

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
PASS-AROUND REVIEW**

PASS-AROUND TITLE: Department of Human Services Policy Chapter 2, Article I, Section 2.1.20 – Child Welfare Document Falsification Policy.

DEPARTMENT: Human Services

DATE: April 9, 2024

PERSON REQUESTING: Jamie Ulrich, Director, Human Services

Brief description of the problem/issue: Per section § 18-8-114(1)(a), C.R.S., county departments are required to maintain policies and procedures regarding document falsifications by employees with regards to the Child Welfare program. The following policy (attached) has been drafted by involved Department staff and reviewed and approved by Legal (B. Howell).

CHAPTER 2 – CHILD WELFARE
ARTICLE I – General Provisions

- Sec. 2.1.20 – Child Welfare Document Falsification

What options exist for the Board?

- Approval of the new Child Welfare Document Falsification policy.
- Deny approval of the new Child Welfare Document Falsification policy.



Consequences: New department policy will not be put in place.

Impacts: Weld County Department of Human Services will not be in compliance with section § 18-8-114(1)(a), C.R.S.

Costs (Current Fiscal Year / Ongoing or Subsequent Fiscal Years): There is no cost associated with this.

Recommendation:

- Approval of the new policy.

	<u>Support Recommendation</u> <u>Place on BOCC Agenda</u>	<u>Schedule</u> <u>Work Session</u>	<u>Other/Comments:</u>
Perry L. Buck, Pro-Tem			
Mike Freeman	mf		
Scott K. James			
Kevin D. Ross, Chair	KR		
Lori Saine	LS		

Department of Human Services Policies

CHAPTER 2 – CHILD WELFARE

ARTICLE I – GENERAL

Sec. 2.1.20 - CHILD WELFARE DOCUMENTATION FALSIFICATION POLICY

A. **PURPOSE**

To ensure casework practice that demonstrates the highest integrity and further ensures documentation of contacts with children, youth, and families are accurately and timely entered into the Statewide Automatic Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), commonly referred to as the statewide database.

B. **POLICY**

Falsifying documentation in the statewide database is a criminal act and is not tolerated under any circumstance. Any failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to warnings, reprimands, suspension without pay, special review period, demotion, and dismissal. Falsifying documentation in the statewide database will be reported to law enforcement for the determination of filing and prosecution of criminal charges.

1. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that staff are accurately documenting contacts in the statewide database and will initiate measures that prevent document falsification or minimally identify concerns early. Such measures will include:
 - a) Randomly calling a minimum of two families monthly on each worker's caseload to obtain feedback and confirm documented contacts documenting the date and information in their supervision notes.
 - b) Accompanying each worker to interviews, court, and/or home visits at least twice per year and documenting the date and observations in their supervision notes.
 - c) Randomly calling community partners listed as collateral on each worker's caseload at least twice per year and documenting the date and contact in their supervision notes.
 - d) Engaging in detailed discussions with each worker regarding the worker's observations to inform safety, permanency, and well-being and to verify completion of required duties.
 - e) Assigning another worker in the event of frequent reports by the initially assigned worker that they are unable to locate children and/or family members.
 - f) Ensuring casework complies with all applicable laws and regulations.
2. The following additional measures will be employed to prevent documentation falsification or minimally identify concerns.
 - a) The Response, Permanency, and Resource Managers will review a sample of assessments and cases minimally once per quarter from each of their teams.

Department of Human Services Policies

- b) Ongoing communication and training will be provided to all Child Welfare staff regarding ethics and professionalism through team meetings, division-specific meetings, department-specific meetings and trainings, and county trainings.
 - c) Supervisors, managers, and administrators will diligently monitor for worker fatigue, burnout, and missed deadlines, as well as other predictive indicators. Referrals for support or training will be made, if appropriate.
 - d) All staff will receive annual training on expectations and consequences of documentation falsification provided by the Child Welfare Trainers.
 - e) All staff will be provided this policy at hire and will review and acknowledge this policy on an annual basis.
3. Any Child Welfare employee who is made aware of suspected or confirmed falsification of documentation will report the matter to their direct supervisor immediately. Should their immediate supervisor not be available they will report immediately to another supervisor, manager, or administrator.
 4. The following actions will be initiated when an identified instance of falsification has been brought forward.
 - a) The supervisor or manager will notify the Director and Deputy Director of Child Welfare immediately.
 - b) The Director and Deputy Director of Child Welfare will promptly communicate with the Director and Deputy Director of Human Services to inform them of the incident.
 - c) The Director of Human Services will consult with the Weld County Director of Human Resources and the County Attorney regarding appropriate disciplinary action during the investigation, which may include paid administrative leave or temporary suspension.
 - i. County Code and State Rules and Regulations will be followed regarding accesses to county and state systems and/or suspension.
 - ii. The Director of Human Services will involve law enforcement for determination of filing and prosecution of criminal charges.
 - iii. The identified worker's entire caseload will be reviewed by the Child Welfare Deputy Director, or Designee, for quality assurance on assessments and case to include both open and closed assessments/cases, as well as all supervision notes.
 - iv. The Director of Child Welfare, or Designee, will notify individuals and/or agencies impacted by a confirmed incident of documentation falsification, such as parents, legal caregivers, guardians, and youth aged twelve (12) and older will occur. For cases that are court involved, and for which Weld County has legal authority to provide information, legal representative(s) including but not limited to County Attorney, Respondent Parent Council (RPC), Guardian ad Litem(GAL), and/or Counsel for Youth (CFY) will also be notified.

Department of Human Services Policies

- v. Notification to any of the abovementioned parties will be documented and will include:
 - 1) Details of the confirmed incident and when it occurred.
 - 2) All other parties notified of the incident.
 - 3) The manner in which all other parties were notified and when.