



South Carolina Department of Social Services

Work Aid 3.2: Concerted Efforts to Locate Families

Supplemental to DSS Policy: Chapter 3: Investigations

A. After an unsuccessful attempt to make initial contact	1. Make multiple visits or attempts at different times of the day. 2. Contact Intake for a Citizen and Law Enforcement Analysis Reporting (CLEAR) search and obtain the most recent address. Attempt to make contact at the most recent address provided by the CLEAR search. Document efforts or contacts in CAPSS. 3. If the child, youth, or young adult in the home is school-aged, contact school officials and attempt contact at the school. Document efforts or contacts in CAPSS. 4. If the child, youth, or young adult does not attend the school, gather information from school officials about the family including any transfer records. Document efforts or contacts in CAPSS. (Note: Do not leave notes for the family if they are not home. Notes raise anxiety and can make the situation unstable which could increase concerns for the child, youth, or young adult's safety.)
B. Within 48 hours of an unsuccessful attempt to make contact	1. If the reporter is not anonymous, contact the reporter to gather any information about the whereabouts of the family. Document in CAPSS. 2. Access CHIP to obtain any recent change of address, another address listed for the family, or phone numbers. Attempt contact at any updated address and via phone. Document results in CAPSS. 3. Conduct interviews with neighbors to determine if the family moved or any concerns. Document in CAPSS.
C. Within 72 hours of an unsuccessful attempt to make contact	1. Complete team leader consultation to discuss other ways of locating family. 2. Contact law enforcement to notify them about being unable to locate the family. 3. Request assistance from law enforcement to conduct another home visit. 4. Obtain any recent information such as driver's license information. 5. Document efforts to contact in CAPSS. 6. Request a County Attorney to prepare and submit an affidavit and petition for an inspection warrant.

D. Throughout the investigation	1. Make attempts to locate the family weekly at the last known address. 2. Document all efforts in CAPSS.
E. At case decision	1. If the investigation cannot be completed because the department is unable to locate the child or family or for other compelling reasons, the report may be classified as Unfounded Category III, and the investigation may be reopened at a later date if the child or family is located or the compelling reason for failure to complete the investigation is removed. 2. If it is determined the investigation may be reopened, the case manager shall complete DSS Form 3073: Notice of the Reopening of a Child Welfare Services Investigation for Category III Unfounded Reports, and upload a copy to the linked files in CAPSS. Note: A referral that does not meet the legal criteria for child abuse or neglect as is cited in Title 63 of the South Carolina Children's Code may be accepted for CWS investigation based on the previous Unfounded Category III allegation.