



Department of
Job and Family Services

John Kasich, Governor

Michael B. Colbert, Interim Director

January 19, 2011

Dear Executive Director:

This letter is to announce the release of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Request for Application (RFA)#: R-1011-06-8076, and to invite Ohio's Public Children Services Agencies (PCSAs) to participate in Ohio's expanded use of a differential response system. Through this RFA, ODJFS plans to select up to ten additional counties to participate. Differential response is a practice approach in child protective services that allows for more than one method of response to accept reports of suspected child abuse and/or neglect. Ohio's differential response system provides two pathways recognizing the varied nature of reports and offering the opportunity to respond differentially through either a traditional response or an alternative response. The Public Children Services Agency (PCSA) of any Ohio county interested in implementing an alternative response pathway must respond to this RFA according to directions provided herein and demonstrate its readiness to implement a differential response system. ODJFS will consider responses only from PCSAs.

If you are interested in submitting an application for this important project, please obtain the RFA through the ODJFS web site at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/rfp/>. If you experience problems opening the above referenced ODJFS URL, please contact the RFP/RLB Unit at (614) 728-5693 or at the address: ODJFS, Office of Legal and Acquisitions Services, 30 E. Broad Street, 31st Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414.

Responses must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the requirements and time frames given in the RFA. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

Michael B. Colbert
Interim Director

30 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
jfs.ohio.gov

**THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES
REQUEST FOR APPLICATION
FOR
OHIO DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE EXPANSION**

RFA # R-1011-06-8076

**Issued By:
The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services**

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA): Ohio Differential Response Expansion

RFP#: R-1011-06-8076

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The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Request for Applications (RFA)
R-1011-06-8076

Differential Response Expansion Sites

SECTION I. GENERAL PURPOSE & APPLICANT INFORMATION

1.1 Purpose

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) releases this Request for Applications (RFA) to Ohio's Public Children's Services Agencies (PCSAs) in order to expand the use of a differential response system in Ohio to ten additional counties. Differential response is a practice approach in child protective services that allows for more than one method of response to accepted reports of suspected child abuse and/or neglect. Ohio's differential response system provides two pathways recognizing the varied nature of reports and offering the opportunity to respond differentially through either a traditional response or an alternative response. The public children services agency (PCSA) of any Ohio county interested in implementing an alternative response pathway must respond to this RFA according to directions provided herein and demonstrate its readiness to implement a differential response system. ODJFS will consider responses only from PCSAs.

An alternative response assesses the needs of the child or family and offers services without requiring a formal disposition that maltreatment has occurred. Since a disposition is not required, the caseworker is able to place less emphasis on circumstances of the incident and more focus upon the family's overall needs. The ability not to assign fault aids the caseworker in establishing the process as one of collaboration that is accomplished jointly with the family. The alternative response (AR) pathway is not outreach or diversion programming but provides an additional intervention option for responding to accepted (screened-in) reports of suspected child maltreatment, and as such, is subject to the policy, instruments, and oversight of ODJFS.

It is recognized that the alternative and traditional response methodologies share many components and values. In both traditional and alternative responses, results are shared with the family and case plans are developed together with family members. However, the AR caseworker's ability to be fully transparent, more fully honor the family's wishes, and move from an incident-based interaction helps to facilitate parental engagement with services at a much earlier stage. Addressing family-identified concerns and needs and using agency and community resources to support families are key elements in the service design. It is important to recognize that this approach is neither better than nor supplants the need for and use of traditional response. Introducing the alternative response approach merely acknowledges that families with different circumstances of varying severity require different responses.

1.2 Issuing Office

This RFA is released by ODJFS. The Office for Families and Children is responsible for state level supervision of all child welfare services. The mission of this office is to work for children, adults and families by mutually educating and engaging communities and systems to jointly provide services to achieve safety, permanency, self-sufficiency and well-being.

If interested county PCSA representatives have a need to communicate regarding this RFA, they must contact **ODJFS** using one of the mechanisms provided for in **Sections 1.8, Internet Question and Answer Period/RFP Clarification Opportunity**.

1.3 Background

The Advisory Committee on Children, Families, and the Courts was **appointed by the Supreme Court of Ohio to make recommendations regarding family law initiatives**. A *Subcommittee on Responding to Child Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency* (hereinafter, the Subcommittee) was established by the Advisory Committee to study the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect and determine in what ways Ohio's system for accepting and investigating reports of child abuse and neglect could be improved to better serve children and families in need of government intervention. Among the recommendations made by the Subcommittee was one for the field testing and evaluation of the value of an Alternative (Differential) Response System in Ohio, and statutory authority for it was enacted.

A team of consultants led by the American Humane Association was selected by the Subcommittee through a competitive proposal process to provide technical assistance and project leadership and to conduct a rigorous evaluation of Ohio's Alternative Response pilot. In September 2007, ten counties were selected to pilot an AR pathway: Clark, Fairfield, Franklin, Greene, Guernsey, Licking, Lucas, Ross, Trumbull, and Tuscarawas. Two representatives of each pilot site and representatives of selected stakeholder groups convened to form the leadership body for the duration of the pilot. This body initially was entitled the "Design Workgroup" and was charged with developing the model for pilot implementation. Following an intensive design and planning process, implementation of alternative response in the ten pilot counties began in July of, 2008. The Design Workgroup transitioned to become the "Leadership Council" post-implementation.

Through a series of decisions determined by the Leadership Council, all counties committed to adhere to a set of agreed-upon statewide standards, principles and practices; however, counties were given flexibility to implement these core elements in a way that was consistent with community standards, agency resources and most importantly, the children and families served by the agency. Core *principles* of AR were universally agreed to by the Leadership Council. The ten pilot counties participated in a 15 month evaluation of AR implementation (July 2008 – September 2009), which included random assignment of eligible cases to AR (experimental) or TR (control) pathways. Data collection continued through the end of January 2010. Random assignment was conducted to assure that the two groups of families were, as groups, highly comparable. The assumption underlying this design was that any differences in outcomes would be the result of the new approach rather than any pre-existing differences between the groups.

Ohio's evaluation findings parallel those realized in previous evaluations of differential response systems in Minnesota and Missouri. As in the Minnesota and Missouri studies, Ohio's evaluation findings reflect positive outcomes with the addition of an alternative response approach:

- Child safety has not diminished;
- Families are more satisfied and feel more involved in decision making;
- CPS staff have reacted positively;
- Services to families and children have increased and changed;
- Subsequent reports of child abuse and neglect have been reduced; and
- Later placements of children have been reduced.

In light of the outcomes achieved through Ohio's pilot of an alternative response pathway, all pilot sites and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services have embraced the AR approach as an option that should be available for appropriate families. Following a review of the outcomes of the pilot, the Subcommittee on Responding to Child Abuse, Neglect and Dependency recommended to the Supreme Court of Ohio's Advisory Committee on Children, Families and the Courts that Ohio move forward with statewide implementation of a differential response system. Five additional Ohio counties (Champaign, Madison, Montgomery, Richland, and Summit) were selected to join Clark County to serve as differential response pilot sites through a federal grant awarded by the National Quality Improvement Center on Differential Response. These "Round 2" counties began implementation of the AR pathway in September of 2010 and are participating in a four year federal outcomes evaluation study of differential response. Additionally, a third round of ten counties was selected for AR expansion through a competitive RFA process and began implementation in October of 2010. "Round 3" counties include: Ashtabula, Athens, Coshocton, Erie, Hamilton, Hocking, Huron, Mahoning, Medina, and Washington. This RFA is offered by ODJFS to continue the expansion of differential response in Ohio in a fourth round of counties.

1.4 Overview of the Project

In addition to having the option of an AR pathway for responding to accepted (screened-in) reports of child maltreatment, PCSAs approved for differential response are expected to be fully invested in the leadership of this project. Each county agency will be actively engaged in the tasks and activities of the Leadership Council and/or its Task Teams. The purpose of the Leadership Council is twofold:

1. To provide advice to the Subcommittee on Responding to Child Abuse, Neglect and Dependency, staff of the Supreme Court of Ohio (the Court), and staff of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) regarding the statewide implementation of a differential response approach to accepted reports of child maltreatment.
2. To function as an ongoing leadership forum for guidance and support, as well as, monitoring, problem solving, and mentoring for the Ohio Differential Response Project. The Leadership Council brings together the experiences of individual public children services agencies to develop a statewide approach to differential response.

Leadership Council members agree to:

- Develop an understanding of differential response.
- Identify and recommend appropriate resources and strategies to support the successful statewide implementation of differential response.
- Participate in discussions and represent the constituent group of which they have been appointed. The constituent group will include both the member's agency as well as the various counties they are charged to represent.
- Serve as a liaison to facilitate the open exchange of information between their constituent group and the Leadership Council.
- Provide regular updates on Leadership Council activities to professional colleagues.
- Participate on task teams as needed to accomplish the purpose of the Leadership Council.
- Develop, implement and utilize mechanisms to collect input from constituent membership, including distributing Leadership Council meeting minutes.

Two representatives from the group of Round 4 counties will be appointed to serve as voting members of the Leadership Council. All counties selected as expansion sites are expected to interface with Leadership Council members in order to stay apprised of Leadership Council activities and to inform the work of the group. All expansion sites, including those that do not have a representative appointed to serve directly on the Leadership Council, may also participate on Task Teams formed by the Leadership Council. Task Teams will consist of select members of the Leadership Council as well as other representatives needed to accomplish the specific charge of the Task Team.

1.5 Objectives of the Project

The AR approach is predicated upon certain philosophical concepts that are founded in a partnership model at all levels of practice: caseworker and family, supervisor and caseworker, agency and community, and county and state. Ohio's AR pathway is grounded in the following foundational tenets:

- The primary goal of Alternative Response is child safety.
- Alternative Response practice is based on safety-focused engagement of and partnership with families rather than an expectation of compliance.
- Transparency in purpose and process is of utmost importance.
- Interventions collaboratively created by the practitioner/social worker and the family are more likely to succeed.
- Intervention in the lives of families should be commensurate with the family's needs.
- Partners – whether they be the community, service providers, colleagues, and/or families – share power.
- Practice focuses on the solutions, not the problems.

Initiation of the AR approach requires that agencies regard families as:

- Concerned about the safety of their children;
- Wanting to address safety threats, risk of future maltreatment and child well-being;
- Having protective capacities and strengths that must be identified, respected and leveraged to protect children and reduce risk of potential harm;
- Having a right to self-determination; families expressed wishes should be honored except when (1) concerns about child safety currently exist and/or (2) families decisions compromise the safety of the children
- Equal partners in service planning; the service plan is driven by the family and developed jointly with the caseworker.

It is the expectation that selected counties will reflect these assumptions in agency practice, supervision and management.

1.6 Anticipated Procurement Timetable

DATE	EVENT/ACTIVITY
1/24/2011	DJFS Releases RFA to Potential Applicants on ODJFS Web Site; Q&A Period Opens - RFA becomes active - Applicants may submit inquiries for RFA clarification
2/14/2011	Applicant Q&A Period Closes, 10:00 a.m. (for inquiries for RFA Clarification) - No further inquiries for RFA clarification will be accepted. ODJFS provides Final Applicant Question & Answer Document (estimated)
3/07/2011	Deadline for Applicants to Submit Applications to ODJFS (3:00 p.m.) - This is the proposal opening date, beginning the ODJFS process of proposal review. Late applications will not be considered - no exceptions will be made!
3/28/2011	ODJFS Issues Notification Letters (estimated) - Applicants that submitted proposals in response to this RFA will be sent letters stating whether their application was accepted for DR implementation
4/15/2011	Selected expansion counties are required to participate in a one-day project orientation session in Columbus.

8/1/2011	AR Pathway assignments of families may begin
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ODJFS reserves the right to revise this schedule in the best interest of the State of Ohio and/or to comply with the State of Ohio procurement procedures and regulations and after providing reasonable notice.

1.7 Internet Question & Answer Period; RFA Clarification Opportunity

Potential applicants or other interested parties may ask clarifying questions regarding this RFA via the Internet during the Q&A Period as outlined in Section 1.5, Anticipated Procurement Timetable. To ask a question, potential vendors must use the following Internet process:

- * **Access the ODJFS Web Page at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/>**
- * **Select “About JFS” on the front page;**
- * **Select “Doing Business with ODJFS;”**
- * **Select “Requests for Proposals, Letterhead Solicitations, and Other Invitations;”**
- * **RFP Number *JFS-R1011068076*;**
- * **Follow the link to the dedicated web page;**
- * **Select “Submit Inquiry” near the bottom of the web page;**
- * **Follow instructions there for submitting questions.**

Questions about this RFA must reference the relevant part of this RFA, the heading for the provision under question, and the page number of the RFA where the provision can be found. The name of a representative of the potential applicant (or other interested party), the organization name, phone number, and e-mail address must be provided to submit an inquiry. ODJFS may, at its option, disregard any questions which do not appropriately reference an RFA provision or location within the RFA, or which do not include an identification for the originator of the question. ODJFS will not respond to any questions submitted after **10:00 a.m.** on the date the Q&A period closes.

ODJFS responses to all questions asked via the Internet will be posted on the Internet website dedicated to this RFA, for public reference by any interested party. ODJFS will not provide answers directly to the vendors (or any interested party) that submitted the question. All questions about this RFA that are submitted in accordance with these instructions will be answered on the RFA’s dedicated web page.

Questions submitted may be no more than 4,000 characters in length, but there is no limit on the number of questions that may be submitted. The answers provided by ODJFS may be accessed by following the instructions above, but rather than selecting “Submit Inquiry,” applicants and others should select “View Q and A.” ODJFS strongly encourages applicants to ask questions early in the Q&A period so that answers can be posted with sufficient time for any possible follow-up questions.

Applicant proposals in response to this RFA are to take into account any information communicated by ODJFS in the Q&A process for the RFA. **It is the responsibility of all potential applicants to check this site on a regular basis for responses to all questions, as well as for any amendments, alerts, or other pertinent information regarding this RFA.**

Accessibility to questions and answers are clearly identified on the website dedicated to this RFA, once submitted questions have been answered.

1.8 Applicants' Library

Counties interested in applying for approval to implement differential response or that want additional information concerning this opportunity should consult the project resources available on the National Center for Adoption Law & Policy website at www.ohiochildlaw.com. This website contains a wealth of information about differential response in Ohio, including responses to requests for proposal assistance from previous rounds of expansion site selection. The American Humane Association also has a web page dedicated to its work on Ohio's differential response project with links to national differential response information and resources:

<http://www.americanhumane.org/protecting-children/programs/differential-response/current-projects/ohio-alternative-response.html>.

SECTION II. ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

ODJFS will only consider applications from PCSAs prepared and qualified to implement all principles, standards, requirements and rules necessary for successful use of the AR pathway in child welfare services. For all PCSAs selected for the next round of differential response implementation, a commitment to each of the items included in sections 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 (see below) will be required.

By submitting an application to ODJFS in response to this RFA, the public children services agency is affirming its understanding of, and its commitment to fulfilling all participation requirements as expressed in this Section II.

2.1 APPLICANT TERMS and CONDITIONS

- Attendance at the April 15, 2011 project orientation session in Columbus.
- Commitment to the philosophical concepts of the project as described in this RFA;
- Commitment to engagement and participation in Leadership Council tasks and activities;
- Participation in an onsite readiness visit with project consultants from the American Humane Association and staff of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services in advance of implementation;
- Full participation of staff in the activities set forth in the RFA including but not limited to in-person worker and supervisor meetings, training and coaching activities;
- Adherence to the SACWIS data collection requirements for monitoring and evaluation and other data collection activities as determined by the Leadership Council or its Task Teams;
- Adherence to AR State rules and use of AR Practice tools as established by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services;
- Identification of a *Project Leader* who will serve as the primary point of contact in the county for all differential response expansion activities;

- Commitment to produce quarterly reports in a format that is established by the state and is in compliance with any outside funding requirements;
- Collaboration of county agencies, private providers and community social services in the delivery of post-assessment services; and
- Use of staff as mentors and advisors as appropriate and requested to assist in AR statewide implementation.

2.2 TRAINING

Prior to the implementation of differential response, selected agencies are required to participate in skill-based instruction to facilitate incorporation of the AR approach into the county child protection system. This training will be in two parts:

- **Alternative Response Overview:** all agency staff should attend this half-day presentation on the history, philosophy, research findings and operational context within a public children's services agency.
- **Alternative Response Practice:** CPS staff who will be providing or supporting the provision of the alternative response approach should attend this one-day training on engagement and assessment strategies and tools to enhance strength-based family centered approaches to practice.

Implementation of the alternative response pathway will highlight the need to enhance specific staff skills and competencies. These needs will vary depending upon the staffing structure of the workforce, the diverse service and support needs of the population served, the skills of practitioners and supervisors, the quality of clinical practice, the history and experiences of agency staff, the county-based alternative response model, and the capacity to flexibly support the implementation of alternative response. All counties will benefit from ongoing peer support and collegial learning as this new approach is integrated into community practice.

Quarterly in-person meetings will be convened for workers and supervisors involved in the practice of alternative response. These meetings provide the opportunity for face-to-face exchanges across counties to share experiences, learn from one another, and address the joys and challenges of AR practice. It is expected that whenever possible, AR staff attend these quarterly meetings.

A significant lesson learned through the experiences of the ten Round 1 pilot counties was the value of cross-jurisdictional experiential learning opportunities in the development of practice and supervision skills in a differential response system. Coaching, shadowing, mentoring and peer-to-peer networking opportunities build staff capacities and assist counties in addressing administrative, organizational, community and service issues relevant to the implementation of differential response. Counties selected to become expansion sites are encouraged to take part in opportunities for cross-county learning experiences with Round 1, 2 and 3 counties. The state's Alternative Response Experiential Learning (AREL) fund is available to assist counties with costs associated with offering and attending cross-county learning opportunities. Please see OAC 5101:9-6-33 included in the appendices to this RFA for further details.

Additional opportunities for skill development will be offered through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Leadership Council, Ohio Child Welfare Training Program, AIM and other collaborating partners. Training needs and content will be guided by the decisions of the

Leadership Council. The agency's designated Project Leader—the primary point of contact for all project-related activities who is identified on the proposal cover sheet—is responsible for ensuring that all relevant staff attend and participate in training sessions.

2.3 PROJECT EVALUATION

Ohio's pilot study examined the following outcomes of implementation of an alternative response pathway:

- Changes in child safety
- Long-term child safety and welfare: new reports of child abuse and neglect
- Permanency: subsequent removals and placements
- Family satisfaction and cooperation
- Family functioning and well-being, skills of individual family members, financial well-being and social support
- Services to families
- Worker satisfaction

While the evaluation of expansion sites from Rounds 3 and 4 will not be comparable to the random control study conducted in the initial pilot, selected data elements will be measured in order to examine the fidelity of implementation as well as child and family outcomes. Participating pilots *may* be asked to assist in the collection of data from the following sources:

- SACWIS data for families and children
- Case record reviews
- Case-specific survey: feedback from workers about specific cases
- Feedback from families
- Community surveys and interviews
- Staff interviews and/or surveys

Applicants must have the capacity to collect and make these sources of information available to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

SECTION III. APPLICATION FORMAT & SUBMISSION

3.1 Proposal Submission Information

For ODJFS to consider a potential applicant's proposal, the applicant must prepare and submit its application by the time specified, and in accordance with the instructions in this Section. The potential applicant must submit:

- * **One (1) signed original of its Application Submission;**
- * **[Five] (5) copies of its Application Submission;**
- * **One (1) CD-ROM copy (in non-rewriteable CD format) of its Application Submission; and**

ODJFS must receive the Application Submission (including required copies) no later than **3:00 p.m. on March 7, 2010** (“the submission deadline”). ODJFS will not accept faxes. Applications must be addressed to, and received at:

Office of Legal and Acquisition Services
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
30 East Broad Street, 31st Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414
Attn: RFP/RFA Unit

If a potential applicant plans to hand deliver its application to the above address, it should allow time to park, and to pass through security at the lobby and on the 31st Floor of the Rhodes State Office Tower at the 30 East Broad Street address. The ODJFS Office of Legal and Acquisition Services will accept any application received at the above address on or before the submission deadline.

3.2 Content and Format of Applications

Please limit your application to no more than 15 pages (not including a cover page) and please provide the header for each of your responses to the nine elements (items A. through I.) below.

Selection Criteria for the Ohio Differential Response Expansion Project

A. Cover Page - On a cover sheet provide the following information:

Applicant Information:

County:
Address:
Contact Person:
Phone:
Fax:
E-mail:

Project Leader (may or may not be individual named above)

Name:
Position:
Mailing address:
E-Mail address:
Telephone:

B. AGENCY CAPACITY AND PLANNING (20 POINTS)

Initiation of new programming requires a capacity for change, as well as an anticipation of a wide range of impacting factors.

- Describe the public children services agency's capacity to implement differential response citing administrative and community commitment, staff skills and training, ability to respond to the cultural needs of the target population, and agency infrastructure.
- Identify the planning activities and/or organizational decisions undertaken to initially identify how differential response might be implemented within the public children services agency.
- Identify any resolution or approval that is required for full participation, e.g., County Commissioners or Executive Board.

Describe the agency's commitment to fully engage in the precepts of this project. This should address, but not necessarily be limited to, the following questions:

- How will you implement, support, and spread this work across the county and the state, as successes are achieved?
- How have you included the staff – social workers, supervisors, and managers - in the decision to apply for this project and the discussion of structural reorganization that will be required if your jurisdiction is selected as one of the differential response expansion sites? Describe the ways in which you have engaged or will engage the various levels of staff in the planning for and support of the requisite changes in structure and role assignments.
- Have you met with any of Ohio's existing differential response sites regarding implementation experiences; if so, who? Have staff made any site visits or attended agency staffings? If so, with which county? Are there particular aspect(s) of an existing site's experiences or model that you have selected to incorporate or further explore in your planning?
- Has the capacity for leadership and change management been established through notable examples of initiative and/or innovation in the child protection arena on the agency, community, county, state and/or national levels?
- Has the capacity to develop MOU's with partnering services/agencies and/or universal release forms to assure the enduring provision of services and adherence to confidentiality tenets and privacy protections of families been established?
- How will the alternative response pathway be administered? Describe the staffing structure, including job functions, within your proposed program. What is your plan for staffing an alternative response approach? Will workers be dedicated solely to families assigned to the AR pathway? Will there be a dedicated unit of workers? How will supervision of AR workers be structured?

C. COMMUNITY CAPACITY (15 POINTS)

The success of the differential response approach relies, in part, on the creation and development of strong community support agencies that are willing and able to become partners with the state to protect the interests of children.

- Summarize any discussions you have had with the community (community advisory councils, mandated reporters, community social service providers, advocates, courts, law enforcement etc.) concerning the implementation of differential response including the anticipated level of support.

- Do you anticipate any changes in service requirements as a result of differential response and the implementation of an AR pathway? Do you have any plans for addressing service needs/gaps?
- Describe the potential for referral to or collaboration with community programs in meeting service needs identified in the family assessment. Describe the capacity of community programs to meet the service and cultural needs of the target population.

Note: Applicants are encouraged to provide a letter of commitment from external partner(s) that identifies the roles and responsibilities of the prospective partner(s) and demonstrates the building of community capacity. While multiple stakeholders may provide signatures indicating their intent to collaborate with the public children's services agency, only one letter will be accepted per applicant.

D. TARGET POPULATION (10 POINTS)

The 2009-2010 PCSAO Fact book (<http://www.pcsao.org/pcsaofactbook.htm>) includes demographics regarding the population size, racial and ethnic composition, and population receiving child protection services in your county.

- Are there additional issues in the external environment that are likely to impact the development and implementation of differential response or which you have selected to specifically address through the AR approach?
- Do you plan to fully implement the AR pathway throughout your agency, or will this option be limited to a specific geographic or organizational jurisdiction? If limited, what factors determined your selection?
- If you have selected to implement an AR pathway on a limited basis, do you plan to expand and what is your time frame?
- What is your capacity to integrate alternative response within your programming? Have you established a percentage or numerical cap for the number of cases that may be assigned to the AR pathway? How was this decision reached?
- How will the pathway assignment determination be made and by who? Have you included these decision-makers in any discussions? Are there cases that you have selected not to assign as appropriate for alternative response beyond those ineligible through administrative rule? Please identify if there is any specific category of case for which you are considering special alternative response programming.

E SERVICE DELIVERY STRUCTURE (20 POINTS)

Please describe what differential response will “look like” in your community and the decisions that remain undecided. It is understood that many of these questions may not yet have been resolved. Detail your plan for or discussions about:

- Acquisition of needed resources, including staff training and resources.
- Delivery of needed services to the families assigned to the alternative response pathway. Who will provide the service needs identified in the family assessment? Will there be collaborative or contractual arrangements with community service providers?
- Identify whether the assessment and post-assessment functions will be separated or will be the continuous responsibility of the same staff person. Will a single worker be assigned to work with a family for the duration of the family's involvement? Will cases be transferred

from one worker to another at particular stages during the life of the case? Are there changes in case flow that you have considered because of the different time frames and/or requirements of the alternative response pathway?

- What is your plan for ongoing support and skill enhancement of staff and supervisors as they initiate this new approach?
- Have you developed a case flow chart with projected time frames? If so, please include as an attachment.

F. EVALUATION CAPACITY (10 POINTS)

Describe the applicant agency's capacity to monitor the outcomes of the project. Please identify:

- Any data collection activities you have discussed internally. What elements do you intend to track? How do you intend to monitor project progress? Are there particular aspects in which you are most interested?
- How do you plan to monitor fidelity?
- Who will be the county representative responsible for coordinating data gathering and producing requested reports?

Indicate your commitment to participate fully in benchmarking and a continuous quality improvement process including tracking cases and case outcomes.

G. ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES (15 POINTS)

Each and every agency reform is accompanied by practice, agency, and community challenges – both anticipated and those that were not intended. It is not the presence of challenges that threaten projects' success, but the failure to recognize and/or address them. A candid appraisal will be considered an important facet of application evaluation.

Identify the most significant challenges you anticipate and the various levels of impact (e.g., practice, agency, community, county) and how you plan to address them should they arise. Also identify what assistance ODJFS or our project consultants from the American Humane Association can provide to you in order to limit the deleterious impacts of these challenges.

H. BUDGET PROJECTIONS/FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS (10 POINTS)

Counties selected to participate in this fourth round of implementation will be eligible to receive up to \$25,000 per year for two years to support transitional and service costs, subject to the availability of funding provided by Casey Family Programs. **(NOTE: This Funding IS NOT provided by ODJFS, and acceptance by ODJFS of a county's AR application cannot be construed as a guarantee of funding from any other source.)** Describe your plan for funding this change in your system. Describe the agency's and/or community's ability or plans to reallocate existing funds in preparation for sustainability of differential response in your county.

I. AGENCY DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE OF COMMITMENT

Provide your signature below indicating your consent to the following statement:

If selected to become an expansion site, _____ (name of county) will plan, develop and implement preparations for the launch of a differential response system by August 1, 2011. The agency director's signature below affirms a commitment to all of all terms and conditions of this RFA and adherence to all applicable ORC and OAC regulations.

Signature of **Agency Director**

SECTION IV. CRITERIA FOR PROPOSAL EVALUATION & SELECTION

4.1 Scoring of Proposals

Reviewers from the Supreme Court of Ohio's *Subcommittee on Responding to Child Abuse, Neglect and Dependency*, the Leadership Council and ODJFS will evaluate all applications received by the deadline. Applications will be evaluated using the criteria outlined in section 3.2 of this RFA, and reviewers will utilize the worksheet included in the appendices to this RFA in their scoring of proposals.

Up to ten expansion sites will be selected based on proposal scoring by a team of reviewers. ODJFS reserves the right to select fewer than ten expansion sites based on state capacity, proposal scoring, and/or the recommendations of the selection committee. In the event of a tie score for the final available expansion site opening, ODJFS will select from among the proposals with tied scores with consideration given to the overall diversity of the group of selected counties, including such factors as geographic location and population size.

SECTION V. APPENDICES

- A.** Legislation authorizing initial Alternative Response pilot
- B.** Legislation authorizing expansion of Alternative Response to additional sites
- C.** Alternative Response Fundamentals in Support of Ohio's Child Protection Practice Model
- D.** Case Flow Chart
- E.** Differential Response Readiness Assessment Instrument - The Differential Response Implementation Readiness Assessment is a self-assessment tool that assists the county in appraising its current state of readiness for implementation of differential response. In completing this assessment, the county may gain insight in understanding its readiness for implementation, assess its technical assistance needs, plan interim steps to heighten county readiness, as well as prepare for the completion of the application due February 25, 2011.
- F.** Current Differential Response County Leaders Contact Information
- G.** OAC 5101:2-36-01 Intake and screening procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and family in need of services reports; and information and/or referral intakes. (Anticipated effective date of March 15, 2011)

- H.** OAC 5101:2-38-20 Public children services agencies requirements for child abuse and neglect reports receiving on-going services in alternative response. (Anticipated effective date of March 15, 2011)
- I.** OAC 5101:2-36-20 Public children services agencies assessment requirements for child abuse and neglect reports in alternative response. (Anticipated effective date of March 15, 2011)
- J.** OAC 5101:9-6-33 Alternative response experiential learning (AREL).
- K.** Proposal Reviewers' Worksheet

Thank you for your interest in this project.

AN ACT

SECTION 309.45.10. ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE

The Department of Job and Family Services shall develop, implement, oversee, and evaluate a pilot program based on an "Alternative Response" approach to reports of child abuse, neglect, and dependency. The pilot program shall be implemented in not more than ten counties that are selected by the Department and that agree to participate in the pilot program. The pilot program shall last eighteen months, not including time expended Am. Sub. H. B. No. 1 128th G.A.

2899

in preparation for the implementation of the pilot program and any post-pilot program evaluation activity. After the eighteen-month period, the ten sites may continue to administer the Alternative Response approach uninterrupted, unless the Department determines otherwise.

The Department shall assure that the Alternative Response pilot program is independently evaluated with respect to outcomes for children and families, costs, worker satisfaction, and any other criteria the Department determines will be useful in the consideration of statewide implementation of an Alternative Response approach to child protection. The measure associated with the eighteen-month pilot program shall, for the purposes of the evaluation, be compared with those same measures in the pilot counties during the eighteen-month period immediately preceding the beginning of the pilot program period. If the independent evaluation of the pilot program recommends statewide implementation of an Alternative Response approach to child protection, the Department may expand the Alternative Response approach statewide through a schedule determined by the Department. Prior to statewide implementation, the Department shall adopt rules in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code as necessary to carry out the purposes of this section. Until that time, the Department may adopt rules in accordance with section 111.15 of the Revised Code, as if they were internal management rules, as necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

AN ACT

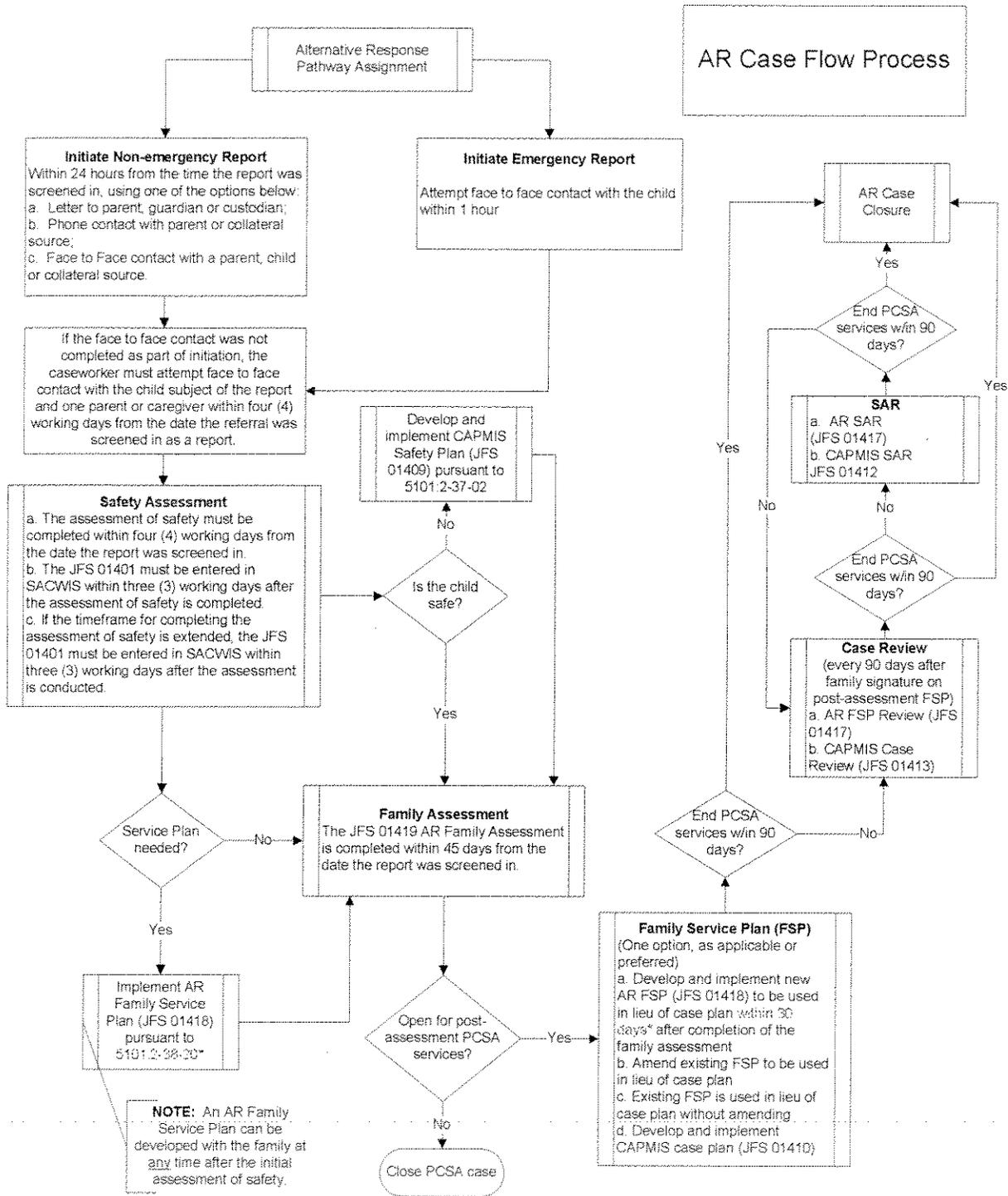
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Alternative Response Fundamentals in Support of Ohio's Child Protection Practice Model

Ohio's Alternative Response (AR) Practice identifies the goal, principles, core elements, foundational tenets, workers skill sets, and indicators of quality practices with families. There are numerous commonalities between the AR requisites and the investigation response. Quality Child Protection Practice includes specific principles and methods in working with families that encompasses all of our work, regardless of the initial response to reports of maltreatment. What follows is an articulation of the requisites of an alternative response approach.

Goal

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), in collaboration with other state agencies, state professional associations, community stakeholders, Ohio's 88 counties and the three branches of Ohio government, will develop a **statewide child protection system** that provides *two* pathways – an investigation pathway and an alternative response pathway – that assesses and responds to the unique safety concerns, risks and protective capacities of each family who is subject of an accepted report of child maltreatment.

Principles: For All Child Protective Services (CPS) Interventions

- Child safety comes first, and all policies, guidelines and practices are child centered and family-focused.
- CPS emphasizes family engagement and involvement in all aspects of our practice.
- CPS supports assessment and intervention processes that focus on family strengths while addressing the underlying conditions and contributing factors that impact child safety.

Fundamentals in Support of Ohio's Child Protection Practice Model

- Child safety is best achieved through active, collaborative and respectful engagement of parents, family, community and all other CPS stakeholders.
- When families cannot assure child safety, it is necessary for the agency, courts, community, and/or extended families and kin to make appropriate efforts to provide protection.

Principles: Alternative Response Specific

- Alternative Response is a CPS intervention.
- Families screened into the child welfare system and identified as eligible for Alternative Response have the opportunity to make an informed decision to participate in Alternative Response or to be served by the Investigation Response.
- Families are more easily engaged in a partnership when the labels of perpetrators and victims have been removed.
- Alternative Response systems are designed to identify family needs and find creative solutions, including formal and informal supports and services.
- Child protective agencies should respect family choices in the selection of services.

Core Elements

The *core elements* of Ohio's Alternative Response are the following:

- Use of two or more discrete response pathways for abuse and neglect reports that are screened-in and accepted;
- Establishment of discrete response pathways is formalized in statute, rules, and protocols;
- Screening decisions are documented by identifying the factors that are used to determine initial pathway assignment (e.g., presence of imminent danger, level of risk, the number of previous reports, the source of the report, and/or presenting case characteristics such as type of alleged maltreatment and age of the alleged victim);
- Initial pathway assignment can change based on new information acquired by the CPS agency that alters risk level or safety concerns;
- Families who are assigned to the alternative response pathway can choose to receive the investigation response;
- After assessment, if there are no safety concerns, families can accept or refuse the services offered;

Fundamentals in Support of Ohio's Child Protection Practice Model

- Assessments are completed using a child centered, family focused strength based perspective.
- Families served in an alternative response pathway do not have a formal determination of child maltreatment; and
- *Perpetrator* and *victim* labels are removed from the intake record for those reports assigned to an alternative response pathway.

Foundational Tenets of the Practice Model

Alternative Response

- The primary goal of Alternative Response is child safety.
- Alternative Response practice is based on safety-focused engagement of and partnership with families and communities rather than expectation of compliance.
- Transparency in purpose and process is of utmost importance.
- Interventions collaboratively created by the practitioner/social worker and the family are more likely to succeed.
- Intervention in the lives of families should be commensurate with the family's needs.
- Partners – whether they be the community, service providers, colleagues, and/or families – share power.
- Practice focuses on the solutions, not the problems.

Families

- Families have strengths and resources; it is the job of CPS to tap into them and help the family apply them to keep their children safe.
- Families' values & cultural traditions are to be identified, understood and respected.
- Families are the experts; honor family wisdom about their circumstances, strengths and needs.
- Most families want to address threats to child safety.
- Most families can be partners in achieving child safety.
- Families are more than the presenting concerns that brought them to the attention of the child protection agency.
- Families are helped through connections with their natural support network and with community services and resources, when appropriate.

Fundamentals in Support of Ohio's Child Protection Practice Model

Services

- Services are provided based on need as well as on child safety and maltreatment risk.
- Where service gaps exist, efforts are expended to fill the gap in order to be responsive to the needs of families served by the child protection system.
- Service plans are simple and family friendly.
- Services are driven by parents and honored, unless compromising child safety.
- Services are terminated when safety and high risk issues are resolved and in voluntary situations, when there is no longer mutual agreement to continue.

Workers' Skill Sets

The following skills are instrumental in the implementation of the practice model at all levels of the public child welfare system:

- *Engaging*: Effectively joining with family and community to establish common goals concerning child safety, well being, and permanency.
- *Assessing*: Gathering information about reported concerns and family needs, evaluating the relevance of that information as well as identifying family strengths and community and tribal resources that may be applied to address those concerns and needs.
- *Partnering*: Respectful and meaningful collaboration with families and community to achieve shared goals.
- *Planning*: Setting goals, developing strategies, and outlining tasks and schedules to accomplish the goals derived from the engaging, assessing, and partnering process.
- *Implementing*: Identifying and applying the most effective and culturally appropriate services, resources, and processes to meet the goals established in the planning stage.
- *Evaluating*: Monitoring outcomes of service plans and system programs to determine if the desired goals are being achieved and if not, to use this information to reconsider goals and strategies developed in the planning phase or services and resources identified in the implementation stage.
- *Advocacy*: Recognizing individual or group needs, providing intervention on behalf of a client or client group, communicating to decision makers and initiating actions to secure or enhance a needed service, resource, or entitlement.
- *Communication*: Effectively sending and receiving information within the appropriate cultural context. Methods include verbal, non-verbal, electronic, and written communication



Fundamentals in Support of Ohio's Child Protection Practice Model

- *Cultural Competence*: Interacting with families without making assumptions, respecting and learning from the unique characteristics and strengths of the family and tribe while acknowledging and honoring the diversity within and across cultures, and applying these skills to the partnership with the family and tribe and the options made available to them.

(MN Practice Model, 2009)

Selected Indicators of Quality Practices with Families¹

The following behaviors are indicative of fidelity to the Alternative Response Practice Model. These are selected examples from which to examine the quality of child protection practice:

- Communicate with families in a respectful, non-judgmental, and supportive manner.
- Minimize use of drop-in visits (It may be necessary when there is no phone, no response or timeline constraints dictate such a visit).
- Meet the family at a time that is convenient for them.
- Meet with family members together, whenever possible and appropriate to do so.
- Ask parental permission to see children.
- Use of law enforcement on home visits should be avoided unless worker safety may be jeopardized.
- Use the *warm handoff* in referring the family to a new service provider and new worker.
- Be honest about the lack of knowledge of the family's life circumstances and culture and be open to learning about these things from the family.
- Actively listen to the family's story.
- Search for the family's strengths and competencies.
- Encourage the family to develop their own goals and make the decisions that affect them.
- Partner with the family to meet family-identified needs.
- Honor family decisions unless they compromise child safety.

¹ These behaviors are necessary, but not sufficient, to demonstrate adherence to Alternative Response practice. There are multiple factors (e.g., case record review, supervisor feedback, family input, etc.) that require consideration when assessing the quality of practice.

DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE IMPLEMENTATION READINESS ASSESSMENT¹

*For Use by Ohio Counties in Determining Preparedness for Launching a
Differential Response System*

Background

The Differential Response Implementation Readiness Assessment, referenced in the Request for Application as a self-assessment tool, allows the County to appraise its current state of county-readiness for implementation of differential response. In completing this assessment, the County may gain insight in understanding its readiness for implementation, assess its technical assistance needs, plan interim steps to heighten county readiness, as well as prepare for the completion of the application due February 25, 2011.

This assessment is comprised of components that indicate competency in the planning, launch and implementation of Differential Response. The components of the Readiness Assessment include:

- Goal and Vision for the Project
- Leadership Commitment
- Community Partners
- Two Response Pathways and Pathway Assignment
- Procedures and Tools
- Workforce Capacity and Competence
- Training
- Measures and Data
- Service Availability
- Communications and Messaging

The scoring column allows the County to score itself on the extent of its implementation of that particular benchmark:

The numeral **1** indicates the Benchmark has **not been discussed nor considered**.

The numeral **2** indicates the Benchmark is **under discussion**.

The numeral **3** indicates the Benchmark is **in development** (under construction).

The numeral **4** indicates the Benchmark is **operational** (currently in process).

The numeral **5** indicates the Benchmark has been **'completed' at least once and is ongoing status**.

¹ This assessment framework is adapted from the *Redesign Implementation Readiness Matrix*; the Matrix was developed as part of California's Child Welfare Services Redesign effort in 2003.

IMPLEMENTATION READINESS ASSESSMENT

Instructions

- Complete the assessment by scoring each of the Benchmarks associated with the ten components.
- Use the Example section to illustrate specific examples of activities or functions currently in place within the county that, with some enhancement or expansion, could lead towards achieving the intent of the Benchmark.
- Ensure that there are opportunities to discuss this process, the outcomes, and plans for increasing the numerical value.
- Conduct this readiness assessment at least monthly during the developmental phase of Differential Response Implementation

COUNTY _____

NAME OF PRIMARY COUNTY CONTACT: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL: _____

NAME AND AGENCY POSITION OF INDIVIDUAL(S) COMPLETING MATRIX

PCSA County Director

Date

BENCHMARK	SCORE 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5	EXAMPLE Provide example(s) that illustrate current activity within the county that are consistent with each Benchmark
<p>Goals and Vision for the Project: What will be different within your agency and community as a result of DR implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is there an articulated goal and vision, by your agency, as to what is to be achieved through the implementation of DR? ➤ Are your agency staff familiar with and able to articulate this agency goal and vision? ➤ Are your community stakeholders familiar with and able to articulate this agency goal and vision? 		
<p>Leadership Commitment: Within your agency, is there an individual in a position of authority who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Can be a voice and champion of this work? ➤ Is committed to spreading this work across the county as successes are achieved? ➤ Can help eliminate barriers to implementation? 		
<p>Community Partners: What partnerships exist between PCSA and public/private community agencies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Are there examples of participation and engagement between community partners with the PCSA? ➤ How are these partnerships positively impacting the safety, permanency and child and family wellbeing? 		
<p>Two Response Pathways and Pathway Assignment: A Differential Response system allows for accepted reports of alleged child maltreatment to be responded to in one of two distinct ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Does your agency have the know-how to discern appropriate pathway assignment? ➤ Does your PCSA have clear, consistent criteria in place for assigning referrals to one of these pathways? 		
<p>Procedures and Tools DR Implementation requires a framework for standardized assessment. State and county guidelines have been established to help meet this goal. When thinking about the procedures and tools that will be required in the implementation of DR, is your agency able/willing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adopt the use of established and available procedures? 		

BENCHMARK	SCORE 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5	EXAMPLE Provide example(s) that illustrate current activity within the county that are consistent with each Benchmark
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use established tools that bring uniformity to safety and well-being decision making? 		
<p>Workforce Capacity and Competence Is your PCSA and stakeholder community prepared to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Quality practice to sustain a sufficient, competent workforce? ➤ A well coordinated workforce, utilizing the strengths of each team member/stakeholder? ➤ A plan that address workload issues? 		
<p>Training: Implementation of DR requires a significant amount of training for supervisors, workers and community partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Does your PCSA have a plan for county-wide training on differential response and implementation of an alternative response pathway? ➤ Does this plan include agency wide staff? ➤ Does this plan include service providers, and other stakeholder community members? 		
<p>Measures and Data: Differential Response promotes a priority for evaluating the implementation of the two response paths.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is your agency able to supply data that is used to assess the current state of child protective services within the county with an ability to highlight cases assigned to the Alternative Response Pathway? 		
<p>Assessment of Service Needs & Availability and Access to Needed Services Agencies/workers conducting Alternative Response assessments will determine, with the family, if there are any service needs. Since Alternative Response assessments are not incident driven, the needs that are identified are often outside of the scope of what brought the family to the attention of the agency. Is your PCSA and your stakeholder community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Aware of the broad range of services available to families throughout your community? ➤ Aware of the gaps in services available to families within your community? 		

BENCHMARK	SCORE 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5	EXAMPLE Provide example(s) that illustrate current activity within the county that are consistent with each Benchmark
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Able to provide flexible funding to help meet the needs families identify? ➤ Have the will/capacity to grow the array of services available to families? 		
<p>Communications and Messaging Differential Response represents a shift in thinking about the child welfare system. This shift requires an effective and well developed communication plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Does your PCSA have a communication plan that educates the community on this shift? ➤ Does your communication plan highlight the role of community partners in this shift? 		

Additional Comments

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5101:2-36-01 **Intake and screening procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and family in need of services reports; and information and/or referral intakes.**

(A) A public children services agency (PCSA) shall attempt to obtain, at a minimum, the following information from a referent/reporter upon receipt of referral information in order to determine an intake category and arrive at a screening decision. Receipt of all of the following information is not required in order to screen in a report:

- (1) The name(s) and address(es) of the child and his parent, guardian or custodian.
- (2) The child's age.
- (3) The child's and any family member's race and ethnicity.
- (4) The type, extent, frequency, and duration of the abuse, neglect or dependency, as applicable.
- (5) Alleged perpetrator's access to the child, if applicable.
- (6) The child's current condition.
- (7) The child's current location.
- (8) Circumstances regarding the abuse, neglect, or dependency or the circumstances indicating a need for PCSA services.
- (9) Information regarding any evidence of previous injuries, abuse, or neglect.
- (10) Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the known or suspected injury, abuse, or neglect or the known or suspected threat of injury, abuse, or neglect or the case circumstances that support the family is in need of PCSA services.

(B) The PCSA may request that a referent/reporter providing information submit the allegations in writing. The PCSA shall not delay making the screening decision while waiting for the written information from the referent/reporter.

(C) All information reported to a PCSA alleging known or suspected child abuse, neglect, or dependency, or indicating a family is in need of PCSA services shall be recorded in the statewide automated child welfare information system (SACWIS).

(D) If a PCSA receives a referral alleging abuse or neglect of a child located in Ohio and the child's parent, guardian or custodian resides in another state, the PCSA shall:

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- (1) Contact the children services agency (CSA) and inform the CSA of the referral pursuant to rule 5101:2-36-13 of the Administrative Code.
 - (2) Assess child safety, including leading assessment/investigative efforts.
- (E) Within twenty-four hours from receipt of the information, the PCSA shall categorize the information received into one of the following intake categories:
- (1) Child abuse and/or neglect report.
 - (a) Physical abuse, in accordance with section 2151.031 of the Revised Code, and including any report alleging that an infant has been born and identified as affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure.
 - (b) Physical abuse, shaken baby, in accordance with section 2151.031 of the Revised Code.
 - (c) Sexual abuse, in accordance with section 2151.031 of the Revised Code and Chapter 2907. of the Revised Code.
 - (d) Emotional maltreatment/mental injury, in accordance with section 2151.011 or 2151.031 of the Revised Code.
 - (e) Neglect, in accordance with section 2151.03 of the Revised Code.
 - (f) Medical neglect, in accordance with section 2151.03 of the Revised Code.
 - (g) Disabled infant, also known as "Baby Doe", in accordance with rule 5101:2-36-07 of the Administrative Code.
 - (2) Dependency report. Dependent child, as defined in section 2151.04 of the Revised Code.
 - (3) Family in need of services report.
 - (a) Emancipated youth, in accordance with rule 5101:2-42-19.2 of the Administrative Code.
 - (b) Permanent surrender, in accordance with rule 5101:2-42-09 of the Administrative Code.
 - (c) Deserted child, as defined in rule 5101:2-1-01 of the Administrative Code and in accordance with rule 5101:2-36-06 of the Administrative Code.

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- (d) Stranger danger investigation, in accordance with rule 5101:2-36-05 of the Administrative Code.
 - (e) Post-finalization adoption services, in accordance with rule 5101:2-1-01 of the Administrative Code.
 - (f) Preventive services, in accordance with rule 5101:2-1-01.1 of the Administrative Code.
 - (g) Unruly child/delinquent child, in accordance with section 5153.16 of the Revised Code and rule 5101:2-33-26 of the Administrative Code.
 - (h) Child fatality, not as a result of child abuse and/or neglect, in accordance with rule 5101:2-42-89 of the Administrative Code.
 - (i) Required non-lead PCSA interviews, in accordance with rules 5101:2-36-03, 5101:2-36-04, and 5101:2-36-09 of the Administrative Code and sections 5103.20 and 2151.56 of the Revised Code.
 - (j) Courtesy supervision in accordance with ~~—~~sections 5103.20 and 2151.56 of the Revised Code.
 - (k) Home evaluation/visitation assessment, in accordance with rules 5101:2-1-01.1 and 5101:2-42-18 of the Administrative Code or in response to a request from another PCSA or a court exercising appropriate jurisdiction.
 - (l) Postnatal placement services to an infant of an incarcerated mother, in accordance with rule 5101:2-42-60 of the Administrative Code.
 - (m) Adoption subsidy only in accordance with Chapter 5101:2-49 of the Administrative Code.
 - (n) Interstate compact on the placement of children (ICPC) in accordance with rule 5101:2-52-04 of the Administrative Code.
 - [\(o\) Alternative response required non-lead PCSA contacts, in accordance with rule 5101:2-36-20 of the Administrative Code.](#)
- (4) Information and/or referral, pursuant to rule 5101:2-1-01.1 of the Administrative Code, if paragraph (E)(1), (E)(2), or (E)(3) of this rule do not apply.
- (F) The PCSA shall record referral information received into SACWIS in accordance with the following:

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- (1) Referral information received during the PCSA's regular business hours shall be recorded in SACWIS no later than twenty-four hours from the time the referral information is received.
 - (2) Referral information received outside of the PCSA's regular business hours shall be recorded in SACWIS no later than the next working day from the date and time of the receipt of the referral information.
 - (3) The original date and time the referral information is received by the PCSA shall be reflected in SACWIS including the actual date and time of the screening decision.
- (G) The PCSA shall complete the screening decision and determine the immediacy of need for agency response to ensure child safety within twenty-four hours from receipt of the information and following the categorization of the referral information in accordance with paragraphs (E) (1), (E)(2), and (E)(3) of this rule based on the information received from the referent/reporter and the child protective services records regarding the principals of the report.
- (H) The PCSA shall assess and investigate the following types of reports of child abuse and/or neglect through an assessment/investigation:
- (1) Reports containing allegations that could result in charges of felony child endangering
 - (2) Reports containing allegations that could result in charges of criminal sexual conduct.
 - (3) Reports containing allegations of the sexual abuse of a child or an abused child who is also a victim of sexual abuse
 - (4) Reports containing allegations that could result in charges of homicide.
 - (5) Reports requiring a specialized assessment as identified in rule 5101:2-36-04 of the Administrative Code.
 - (6) Reports requiring a third party investigative procedure as identified in rule 5101:2-36-08 of the Administrative Code.
 - (7) Reports containing allegations regarding a suspicious child fatality
- (I) PCSAs who have the written approval from the Ohio department of job and family services to participate in alternative response shall assign reports screened in and categorized pursuant to (E)(1) of this rule to one of the following pathways:

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(1) Assessment/investigation, pursuant to Chapters 5101:2-36, 5101:2-37, and 5101:2-38 of the Administrative Code.

(2) Alternative response, pursuant to rule 5101:2-36-20 of the Administrative Code.

~~(H)~~(J) The PCSA shall conduct an assessment/investigation in accordance with rules contained in Chapter 5101:2-36 of the Administrative Code for all screened in reports.

~~(H)~~(K) All referral information categorized as information and/or referral, shall be screened out. The PCSA shall identify which of the following activities was completed by the PCSA.

(1) Directed/advised to contact non-PCSA service provider within the county.

(2) Directed/advised to contact non-PCSA service provider outside the county.

(3) Provided information only/no referral made.

~~(H)~~(L) The PCSA shall record all of the referral information screened out in SACWIS, including but not limited to:

(1) The date and time information received.

(2) The name of referent/reporter, if known.

(3) Whether or not the referral was made by a mandated reporter.

~~(K)~~(M) The PCSA may refer the referent/reporter to the county prosecutor pursuant to the county child abuse and neglect memorandum of understanding developed pursuant to section 2151.421 of the Revised Code.

~~(L)~~(N) The PCSA shall not categorize information as anything other than the intake categories listed in paragraph (E) of this rule.

~~(M)~~(O) Additional child abuse and/or neglect allegations screened in within the first four working days of the acceptance of a child abuse and/or neglect report and prior to the completion of a safety assessment, may be added to the initial report and assessed/investigated concurrently with the allegations received initially. The date and time the subsequent report was received along with the reporter information shall be recorded. Initiation of the subsequent allegations is not required.

~~(N)~~(P) Additional child abuse and/or neglect allegations screened in after the first four working days of the acceptance of the previous child abuse and/or neglect report or after completion of the safety assessment shall be recorded as a subsequent child

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abuse and/or neglect report and is subject to the requirements contained in rules 5101:2-36-03, 5101:2-36-04, and 5101:2-36-05 of the Administrative Code.

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5101:2-38-20 Public children services agencies requirements for child abuse and neglect reports receiving on-going services in alternative response.

- (A) This rule applies public children services agencies (PCSA) who have received training and have written approval from the Ohio department of job and family services (ODJFS) to participate in alternative response.
- (B) The PCSA shall implement the following planning and review tools for screened in child abuse and neglect reports assigned to the alternative response pathway to receive ongoing services:
- (1) The JFS 01418 "Alternative Response Family Service Plan (rev. 9/2010)".
 - (2) The JFS 01417 "Alternative Response Family Service Plan Review (rev. 9/2010)".
 - (3) The JFS 01423 "Alternative Response Ongoing Case Assessment (rev. 9/2010)".
- (C) The PCSA shall do one of the following upon reaching a case decision to continue PCSA services after completion of the JFS 01419 "Alternative Response Family Assessment (rev. 9/2010)":
- (1) Develop and implement a JFS 01418 with the parent, guardian or custodian no later than thirty days from the completion date of the JFS 01419.
 - (2) Develop and implement a JFS 01410 "Comprehensive Assessment and Planning Model - I.S., Case Plan (rev. 2/2006)" pursuant to rule 5101:2-38-01 of the Administrative Code.
 - (3) Continue to implement the JFS 01418 previously developed after the assessment of safety.
- (D) The PCSA shall obtain agreement and signatures from the child's parent, guardian, or custodian on the JFS 01418, or JFS 01410. The PCSA shall provide each with a copy of the JFS 01418, or JFS 01410.
- (E) The PCSA shall update the JFS 01418, or JFS 01410, when changes occur in any of the following:
- (1) The conditions of the child.
 - (2) The family service plan participants.
 - (3) The family service plan activities.

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- (4) The provision of supportive services.
- (5) The safety or risk to the child.
- (F) The PCSA shall seek agreement, obtain signatures from and provide a copy of the updated JFS 01418 or JFS 01410 to the child's parent, guardian, or custodian within seven days of the update.
- (G) The PCSA shall make face-to-face contact with each parent, guardian or custodian, and child participating in, and being provided services through, the JFS 01418, or JFS 01410, at least two times each month to monitor progress on the service plan activities. At least one contact every two months shall be made in the child's home.
- (H) If the initial attempt to complete a face-to-face contact pursuant to paragraph (G) of this rule is unsuccessful, the PCSA shall attempt to make a minimum of two additional attempts to complete the face-to-face contact within the calendar month.
- (I) If the PCSA and the child's parent, guardian, or custodian can no longer agree on the service plan the PCSA shall do one of the following:

 - (1) Close the case.
 - (2) File a complaint with the court pursuant to section 2151.27 of the Revised Code if the child is or may become an abused, neglected, or dependent child; and intervention of the court is needed for the child's protection.
- (J) The PCSA shall convert a case from the alternative response pathway to the traditional response pathway when either of the following occurs:

 - (1) The family requests a pathway change from the alternative response pathway to the traditional response pathway.
 - (2) The PCSA files a complaint with the juvenile court pursuant to 2151.27 of the Revised Code alleging the child is or may become an abused, neglected or dependent child.
- (K) The PCSA shall review the progress on the service plan activities every ninety days after the completion date of the JFS 01419 by completing either the JFS 01417 or the JFS 01413 "Comprehensive Assessment Planning Model - I.S., Case Review (rev. 2/2006)", pursuant to rule 5101:2-38-09 of the Administrative Code.
- (L) The PCSA shall encourage the participation of the child's parent, guardian, or custodian in all family service plan reviews and may involve others, as appropriate.

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(M) The PCSA shall complete the JFS 01417 or the JFS 01412 "Comprehensive Assessment and Planning Model - I.S., Semiannual Administrative Review (SAR) (rev 2/2006)" no later than every six months from completion of the JFS 01419. Written notification, including the date, time, and place for the SAR, shall be provided to the child, if age appropriate, and the child's parent, guardian, or custodian.

(N) The SAR shall, at a minimum, include the following individuals:

(1) A caseworker, who has a connection with the family and knowledge of the family service plan.

(2) A supervisor or designee.

(O) The PCSA shall invite the following individuals to participate in the SAR:

(1) The child's parent, guardian, or custodian.

(2) The child, if age appropriate.

(P) If the PCSA determines a child to be in immediate danger of serious harm during the provision of on-going services, the PCSA shall follow procedures outlined in rule 5101:2-37-02 of the Administrative Code.

(Q) The PCSA shall close the case when all of the following occur:

(1) The PCSA has determined there are no active safety threats.

(2) The PCSA and family agree that services are no longer needed.

(3) The PCSA has notified the principals of the case of the closure.

(4) The PCSA has completed the JFS 01417 or JFS 01413 documenting the intent to close the case.

(R) The PCSA shall maintain a copy of the original JFS 01418 or JFS 01410, all updates, documentation of face-to-face contacts, including all attempts, to monitor progress of the case plan objectives, and any JFS 01417 in the case record pursuant to rule 5101:2-33-23 of the Administrative Code.

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5101:2-36-20

Public children services agencies assessment requirements for child abuse and neglect reports in alternative response.

- (A) This rule applies to public children services agencies (PCSA) who have received training and have written approval from the Ohio department of job and family services (ODJFS) to implement alternative response.
- (B) The PCSA shall conduct an assessment in response to a child abuse and/or neglect report assigned to the alternative response pathway.
- (C) The PCSA shall initiate the screened in child abuse and neglect report assigned to the alternative response pathway in accordance with the following:

 - (1) For an emergency report, attempt a face-to-face contact with the child subject of the report within one hour from the time the referral was screened in as a report in order to assess child safety.
 - (2) For all other reports, complete one of the following activities, within twenty-four hours from the time the referral was screened in as a report, with a principal of the report or collateral source, who has knowledge of the child's current condition and can provide current information about the child's safety:

 - (a) Attempt a face-to-face contact with the parent, child or collateral source.
 - (b) Attempt a telephone contact with the parent or collateral source.
 - (c) Send a letter to the parent, guardian, or custodian acknowledging a report was received and inviting the family to engage with the PCSA.
- (D) The PCSA shall document in the case record the date, time, and with whom the assessment was initiated. For all reports initiated by the mailing of a letter, the date the letter is mailed shall be documented in the case record.
- (E) The PCSA shall complete face-to-face contacts within the first four working days from the date that the report was screened in as a child abuse or neglect report to assess the safety of the child.

 - (1) The PCSA shall complete and document the JFS 01401 the JFS 01401, "Comprehensive Assessment and Planning Model - I.S., Safety Assessment" pursuant to rule 5101:2-37-01 of the Administrative Code in the statewide automated child welfare information system (SACWIS) within seven working days from the date the report was screened in as a child abuse and/or neglect report.

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- (2) If the PCSA has extended the completion of the JFS 01401 pursuant to rule 5101:2-36-11 of the Administrative Code, the PCSA shall document the assessment of safety by completing the JFS 01401 within three working days from the face to face contact with the alleged child victim and one parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker.
- (F) The PCSA shall not contact a child without parental consent, unless one of the following exigent circumstances exists:
- (1) There is credible information indicating the child is in immediate danger of serious harm.
 - (2) There is credible information indicating that the child will be in immediate danger of serious harm upon return home from school or other locations away from his or her home.
 - (3) There is credible information indicating that the child may be intimidated from discussing the alleged abuse or neglect in his or her home.
 - (4) The child requests to be contacted at school or another location due to one of the circumstances listed above.
- (G) If a child is contacted without parental consent, the PCSA shall attempt a face-to-face contact with the child's parent, guardian, or custodian to inform that contact with his or her child occurred and provide the specific facts that necessitated that the child be contacted without parental consent. This face-to-face contact shall occur the same day the child was contacted.
- (H) The specific facts necessitating that contact with the child be completed without parental consent shall be documented in the case record.
- (I) The PCSA shall complete and document face-to-face contacts with each child residing within the home of the child(ren) who were the subject of the report.
- (J) The PCSA shall complete and document face-to-face contacts with all adults residing within the home of the child(ren) who were the subject of the report.
- (K) If the attempted face-to-face contacts with the family, as specified in paragraphs (I) and (J) of this rule are unsuccessful, the PCSA shall continue, at a minimum, making attempts of face-to-face contact at least every five working days until the child is seen or until the PCSA is required to complete a case decision pursuant to paragraph (T) of this rule.
- (L) The PCSA shall convert a case from the alternative response pathway to the traditional response pathway if any of the following occur:

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- (1) The family requests a pathway change from the alternative response pathway to the traditional response pathway.
 - (2) The JFS 01401, JFS 01419 "Alternative Response Family Assessment" (rev. 9/2010), or JFS 01423 "Alternative Response Ongoing Case Assessment" (rev.XX/2010) cannot be completed.
 - (3) The PCSA files a complaint with the juvenile court pursuant to 2151.27 of the Revised Code alleging the child is abused, neglected or dependent child.
 - (4) The PCSA screens in a report requiring an assessment/investigation pursuant to rule 5101:2-36-01(H) of the Administrative Code.
- (M) The PCSA shall advise the parent, guardian, or custodian of the information contained in the report at the time of the initial contact. The initial contact between the PCSA and the parent, guardian, custodian includes face-to-face or telephone contact, whichever occurs first, if information is gathered as part of the assessment process.
- (N) If the PCSA determines a child to be in immediate danger of serious harm, the PCSA shall follow procedures outlined in rule 5101:2-37-02 of the Administrative Code.
- (O) The PCSA shall conduct and document face-to face or telephone contact with any person identified as a possible source of information during the assessment to obtain relevant information regarding the safety of and risk to the child. The PCSA shall exercise discretion in the selection of collateral sources to protect the family's right to privacy.
- (P) If two or more PCSAs are involved in an assessment, the PCSA located within the county where the parent, guardian, custodian of the child subject of the report resides is lead. If an order of shared parenting has been issued, the PCSA located within the county of residence of the custodian, who has physical care of the child subject of the report at the time the referral information is received, is the lead, unless the court order identifies a designated custodian of the child subject of the report.
- (Q) The PCSA may request the assistance of a non-lead PCSA, either verbally or in writing, to contact any principals of the report and collateral sources located within the non-lead PCSA's jurisdiction to complete the JFS 01401, JFS 01419 or JFS 01423 .
- (R) If the PCSA has determined that a family member involved in the alternative response assessment has a language or an impairment that causes a barrier in communication (e.g., deaf or hearing impaired or limited English proficiency), the PCSA shall have an interpreter present for all interactions.

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- (S) The PCSA and the family may develop and implement the JFS 01418 "Alternative Response Family Service Plan" (rev. 9/2010) any time after the assessment of safety has been conducted and the PCSA and the family agree upon services.
- (T) The PCSA shall make a final case decision by completing the JFS 01419 no later than forty-five days from the date the PCSA screened in the referral as a report.
- (1) The PCSA may extend completion of the JFS 01419 with written justification and supervisory approval. The time frame for extension shall not exceed fifteen days.
- (2) The JFS 01419 shall be entered in SACWIS within three working days from the date of the final case decision.
- (U) If the child abuse and/or neglect report involves a family member receiving services after the completion of the JFS 01419, the PCSA shall make the final case decision by completing the JFS 01423.
- (1) The JFS 01423 shall be completed no later than forty-five days from the date the PCSA screened in the referral as a report.
- (2) The JFS 01423 shall be entered in SACWIS within three working days from the date of the final case decision.
- (V) If the case decision is to transfer the case for ongoing PCSA services, and the case will continue to be assigned to the alternative response pathway, the agency shall provide ongoing services to the family pursuant to rule 5101:2-38-20.
- (W) Within two working days of completion of the assessment, the PCSA shall do both of the following:
- (1) Notify the parent, guardian, custodian of the final case decision in writing.
- (2) Refer any infant who has been born and identified as affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure to "Help Me Grow."
- (X) Documentation of the alternative response assessment, including any materials obtained during the assessment, shall be maintained in the case record.
- (Y) The PCSA may extend time frames for completion or waive assessment activities pursuant to rule 5101:2-36-11 of the Administrative Code.

5101:9-6-33 Alternative response experiential learning (AREL).

(A) Definitions.

(1) "Alternative response" is a practice approach in child protective services that allows for more than one method of responding to accepted reports of child abuse or neglect as described in rule 5101:9-14-03 of the Administrative Code.

(2) "Alternative response experiential learning (AREL) activities" are coaching, mentoring, shadowing, and peer-to-peer networking activities that facilitate implementation of the alternative response program in a county by developing staff skills and capacities and addressing relevant administrative, organizational, community, and service issues.

(3) "AREL event" is an organized gathering hosted by a public children services agency (PCSA) that is participating in the alternative response program in accordance with rule 5101:9-14-03 of the Administrative Code to provide AREL activities to a PCSA that is participating in or considering participation in the program.

(B) The AREL fund consists of one hundred per cent state funds.

(C) The AREL fund is available for reimbursement of expenditures listed in paragraphs (D) and (E) of this rule that occur or have occurred from July 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010.

(D) A PCSA that is participating in the alternative response program is eligible to be reimbursed from the AREL fund as specified in paragraph (F) of this rule for each of the following expenditures:

(1) Pre-visit preparation and planning for hosting an AREL event;

(2) Hosting an AREL event; and

(3) Participating in an AREL event. A host PCSA may not be paid for its own staff participating in an AREL event that it is hosting.

(E) A PCSA that is considering participation in the alternative response program may be eligible to receive reimbursement as specified in paragraph (F) of this rule if it receives prior approval from the Ohio department of job and family services (ODJFS) office of families and children for participant expenditures for each of its employees who attend an AREL event hosted by a PCSA as described in paragraph (D) of this rule.

(F) A PCSA will receive reimbursement when both of the following occur no later than December 31, 2010:

(1) The PCSA has reported expenditures on the JFS 02820 "Monthly Financial Statement Childrens Services Fund" as described in rule 5101:9-7-29 of the Administrative Code; and

(2) The PCSA has submitted and obtained approval of an invoice based on unit cost for reimbursement to the ODJFS office of families and children.

(G) The definitions, requirements, and responsibilities contained in rule 5101:9-6-50 of the Administrative Code are applicable to this rule.

Effective: 11/08/2010

Promulgated Under: 111.15

Statutory Authority: 5101.02, Section 309.45.10 of Am. H.B. 1, 128th G.A.

Rule Amplifies: 5101.02, Section 309.45.10 of Am. H.B. 1, 128th G.A.

**Ohio Differential Response Project
Review of Applications for Expansion Sites
February 2011**

Reviewer Worksheet

Name of Reviewer: _____

County: _____

Note: It is understood that many questions or issues may not have been resolved by counties prior to submission of their application. In evaluating the responsiveness of the application to selection criteria, please consider descriptions of discussions, identification of issues, and planned activities as evidence of meeting benchmarks.

I. Agency Capacity and Planning (20 Points)

Benchmark	Score (Please assign a point value for each benchmark.)
PCSA capacity to implement differential response (administrative and community commitment, staff skills and training, ability to respond to cultural needs of target population, and agency infrastructure).	0 1 2 3 4 5
Planning activities and/or organizational decisions undertaken to identify how DR might be implemented within the PCSA. Description of the ways PCSA has or will engage various levels of staff in planning and preparation for DR implementation.	0 1 2 3 4 5
Capacity for leadership and change management demonstrated through notable examples of initiative or innovation on the agency, community, county, state and/or national levels?	0 1 2 3 4 5
Plan for administration of the Alternative Response pathway , including plans for staffing structure, job functions and supervision.	0 1 2 3 4 5
TOTAL SCORE FOR THIS SECTION	____ out of 20
Comments:	

II. Community Capacity (15 Points)

Benchmark	Score (Please assign a point value for each benchmark.)
Discussions within the community (e.g., community advisory councils, mandated reporters, social service providers, courts, law enforcement, etc.) regarding the implementation of differential response and anticipated level of support.	0 1 2 3 4 5
Identification of any anticipated changes in service requirements or needs as a result of the implementation of an alternative response pathway. Description of any plans for addressing service needs or gaps.	0 1 2 3 4 5
Potential for referral to or collaboration with community programs in meeting service needs identified in the family assessment. Description of the capacity of community programs to meet the service and cultural needs of the target population.	0 1 2 3 4 5
TOTAL SCORE FOR THIS SECTION	___ out of 15
Comments:	

III. Target Population (10 Points)

Benchmark	Score (Please assign a point value for each benchmark.)
Identification of any issues in the external environment that are likely to impact the development and implementation of differential response or which the PCSA has selected to specifically address through the AR approach. Discussion of planned pathway assignment process , including any cases agency will not assign as appropriate for alternative response beyond those ineligible by administrative rule. Identification of any specific category of case for which the agency is considering special alternative response programming.	0 1 2 3 4 5
Discussion of whether the alternative response approach will be implemented agency-wide or limited to a specific geographic or organizational jurisdiction. If agency is implementing on a limited basis, description of what factors determined selection of specific populations to be served.	0 1 2 3 4 5
TOTAL SCORE FOR THIS SECTION	___ out of 10
Comments:	

IV. Service Delivery Structure (20 Points)

Benchmark	Score (Please assign a point value for each benchmark.)
Decisions, planning activities and/or discussions of acquisition of needed resources , including staff training and resources.	0 1 2 3 4 5
Decisions, planning activities and/or discussions of delivery of services to families assigned to the alternative response pathway , including description of who will meet service needs identified through the family assessment and any collaborative or contractual arrangements with community service providers.	0 1 2 3 4 5
Identification of planned staffing structure for assessment and post-assessment functions , e.g., will a single worker be assigned to work with a family for the duration of the family’s involvement, or will cases be transferred from one worker to another at particular stages?	0 1 2 3 4 5
Plan for ongoing support and skill enhancement of staff and supervisors as they initiate this new approach?	0 1 2 3 4 5
TOTAL SCORE FOR THIS SECTION	____ out of 20
Comments:	

V. Evaluation Capacity (10 Points)

Benchmark	Score (Please assign a point value for each benchmark.)
Identification of data collection activities that have been discussed internally , including elements the agency intends to track; plans for monitoring project progress; and any particular areas of interest for data collection and tracking.	0 1 2 3 4 5
Discussion of how the agency plans to monitor fidelity and expressed commitment to participate fully in benchmarking and a continuous quality improvement process , including tracking cases and case outcomes. Identification of the county representative responsible for coordinating data gathering and producing requested reports.	0 1 2 3 4 5
TOTAL SCORE FOR THIS SECTION	____ out of 10
Comments:	

VI. Anticipated Challenges (15 Points)

Benchmark	Score (Please assign a point value for each benchmark.)
Recognition and candid appraisal of anticipated challenges and their various levels of impact (e.g., practice, agency, community, county).	0 1 2 3 4 5
Identification of any discussions, decisions, or planned activities to address significant challenges, should they arise.	0 1 2 3 4 5
Identification of any assistance that might be provided by ODJFS and/or project consultants to address or limit the deleterious impact of particular challenges.	0 1 2 3 4 5
TOTAL SCORE FOR THIS SECTION	___ out of 15
Comments:	

VII. Budget Projections/Financial Commitments (10 Points)

Benchmark	Score (Please assign a point value for each benchmark.)
Description of county's plan for funding this change in their system.	0 1 2 3 4 5
Description of the agency's and/or community's ability or plans to reallocate existing funds in preparation for sustainability of differential response in the county.	0 1 2 3 4 5
TOTAL SCORE FOR THIS SECTION	___ out of 10
Comments:	

Address the following areas in the space provided on the next page:

- Strengths
- Challenges/Deficiencies
- Overall comments

Major Strengths:

Major Challenges and/or Deficiencies:

Overall Comments: