

# CHANGE NOTICE FOR MANUAL

## CHANGE NUMBER 01-2016

**DATE:** April 15, 2016

**MANUAL:** Child Welfare Services Manual – Chapter VIII: Child Protective Services Section 1410 – Conflict of Interest and Chapter V: Jurisdiction in Child Welfare

**TO:** County Directors of Social Services

**ATTENTION:** Child Welfare Program Managers & Supervisors, Child Welfare Social Workers

**RE:** Conflict of Interest Policy

**EFFECTIVE:** April 15, 2016

### **I. BACKGROUND | CHANGE INTENT**

In 2003, the North Carolina Division of Social Services published Chapter V of its Child Welfare Services Manual, entitled Jurisdiction in Child Welfare. The goal of this policy chapter was to enhance the practice and services to children and families across county lines. While the policy achieved the goal of advancing communication and enhancing relationships between counties, guidance as it pertained to conflict of interest matters needed to be strengthened.

In 2014, the Children's Services Committee of the North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services formed a workgroup to specifically address practice in cases where the county child welfare agency has a conflict of interest in managing the case. The workgroup met to formulate recommendations and to draft new policy to address the concerns. These policy changes are the product of that work effort.

### **II. SPECIFIC CHANGES**

There are many changes to the way conflict of interest cases are managed, as explained by this policy (Chapter VIII: Protective Services – Section 1410 Conflict of Interest). Highlights of the specific changes include:

- The definition of conflict of interest includes all those spelled out in North Carolina Administrative Code 10A NCAC 70A .0103. As outlined in policy, the definition also now includes a child's parent/caretaker who is an incompetent adult and who is a ward of that county child welfare agency, a minor in foster care who is also a parent, and a minor in foster care who makes allegations against his/her placement provider.
- The identification of conflicts of interest begin at intake, if at all possible. If a conflict of interest is discovered at some other point during the provision of services, the case shall be referred to a partner county child welfare agency for the completion of those services.

- Partner county child welfare agencies are responsible for all of the case activities (screening, assessment, in-home services, and child placement services) once the case has been referred for services.
- Once a case is identified as a conflict of interest, it remains a conflict of interest until the case is closed or the conflict of interest is resolved.

The following changes have been made to Chapter V: Jurisdiction in Child Welfare to remove references to conflict of interest cases:

- Remove references to conflict of interest cases that appeared in Section III - CPS Assessments of the policy, as the handling of conflict of interest cases is now covered in new policy section Chapter VIII: Protective Services – Section 1410 Conflict of Interest.
- Language and formatting updates
- Updates to web links, as needed

### III. **INSTRUCTIONS**

For Conflict of Interest cases, utilize Chapter VIII: Protective Services, New Section 1410 – Conflict of Interest Policy. Utilize updated Chapter V: Jurisdiction in Child Welfare for matters involving more than one county child welfare agency. Conflict of interest information has been removed from Chapter V: Jurisdiction in Child Welfare, Section III - CPS Assessments.

<b>NO LONGER IN USE</b>	<b>USE</b>
<p><b>NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES</b></p> <p><b>CHILD WELFARE SERVICES MANUAL</b></p> <p><b>CHAPTER V: JURISDICTION IN CHILD WELFARE (DATED JUNE 2008)</b></p>	<p><b>NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES</b></p> <p><b>CHILD WELFARE SERVICES MANUAL</b></p> <p><b>CHAPTER VIII: CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES, NEW SECTION 1410 – CONFLICT OF INTEREST (DATED APRIL 2016)</b></p> <p><b>UPDATED CHAPTER V: JURISDICTION IN CHILD WELFARE (DATED APRIL 2016)</b></p>

Please ensure that staff responsible for the delivery of services are made aware of this change. Should you have any questions, contact the Child Welfare Policy Team at (919) 527-6340 or your agency’s Children’s Program Representative.

Sincerely,

Kevin Kelley, Section Chief  
Child Welfare Services

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