



**Name of Provider:**

**Each employee will read the policies listed herein and receive a briefing from supervisory staff before making contact with or assuming responsibility for children.**

- A. Read and discuss DCS Policy 31.2, Responsibilities Regarding Runaways, Absconders, and Escapees, revised 1 August 2007.
- B. Read and discuss sections of the Provider Policy Manual (PPM) pertaining to runaways
- C. Treating Children with Respect. The following—not all inclusive—will be discussed:
  1. Physical and mental abuse of a child is strictly prohibited
  2. Encouraging a child to run is strictly prohibited
  3. Keep lines of communication open and allow child to freely express concerns
  4. Remain aware of runaway clues
    - Child expresses dissatisfaction with placement
    - Child reports abuse by staff or peers
    - Child packs sentimental items (girlfriend/boyfriend picture, etc.) prior to going home for a short pass
    - Child demonstrates a change in behavior
    - Child receives news of problems at home or with a significant other
      - Tactfully discuss observations with youth and supervisor and address issues in a mutually supportive and positive environment
    - Be alert to youth running during movement/transportation
- D. INCOMING YOUTH: Within three (3) work days of a child's placement, the assigned counselor/case manager/supervisor at the provider agency will:
  1. Review the child's file for history of runaways
  2. Tactfully counsel child on the dangers/consequences of running away from placement, to include, but not limited to:
    - Interrupts treatment
    - Delay in achieving permanency/exiting DCS custody
    - Child and community placed at risk of harm
    - Runaway petition/attachment will be filed with Juvenile Courts (JC) in county from with absconded and county of commitment
      - JCs could add additional charges which could delay achievement of permanency or discharge from DCS custody



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- o Parent/caretaker could be charged with harboring if AWOL child returns home and parent/caretaker does not turn child in to law enforcement, DCS, or provider. Maximum penalty is:
  - ❖ \$2,500 fine and 11-29 in jail

E. RETURN of YOUTH to PLACEMENT after RUNAWAY EVENT: Same topics required for INCOMING YOUTH (see above) will be discussed in addition to applicable topics in the PPM:

1. Within 24 hours of the child's return:

- Conduct debriefing with child to determine:
  - o Medical and other needs
  - o Reasons for absconding
  - o Contacts made while AWOL
- During the debriefing, develop a safety plan (SP) to reduce the likelihood of the child running before the Child and Family Team Meeting (CFTM) to be held within seven (7) days of the child's return to care. At a minimum, the CFTM will address why the child absconded and what can be done to preclude the child from absconding again and a formal SP developed.
  - o The Family Service Worker (FSW) may telephonically participate in the debriefing (Reference the PPM, Section One, Core Standards, Paragraph III, General Program Requirements, Subparagraph G.2.)

F. OTHER TOPICS OF THE AGENCY'S CHOICE TO ADDRESS PREVENTION OF RUNAWAYS AND PROTOCOL FOLLOWING A RUNAWAY INCIDENT:

The signatures and dates below indicate that the above-referenced issues have been discussed and the employee understands DCS Policy and agency polices on runaway prevention and protocol on safety following a runaway incident.

**SIGNATURE of EMPLOYEE:**

**PRINTED TITLE and NAME OF EMPLOYEE:**

**SIGNATURE of SUPERVISOR:**

**PRINTED TITLE and NAME of SUPERVISOR:**

**DATE POLICIES READ and BRIEFING CONDUCTED:**



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## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE OF FORM**

To ensure that each provider agency has established a written plan for the preventing runaways as required by DCS Policy 31.2, Paragraph G.2, and that the plan is communicated to the staff. Provider agency supervisory staff must review their plan with any staff before they have contact or assume responsibility for children. This form serves as confirmation that the runaway prevention plan has been reviewed.

The form is maintained in each employee's record and be available upon request to DCS staff.



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