



DEPARTMENT of CHILDREN and FAMILIES

Making a Difference for Children, Families and Communities



Vannessa L. Dorantes
Commissioner

Ned Lamont
Governor

Memorandum

To: Foster Care Division
From: Natalia Liriano, Director
CC: Valerie Lilley, Program Director
Toni Ligon, Program Director
Date: December 12, 2023
Subject: **Foster Care Division CHILDREN IN CARE ARREST**

Background:

Children in foster care are much more likely than their peers to become involved in the criminal justice system. An estimated 25% of foster care children will become involved with the criminal system within two years of leaving care, and over half of youth in care experience an arrest, conviction, or overnight stay at a correctional facility by age seventeen. For children who have been moved through multiple placements, the risk is even higher, with one study indicating that over 90% of foster youth who move five or more times will end up in the juvenile justice system. Children placed in group homes are also much more likely to become involved in the justice system than children placed in an actual foster home. The correlation between foster care and criminal involvement is strong enough that advocates refer to this criminalization of children as the foster care-to-prison pipeline.¹

Purpose:

The Department of Children and Families has a responsibility to assure the safety, permanency and well-being of the children entrusted to its care. On occasion, children in the foster care system find themselves in situations that involve local and state officials law enforcement and they are arrested. It is the responsibility of the Department to know immediately whenever a child in its care is arrested and detained by law enforcement. We currently have a reporting process through Careline for children placed in congregate care or with a child placing agency. However, a process does not exist for children placed in foster care (core, kinship, or pre-adoptive caregivers).

Protocol:

Therefore, **effective January 1, 2024**, the Department is implementing a new process that requires DCF licensed caregivers to notify the Department that a child entrusted to their care has been arrested. This process will give the department real-time data on the number of children in foster care arrested, who they are, where the arrest occurred and arrest reason. By capturing this data, the Department will be able to improve the quality of service of children in foster care, assure their wellbeing and reduce the foster care-to-prison pipeline.

Notification:

- If a child entrusted to the care of a **DCF Licensed Caregiver** is arrested, the caregiver shall inform their Foster Care Division (FCD) Social Worker within 24 hours of the arrest. The caregiver shall provide the date of the arrest, the alleged criminal offense leading to the arrest, the town of the arrest, and whether the child was detained or released.
- **Important note: A child entrusted to Department's care is considered a suspect or a witness, they must have legal representation to be interviewed or interrogated by law enforcement. Please contact the**

¹ Palcheck, T 2021, Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law & Policy, Child Welfare, and the Criminal System: Impact, Overlap, Potential Solutions. https://www.law.georgetown.edu/poverty-journal/blog/child-welfare-and-the-criminal-system-impact-overlap-potential-solutions/#_ftn18

assigned DCF Child Protective Services (CPS) or FCD team who will ensure they have legal representation either from their appointed attorney or from the Office of the Chief Public Defender.

- The assigned FCD Social Worker will notify the child's assigned Child Protective Service (CPS) Social Worker via e-mail with the below noted information.

After-hour Notification:

- If a child entrusted to the care of a **DCF Licensed Caregiver** is arrested after normal business hours, the caregiver shall inform Careline, the Department's After Hour Response call center at 1-800-842-2288.
- The Careline will input the information on the Exception Circumstance document and send via Foster Care shared mailbox - DCFFCEC-CI@ct.gov
- FCD Administrative Secretary responsible for monitoring the Foster Care shared mailbox will forward the communication to the assigned FCD and CPS teams.

Documentation:

- The assigned **FCD Social Worker** will document the information in the statewide "Children in Care Arrest" spreadsheet.

The information shall be documented in a statewide shared document located on the Microsoft Team SharePoint site and accessed through the following link: [Child in Care Arrest.xlsx](#)

The following table provides the required information and description for each column heading.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
IncidentDate	Region	Type of Placement	Case Id	Child ID	ChildName (last,first)	DOB	Age	Gender	Race	Town of Arrest	ArrestReason	ArrestCharges	LegalStatus	ResultsArrest

Column Heading	Definition
Report Date	The DATE Caregiver reported the incident to FCD. <i>Date format is xx/xx/xxxx</i>
Incident Date	The DATE of the ARREST. <i>Date format is xx/xx/xxxx</i>
Region	Child's Region -Area Office. <i>Select from drop down.</i>
Type of Placement	Type of placement- Core, Kin, Pre-Adoptive, or ICPC. <i>Select from drop down.</i>
Case Id	Child's CASE LINK id
Child ID	Child's PERSON LINK id
Child Name (last, first)	Childs Name. <i>Name format should be last name first followed by first name and separated by a coma</i>
DOB	Child's date of birth (DOB). <i>Date format is xx/xx/xxxx</i>
Age	<i>No data entry required; the cell calculates the age</i>
Gender	Child identified gender. <i>Select from drop down.</i>
Race	Child identified race/ethnicity. <i>Select from drop down.</i>
Town of Arrest	The town (police department) is making the arrest. <i>Select from drop down.</i>
Arrest Charges	The actual arrest charge i.e., disorderly conduct, assault, robbery etc..
Arrest Reason	Described the incident to the best of your ability Child's current legal status, i.e., Administrative Hold (96hh), Order of Temporary Custody (OTC), or Commitment. <i>Select from drop down.</i>
Legal Status	
Results Arrest	Result of arrest, promise to appear, in police custody etc..