

31.14, Case Documentation Requirements	
Application: To All Department of Children's Services Employees and Contract Agency Staff with Responsibilities for Documenting Case Recordings	
Authority: TCA 37-5-105; 37-5-106	Standards: COA: RPM 2.04 and 4.03; PDS 2.02; PRG 1.01; 1.02; and 1.03
Original Effective Date: 09/01/2003 Current Effective Date: 7/24/2025	Supersedes: 2/28/2019 Last Review Date: 7/2/2025
Glossary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ <u>Case Recordings:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The ongoing chronological narrative written by a case manager in a case record that serves to document each contact or to document any activity related to the case. 	

Policy Statement:

The Department of Children's Services (DCS) will maintain documentation of all contacts with children/youth, clients, parents, family members, service providers, and/or other available collaterals and ensure the contacts are entered/uploaded to the Electronic Record System within 14 (fourteen) calendar days from the date of contact.

Purpose:

The Electronic Record System serves as the official record for DCS staff and private provider workers for collection of data and preparation of required documents, forms, and assessments on children and families served.

Procedures:

A. General Case Documentation Requirements

1. The case documentation timeframe outlined in this policy applies to all DCS program areas, DCS employees, and Contract Agency staff.
2. Case recordings and case documentation serve as the official record of efforts DCS staff have made to serve DCS children, youth, and families. This information may be used in administrative hearings, court proceedings, audits, and reviews.
3. DCS Case Management staff will utilize the official case record for preparing court summaries and other documents, as well as at the point of case transfer when new DCS

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staff are assigned and require historical information on the current case. The case record will be used as a guide for on-going case planning.

4. The official case record may also serve as a resource for historical information that may be useful after the case is closed, if the family has a subsequent relationship with DCS through referrals, reentry, or through the next generation.
5. Case documentation may be utilized as a resource for important information about a child/youth's life, should she/he request it after he or she becomes an adult.
6. Case recordings and case documentation will serve as a supervisory tool for DCS management and administrative staff.
7. All case documentation will be used to track client and family outcomes in order for DCS to engage in Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI).
8. Printing of case recordings must comply with DCS policies [9.7-DOE, Standardization and Confidentiality of Youth Master Files](#), [14.11, Child Protective Services Case File Organization, Documentation and Disposition](#), and [31.5, Organization of Family Case Files](#).
9. DCS staff must ensure honest and credible case documentation, as per DCS policy [4.3, Employee Code of Conduct](#).
10. All DCS staff will adhere to the requirements of DCS policies [9.4, Confidential Client-Specific Information](#), [9.5, Access and Release of Confidential Child-Specific Information](#), and [14.15, Confidentiality of Child Protective Services Cases](#).
11. For information regarding specific case documentation requirements, review the [Protocol for Case Documentation Requirements](#).

Forms: None

Collateral Documents:

[9.7-DOE, Standardization and Confidentiality of Youth Master Files](#)

[9.4, Confidential Client-Specific Information](#)

[9.5, Access and Release of Confidential Child-Specific Information](#)

[14.11, Child Protective Services Case File Organization, Documentation and Disposition](#)

[14.15, Confidentiality of Child Protective Services Cases](#)

[31.5, Organization of Family Case Files](#)

[Protocol for Case Documentation Requirements](#)