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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |
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DSS-4037EL (Rev. 9/89)

Transmittal No: 95 LCM-48

Date: April 28, 1995

Division: Services and
Community
Development

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Statewide SCR Inquiry

ATTACHMENTS: None

It gives me great pleasure to announce that in an ongoing effort to improve LDSS access to State Central Register data, Statewide Inquiry will be supported as of May 1, 1995. Currently local districts can only access SCR data on individuals for whom they have case responsibility. With Statewide Inquiry capability the following information will be available:

- o top fifty names and cases statewide for the name searched (includes under investigation, open and closed cases)
- o case composition data for each name
- o cross district inquiry into the Agency/Unit/Worker file to determine appropriate contact person.

Access to Statewide Inquiry, which includes the enhanced Agency/Unit/Worker file inquiry, will be controlled by password and terminal assignment at the discretion of the local district. This increased access to CPS data will require that each local department review existing local practices and procedures regarding access to CPS data, and develop a local plan for access which will fully address the confidentiality requirements, as stated in Section 422.2 of the Social Services Law and Department Regulations.

Each district's local plan must include necessary precautions to guarantee adequate terminal security, and to support the disclosure requirements for CPS records.

Local district access to the statewide database should be limited to child protective workers with investigative responsibilities. Rediscovery of individually identifiable CPS data within the local district beyond the Child Protective Unit is restricted by the standards set forth in Department Regulation, 18 NYCRR 357.5 (g) whereby client identifiable information may be made available to a local district employee when such district employee's job responsibilities cannot be accomplished without access to client identifiable information.

Computer terminals which are designated for statewide access must be those which have previously been designated for CPS purposes, and must be located within the secure CPS area in the district office. Information contained on the SCR database must receive the same level of security as has been previously applied to CPS paper files. If you wish to expand the number of terminals authorized for statewide access beyond the limits of the Child Protective Unit you are required to first receive the approval of this Department.

Finally, in preparation for this expanded name search capability please review with district staff the consequences, including disciplinary consequences and penalties pursuant to Section 422 (12) of the State Social Services Law for unauthorized release of confidential SCR data, and take steps to review the practices of your Child Protective Unit regarding this.

The ability to do a CPS Statewide Name Search has been a high priority request from local districts. This inquiry function will provide an invaluable tool to local CPS staff both as a time saver and as a source of timely and reliable data. Specific information regarding new terminal security functions and modifications to Name Search Inquiry instructions will be sent under separate cover as a Services Information Systems (SIS) letter to local CPS Directors.

We suggest you share this letter with your Directors of Services, CPS Directors and WMS Coordinators. If you have any questions with regard to policy or confidentiality planning, please contact David Peters, Director, New York State Child Abuse and Maltreatment Register, at (518) 474-9607 or User ID 89A452. Technical information will be addressed in the Services Information Systems Letter (95:02). Joe Duffney of the SCR is the contact at (518) 474-9323 or User ID 90A375.

Anona Joseph
Deputy Commissioner
Services and Community Development