



**Administrative Policies and Procedures: 9.6**

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Organization and Maintenance of DCS File Rooms</b>
<b>Authority:</b>	TCA 36-1-125; 36-1-126; 37-1-153; 37-1-409; 37-1-612; 37-2-408; 37-5-105; 37-5-106; 37-1-107; 49-10-608;
<b>Standards:</b>	<b>ACA:</b> 4-JCF-6F-01; <b>COA:</b> PA-RPM 2, PA-RPM 5.01, PA-RPM 5.02, PA-RPM 6.01, PA-RPM 7.01, PA-RPM 8
<b>Application:</b>	To All Department of Children's Services Regional Administrators, Facility Managers, Records Clerks and Records Coordinators
<b>Policy Statement:</b>	
The Department of Children's Services (DCS) shall ensure that all closed records are maintained in a systematic secure order. Child case files and related information are official confidential records and shall be safeguarded in accordance with applicable statutes, rules, policies and ethical standards.	
<b>Purpose:</b>	
To ensure that all closed DCS records can be retrieved in a timely manner and that records are maintained in a uniform manner in all DCS offices and facilities.	
<b>Procedures:</b>	
<b>A. Organization of Closed Paper Records</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Each office will designate a secured area to store closed records. This will be in either a locked file room or secure file cabinets.</li> <li>2. Each office will designate a Records Clerk to manage the storage areas.</li> <li>3. Access to the secure storage areas will be limited to the records clerk or their designee.</li> <li>4. The secure storage area will be locked at all times to ensure access is limited to <b><u>AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY</u></b>.</li> <li>5. All closed DCS files will be transferred to the Records Clerk or their designee.</li> <li>6. All DCS Records Clerks and Coordinators will be given access to the DCS Records Management Database.</li> <li>7. The DCS Records Clerk or their designee will enter the required tracking information into the DCS Records Management Database.</li> <li>8. The paper records will be filed in the secure storage area in Alphabetical order and separated by Program type (CPS, Home County Case Files, Resource Home Files, Family Case Files).</li> </ol>

<p><b>B. Obtaining Closed Records</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Any authorized person wishing to gain access to a record in the secure storage area, must request that file from the Records Clerk or their designee.</li> <li>2. The Records Clerk will maintain a tracking log that contains the following information:                         <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>RECORD NAME,</b></li> <li>b) <b>REQUESTOR’S NAME,</b></li> <li>c) <b>DATE REMOVED,</b></li> <li>d) <b>DATE RETURNED,</b> and</li> <li>e) <b>NOTES.</b></li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<p><b>C. Request of Records</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Records Clerk will ensure the requester is authorized to access the requested file.</li> <li>2. If it is necessary to send a requested file to another location, the Records Clerk will make a copy of the original case file.</li> <li>3. The original case file will be returned to the secured storage area.</li> <li>4. The copy of the original file will be transferred to the requester along with DCS form <b>CS-0422 Transfer, Mail and Acknowledgement of Case Record Material and Forms.</b></li> </ol> <p><b>Note:</b> No original case records will be sent to DCS Central Office unless authorized to do so by DCS Legal Counsel.</p>
<p><b>D. Change of Venue</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If a record is being transferred from one county of venue to another, the original file will be transferred to the new county of venue along with DCS <b>CS-0422 Transfer, Mail and Acknowledgement of Case Record Material and Forms.</b> The Records Clerk will document the new venue in the file room log.</li> </ol>

<p><b>Forms:</b></p>	<p><a href="#"><u>CS-0422 Transfer, Mail and Acknowledgement of Case Record Material and Forms</u></a></p>
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<p><b>Collateral documents:</b></p>	<p><i>None</i></p>
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<b>Glossary:</b>	
<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>County of Venue:</b>	The county that is considered the “Home County” of the child or family receiving services.
<b>Family Case File:</b>	A working case file that contains all of a family’s information that is maintained in a systematic and confidential manner while receiving services from DCS.
<b>Locked File Room:</b>	Any area that is accessible only via a locked door with access limited to authorized personnel only.
<b>Records Management Database:</b>	A database created by DCS Information Systems to log and track the maintenance and destruction of paper records.
<b>Secure File Cabinet:</b>	Any file cabinet that can be locked to ensure limited access to confidential information.
<b>Separated by Program Type:</b>	All CPS files will be grouped together. All Home County Case Files will be grouped together; all Resource Home Files will be grouped together and all Family Case Files will be grouped together.