

<b>OCFP</b> Office of <b>Child and  Family  Policy</b>	<b>Department of Children and Family  Services</b>	
	<b>Index No:</b> 98.32	<b>Issuance Date:</b> October 28, 1998
	<b>Origin of Request:</b> Private Agency	
	<b>Distribution:</b> X, Z, and C-3	
	<b>Key Words:</b> CERAP, Placement cases	
	<b>Approved by:</b>	

### Interpretation

**Applicable to:** Child Welfare and Child Protective Staff of the Department and staff of purchase of service provider agencies.

**Policy Citation:** Procedures 305, Appendix K, Child Endangerment Risk Assessment Protocol

The Child Endangerment Risk Assessment Protocol must be completed on the **CFS 1441, Safety Determination Form**, minimally at the following times:

1. For child protection purposes (investigation):
  - o Within 24 hours after the investigator first SEES the alleged child victim.
  - o Whenever circumstances suggest that a child's safety may be in jeopardy.
2. For child welfare services (follow-up):
  - o Within five working days after case assignment. (All children in the case must be SEEN in order for the safety assessment to be conducted.)
  - o Whenever evidence or circumstances suggest that a child's safety may be in jeopardy, regardless of the placement of the child.
  - o Every six months (from case opening) on intact family cases.
  - o Immediately prior to returning a child home. (Assess the child's safety in the child's return home environment.)
  - o When considering the commencement of unsupervised visits.

- o Before an administrative case review where one or more children are still in placement and where one or more children are still in the home. (Document the conditions or behavior which continue to prevent return home and document the continuous safety of every child still in the home.)
- o Immediately prior to closing a service case.

**Question:** Is a CERAP required every six months regardless of the child's placement? Are CERAPs completed on foster homes?

**Discussion:** There exists some confusion as to when CERAPs are to be conducted. In some case reviews, private agency workers have been told that a CERAP must be done on every child prior to the case review. This would mean that workers must do CERAPs on foster homes. However, in some training sessions, the same workers have been told that it is illegal to do a CERAP on a foster home.

From the policy quoted above in the Policy Citation, it is evident that CERAPs are primarily conducted on the family and home environment from which the child has been removed, either for the purpose of ensuring the child's initial or ongoing safety in the home, or in determining whether it is safe to return the child home.

However, it is not the intent of the policy to conduct regular CERAPs on foster homes. This does not mean that a CERAP cannot be done on a foster home. The policy also states that a CERAP must be completed "whenever evidence or circumstances suggest that a child's safety may be in jeopardy, regardless of the placement of the child."

**Response:** CERAPs are required every six months prior to the case review on the home of the child's parent(s) to determine whether the home is still unsafe, even when the children are in placement.

CERAPs are required in the foster home or other placement only when evidence or circumstances suggest that a child's safety may be in jeopardy. If a determination is made that a child is unsafe, a safety protection plan must be completed. If abuse or neglect is suspected, a report must be made to the State Central Registry. If the unsafe condition is due to a licensing violation, the condition shall also be reported to the agency's or Department's licensing unit.