

DCF Policy #86-005

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VOLUNTARY INTAKE POLICY

Voluntary intake consists of the receipt of an application for Department services and the opening of a case. If the request is for services which the Department does not provide, *Policy #86-003, Information & Referral Policy*, applies. If the request is for services which the Department does provide but which are currently unavailable, the individual/family chooses whether to utilize information and referral services or to complete an application for the services. If the request is only for a service for which a sliding fee is assessed and the individual/family is assessed the full service fee, the individual/family shall be provided information and referral services only.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Department that any mature individual or family may apply for services by completing a written application. The Department will make every effort to provide an application form in the individual's preferred language and will provide assistance in completing the form, if necessary.

If the Department determines that the individual or family needs and is eligible for services on an emergency basis, the Department shall authorize services as soon as possible and no later than 7 days after the receipt of the application.

PROCEDURES

1. **Application.** The Social Worker gives the individual the application form and provides assistance in completing the form, if necessary. If the individual is unable to come to the Area Office, the Social Worker, in consultation with the Supervisor, may make a home visit to complete the application with the individual or may mail out the application and make a subsequent home visit to review the completed application. The Social Worker ensures that the applicant signs the completed application form or, if the individual is unwilling or unable to sign the application, documents on the application form the reason for the absence of this signature. The Social Worker ensures that the information contained in the application is entered into the Intake screen.
2. **Request for Emergency Services.** If the client requests services on an emergency basis, the Social Worker, in consultation with the Supervisor, determines if emergency services are necessary and begins the process of locating and authorizing services on an emergency basis. The reason(s) for the provision of emergency services is documented in the "Emergency/Interim Service Plan" section of the service plan. (See *Policy #86-001, Service Planning and Referral Policy*)
3. **Opening a Case.** If the case is to be opened, the Social Worker:
 - conducts a FamilyNet person search to determine whether the family is currently receiving or has received Department services in the past;
 - initiates setting up a physical case record for the individual/family, which includes the completed application form, in accordance with Area Office procedures;
 - reviews the Intake screen for completeness and accuracy; and
 - documents in dictation the client and collateral contacts made during the intake process.
4. **Assignment.** The Social Worker forwards the case to her/his Supervisor for assignment in accordance with FamilyNet procedures.
5. **Closing a Case.** If the applicant withdraws the application or is unwilling to cooperate with the application process despite reasonable efforts by the Social Worker, the Social Worker documents this on the application form and the Intake screen and follows FamilyNet procedures to close the case. (See *Policy #86-007, Case Closing Policy*)