

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P.O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

June 9, 2010

**What's Inside:**  
Purpose Code "X" Screening

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: REGIONAL EXECUTIVE STAFF, CIRCUIT MANAGERS AND CHILDREN'S DIVISION STAFF

FROM: PAULA NEESE, DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: PURPOSE CODE "X" SCREENING

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this memorandum is to clarify policy and practice, and introduce a log for conducting a Purpose Code "X" screening. This screening is a specific type of criminal background check that uses the Missouri Uniform Law Enforcement System (MULES). Children's Division (CD) staff typically request a Purpose Code "X" screening to determine the appropriateness of a potential placement for a child who has been taken into emergency protective custody. The Division has received clearance from the Missouri State Highway Patrol (MSHP) to allow for Purpose Code "X" screenings to also be requested in response to exigent circumstances, which involve a child who is already in the care and custody of CD, or where a placement disruption has occurred and a perspective relative or kinship provider has come forward to request placement consideration.

Exigent circumstances refer to an emergency, a pressing necessity, or a set of circumstances requiring immediate attention or including situations when: time is of the essence; the health and safety of a child is involved; or, action is necessary to ensure the best interest of the child. Exigent circumstances do not include routine foster or licensed care situations, visitations with relatives or kin, or for the purposes of a child or older youth to attend a sleep-over with friends.

**Process for Completing a Purpose Code "X" Screening**

If there is a need to complete a Purpose Code "X" screening for emergency placement or exigent circumstances, staff should adhere to the following process:

- The Children's Service Worker or juvenile officer must request the local law enforcement to search the MULES for anyone 17 years old or older residing in the household;

- **In accordance with Section 210.482.2 RSMo, a child should be immediately removed from the home in which he/she has been placed if anyone 17 years-old or older refuses to provide fingerprints.**
- Fingerprints **must** be submitted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) within 15 days of the MULES check. To meet that deadline, the CD Worker must provide the placement provider with information to schedule their screening with the contracted electronic fingerprint vendor;
- The requesting agency will be responsible for maintaining a Purpose Code “X” Log to document the screening and subsequent fingerprinting process.

The law enforcement agency is not responsible for ensuring the legitimacy of the request. Law enforcement is required to ensure the requestor is an authorized representative, and upon verification, the inquiry should be performed.

**Staff shall no longer use Purpose Code “X” background screenings in conjunction with safety planning or the voluntary placements of children by their parents.** This would include any case in which a child has not been placed in the custody of CD. The Division could lose the privilege to use Purpose Code “X” background screenings should this practice continue. Staff should use background screenings through FACES, and continue to complete walkthrough observations of household environments to assure the safety and well-being of child(ren).

There is a way **outside** of Purpose Code “X” which can be utilized for the purpose of safety planning with families in response to reported concerns of child abuse or neglect. Law enforcement is able to share criminal history information with the Division during the course of a co-investigation, outside of completing Purpose Code “X” screenings. Local protocols should be established regarding the sharing of this type of information, and staff should ask law enforcement if Purpose Code “X” was used, so CD can log and process those situations. There is no need to log information shared outside of Purpose Code “X”.

### **Documentation of Purpose Code “X” Screenings**

The Purpose Code “X” Request Log, CD-153, has been developed for local offices to complete and maintain in order to track the use of Purpose Code “X” screenings and the subsequent fingerprinting of those whose background was screened using Purpose Code “X”. Staff will also need to document situations when fingerprints were not completed and the reason they were not completed by indicating “No Placement” on the Purpose Code “X” Request Log. This resource form may be found in the CD Forms folder of your computer desktop.

MSHP completes audits to verify the appropriate use of Purpose Code “X” screenings on behalf of the FBI. The Purpose Code “X” Log, CD-153, will be used in response to any such audit. Staff may also need to review appropriate case records if additional information is needed to respond to questions concerning the use of a Purpose Code “X” screening or the subsequent fingerprinting process.

Law enforcement is required to ensure that anyone requesting a Purpose Code “X” screening is an authorized representative of an agency entitled to make such a request.

Local offices should work with their multidisciplinary teams to establish protocols to fulfill the required verification process.

<b>NECESSARY ACTION</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review this memorandum with all Children’s Division staff.</li> <li>2. Review revised Child Welfare Manual chapters as indicated below.</li> <li>3. All questions should be cleared through normal supervisory channels and directed to:</li> </ol>	
<b>PDS CONTACT</b>	<b>PROGRAM MANAGER</b>
Scott B. Montgomery, PDS 573-526-5408 <a href="mailto:Scott.B.Montgomery@dss.mo.gov">Scott.B.Montgomery@dss.mo.gov</a>	Dena Driver 573-751-3171 <a href="mailto:Dena.D.Driver@dss.mo.gov">Dena.D.Driver@dss.mo.gov</a>
CHILD WELFARE MANUAL REVISIONS:	
<a href="#">Section 4 Chapter 3.1.2 Protective Custody of the Child</a> , <a href="#">Section 4 Chapter 4 Attachment B Guidelines to Placement Options, Criteria and Selection</a> , and <a href="#">Section 6 Chapter 3 Attachment A Guide for Conducting Foster/Kinship Family Assessments</a>	
FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS	
N/A	
REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES	
Purpose Code X Request Log (CD Forms Folder of Computer Desktop)	
RELATED STATUTE:	
<a href="#">Section 210.482.2 RSMo</a>	
ADMINISTRATIVE RULE	
N/A	
COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION (COA) STANDARDS	
N/A	
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW (CFSR)	
N/A	
PROTECTIVE FACTORS	
Parental Resilience-N/A	
Social Connections-N/A	
Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development-N/A	
Concrete Support in Times of Need-N/A	
Social and Emotional Competence of Children-N/A	
FACES REQUIREMENTS	
N/A	