

Child Record Transfer Policy

Overview

- This policy sets out when and how children's cases are transferred between teams, practitioners and the jurisdictions of England and Wales.

Why this is important for children and families

- When a child's case needs to be transferred to another practitioner or team, this must be done in a timely way to minimise delay to children and families.
- It is important that we communicate any changes in allocation to the family and recognise any impact this may have for them.
- Effective transfer helps to ensure a consistent service for children and families even if the team or practitioner change

1.0 Principles

- 1.1 The overriding principle when considering transfer within Cafcass is that the transfer is in the best interests of the child, including minimising delay to proceedings.

2.0 Private law

- 2.1 All private law applications are received and screened by the Central Intake Team. The practitioner then transfers the application to the Early Intervention Team responsible for servicing the court which has issued the application. No further transfers take place before the first hearing.
- 2.2 When there is further work for Cafcass after the first hearing, the work will be transferred from EIT to the work after first hearing team in the area where the child lives. The relevant EIT service manager or practice supervisor will complete this transfer within two working days.
- 2.3 If the transfer may put either party or the child at increased risk, the transfer should be conducted by the relevant service manager.
- 2.4 All families with confidential addresses should be discussed with the relevant service manager before transfer.
- 2.5 If there are exceptional circumstances in which service managers disagree about transfers, they should refer the issue to the Head of Practice and/or Assistant Director.

If the work is transferring from private law to public law, the entry will need to be closed on ChildFirst and a new public law entry opened, with the papers being copied to the new file.

3.0 Public law

- 3.1 If it is necessary to change the children's guardian, agreement should be sought from the court that this is in the best interests of the child.

3.2 A conversation needs to happen between service managers, if there is a change of team, before transfer to ensure the appropriate steps are taken.

4.0 Change of practitioner

4.1 When a practitioner goes on long-term leave, of any nature, work will be held by a local service manager or practice supervisor who will triage and reallocate the children's cases where there is an immediate need. The remaining children's cases will be held by the practice supervisor until re-allocated or returned to the practitioner following their absence. All children's cases should be re-allocated if the practitioner is absent for more than four weeks. If this is the practice supervisor they will be the lead allocation. Children and families should be kept informed about absences and any changes to allocation. They should be aware of whom to contact if they need to.

4.2 If children's cases are held by the practice supervisor they should undertake the work required. This should include a monthly overview of those children.

4.3 Work allocated to managers is reported in the balanced scorecard so that the volume of work held by managers is monitored.

5.0 Transfers between jurisdictions

5.1 Work to first hearing should be completed by Cafcass if the child lives in England and Cafcass Cymru if the child lives in Wales, regardless of which court issued the application. If an application is received by the wrong service or the child moves during proceedings, it can be transferred between Cafcass and Cafcass Cymru without a court order. The [joint agreement on the transfer of cases](#) must be followed to ensure delay and disruption is minimised.

5.2 For all other transfers between jurisdictions, please refer to the [legal topics guidance](#) on work with an international element.

Owned by	Marie Gittins, Assistant Director
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