

**NORTH CAROLINA
SDM® FAMILY RISK ASSESSMENT OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT**

Case Name: _____ Case #: _____ Date: _____

County Name: _____ Social Worker Name: _____ Date Report Received _____

Children: _____

Primary Caretaker: _____ Secondary Caretaker: _____

(Regardless of the type of allegations reported, ALL items on the risk assessment are to be completed.)

<u>RISK OF FUTURE NEGLECT</u>	<u>SCORE</u>	<u>RISK OF FUTURE ABUSE</u>	<u>SCORE</u>
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N1. Current report is for neglect or both neglect and abuse
a. No.....0
b. Yes1 _____

N2. Number of prior CPS assessments (take highest score)
a. None.....0
b. One or more family assessments.....1
c. One or more investigative assessments.....2 _____

N3. Prior CPS in-home/out-of-home service history
a. No.....0
b. Yes1 _____

N4. Number of children residing in the home at time of current report
a. Two or fewer.....0
b. Three or more.....1 _____

N5. Age of primary caretaker (note: score is either 0 or -1)
a. 30 or older -1
b. 29 or younger.....0 _____

N6. Age of youngest child in the home
a. 3 or older.....0
b. 2 or younger.....1 _____

N7. Number of adults residing in home at time of report
a. Two or more.....0
b. One or none.....1 _____

N8. Caretaker(s) history of abuse/neglect
a. No.....0
b. Yes1 _____

N9. Either caretaker has/had a drug or alcohol problem
a. No.....0
b. One or more apply.....1 _____
Primary: Within last 12 months
 Prior to last 12 months
Secondary: Within last 12 months
 Prior to last 12 months

N10. Either caretaker has/had a mental health problem
a. No.....0
b. One or more apply.....2 _____
Primary: Within last 12 months
 Prior to last 12 months
Secondary: Within last 12 months
 Prior to last 12 months

A1. Current report is for abuse or both neglect and abuse
a. No0
b. Yes.....1 _____

A2. Number of prior CPS investigative assessments
a. None0
b. One or more2 _____

A3. Prior CPS in-home/out-of-home service history
a. No0
b. One or more apply1 _____
 Prior case open for in-home, CPS services
 Prior case open for foster care services

A4. Age of youngest child in the home
a. 4 or under.....0
b. 5 or older.....1 _____

A5. Number of children residing in home at time of current report
a. Two or fewer0
b. Three or more1 _____

A6. Caretaker(s) history of abuse/neglect
a. No0
b. Yes.....1 _____

A7. Child characteristics
a. Not applicable.....0
b. One or more apply1 _____
 Developmental disability
 Mental Health and/or behavioral problems
 History of delinquency

A8. Either caretaker is a domineering parent
a. No0
b. Yes.....1 _____

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- N11. Either caretaker has barriers to accessing community resources**
- a. No.....0
- b. One or more apply.....1 _____
- Difficulty finding/obtaining resources
 - Refusal to utilize available resources

- N12. Either caretaker lacks parenting skills**
- a. No.....0
- b. One or more apply.....1 _____
- Inadequate supervision of children
 - Uses excessive physical/verbal discipline
 - Lacks knowledge of child development

- N13. Either caretaker involved in harmful relationships**
- a. No.....0
- b. Yes1 _____

- N14. Child characteristics**
- a. Not applicable0
- b. One or more apply.....1 _____
- Mental Health and/or behavioral problems
 - Medically fragile/failure to thrive diagnosis
 - Developmental disability
 - Learning disability
 - Physical disability

- N15. Housing/basic needs unmet**
- a. Not applicable0
- b. One or more apply.....1 _____
- Family lacks clothing and/or food
 - Family lacks housing or housing is unsafe

- A9. Either caretaker is/was a victim/perpetrator of domestic violence**
- a. No0
- b. Yes1 _____
- Primary: Victim within last 12 months
 Victim prior to last 12 months
 Perpetrator within last 12 months
 Perpetrator prior to last 12 months
- Secondary: Victim within last 12 months
 Victim prior to last 12 months
 Perpetrator within last 12 months
 Perpetrator prior to last 12 months

- A10. Caretaker(s) response to current assessment**
- a. Not applicable0
- b. One or more apply1 _____
- Caretaker unmotivated to improve parenting skills
 - Caretaker viewed situation less seriously than worker
 - Caretaker failed to cooperate satisfactorily

- A11. Either caretaker has interpersonal communication problems**
- a. No0
- b. One or more apply1 _____
- Lack of communication impairs functioning
 - Poor communication impairs functioning

TOTAL NEGLECT RISK SCORE _____

TOTAL ABUSE RISK SCORE _____

SCORED RISK LEVEL

Assign the family's risk level based on the highest score on either scale, using the following chart:

<u>Neglect Score</u>	<u>Abuse Score</u>	<u>Risk Level</u>
___ -1-2	___ 0-2	___ Low
___ 3-5	___ 3-5	___ Moderate
___ 6-16	___ 6-12	___ High

OVERRIDES

Policy: Override to high; mark appropriate reason.

- ___ 1. Sexual abuse cases where the perpetrator is likely to have access to the child victim.
- ___ 2. Cases with non-accidental physical injury to an infant.
- ___ 3. Serious non-accidental physical injury warranting hospital or medical treatment.
- ___ 4. Death (previous or current) of a sibling as a result of abuse or neglect.

Discretionary: Override (increase or decrease **one level** with supervisor approval). Provide reason below.

Reason: _____

OVERRIDE RISK LEVEL: ___ Low ___ Moderate ___ High

Social Worker: _____ **Date:** _____

Supervisor's Review/Approval of Override: _____ **Date:** _____

**NORTH CAROLINA
SDM® FAMILY RISK ASSESSMENT OF ABUSE/NEGLECT
DEFINITIONS**

Only one household should be assessed on a risk assessment form. If the allegations involve maltreatment in two households and both have responsibilities for child care, complete **two** separate risk assessments. In situations where the parents are not living together, a family risk assessment of abuse/neglect will **only** be completed on the home of the alleged perpetrator.

The primary caretaker is the adult (typically, the parent) living in the household who assumes the most responsibility for child care. When two adult caretakers are present and the worker is in doubt about which one assumes the most child care responsibility, the adult legally responsible for the child involved in the incident should be selected. If this rule does not resolve the question, the legally responsible adult who is an alleged perpetrator should be selected. **Only one primary caretaker can be identified (per form/household).**

The secondary caretaker is defined as an adult living in the household who has routine responsibility for child care, but less responsibility than the primary caretaker. A live-in partner can be a secondary caretaker even though he/she has minimal responsibility for the care of the child.

NEGLECT SCALE

N1. Current report is for neglect or both neglect and abuse

- a. Score 0 if the current report is not for neglect.
- b. Score 1 if the current report is for neglect or both abuse and neglect. This includes any allegations under assessment even if not identified in the original report.

N2. Number of prior CPS assessments

Use Central Registry to count all maltreatment reports for all children in the home which were assigned for CPS assessment (both family assessments and investigative assessments) for any type of abuse or neglect prior to the report resulting in the current assessment. Include prior assessments that resulted in temporary or permanent placement of a child, even if that child is no longer in the home. If information is available, include prior maltreatment assessments conducted in other states.

- a. Score 0 if there were no CPS assessments prior to the current report.
- b. Score 1 if there were one or more family assessments prior to the current report.
- c. Score 2 if there were one or more investigative assessments prior to the current report (if there were both one or more prior family assessments and one or more prior investigative assessments, score 2).

N3. Prior CPS in-home or out-of-home service history

Contact other counties and states where there is believed to be prior CPS service history on this family.

- a. Score 0 if this family has not received CPS in-home or out-of-home services as a result of a prior finding of “substantiated” or “services needed” report of abuse and/or neglect.
- b. Score 1 if this family has received CPS in-home or out-of-home services as a result of a prior finding of “substantiated” or “services needed” report of abuse or neglect, or is receiving CPS in-home or out-of-home services at the time of the current assessment.

N4. Number of children residing in the home at time current report

Number of individuals under 18 years of age *residing* in the home at the time of the current report. If multiple families reside in the home, count all children. Children within a residential placement but in the custody of the caretaker(s) should be counted as residing in the home. If a child is on runaway status, is removed, whether placed in foster care or with a safety resource as a result of current CPS involvement, count the child as residing in the home (I.E. if there was never closure of

current CPS Services whether In-Home or Out-of-Home being provided and a new report is made, count the child as in the home).

- a. Score 0 if two or fewer children were residing in the home at the time of the current report.
- b. Score 1 if three or more children were residing in the home at the time of the current report.

N5. Age of primary caretaker

Age at the time of current assessment.

- a. Score -1 if the primary caretaker is 30 or older at the time of the current report.
- b. Score 0 if the primary caretaker is 29 or younger at the time of the current report.

N6. Age of youngest child in the home

Choose the appropriate score given the current age of the youngest child in the household where the maltreatment incident reportedly occurred. Youngest children within a residential placement but in the custody of the caretaker(s) should be counted as residing in the home. If a child is on runaway status, is removed, whether placed in foster care or with a safety resource as a result of current CPS involvement, count the child as residing in the home (I.E. if there was never closure of current CPS Services whether In-Home or Out-of-Home being provided and a new report is made, count the child as in the home).

- a. Score 0 if the youngest child is 3 years old or older at the time of the current report.
- b. Score 1 the youngest child is 2 years old or younger at the time of the current report.

N7. Number of adults residing in home at time of report

Count number of individuals 18 years of age or older *residing* in the home at time of the current report.

- a. Score 0 if two or more adults were residing in the home at the time of the current report.
- b. Score 1 if one or no adults were residing in the home at the time of the current report.

N8. Either caretaker has history of abuse/neglect

- a. Score 0 if neither caretaker was abused and or neglected as a child, based on credible statements by the caretaker(s) or others.
- b. Score 1 if credible statements were provided by the caretaker(s) or others regarding whether *either or both* caretakers were abused and or neglected as children.

N9. Either caretaker has/had a drug or alcohol problem

Either caretaker has/had alcohol/drug abuse problems, evidenced by use causing conflict in home, extreme behavior/attitudes, financial difficulties, frequent illness, job absenteeism, job changes or unemployment, driving under the influence (DUI), traffic violations, criminal arrests, disappearance of household items (especially those easily sold), or life organized around substance use.

- a. Score 0 if neither caretaker has or has ever had a drug or alcohol problem, or has some substance use problems that minimally impact family functioning.
- b. Score 1 if either caretaker has a past or current alcohol/drug abuse problem that interferes with his/her or the family's functioning. Such interference is evidenced by the following:
 - Substance use that affects or affected employment; criminal involvement; marital or family relationships; and/or caretaker's ability to provide protection, supervision, and care for the child;
 - An arrest in the past two years for DUI or refusing breathalyzer testing;

- Self-report of a problem;
- Treatment received currently or in the past;
- Multiple positive urine samples;
- Health/medical problems resulting from substance use and/or abuse;
- The child's diagnosis with fetal alcohol syndrome or exposure (FAS or FAE), or the child's positive toxicology screen at birth and the primary caretaker was the birthing parent.

Legal, non-abusive prescription drug use should not be scored. Abuse of legal, prescription drugs should be scored.

Indicate whether the drug and/or alcohol problem was/is present DURING the last 12 months and/or was present PRIOR to the last 12 months by the primary or secondary caretaker.

N10. Either caretaker has/had a mental health problem

- a. Score 0 if the caretaker(s) does not have a current or past mental health problem and caretaker demonstrates good coping skills.
- b. Score 2 if credible and/or verifiable statements by either caretaker or other indicate that either caretaker:
 - Has been diagnosed as having a significant mental health disorder as indicated by a DSM Axis I condition determined by a mental health professional;
 - Has had repeated referrals for mental health/psychological evaluations; or
 - Was recommended for treatment/hospitalization or was treated/ hospitalized for emotional problems.

Indicate whether the mental health problem was/is present DURING the last 12 months and/or was present PRIOR to the last 12 months by the primary or secondary caretaker.

N11. Either caretaker has barriers to accessing community resources

- a. Score 0 if the caretaker(s) has no need for community resources; caretaker(s) seeks out resources that are not immediately available; or caretaker(s) accesses and utilizes community resources.
- b. Score 1 if the caretaker(s) experiences resource utilization problems as evidenced by the following:
 - Caretaker(s) do not know about resources available in the community or caretaker(s) cannot or do not attempt to identify available resources;
 - Caretaker(s) are unable to access available resources; or
 - Caretaker(s) refuse to utilize/accept available community resources.

N12. Either caretaker lacks parenting skills

- a. Score 0 if caretaker(s) displays parenting patterns which are age-appropriate for children in the home, including providing adequate supervision, realistic expectations and appropriate discipline.
- b. Score 1 if caretaker(s) lacks parenting skills as evidenced by the following:

- Inadequate supervision of children;
- Use of excessive physical/verbal discipline; or
- Lacks knowledge of child development: Caretaker's lack of knowledge regarding child development and/or age-appropriate expectations for children.

N13. Either caretaker involved in harmful relationships

- a. Score 0 if neither caretaker is involved in harmful relationships.
- b. Score 1 if either caretaker is involved in any harmful adult relationships, including any of the following:
 - Adult relationships outside the home which are harmful to domestic functioning or child care, such as criminal activities;
 - Current relationship or domestic discord inside the home, including frequent arguments, degradation, or blaming. Open disagreement on how to handle child problems/discipline. Frequent and/or multiple transient household members. Violent acts that cause minor or no injury to any household member and are not assessed as "domestic violence;" or
 - Domestic violence, defined as the establishment of control and fear in an intimate relationship through the use of violence and other forms of abuse including but not limited to physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; economic oppression; isolation; threats; intimidation; and maltreatment of the children to control the non-offending parent/adult victim. Domestic violence may be evidenced by repeated history of leaving and returning to abusive partner(s), repeated history of violating court orders by the perpetrator of domestic violence, repeated history of violating safety plans, involvement of law enforcement and/or restraining orders, or serious or repeated injuries to any household member.

N14. Child characteristics

- a. Score 0 if no child in the household exhibits characteristics described below.
- b. Score 1 if any child in the household exhibits any of the characteristics described below. Mark all that apply.
 - Mental health and/or behavioral problem: Any child in the household has mental health or behavioral problems not related to a physical or developmental disability. This could be indicated by a DSM Axis I diagnosis, receiving mental health treatment, attendance in a special classroom because of behavioral problems, or currently taking prescribed psychoactive medications.
 - Any child is medically fragile or diagnosed with failure to thrive.
 - » Medically fragile: Medically fragile describes a child who has any condition diagnosed by a physician that can become unstable and change abruptly, resulting in a life-threatening situation; and which requires daily, ongoing medical treatments and monitoring by appropriately trained personnel, which may include parents or other family members, and requires the routine use of a medical device or of assistive technology to compensate for the loss of usefulness of a body function needed to participate in the activities of daily living, and child lives with ongoing threat to his or her continued well-being. Examples include a child who requires a trach-vent for breathing or a g-tube for eating.
 - » Failure to thrive: A diagnosis by a physician that the child has failure to thrive.
 - Developmental disability: A severe, chronic condition due to mental and/or physical impairments which has been diagnosed by a physician or mental health professional. Examples include mental retardation, autism spectrum disorders, and cerebral palsy.

- Learning disability: Child has an individualized education program (IEP) to address a learning disability such as dyslexia. Do not include an IEP designed solely to address mental health or behavioral problems. Also include a child with a learning disability diagnosed by a physician or mental health professional who is eligible for an IEP but does not yet have one, or who is in preschool.
- Physical disability: A severe acute or chronic condition diagnosed by a physician that impairs mobility, sensory, or motor functions. Examples include paralysis, amputation, and blindness.

N15. Housing/basic needs unmet

- Score 0 if the family has adequate housing, clothing, and food; or if the family has minor housing, clothing, and food problems that can be corrected using resources available to the family, and the family is willing to correct these problems.
- Score 1 if the family has serious housing, clothing, and food problems that are not easily correctable or which the family is not willing to correct. This may include condemned or inhabitable housing, chronic homelessness, and lack of clothing and/or food.

ABUSE SCALE

A1. Current report is for abuse or both neglect and abuse

- Score 0 if the current report is not for abuse.
- Score 1 if the current report is for abuse or both abuse and neglect. This includes any allegations under assessment even if not identified in the original report.

A2. Number of Prior CPS investigative assessments

Use Central Registry to count all CPS investigative assessments for all children in the home for any type of abuse or neglect prior to the report resulting in the current assessment. If information is available, include prior maltreatment investigations conducted in other states.

- Score 0 if there were no CPS investigative assessments prior to the current report.
- Score 2 if there were one or more CPS investigative assessments prior to the current report.

A3. Prior CPS in-home or out-of-home service history

Contact other counties and states where there is believed to be prior CPS history on this family.

- Score 0 if this family has not received CPS **in-home or out-of-home** services as a result of a prior finding of “substantiated” or “services needed” report of abuse and/or neglect.
- Score 1 if this family has received CPS **in-home or out-of-home** services as a result of a prior finding of “substantiated” or “services needed” report of abuse or neglect, or is receiving CPS **in-home or out-of-home** services at the time of the current assessment.

A4. Age of youngest child in the home

Choose the appropriate score given the current age of the youngest child in the household where the maltreatment incident reportedly occurred. Youngest children within a residential placement but in the custody of the caretaker(s) should be counted as residing in the home. If a child is on runaway status, is removed, whether placed in foster care or with a safety resource as a result of current CPS involvement, count the child as residing in the home (I.E. if there was never closure of current CPS Services whether In-Home or Out-of-Home being provided and a new report is made, count the child as in the home).

- Score 0 if the youngest child in the home was 4 years of age or younger at the time of the current report.

- b. Score 1 if the youngest child in the home was 5 years of age or older at the time of the current report.

A5. Number of children residing in home at time of current report

Number of individuals under 18 years of age *residing* in the home at the time of the current report. If multiple families reside in the home, count all children. Children within a residential placement but in the custody of the caretaker(s) should be counted as residing in the home. If a child is on runaway status, is removed, whether placed in foster care or with a safety resource as a result of current CPS involvement, count the child as residing in the home (I.E. if there was never closure of current CPS Services whether In-Home or Out-of-Home being provided and a new report is made, count the child as in the home).

- a. Score 0 if two or fewer children were residing in the home at the time of the current report.
- b. Score 1 if three or more children were residing in the home at the time of the current report.

A6. Either caretaker has history of abuse/neglect

- a. Score 0 if neither caretaker was abused and or neglected as a child, based on credible statements by the caretaker(s) or others.
- b. Score 1 if credible statements were provided by the caretaker(s) or others regarding whether *either or both* caretakers were abused and or neglected as children.

A7. Child characteristics

- a. Score 0 if no child in the household exhibits characteristics described below.
- b. Score 1 if any child in the household exhibits any of the characteristics described below. Mark all that apply.
- **Developmental disability:** A severe, chronic condition due to mental and/or physical impairments which has been diagnosed by a physician or mental health professional. Examples include mental retardation, autism spectrum disorders, and cerebral palsy.
 - **Mental health and/or behavioral problem:** Any child in the household has mental health or behavioral problems not related to a physical or developmental disability. This could be indicated by a DSM Axis I diagnosis, receiving mental health treatment, attendance in a special classroom because of behavioral problems, or currently taking prescribed psychoactive medications.
 - **History of delinquency:** Any child has been referred to juvenile court for delinquent behavior, being undisciplined, entering into diversion plans, or status offense behavior. Status offenses not brought to court attention but which create stress within the household should also be scored here, such as children who run away from home, are habitually truant from school, or have drug or alcohol problems.

A8. Either caretaker(s) is a domineering parent

- a. Score 0 if neither caretaker is a domineering parent.
- b. Score 1 if *either* caretaker is domineering over child(ren), evidenced by rude remarks/behavior or controlling, abusive, unreasonable and/or excessive rules; or is overly restrictive, overreacts, is unfair, or is berating.

A9. Either caretaker involved in domestic violence

- a. Score 0 if neither caretaker is a victim/perpetrator of domestic violence.

- b. Score 1 if either caretaker is in a relationship characterized by domestic violence, defined as the establishment of control and fear in an intimate relationship through the use of violence and other forms of abuse, including but not limited to physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; economic oppression; isolation; threats; intimidation; and maltreatment of the children to control the non-offending parent/adult victim. Domestic violence may be evidenced by repeated history of leaving and returning to abusive partner(s), repeated history of violating court orders by the perpetrator of domestic violence, repeated history of violating safety plans, involvement of law enforcement and/or restraining orders, or serious or repeated injuries to any household member.

Indicate whether the domestic violence occurred DURING the last 12 months and/or was PRIOR to the last 12 months by the primary or secondary caretaker.

A10. Caretaker(s) response to current assessment

- a. Score 0 if the caretaker(s) responded appropriately to the current assessment; the caretaker(s) regard the incident as serious and cooperate with the worker and are motivated to improve parenting skills.
- b. Score 1 if any of the following apply to the current situation:
- Either caretaker is unmotivated to take steps necessary or recommended to improve parenting skills;
 - Either caretaker views the current situation less seriously than worker or minimizes the level of harm to the child; and/or
 - Either caretaker fails to cooperate satisfactorily by refusing involvement in the assessment and/or refuses access to the child(ren) during the assessment, etc.

An initial reaction of fear or anger at the process of being reported to CPS should be addressed through a discussion with the caretaker(s) before considering scoring any of the above.

A11. Either caretaker has interpersonal communication problems

- a. Score 0 if family communication is functional and personal boundaries and emotional attachments are appropriate. Minor disagreements and/or lack of communication may occur, but only occasionally interfere with family interactions.
- b. Score 1 if either caretaker's communication problems impair the ability to maintain positive relationships, make friends, keep a job, or meet the needs of family members.

**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
SDM[®] FAMILY RISK ASSESSMENT OF ABUSE/NEGLECT
POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The Family Risk Assessment determines the level of risk of future harm in the family and determines the level of service to be provided to each family. It identifies families which have high, moderate, or low probabilities of future risk of abuse or neglect of their children. By completing the risk assessment, the worker obtains an objective appraisal of the likelihood that a family will maltreat their children in the next 18 months. The difference between the risk levels is substantial. High-risk families have significantly higher rates than low risk families of subsequent reports and substantiations and are more often involved in serious abuse or neglect incidents.

The risk scales are based on research on cases with “substantiated” or “services needed” abuse or neglect that examined the relationships between family characteristics and the outcomes of subsequent abuse and neglect. The scales do not predict recurrence simply that a family is more or less likely to have another incident without intervention by the agency. One important result of the research is that a single instrument should not be used to assess the risk of both abuse and neglect. Different family dynamics are present in abuse and neglect situations. Hence, separate scales are used to assess the future probability of abuse or neglect.

Complete both the abuse and neglect scales regardless of the type of allegation(s) reported or assessed. All items on the risk assessment scales are completed. *The assigned social worker must make every effort throughout the assessment to obtain the information needed to answer each assessment question. However, if information cannot be obtained to answer a specific item, score the item as "0."*

Which cases: All CPS maltreatment reports assigned for an assessment that involve a family caretaker. This does not apply to reports involving child care facilities; residential facilities such as group homes or DHHS facilities. This does apply to non-licensed living arrangements, the non-custodial parents home or licensed family foster homes.

Who completes: Social worker assigned to complete the assessment.

When: The risk assessment shall be completed and documented prior to the case decision. It is one of the elements considered in making the case decision.

A risk assessment shall also be completed when a new CPS report occurs in an open CPS In-Home or Out-of-Home Services case.

For children coming into the agency’s legal custody through delinquency, the risk assessment shall serve as the baseline assessment documentation.

Decision: The risk assessment identifies the level of risk of future maltreatment and guides the case decision including whether to close a report or open a case for CPS In-Home or Out-of-Home Services.

Appropriate Completion: Only **one** household can be assessed on the risk assessment form. If the allegations involve maltreatment in two households and both have responsibilities for childcare, complete two separate Risk Assessment tools. In situations where the parents are not living together, a Family Risk Assessment of Abuse/Neglect will only be completed on the home of the alleged perpetrator.

In situations where an adult relative is entrusted with the care of the child and is the alleged perpetrator, the risk assessment is conducted in the home where the child resides. In some cases (for example, joint custody cases), it may be difficult to identify the household in which the children reside. The household which provides the majority of the child care should be selected. If that fails, choose the household where the CA/N incident took place.

Some items are very objective (such as prior CPS In/Out-of-Home Service history or the age of the caretaker). **Others** require the worker to use discretionary judgment based on his or her assessment of the family.

Following scoring all items in each scale, the assigned social worker totals the score for each scale and determines the risk level by checking the appropriate boxes in the risk level section. The highest score from either scale determines the risk level.

Overrides

Policy Overrides

Policy overrides reflect incident seriousness and child vulnerability concerns, and have been determined by the agency to be case situations that warrant the highest level of service from the agency regardless of the risk scale score. If any policy override reasons exist, the risk level is increased to high.

After completing the risk scales, the assigned social worker indicates if any policy override reasons exist. If more than one reason exists, indicate the primary override reason. Only one reason can be selected. All overrides must be approved in writing by the supervisor.

Discretionary Overrides

The assigned social worker also indicates if there are any discretionary override reasons. A discretionary override is used to increase or decrease the risk level by one increment in any case where the assigned social worker feels the risk level set by the scales is too low or too high. All overrides must be approved in writing by the supervisor.

Discretionary overrides should be used only in exceptional cases.