

WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER, Governor

(1) A PROVISION REQUIRING A LOCAL DEPARTMENT TO VISIT EACH CHILD IN FOSTER FAMILY CARE AT LEAST ONCE EVERY 30 DAYS UNLESS THE CHILD'S FOSTER PARENT HAS BEEN GRANTED GUARDIANSHIP OF THE PERSON OF THAT CHILD OR THE CHILD'S PERMANENT PLAN HAS BEEN ACHIEVED BY THE CHILD'S COURT ORDERED PLACEMENT IN A FOSTER FAMILY HOME WITH A SPECIFIC CAREGIVER;

(2) PROCEDURES ESTABLISHING THE MAXIMUM CASELOADS FOR FOSTER CARE STAFF WHO ARE DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR VISITING CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE, AT A LEVEL THAT DOES NOT EXCEED 20 CHILDREN FOR EACH FOSTER CARE STAFF PERSON; AND

(3) A PROVISION ESTABLISHING TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR FOSTER CARE PROVIDERS.

5-706.

(a) Promptly after receiving a report of suspected abuse or neglect:

(1) the local department or the appropriate law enforcement agency, or both, if jointly agreed on, shall make a thorough investigation of a report of suspected abuse to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the child or children; [or]

(2) the local department shall make a thorough investigation of a report of suspected neglect to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the child or children; OR

(3) IF THE REPORT INVOLVES A CHILD IN FOSTER CARE, THE APPROPRIATE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY SHALL MAKE A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF THE REPORT OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT TO PROTECT THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD OR CHILDREN.

(b) (1) Within 24 hours after receiving a report of suspected abuse and within 5 days after receiving a report of suspected neglect, the local department or the appropriate law enforcement agency shall:

[(1)] (I) see the child;

[(2)] (II) attempt to have an on-site interview with the child's caretaker;

[(3)] (III) decide on the safety of the child, wherever the child is, and of other children in the household; and

[(4)] (IV) decide on the safety of other children in the care or custody of the alleged abuser.

(2) (I) WITHIN 5 DAYS AFTER RECEIVING A REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF A CHILD IN FOSTER CARE, THE