

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Distribution: B, D

POLICY GUIDE 2000.03

PROHIBITION OF FALSIFICATION OF RECORDS

RELEASE DATE: March 15, 2000

TO: All Staff

FROM: Jess McDonald, Director

EFFECTIVE: March 31, 2000

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy Guide is to issue revisions to Policy Guide 96.6, Falsification of Records, which was originally issued on April 1, 1996. The revisions occur in Sections IV. and V. 433` Court records have been added to the list of records covered by this policy and immediate discharge is now the only penalty for employees or prospective employees who falsify client/case record information or court testimony. Disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, may be initiated for all other types of falsification and against any employee who participates or encourages another employee or prospective employee to violate the policy.

II. PRIMARY USERS

The primary users of this Policy Guide are all Department staff.

III. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

It is critical that all clients, agencies, members of the public and other entities who interact with the Department or rely on Department records, be able to rely upon the truthfulness and accuracy of records secured and maintained by the Department. Moreover, if an employee submits or prepares any document or record which contains false information, it may jeopardize the value of an investigation, affect the outcome of a case, and/or present an actual or potential risk of harm to children, families, co-workers and/or foster parents.

In the past, the Department has received reports that reflect that some staff members may have submitted false information, data and/or documentation regarding cases and other matters within the scope of their employment. It has also come to my attention that certain employees and applicants for employment have made false representations and/or have failed to disclose certain information when requested which may have directly affected their qualifications for employment or continued employment with the Department.

While these situations are rare, the Department considers them to be very serious matters which will not be tolerated. So that there is no confusion regarding matters, the Department has created the following guidelines which apply to employees and prospective employees of the Department at all levels.

IV. Falsification of Records Prohibited

For reasons noted above, the Department will not tolerate written or oral falsification and/or perjury, by any employee or prospective employee.

Falsification of records or statements includes (without limitation), an act of misrepresentation, falsification or omission of any fact, whether written or verbal. Records covered by this policy include (without limitation):

- Client or case records
- Court testimony;
- Vouchers;
- Personnel records;
- Time and attendance records;
- Employment applications and related documents used to determine eligibility for employment or continued employment; and/or
- Any other form or submission of information which is or may be used by the Department as a basis for determining individual's eligibility for an appointment, reassignment, promotion, leave or other employment decisions.

The Department's prohibition regarding falsification of records extends to documents submitted to the Department pursuant to its mandate of providing or arranging for the delivery of child welfare services. This prohibition also extends to information provided by current and prospective employees submitted for consideration in determining whether the employee or applicant is eligible for employment and/or continued employment with the Department. ***Any Department staff having reason to believe that records or documents received from service providers are false shall bring the matter to the attention of the Office of the Inspector General.***

V. Disciplinary Action for Violations

Disciplinary Action consisting of immediate discharge will be initiated against any employee who has violated this policy (no matter when such violation is discovered) when it involves:

- Falsification of client/case record information.
- Court testimony

Disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, also may be initiated against any employee who violates this policy with regard to any other type of record or any employee who participates or encourages another employee or prospective employee to violate this policy and/or fails to promptly disclose knowledge of a falsified record to the Department's management.

In the event that information is submitted to the Department indicating that an employee

may be in violation of this policy with respect to an on-going investigation, the Department reserves the right to relieve the employee(s) from the case(s) and reassign the affected employee(s) pending the outcome of the investigation.

VI. Filing Instructions

File this Policy Guide immediately after Policy Guide 90.2, which follows the Table of Contents of the Volume of Rules and Procedures. Discard Policy Guide 96.6, which has been replaced by this Policy Guide.