



**South Carolina Department of Social Services**  
**Work Aid 16.7 – All-Staff Meeting**

**Purpose:** The purpose of the all-staff meeting is to create a transparent and psychologically safe atmosphere in the wake of suspicious child fatalities on open cases. All-staff meetings hosted by the county director and/or OHAN director are required when there is a suspicious death of a child during an open Child Protective Service (CPS) case or OHAN Investigation. The intent of the meeting is to share information as it relates to SCDSS involvement, to minimize rumors and the consequences of a fear-based atmosphere as well as to provide support and resources for staff.

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| A. Notification to Case Manager Supervisors and Case Managers | <p>The county and/or OHAN director will notify all child welfare case manager supervisors and case managers who are currently or who have previously been assigned to cases involving the family. This notification must occur within twenty-four (24) hours of becoming aware of the suspicious death of a child on an open CPS case.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. If the county director is first notified and after searching CAPSS by the deceased child's name, becomes aware that OHAN staff have previously investigated this child or family, the county director must immediately notify the OHAN director so the OHAN director is able to notify their staff.</li><li>2. If the OHAN director is first notified, the OHAN director must immediately notify the county director(s) so the county director(s) is/are able to notify their staff.</li></ol> <p><i>Note: Notifications should be done in person when able to do so. If in person notification is not an option notify via phone. Refrain from notifying via email, texts, Microsoft Teams message, or any other written communication. The purpose of this notification is to inform connected staff of the fatality prior to public release when possible, not to assess blame. When notifying staff, only include facts such how the child died. Provide staff information on how to access the employee trauma support unit and avoid the following phrases: "We are investigating", "Do you feel you could have done anything differently?", "You did everything right", etc.</i></p> |
| B. Notification of All-Staff Meeting                          | <p>The county director will invite all county staff, including non-child welfare staff, to the meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. All-staff meeting needs to be held within two business days of screened in report regarding suspicious death of a child on an open case.</li><li>2. The invitation to the meeting must state the all-staff meeting is optional for attendance.</li></ol> <p>The OHAN director will invite all OHAN Staff to the meeting:</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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|                                   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All-staff meeting needs to be held within two business days of screened in report regarding suspicious death of a child on an open case.</li> <li>2. The invitation to the meeting must state the all-staff meeting is optional for attendance.</li> </ol> <p><i>Note: Do not include any identifying information in the invitation such as the case name, case number, assigned case manager, or name of deceased child.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| C. Structure of All-Staff Meeting | <p>The county director and/or OHAN director will adhere to a specific structure to conduct all-staff meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss the purpose of all-staff meeting.</li> <li>2. Remind staff that all information shared is confidential and should not be discussed after meeting.</li> <li>3. Open meeting to notify staff about the known facts of the case.</li> </ol> <p>Example: I have called this meeting to discuss an event that has happened within our community that affects us all. _____ county was involved with a family in a _____ (Investigation, Family Preservation, Foster Care or Adoptions) case. We were involved due to concerns of _____ (give a summary of why SCDSS was involved). I brought you all here today to notify you that one of the children in the case, (name of child, first name only), has died due to _____ (summarize the screened in intake in regards to fatality). We are all in this together and will support each other as needed.</p> <p><i>Note: This is an example only intended solely to provide context on what should be presented to staff.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Provide all staff in attendance information on how to access the Employee Trauma Support Unit and Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Information about EAP can be found in the following link:<br/><a href="http://www.DeerOaksEAP.com">www.DeerOaksEAP.com</a></li> <li>5. Close meeting by reminding staff that we are all here to support each other and if any media contacts them to forward all calls to Communications and External Affairs Department.</li> </ol> <p><i>Note: Do not answer any case specific questions. Examples include but are not limited to who was the assigned case manager at the time of death, what services were the family receiving, when was the last time anyone from our office seen the child, etc.</i></p> |