



Tennessee Department of Children's Services

## Protocol for Safe Sleep Education and Delivery of Safe Sleep Furniture

Supplemental to DCS Policies: [14.6](#), [14.12](#), [14.13](#), [14.14](#), [14.17](#), [14.18](#), [16.4](#), [16.12](#), [16.46](#), [20.8](#)

The Department of Children Services (DCS) and contracted agencies ("staff") are committed to ensuring that every infant under 12 (twelve) months of age, with whom DCS has contact, has the following:

- a) Primary and secondary caregivers educated on safe sleep practices and safe sleep risk factors; and
- b) Safe Sleep Furniture.

### **Safe Sleep Education:**

To best ensure caregivers consistently practice safe sleep, staff educates caregivers on:

#### **The "ABCs of Safe Sleep"**

##### **A – Alone**

- ♦ Infants should be placed **Alone** with no blankets, pillows, or toys
- ♦ Infants should not co-sleep with caretakers, siblings, or pets

##### **B – Back**

- ♦ Always place infants on their **Backs** to sleep
- ♦ Do not use wedges or positioning devices in infant sleep furniture

##### **C – Crib**

- ♦ Infants should sleep on a firm, infant mattress in an approved crib, bassinet, or pack n' play
- ♦ Crib mattresses should be covered with a properly fitted sheet

### **Safe Sleep Risk Factors:**

<http://safesleep.tn.gov>

<https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/safe-sleep/>

<https://www.healthychildren.org/english/ages-stages/baby/sleep/pages/a-parents-guide-to-safe-sleep.aspx>

Current Effective Date: 2/25

Supersedes: 12/01/23

Supplemental to: DCS Policies: 14.6, 14.12, 14.13, 14.14, 14.17, 14.18, 16.4, 16.12, 16.46, 20.8  
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**Safe Sleep Furniture:**

All staff are responsible for identifying infants in need of **Safe Sleep Furniture**. **Safe Sleep Furniture** is available 24/7 to all families served by the Department. Once an infant in need of safe sleep furniture has been identified, staff ensures the infant has safe sleep furniture fully set-up (i.e. not in a storage box) and visually verified by staff within eight (8) hours.

**Safe Sleep Furniture** may be provided by the caregivers, a family resource, a community partner, or DCS. Staff may assist in assembling safe sleep furniture.

**Notes:**

- ◆ Each region is responsible for maintaining an adequate supply of **Safe Sleep Furniture** in their region. As a general guideline, a minimum of two pack-n-plays per county office is recommended.
- ◆ Any **Safe Sleep Furniture** provided to an infant by DCS should move with the infant in the case of a placement change. The infant's name should be written on the bottom of the pack-n-play.

**Family-Focused Education:**

Staff provide **Safe Sleep Education** to all members of the household who may serve in a caregiving role, including siblings and other relatives. This **Safe Sleep Education** is always presented verbally but may additionally be delivered through the provision of handouts by watching a safe sleep media presentation or through active demonstration of **Safe Sleep** practices.

**Staff Responsibilities:**

Staff will provide Safe Sleep Assessment and Safe Sleep Education during each home visit where a child under the age of twelve (12) months is present or living in the home.

a) Non-Custodial:

Staff must visually verify assembled **Safe Sleep Furniture** and provide **Safe Sleep Education** to primary and secondary caregivers regarding all children under the age of twelve (12) months and complete [CS-1209, Safe Sleep Assessment](#) to demonstrate compliance with this protocol.

b) Custodial:

Staff must visually verify assembled **Safe Sleep Furniture** and provide **Safe Sleep Education** to primary and secondary caregivers regarding all children under the age of twelve (12) months. This education is provided at every change of placement to all primary and secondary caregivers and applies to all children in the placement home regardless of their custodial status. This includes foster

parents' biological children. Staff must complete [CS-1209, Safe Sleep Assessment](#) to demonstrate compliance with this protocol.

- c) Document **Safe Sleep Education** and efforts to provide **Safe Sleep Furniture** in CCWIS.
- d) If a pack-n-play was provided by DCS to an infant, staff must complete a Case Service Request (CSR) in the Electronic Record System in the name of the infant for whom the **Safe Sleep Furniture** was delivered.
- e) Staff will provide ongoing assessment of safe sleep environment and education during each subsequent visit with the family.

**The CSR should be entered using the following path in the Electronic Record System. A CSR is only entered if DCS is providing a pack n' play:**

**Service Group/ Category** – Non-Custodial Services /Support Services or Custodial Services/Support Services

**Service Type** – Family Support Services

**Service Description** – Emergency – Pack n Play

**In the Narrative/Comment Box** – Employee describes identified need, and pack-n-play was delivered for (infant's name) on (date) from which building and who provided the safe sleep education to the family.

- ◆ *Example: FSW Johnson was completing a visit in the home of John Doe and identified infant, Susie Smith, was without safe sleep furniture. A pack-n-play was obtained from the (enter county) DCS office, delivered on xx/xx/xx, and safe sleep education was provided.*
- ◆ *Example: Infant, Susie Smith, was placed with John Doe as an expedited placement who did not have proper safe sleep furniture. A pack-n-play was obtained from the (enter county) DCS office, delivered on xx/xx/xx to preserve the expedited placement, and safe sleep education was provided.*

If the infant is not currently a member in the family case, he or she is added as a member including the date of birth and social security number in their person profile. The CSR should be entered within two (2) days of providing the pack-n-play.

**Supervisor Approval Process:**

1. From the Home Screen: Click Approvals in the upper right corner.
2. Locate & Click Case Service.
3. Locate the Name of the Child & Click on their name.
4. Locate & Click Approval near the bottom left of the screen.
5. Locate Action Review & Route.

6. Locate Organization Category: Change to Region.
7. Locate Organization: Change to supervisor's Region.
8. Locate Team: Change to Fiscal Region Team.
9. Reviewer/Approvers: Should change to the Fiscal Director in the supervisor's region.
10. Click Save.

**Tracking and Replenishment:**

The fiscal unit authorizes the purchase of pack-n-plays and provides authorization to a cardholder in/around the requesting office. Cardholders or regional designees replenish the pack-n-plays and update the **Safe Sleep** Replenishment Log for the region.

It is recommended all regions develop an efficient process for allowing staff to temporarily "check out" a pack-n-play when they believe a family served by DCS is potentially without a **Safe Sleep** environment. This better ensures expedient delivery of safe sleep furniture to families upon initial contact with DCS.

**Available Resources:**

<http://safesleep.tn.gov>

<https://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov/safe-sleep/breastfeeding>

**Definitions:**

- ◆ **Safe Sleep Furniture** is defined as a crib, bassinet, or pack-n-play.
- ◆ **Primary caregivers** are caregivers who have the main duties of caring for the infant the majority of the time.
- ◆ **Secondary caregivers** are caregivers who assist or fill in when the primary caregivers are unavailable (e.g. age-appropriate minor siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and non-relative babysitters).