

**Program and Operational Changes Supported by CONNECTIONS
Impact Analysis: Safety Assessment**

Subject: CPS Investigation

Functional Area: Safety Assessment

Brief Description of Current Function/Process:

- The Safety Assessment is displayed on the CPRS but is accessed through the Task List.
- Workers are required to complete safety assessments within specified timeframes during the course of an investigation as well as in assessment and service plans for ongoing cases.

What Remains the Same:

- Workers will continue to assess safety of all children in a CPS case on an ongoing basis throughout their involvement with the family.
- The purpose of this assessment will continue to be to ascertain whether there are any safety issues or concerns, if any children are likely to be in immediate danger of serious harm, and what interventions need to be initiated/maintained to provide a safe environment for the child(ren).
- The timeframes for completion of safety assessments in CONNECTIONS will not change.

What is New or Changed:

- Ability to access and modify the Safety Assessment directly from the CPRS window. The CPRS window will be accessed directly through the Task List.
- Creation of four tabs on the Safety Assessment window to facilitate organization and ease of use in completing Safety Assessments.
- Clarification and rewording of the safety factors and the ability to distinguish those that put the child(ren) in immediate danger of serious harm.
- New safety decisions that are more consistent with casework practice.
- Revised list of safety interventions that eliminates some interventions that were more suited to risk reduction than to controlling safety.
- Ability for the worker to specify which area(s) to print (instead of selecting and printing each tab at a time).
- Ability to assign Safety Assessment To-Do's.

**Program and Operational Changes Supported by CONNECTIONS
Impact Analysis: Safety Assessment**

Implications/Considerations:

System:

- The enhancements to the Safety Assessment window are incremental in scope.
- Access to the Safety Assessment window will be consistent with the current CPRS tab structure, allowing seamless familiarity for CPS workers.
- Ease of use features such as Microsoft Word-like support on the longer narrative and spell check on the comment boxes will facilitate completion of the assessment.
- On-screen ability to check approval status provides some ease-of-use support to staff.

Program:

- Taken in the context of OCFS' Structured Decision-Making initiative, CPS staff will generally regard the changes to the values for Safety Factors, Safety Decisions and Safety Interventions as more intuitive.
- The two-level designation of Safety Factors will require an adjustment, but this should be easily made and should allow for clearer decision-making.
- Depending upon case circumstances, workers may need to enter somewhat more information, including narrative.
- The language used by all staff who serve cases that originated in CPS to describe safety status of the child(ren) will need to change, i.e., children will no longer be either "safe" or "unsafe". To address this, the UCR templates are being revised to reflect the new safety assessment so that all child welfare staff will be using the same safety language for CPS cases. The revised templates will be available in conjunction with Build 16.

Recommendations/Next Steps:

1. Update policies and procedures to reflect new safety decisions and to assure appropriate casework response to the assessment.
2. Provide all staff with the opportunity to review the new UCRs for ongoing CPS services cases.