter, Court Hearings, Phone Contact, School/Home/Office/Detention Visits, Collaterals, Wraparound Meeting, Intake meeting, Day Treatment, ARB hearings, etc.

ASSESSMENT – A professional assessment of the contact, i.e. an impression (if any) that the writer may have regarding the contact and the outcome of the contact. This professional assessment must be written in a skilled and proficient manner that reflect progress (or lack of progress) toward the case plan in addition to completion of the court order, consent decree, or deferred prosecution agreement. Only factual information should be referenced and one should refrain from using verbiage that may have expressed one's personal feelings and biases. This section should include any recommendations, referrals needed and/or youth needs that have been identified that require follow-up.

SIGNATURE – Synthesis provides that each case note is electronically signed.

III. CONSIDERATIONS

- A. All Case Notes must be completed and finalized in Synthesis within **three (3) business days** of the contact.
- B. At minimum, Contact Standards made or attempted to be made with the youth and families are required to be documented. If a youth and or family refuse to meet, this must be referenced in a Case Note, along with a statement containing what steps are being taken to address the issue of not meeting or talking with the youth and family.
- C. If a youth is missing, the HSW must include the surrounding facts & circumstances, all actions taken by the HSW, including but not limited to filing reports, legal documents and making notifications, all face-to-face contacts made, interviews conducted, any and all efforts to locate the youth, documentation of post return activity and behavior of youth, specific documentation of the determination made regarding the youth's involvement with human trafficking (if applicable) and any other relevant information from the HSW/Supervisor.
- D. Case notes must be written in a professional manner and reflect progress or lack of progress toward the Case Plan and the ending of the court order, consent decree, and deferred prosecution agreement. Only factual information should be referenced and one should refrain from using verbiage that may have expressed one's personal feelings.
- E. Case notes are not to be shared with outside departments. The contents of the case notes can be discussed and transferred into appropriate documents (e.g. court reports, case plans, etc.) but should not be printed and shared with any department outside of DCSD without authorization via valid court order.
- F. All case notes should be checked for basic editing and grammatical needs. Typos, misspellings, inaccuracies, biases, etc. should NOT be included in a case note.
- G. To make edits, refer to the Synthesis manual on case note edits. Additional needs can be addressed by the supervisor.

Reviewed & Approved By: _____

B Thomas Wanta

B. Thomas Wanta, Division Administrator