

**DIVISION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
ADMINISTRATIVE MEMO #10-2012**

To: All Children and Family Services Staff

From: Christine M. Hanus, Child Welfare Administrator 
Division of Children and Family Services

Signed by: Thomas D. Pristow, Director 
Division of Children and Family Services
Department of Health and Human Services

Date: April 3, 2012

RE: **Rescind and Replace Administrative Memo #6-09 Contacting the Nebraska Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline. This memo clarifies the appropriate use of the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline Alert. It provides instruction on what information should and should not be sent using this functionality.**

Effective: Immediately

Contact: Sherri Haber, Child and Adult Abuse and Neglect Administrator
at 402-471-7989 or sherri.haber@nebraska.gov

Purpose: Direction on calls made to CFS Staff concerning a child's well-being or a parent contact requesting foster care for their child and clarification on resources available for families requesting assistance due to individual circumstances of the child and/or family.

Action Required: Children and Family Services (CFS) staff may be contacted directly by family members or others voicing concerns for a child's well-being or may be contacted by a parent asking for help or that their child be placed in foster care. If this occurs, the CFS staff will link the caller to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline by transferring the call and staying on the line to ensure transfer of the call.

If unable to connect the reporting party to the Hotline directly, then the CFS staff will document the information reported on the "Alert to Hotline" form. In addition to the information required in the pre-defined fields, the CFS staff should include Master Case Number (if applicable); First and Last Name and current address. When staff hits 'send', an automatic e-mail will be sent to the Hotline for an Intake Specialist to review the information.

The Hotline staff will accept the form in the same manner as a direct call to the Hotline and will attempt to contact the reporting party for additional information. If Hotline staff is unable to make contact, then the following steps will be taken to ensure face-to-face contact by CFS staff or law enforcement.

1. If it is a CFS Specialist who receives the information and that CFS Specialist has a present or historical professional relationship with the reporting party and/or the family identified, a request will be made for that CFS Specialist to make contact within the next working day with the reporting party and/or the family identified to facilitate information exchange with the Hotline within the next working day.
2. If it is not a CFS Specialist who received the information or if there is no previous relationship with the reporting party, an Intake Specialist will request that a local law-enforcement agency conduct a well-child check to assess the child's well-being if or when needed.

DO NOT use the "Alert to Hotline" form to do any of the following:

1. Request an Accepted Intake be Screened Out;
2. When not reporting child abuse or neglect; or
3. When an Immediate response by a person is warranted;

These situations require a contact with a Hotline Intake Worker or Supervisor directly.

Available Resources:

In addition to the above protocol, information on available community supports should be shared with individuals who express that a family or child has a specific need.

- Individuals should be encouraged to call 2-1-1, an information and referral line which is an excellent source of information on a variety of services statewide. Dial 2-1-1 or (402) 444-6666 or nebraska211@uwmidlands.org.
- The *Nebraska Family Helpline* at (888) 866-8660 makes it easier for families to obtain assistance by providing a single contact point 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Trained Helpline operators screen calls to assess immediate safety needs, identify the potential level of behavioral health crisis, make recommendations or referrals to appropriate resources, and help callers connect to emergency resources or providers. The Helpline is supervised by licensed mental health professionals.
 - The Division of Behavioral Health also supports Family Navigator and Family Peer Support programs through the Nebraska Family Helpline to respond to children's behavioral health needs. The Family Navigator Program will provide individuals trained to facilitate peer support and connection to existing services, including the identification of community based services. These services will be available to families whose primary concern is their children's

behavior, rather than safety concerns identified in the family.

- *Right Turn* provides post adoption/post guardianship services to adoptive families. *Right Turn* is a single point of entry for the program providing inquiry, intake, crisis management, and initial case management. Information on family eligibility and services provided can be found at <http://www.rightturnne.org/>. Right Turn is committed to ensure that adoptive families' access needed support even when they are not eligible for Right Turn services. When appropriate these families are referred to the Nebraska Family Helpline. Eligible families should call 888-667-2399. Right Turn provides respite support, training and education, case management, peer mentor services, statewide support groups, and short-term mental health services and referrals as well as in-home support and intervention components that responds to the gaps in and barriers to in-home, community support services.
- Answers4Families.org is Nebraska's support and information connection for families and professionals seeking assistance. This web site is a collection of articles, resources and referrals organized by target group.

Accessing the Alert to Hotline form:

In order to access the Alert to Hotline form, do the following:

1. Select the Start button;
 - a. If you have previously utilized the function you will see an icon 'Create Alert Hotline Form'.
 - b. If do not have this icon on your Start Menu proceed to Step 2.
2. Select All Programs;
3. Select Folder labeled 'Child Abuse Hotline';
4. Select 'Create Alert Hotline Form'.
5. The Hotline form will display and be ready for entry.
6. The 'Create Alert Hotline Form' icon should now be on your Start Menu for future use.