

COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

POLICY & PROCEDURE

POLICY NUMBER: CWS 09-67	POLICY TITLE: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INTERVENTION AND TREATMENT REFERRAL	EFFECTIVE DATE: 02/01/2011
PROGRAM: ER, FM/FR, ICWA, EFC, PP	REVISION DATES: 09/02/2020, 11/22/2024, 12/26/2024	REFERENCES: ACL 15-11, ACL 18-81, ACL 24-35, SB 93, Core Practice Model Guide

OVERVIEW

This policy outlines the procedures and requirements for referring children/youth to behavioral health services.

POLICY

It is the policy of Child Welfare Services (CWS) that all children/youth with an open CWS case will be referred to behavioral health services within 3 business days of case opening, and on an ongoing basis as determined by the child and family team (CFT), but no later than annually. The primary provider of these services is Humboldt County Children’s Behavioral Health (CBH) and contracted Organizational Providers.

PROCEDURE

1. Initial Referral

- 1.1. Referrals for behavioral health service needs of children/youth for whom a CWS case is opened will be done by initiating the Behavioral Health Intervention and Treatment (BHIT) Referral.
- 1.2. The investigating social worker will complete the BHIT Referral for all children/youth as soon as it is determined that a new CWS case will be opened, and no later than 3 business days after promotion to a CWS case.
 - 1.2.1. If the child has Tribal affiliation, the social worker will contact the Tribe to jointly coordinate completion of the BHIT Referral with a Tribal representative.
- 1.3. For Extended Foster Care re-entry cases, the assigned social worker will complete the BHIT Referral for the youth within 3 business days after opening the CWS case.
 - 1.3.1. If the child has Tribal affiliation and opts for ICWA to apply or would like the Tribe to participate, the social worker will contact the Tribe to jointly coordinate completion of the BHIT Referral with a Tribal representative.

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- 1.4. The BHIT Referral can be found via the CWS/CMS application in the Humboldt County templates location and shall be completed in its entirety.
- 1.5. Upon completion of the BHIT Referral, the investigating social worker will provide a copy the *“Behavioral Health Services for Children and Youth Receiving CWS Services”* brochure to the parent/caregiver.
- 1.6. The BHIT Referral shall not be the only mode of communication between CWS and the Mental Health Clinician. Children/youth and/or their caregivers that need the supports of behavioral health will be discussed to help keep children/youth in the lowest level of care; eliciting information from collaterals in the child/youth’s network can also provide a more robust pictures of the needs of the child/youth.
- 1.7. Any additional information that may provide a better understanding of the child/youth’s current behavior and situation, including information about any current behavioral health services being provided/accessed should be entered in the *“Other Comments or Concerns”* box.
- 1.8. For high priority situations, the social worker will check the *“High Priority”* box on the BHIT Referral. The social worker supervisor will also contact the Supervising Mental Health Clinician directly advising that there is a high priority BHIT Referral.

2. Updated Referral

- 2.1. The case carrying social worker will complete an updated BHIT Referral on an ongoing basis as determined by the child and family team (CFT), but no later than annually.
 - 2.1.1. If the child/youth has Tribal affiliation, the social worker will contact the Tribe to jointly coordinate completion of the BHIT Referral with a Tribal representative.
 - 2.1.2. For EFC Cases, if the youth has Tribal affiliation and opts for ICWA to apply or would like the Tribe to participate, the social worker will contact the Tribe to jointly coordinate completion of the BHIT Referral with a Tribal representative.
 - 2.1.3. For children/youth that present new symptoms/behaviors that are open to behavioral health services, the social worker will contact the assigned clinician to communicate the information and invite the assigned clinician to all CFTs.

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2.2. Upon completion of the BHIT Referral, the case carrying social worker will provide a copy of the “Behavioral Health Services for Children and Youth Receiving CWS Services” brochure to the parent/caregiver.

3. Referral Documentation and Submission

3.1. The social worker will document completion of the BHIT Referral in CWS/CMS under the Screenings tab of the child/youth’s Health Notebook. (See *CMS Data Entry Guide – BHIT Referral Entry*)

3.2. Completed BHIT Referrals can be emailed directly to the Mental Health Services Team (MHST) Inbox: DHHS-MHST@co.humboldt.ca.us.

3.2.1. Email high priority BHIT Referrals directly to the MHST Inbox with a CC to the Supervising Mental Health Clinician.

3.3. When the DHHS-BH 1006 ROI and DHHS-BH 1009 Consent are obtained, they will be emailed to the MHST Inbox: DHHS-MHST@co.humboldt.ca.us upon completion.

3.4. Upon receipt of the BHIT Referral, CBH staff will reach out to the assigned social worker if assistance is needed coordinating with the parent/caregiver.

3.5. After processing of the BHIT Referral, CBH staff will email the outcome of the referral to CWS-CQI@co.humboldt.ca.us.

3.5.1. Staff designated to monitor the CWS-CQI Inbox will document the outcome of the BHIT Referral in CWS/CMS under the Screenings tab of the child/youth’s Health Notebook, and enter the email communication as a contact. (See *CMS Data Entry Guide – BHIT Referral Entry*)

3.5.1.1. Outcome of Referral

3.5.1.1.1. Accepted – CBH accepted the referral and offered, or attempted to offer, BH services to child/youth, or CBH verified child/youth already open to BH services. This includes when a child/caregiver declines services or is unreachable, so long as CBH confirmed they accepted the referral and offered or attempted to offer services.

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- 3.5.1.1.2. Not Accepted – CBH did not accept the referral. CBH did not attempt any contacts with the child/caregiver and did not verify child/youth was already receiving BH services.
- 3.5.1.2. Referral Outcome Date – the date CBH returns the BHIT to CWS via email with the status of the referral.

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