

**Program and Operational Changes Supported by CONNECTIONS
Impact Analysis: Risk Assessment Profile (RAP)**

Subject: CPS Investigations

Functional Area: Risk Assessment Profile (RAP)

Brief Description of Current Function/Process:

Workers have been assessing risk to children at the time of the CPS investigation conclusion on the UCR–Indicated and Closed template. These were required to be completed only on those cases where the investigation determination was “indicated abuse/maltreatment.” OCFS has since developed the new Risk Assessment Profile (RAP) for CPS cases. A web-based RAP was developed as an interim process prior to statewide implementation of the RAP within CONNECTIONS. The Web RAP has been progressively implemented across the state from February 2003 through August 2003. The Web RAP is completed for every CPS familial report during the Investigation stage, regardless of report determination. Completion of the Web RAP eliminates the requirement to complete an Indicated and Closed UCR. The Web RAP contains a set of 15 risk elements. Risk elements pertain either to the RAP family unit as a whole or to the primary and secondary caretakers individually. The worker completes the Web RAP by selecting the open investigation on the Web RAP workload list and completing the rating of the risk elements and elevated risk elements. The worker must print out a copy of the Web RAP report and give it to the supervisor to review and approve.

What Remains the Same:

- Workers will continue to assess risk (the likelihood of future abuse or maltreatment).
- The RAP will not be completed for CPS Day Care/Foster Care or CPS-IAB investigations.
- For workers consistently completing the Web RAP, the purpose, concepts and content of the Web RAP remain the same in Build 16, i.e., risk elements, risk score, risk rating, elevated risk rating, etc.
- For workers consistently completing the Web RAP, the RAP must be approved before the Investigation Conclusion can be approved.

What is New or Changed:

- The Risk Assessment Profile (RAP) will be completed one time for each investigation, regardless of the disposition of the report.
- Some risk elements are evaluated individually for identified primary and secondary caretakers.
- Elevated Risk Elements, the presence of which raise the level of risk in a case to Very High, must be evaluated as part of each RAP.

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- The system will provide a Preliminary Risk Score and both a Preliminary and Final Risk Rating for each RAP completed.
- The Risk Assessment Profile will be accessed for the selected Investigation through the CPRS Summary task.
- The worker will receive a 'To Do' reminder 33 days after the Intake Date and the RAP is due 40 days after the Intake Date.
- The submission and approval of the RAP is handled electronically. This will replace the manual submission and approval process in the current Web RAP.
- In the Web RAP, the primary and secondary caretaker names must be typed in. In the RAP in Connections, the primary and secondary caretakers will be selected from a list of case persons. This means the worker must make sure all the appropriate persons have been added to the case through person demographics.
- In the CONNECTIONS RAP, the information about risk element #1 regarding the number of prior CPS reports will be generated by the system, based on information in the database.
- In the CONNECTIONS RAP, the information about risk element #3 regarding the presence of one or more children younger than one year of age will be determined by the system based on information in the database.
- This structured risk assessment process will be carried forward from the Investigation into the ongoing CPS Service case in Build 18, so that the level of risk can be reevaluated throughout the life of the case.

Implications/Considerations:

System

- Workers must make sure that all the persons identified as part of the RAP family unit have been added to the case through person demographics in order to be able to select the appropriate primary and/or secondary caretaker on the RAP.
- To ensure that correct information is provided to the worker on Risk Element # 1 regarding the number of prior reports on a family, data clean up efforts will need to be made to eliminate duplicate person records in CONNECTIONS.
- The system will provide automatic reminders to the worker to complete a Risk Assessment Profile.
- All 15 risk elements and the elevated risk elements must be answered/evaluated by the worker in order to complete the RAP and submit for approval.
- The system will enforce comments/explanations to be documented by the worker on elements that raise the level of risk.
- The system will provide supporting tools such as spell check and on-line help not previously available.
- To make completing multiple RAPs less burdensome, CONNECTIONS will carry over the information from a previously completed RAP in a to the newly launched RAP associated with a subsequent report. This historical information forms the basis for the current RAP and should be reviewed and updated based on current case circumstances before marking the RAP complete.

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Program

- The RAP should help the worker focus on critical risk elements and issues in a straightforward, simple manner, enabling them to work with families more efficiently and effectively.
- The RAP can provide caseworkers with a basis for explaining and justifying decisions, while providing administrators with a mechanism for ensuring accountability and quality. Supervisory approval of the RAP signifies concurrence that sufficient information has been collected for each risk element and the ratings reflect the current case circumstance.
- The RAP is designed to assist caseworkers and supervisors in making informed decisions about whether to provide services to reduce the level of risk.
- The RAP is an evidenced-based approach to structuring and informing decisions at all key points in the continuum of decision making and service delivery.
- The RAP is a component of a comprehensive system of assessment throughout the life of a case, from initial receipt of reports to decisions regarding permanency of children.
- The RAP, as a component of structured decision making, increases objectivity, consistency and accuracy of decisions.
- The consistent assessment of risk of harm to children should help identify families who may benefit from services and target service delivery directly to those conditions that increase the likelihood of future abuse and/or maltreatment.

Recommendations/Next Steps:

1. The Web RAP should be used consistently in the districts to aid in preparing and training staff for using the RAP in CONNECTIONS.
2. Update Local District policies and procedures relative to change management issues surrounding implementation of a plan to use risk ratings to prioritize the provision of ongoing services and to identify service gaps.
3. Review and revise, if necessary, the decisions involved and the process for how staff and community resources are directed, based on risk within a family.
4. Develop a plan for supporting the communication between CPS, foster care and preventive services staff on risk assessment and case planning. As a result, those staff who are providing on-going services and who will continue to use the current Risk Assessment and Services Planning Model as part of the Comprehensive and Re-Assessment UCRs communicate clearly regarding levels of risk, the need to maintain the case open for services and the content of the service plan.