Protocol for Case Management of Child Victims of Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation
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Introduction

The Committee for the Special Protection of Children (CSPC), pursuant to its mandate under Executive Order 53 dated 11 August 2011 issues these Protocol for Case Management of Child Victims of Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation for the guidance of all concerned government agencies, non-government organizations, and other stakeholders. A protocol is a set of standards to ensure the protection of the rights of child victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The Protocol is a product of CSPC’s consultations and workshops with various stakeholders on the implementation of Republic Act 7610: An Act Providing for Stronger Deterrence and Special Protection Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination, Providing Penalties for its Violation and for Other Purposes and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

The Protocol highlights the roles and responsibilities of government agencies and their partners, from reporting or referral of a child abuse case until its termination, ensuring that child victims are dealt with in a most child-sensitive and appropriate manner.

Child victims are those who are:

* **Abused** – physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse;
* **Neglected** – abandoned and/or deliberately unattended by their parent/s or guardians;
* **Exploited** – commercial sexual exploitation (prostitution and pornography), economic exploitation (child labor), trafficked children and other exploitative situations.

The CSPC developed a Flowchart on Management of Child Abuse Cases (Figure I) to illustrate the different stages of a case. Using the algorithm as guide, the Protocol will show how the different government agencies and their partners can either work independently or in coordination with each other. The Protocol also provides guidelines to be observed when assisting a victim of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
Fig. 1.: The Flowchart on the Management of Cases of Child Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

RA 7610 official acceptors of reports

BARANGAY

Who can report?

ANYBODY

PNP/NBI

within 48 hours
DSWD or LGU

JOINT INTERVIEW
SW & POLICE

SINUMPAANG SALAYSAY,
OTHER EVIDENCE

FILING OF COMPLAINT

MANDATORY REPORTERS

DSWD OR C/MSWDO

INVESTIGATE
HOME VISIT

SAFE

PSYCHOSOCIAL
AND OTHER
SUPPORT
SERVICES

NOT SAFE

MEDICO-LEGAL EXAM

PROTECTIVE CUSTODY (X PERIOD)

IN VolUNTARY COMMITMENT
Case Management

Case management is a procedure to plan, seek, and monitor services from different social agencies and staff on behalf of a client. Usually, one agency takes primary responsibility for the client and assigns a case manager who coordinates services, advocates for the client, sometimes controls resources and purchases services for the client (Barker 2003).

The following approaches are hereby adopted in the management of cases of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation:

* **Holistic care** - ensures full or optimum development of the child: physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual development;

* **Rights-based and life-cycle approach** - ensures that the rights of the child are upheld throughout the different stages of the child’s growth and development; ensure the participation of the child in all processes;

* **Family and community-based approaches** - recognizes that families and communities are the first line of response in dealing with problems of children, thus interventions should strengthen the capabilities of families and communities to care for them;

* **Gender-sensitive approach** - recognizes that girls and women’s perceptions, experiences and interests may be different from those of boys and men, arising from an understanding of their different social position and gender roles. The provision of gender-sensitive services to abused children necessarily includes rights-based approach, i.e. responding to victims’ peculiar needs at all times and in all stages, affording them respect, and promoting dignity as their inherent right; and

* **Multi-disciplinary approach** - recognizes that children, particularly those in need of special protection, need access to an array of services due to the multi-faceted nature of their needs. Many agencies and professionals need to work together with mutual responsibilities and joint accountability for managing different aspects of helping a child within the context of the family, community, and society.
The management of child abuse cases is multi-sectoral (national and local government agencies, non-government and faith-based organizations, civic and private sectors) and multi-disciplinary (police, prosecutor, judge, lawyer, social worker, medical doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist, barangay officials, among others) working together as a team to provide appropriate protection, legal and social services to the child victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Due to devolution of social services and accessibility to the community, the local government unit’s social worker (referred to as local social welfare and development office or LSWDO social worker) is often the case manager. As case manager, the social worker coordinates the provision of needed services in cooperation with partner agencies.
Who may report and to whom may one report a case of child abuse?

1. Any person may report, either orally or in writing, a case of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. The report may be made to any of the following:
   - Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)
   - Commission on Human Rights,
   - Local Social Welfare and Development Office (LSWDO) of the municipality, city, or province,
   - Philippine National Police,
   - National Bureau of Investigation,
   - Other law enforcement agencies,
   - *Punong barangay* or tribal leader,
   - *Barangay kagawad*,
   - Any member of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC), or
   - *Barangay* help desk person or Violence Against Women (VAW) help desk officer.

2. The following government workers have the duty to report all incidents of possible child abuse:
   - Teachers and administrators in public schools,
   - Probation officers,
   - Government lawyers,
   - Law enforcement officers,
   - Barangay officials,
   - Corrections officers, and
   - Other government officials and employees whose work involves dealing with children.

3. Any person who, acting in good faith, reports a child abuse case shall be free from any civil or administrative liability. As much as possible, the persons who report should give their names and contact details for further contacts, if necessary. Their protection and anonymity shall be assured.

4. Any person who reports must provide basic information on the child victim (name, age, address or whereabouts of child, the reasons that child may be
at risk or in an abusive or exploitative situation) and the alleged perpetrator. However, any relevant information to suspect that a child is being abused or exploited shall suffice to initiate any action and investigation.

5. The person who reports need not be the complainant but has knowledge of the incident.

6. The child victim may or may not be with the person reporting the incident.

The Mandatory Reporters

1. The following are mandated to make a report, either orally or in writing, to DSWD/LSWDO within forty-eight (48) hours, the examination and/or treatment of a child who appears to have suffered from abuse:

   * Head of any public or private hospital, medical clinic and similar institutions, and
   * Attending physician and nurse.

2. Failure to report a child abuse case shall be punishable with a fine of not more than two thousand pesos (P2,000.00) or as may be determined in the future by a court with jurisdiction.

Reception of a Report

When a report is received, the concerned agencies shall undertake actions corresponding to their mandates and in cooperation with other agencies to effectively implement RA 7610 and other child-related laws.

Note that the duly authorized social worker and the assisting police officer and/or barangay official, if any, who shall take a child under protective custody shall be exempt from any civil, criminal, and administrative liability.
The barangay is often the nearest place where a child victim or witness of child abuse may run to and seek assistance. The barangay must designate a child and gender-sensitive barangay kagawad or tanod, preferably female, who shall be in charge of its barangay help desk that shall receive and monitor all child abuse and VAW-related cases, and refer the child victim to the proper agency for appropriate intervention.

When receiving a report, the barangay must observe the following:

1. Enter the report in the barangay blotter exclusively for child abuse and domestic violence cases. This blotter must be kept confidential at all times.

2. If the reporter is not the victim, interview the reporting person about the incident.

3. If report is made by a child victim, do not interview the child except to take the child’s personal circumstances (e.g., name, address, date of birth) and to determine the necessity of referring the child for immediate medical attention. Only the designated barangay help desk person shall talk to the child. Attached as Annex “A” is a sample interview sheet.

   If the alleged offender is in the barangay hall, do not interview the child in the presence of the former.

4. Within 24 hours, contact LSWDO and refer the case to the social worker for validation of complaint and assessment.

5. If the LSWDO is unavailable (e.g., on an official business trip or cannot be reached on a weekend, official holiday, or beyond office hours) and the case seemed to be high risk (e.g., the alleged perpetrator lives under the same roof and no one in the household is protecting the child, there is threat to the safety of the child and her family) the child shall be directly endorsed to the punong barangay, a city/provincial crisis center, or a non-government organization (NGO) temporary shelter for an emergency overnight or weekend placement. Thereafter, a report stating such endorsement to a crisis center or temporary shelter shall be made by the barangay to LSWDO.

6. If the main request is assistance in filing a case, refer the child to the police for conduct of proper police investigation. Any arrest of the alleged perpetrator shall be made in coordination with the police.
7. Refer the child to the nearest women and children protection unit (WCPU), or, if none exists, to the medico-legal officer or the city or municipal health officer.

8. Contact the child’s parents/legal guardians. However, if the alleged perpetrator is a member of the family, the barangay shall immediately refer the LSWDO and/or the law enforcement officer who shall decide whether or not to notify the parents or guardians.

9. Do not conduct any mediation or conciliation relative to the case. Instead, advise the parties that child abuse cases cannot be a subject of any compromise agreement.

10. Beyond the reporting stage, assistance may be extended to other parties directly involved in helping the child. The barangay may accompany the social worker during home visits and assist in monitoring the situation and safety of the child and the family.

11. The media shall not be allowed to have any access to the child, the child’s family, and the barangay blotter.

12. Observe confidentiality at all times.
Victims and witnesses may report directly to the nearest law enforcement agency (LEA). They may either seek the assistance of any women and children protection desk of the PNP or of the NBI. For purposes of this protocol, the term “LEA” will be used to refer to any law enforcement agency that must do the following upon receipt of a child abuse complaint:

1. Enter into the police blotter the complaint made by any of the following:
   * Offended party;
   * Parent or legal guardian;
   * Ascendant or collateral relative of the child within the third degree of consanguinity;
   * Duly authorized officer or social worker of the DSWD or LSWDO;
   * Officer, social worker, or representative of a licensed child-caring institution;
   * Punong barangay; and
   * At least three (3) concerned responsible citizens of the community where the abuse took place who have personal knowledge of the offense committed.

   In some cases, e.g., death of a child under suspicious and abuse-related circumstances, the police must file the case and act as complainant in the case before the Prosecutors’ Office, on the basis of the police investigation.

   Reports received from people other than any of the above must also be entered in the separate and confidential women and children protection desk (WCPD) logbook which will be the basis for further validation and investigation. Proceed with an investigation.

2. Joint interview of the child victim shall be conducted by the LSWDO and the LEA as much as possible. In case the social worker is not available, a trained law enforcement officer (LEO) shall conduct the interview when the child has rested and is prepared to give a statement. For joint interview, see page XX.

   If the child appears to have special needs, suspend the interview and secure the presence of an appropriate and trained professional (e.g., special
education teacher, sign language expert, social worker, psychologist, or
developmental pediatrician,) who can assist in interviewing the child.
If the child does not speak the local dialect, secure the assistance of an
individual who understands and speaks the dialect of the child.

If the child appears to be exhibiting trauma, shows extreme emotions, or
becomes violent, pre-terminate the interview and immediately refer the
child to a psychologist or a counselor for proper intervention.

3. The police blotter, the child’s sworn statement, police investigation report,
and the endorsement letter to the Prosecutors’ Office shall indicate the alias
used to protect the identity of the child (e.g., Minor AAA versus Juan de la
Cruz).

The necessity of using an alias shall be explained to the child to avoid his/
her confusion.

4. Before finalizing the sworn statement, the statement must first be shown
to, explained, and reviewed by the victim. If the child victim is blind or has
hearing disability, the statement shall be taken using a videotape camera.
The assistance of a sign language expert shall be secured for any interview
of a child victim who is hearing impaired.

5. If there is a women and child protection unit (WCPU) with a trained social
worker, a forensic interview of the child victim shall be conducted by the
trained social worker.

6. If the alleged perpetrator is in the police station, the interview of the child
victim must be conducted in a safe and separate room. No contact between
the two should be allowed at any time.

7. Take the sworn statements of other witnesses and gather other relevant
evidence.

8. If report is made within 72 hours after the commission of the act
complained of, immediately refer the child victim to the nearest WCPU
or public hospital for medico-legal examination as well as other medical
interventions.

9. In case of suspicious death of a child, submit a written request for conduct
of mandatory autopsy to the crime laboratory consonant with Section 95 of
the Sanitation Code of the Philippines (PD 856). In the alternative, request any of the following to issue an order for the conduct of an autopsy:

* Competent court;
* Mayor; or
* Provincial or city prosecutor

Attached is the pertinent provision of PD 856.

Pursuant to Department of Justice Circular No. 55, the Prosecutors’ Office has the authority to order the conduct of autopsy on the body of a child who died under suspicious or abuse-related circumstances. Attached as Annex “B” are copies of DOJ Circular No. 55 and DOJ Memo No. 87.

10. Prepare a police’s affidavit and include therein the demeanor and behavior of the child victim during the investigation and interview. If a social worker assisted the child victim, the police investigation report shall also indicate the name of the assisting social worker.

11. Prepare the investigation report and endorse to the Prosecutors’ Office for conduct of inquest or preliminary investigation.

12. No law enforcement agency shall conduct any proceedings similar to preliminary investigation to avoid multiple interviews of the child.

13. Immediately contact LSWDO for further assessment and management and provision of other interventions such as temporary shelter and other services, as may be needed and appropriate.

14. Do not release any information to the media. Do not allow the media to interview the child and the child’s family.

15. Respect the privacy of the child victim and the family and keep the police blotter and other information and evidence confidential.
Complementary Roles of DSWD and LSWDO

The DSWD or the LSWDO social worker plays a crucial role in the management of cases of child abuse. The social worker’s intervention is required from the beginning and for as long as may be necessary to monitor the child’s safety and situation.

Case management shall be the primary responsibility of the LSWDO social worker. As such, the LSWDO social worker shall conduct the intake interview, safety and risk assessments, home visits, collateral interviews; prepare social case study; convene case conferences; plan the comprehensive healing and reintegration program; and regularly monitor the safety and condition of the child victim. As may be necessary and appropriate, the LSWDO social worker shall also decide the issue of rescue, protective custody, and petitioning the court for involuntary commitment.

On the other hand, the DSWD, thru its field offices, shall provide technical support; augment resources; and accredit social workers.

Case management, however, shall be the primary responsibility of DSWD if the concerned local government unit does not have a licensed social worker in its LSWDO. In the latter case, the social welfare and development (SWAD) team detailed to the province or the social worker officer II (SWO II) shall be the case manager and shall perform the functions of the LSWDO social worker.

When a case involves a child victim and a minor perpetrator, the social worker to whom the child victim was first referred to shall be the case manager. The other social worker shall be the case manager of the minor perpetrator. In the absence of a licensed LSWDO social worker, the SWAD team member or SWO II shall act as case manager of the child who had the first contact with the latter. The case management of the other child shall be endorsed to a social worker of a WCPU or an NGO operating in the community.
At the intake interview and safety assessment, the LSWDO social worker or, in the absence of a licensed LGU social worker, the SWAD team member or SWO II must do the following:

1. If a rescue operation is not necessary, conduct, within 48 hours from the complaint, a visit to the child’s home, school, workplace, or where the abusive/exploitative situation is allegedly taking place.

2. If the report is made by a person who witnessed the abuse or exploitation, interview that person to gather information about the situation, who is involved, how it happened, and what actions have been done relative to the child’s situation. Get contact details of the reporting party and assure that person’s protection and anonymity.

3. If the child victim is accompanied by a parent, a guardian, or any adult, conduct separate interviews of the child victim and the accompanying adult.

4. Address the accompanying adult’s fears and concerns regarding the child’s safety and situation.

5. Immediately attend to the child’s needs such as food, rest, sleep and others to stabilize the child’s physical and psychological state. Make an immediate referral to a psychologist or a psychiatrist or bring the child to the nearest hospital if the child is suicidal or exhibiting bizarre behavior.

6. Immediately assess the child’s safety and risks in the child’s current environment. Initial actions by the social worker, depending on the child’s situation, are:

   * Contact child’s parents/legal guardians, assess their parenting capability and the risks on child’s safety;

   * If initial assessment shows that the parents are able to protect the child, particularly if they are not the perpetrator, child may be released to them or the child continues to stay with them under the supervision of the social worker and monitoring by the barangay;
* If parents are incapable of protecting the child or cannot be contacted or unavailable, contact child’s relatives and other significant persons, for possible temporary care of child under the supervision of the social worker and monitoring by the barangay;

* If there are no alternative carers, refer child for temporary care to a child-caring institution or foster home duly licensed and accredited or managed by DSWD.

7. If medical attention is needed, immediately refer to a WCPU or a hospital or clinic.

8. If the alleged perpetrator is the child’s parent or a family member, caution must be exercised when notifying the family. A decision not to notify the child’s parents or guardians shall be reached only after consultation with the police and the examining physician, and should be based on:

* Further risk or danger to the child
* Flight risk of the alleged perpetrator
* Compromising police investigation

9. Conduct collateral interviews and gather other evidence that will either corroborate or negate the allegation of abuse. If corroborated, schedule a thorough assessment of the case to determine the child’s need for continuing protection.

10. Immediately convene a case conference with the other disciplines and agencies directly involved with the case.

11. Document result of the assessment plan and the intervention process.
Rescue of a Child Victim

If, based on the report received either by DSWD or LSWDO or LEA, a rescue operation is necessary, the social worker and the police shall immediately meet to plan the rescue and determine the action necessary to protect the child. The planning and conduct of rescue operations shall proceed as follows:

1. The agency that received the initial report shall immediately verify the matter and gather more information.

2. Such agency shall contact the other team members: DSWD/LSWDO, LEA, and the concerned barangay officials to map out the rescue operations, identify tasks and responsibilities, and identify support agencies or services.

3. Confidential information may be shared only with those directly involved in the planning and conduct.

4. The LEA shall lead the rescue operation. The social worker, at a safe distance, shall take custody of the child victim. The barangay shall assist in securing the family and the community as a whole.

Depending on the nature of the case, the composition of the rescue team shall vary (e.g., a trafficking case involving a child worker shall require the presence of a DOLE representative). The composite team shall, however, properly observe role delineation with the police as lead agency in rescuing the child and apprehending the alleged perpetrator.

5. The barangay or the LEA, however, may immediately rescue a child if coordinating the rescue operations with the nearest available social worker would compromise the safety of the child (e.g., if child is in a far-flung area). As soon as the child is rescued, the child shall be endorsed to LSWDO and the rescue operations entered in the barangay and/or LEA blotter.

6. If media supplied the information, the rescue team shall prohibit it from taking part in or to cover the rescue operations. The media shall not be allowed to interview or take photos of the child victim before, during, or after the rescue operations. Attached as Annex “C” is the Guide for Media Practitioners in the Reportage and Coverage of Cases Involving Children.

7. Immediately bring the rescued child to a WCPU or a hospital to be examined by a doctor or if injured, provided with medical treatment.
Protective Custody and Involuntary Commitment

When investigation discloses sexual abuse, serious physical injury, or life-threatening neglect, the LSWDO social worker, with the assistance of the LEA and/or barangay, shall immediately remove the child from the home or the establishment where the child was found and must place the child under protective custody to ensure the child’s safety.

Protective custody shall be exercised by DSWD, thru its SWAD team or SWO II, when there is no functional LSWDO; no licensed LSWDO social worker; or when the local political climate threatens the life and security of the licensed LSWDO social worker.

When taking protective custody of a child victim, the following shall be observed:

1. The child shall be placed with a relative who is competent and willing to keep the child safe and protected.
2. In the absence of a relative, the child may be placed in a DSWD-managed facility, an accredited child-caring institution, or a foster home.
3. When report of sexual abuse, serious injuries or life-threatening neglect is made to a WCPU doctor or social worker or to an NGO social worker, the latter shall immediately inform the LSWDO of the area where the subject child victim resides or may be found.
4. The LSWDO social worker who received the report shall immediately arrange overnight placement for the child while finalizing transfer of physical custody to a nearest kin or to a temporary shelter. When the LSWDO social worker cannot act or is unavailable to act; or when the complainant goes directly to DSWD; the DSWD, thru its SWAD team or SWO II, shall act on the matter.
5. When LSWDO social worker or SWO II is unavailable to personally work out the details of protective custody and another person (e.g., WCPU or NGO social worker, barangay help desk person, guidance counselor, etc.) endorses the child to a temporary shelter, the LSWDO social worker or SWO II who received the report shall immediately issue a written document evidencing the taking of protective custody and authorizing the latter to effect the placement of the child in a temporary facility. This written authorization, along with the initial intake form and other relevant documents, will be submitted by the
person endorsing the child to the temporary shelter. Attached as Annex “D” is a sample written authority.

6. The LSWDO social worker who issues the written authorization for protective custody enjoys the presumption of good faith and regularity in the performance of duty and shall be free from any civil, criminal, or administrative liability. Annexed are copies of DOJ Circulars 70 and 77.

7. Lack of a social case study shall not be a ground to decline admission of a child victim in a temporary shelter. A completed initial intake form shall suffice. The social case study, however, along with other additional documentary evidence required by the placement institution must be prepared, completed, and submitted by the LSWDO social worker or SWO II within five (5) working days from the time of the child’s placement.

8. If the child was rescued or transferred to a temporary shelter without the assistance of the LEA, the LSWDO must immediately inform the police that the child is placed under protective custody.

If the child was rescued by the LEA without LSWDO (or SWAD team or SWO II) assistance, the former must inform the latter that the child was rescued. Upon receipt of such information, the LSWDO social worker shall immediately arrange the overnight placement of the child victim with a next of kin or in a temporary facility pending determination by the multidisciplinary team the duration of protective custody and the identification of the person/facility with whom the child will be placed.

9. The decision to place a child under protective custody must be reviewed every three (3) months in a multidisciplinary case conference to determine whether extending or shortening the period will redound to the best interest of the child. If deemed necessary, the protective custody will be extended or terminated.

The multidisciplinary case conference will also determine to whom the child will be eventually released for community integration.

10. When the social worker’s assessment report calls for a continuing protection of the child victim in view of the abusive or exploitative environment in the home, or the inability of parents/guardians to protect child, and the high risks of the child to be harmed in said situation, the LSWDO social worker shall immediately, with the assistance of the DSWD SWO II or SWAD team member,
file the Petition for Involuntary Commitment.

In cases where the LSWDO does not have the capacity to file the Petition for Involuntary Commitment, the DSWD Field Office Director shall temporarily assume this responsibility. To address the former’s lack of capacity, the DSWD Field Office shall extend technical assistance by accrediting social workers to handle court-related cases. Thereafter, the filing of the Petition for Involuntary Commitment shall be the responsibility of the LSWDO.

11. The Petition for Involuntary Commitment shall be supported by the social case study, police investigation report, medico-legal report, initial psychological assessment, and other relevant documents. Attached as Annex “E” is a sample petition for involuntary commitment.

12. The Petition for Involuntary Commitment shall be filed in the Family Court or, if there is none, in the Regional Trial Court, of the province or city in which the DWSO Field Office is located or where the child is found, within one (1) week after the receipt of the assessment report.

13. The social worker’s assessment report shall be the basis of discussion in a case conference with the LEA, barangay, child protection specialist, and other individuals and agencies involved in the handling of the case so that a comprehensive plan of action may be taken, particularly if a case will be pursued in court.

14. Efforts shall be exerted to facilitate the continuity of the child’s education. Upon request of the LSWDO social worker (or SWAD team or SWO II), the child’s school of origin shall immediately release the school records and clearance and observe confidentiality on the reason for the child’s transfer.
Medical Evaluation / Medico-Legal Examination

In all cases, the child shall be immediately referred to a WCPU or hospital for medical evaluation and/or medico-legal examination. The following guidelines shall be observed:

1. The child shall be placed with a relative who is competent and willing to keep the child safe and protected.

2. In the absence of a relative, the child may be placed in a DSWD-managed facility, an accredited child-caring institution, or a foster home.

3. When report of sexual abuse, serious injuries or life-threatening neglect is made to a WCPU doctor or social worker or to an NGO social worker, the latter shall immediately inform the LSWDO of the area where the subject child victim resides or may be found.

4. The LSWDO social worker who received the report shall immediately arrange overnight placement for the child while finalizing transfer of physical custody to a nearest kin or to a temporary shelter. When the LSWDO social worker cannot act or is unavailable to act; or when the complainant goes directly to DSWD; the DSWD, thru its SWAD team or SWO II, shall act on the matter.

5. When LSWDO social worker or SWO II is unavailable to personally work out the details of protective custody and another person (e.g., WCPU or NGO social worker, barangay help desk person, guidance counselor, etc.) endorses the child to a temporary shelter, the LSWDO social worker or SWO II who received the report shall immediately issue a written document evidencing the taking of protective custody and authorizing the latter to effect the placement of the child in a temporary facility. This written authorization, along with the initial intake form and other relevant documents, will be submitted by the person endorsing the child to the temporary shelter. Attached as Annex “D” is a sample written authority.
Joint Interview

A joint interview by the social worker and the LEO is advisable to avoid repeated interviews that would re-traumatize the child. If a complaint has already been made, it is advisable for the social worker and the LEO to conduct a joint interview. Joint interview shall be necessary in any of the following circumstances:

- Absence of parent(s), guardian, or family member is accompanying the child;
- The child is accompanied by unsupportive parent(s), guardian, or family member;
- There is a concern for the safety of the child; or
- There is a probability of desistance.

Preferably, the social worker in the joint interview must be of the same gender as the child victim. When conducting a joint interview, the following guidelines shall be observed:

1. It must be conducted in an area where there are investigative services such as a WCPU. Otherwise, it must be conducted in a child-friendly interview room.

2. When investigating a child abuse-related case, the LEO shall conduct the interview. The social worker shall be present during the interview. Before the interview, the social worker shall submit a list of questions to be asked by the LEO interviewer. Before terminating the interview, the LEO shall ask the social worker if there are additional or follow-up questions to be propounded.

3. Minimize the number of interviews by audio- or videotaping the same. The audio or videotape shall be sealed and kept in the place where the interview took place to preserve its integrity and observe the proper chain of custody of evidence. (Refer to forensic interview protocol)

If a criminal complaint has been filed, and upon the request of the investigating prosecutor, the LEA shall comply with the request to listen or view the audio or videotape evidence ensuring the confidentiality of the contents thereof and observing the proper chain of custody.

4. The interviewer shall secure the following data:

   - Information about the child - age, address, health and educational status, as appropriate, description of the child upon initial contact (physical, social and emotional condition)
and effect/impact of the abusive, neglectful or exploitative experience/s including the child’s feelings, behavior and other reactions;

* The child is accompanied by unsupportive parent(s), guardian, or family member;

* There is a concern for the safety of the child; or

* There is a probability of desistance.

5. As much as possible, the testimony of the victim shall be taken conducted through audio or videotaping in order to avoid multiple interviews, prevent re-victimization, and preserve the testimony of the child victim.

6. Before interviewing a child victim with disability/ies, the police and social worker shall coordinate with a psychologist, a developmental pediatrician, a special education teacher, a sign language expert, or other appropriate professional with specialized training on handling and communicating with children with special needs or disabilities.
Multi-Disciplinary Case Conference

A multi-disciplinary case conference is a good venue to gather all professionals such as the social worker, doctor, police, and representatives of the temporary shelter or foster home directly involved in handing a child who is, or is believed to be, a victim of child abuse and the child’s family. Other disciplines such as a mental health professional and a lawyer, if available and involved, may also be invited. This is a good opportunity to analyze issues pertinent to a child victim and come up with an inter-agency plan and recommendation for the child and the family. The following must be observed in multi-disciplinary case conferences:

1. It should be convened by the social worker, acting as case manager, at the earliest possible time, specifically as follows:
   * Before placing the child under protective custody;
   * Immediately after investigation of serious physical abuse, sexual abuse or life threatening neglect to determine suspension or termination of parental authority;
   * Three months after granting of petition of involuntary commitment by the court; and
   * For periodic assessment of the case and planning and monitoring of interventions and progress.

2. If the case is handled and shared by at least two (2) of the following:
   * LSWDO social worker (or SWAD team member or SWO II);
   * WCPU social worker;
   * NGO social worker; or
   * social worker of the temporary shelter or foster home

   the social worker with the main responsibility over the case will call the conference. As may be deemed necessary, the other social worker may also call a case conference.

   The case manager shall only be one in reference to the child abuse case. There may be another social worker in the case for another purpose e.g., residential care (healing and recovery services) or for foster care or adoption.
The supervisor of the managing case worker shall chair the case conference. The managing case worker shall not chair the conference as she is also presenting the assessment and recommendations.

3. The case manager shall only invite those who directly work with the child or have relevant knowledge about the child and family. Other professionals who may likely be involved in any follow-up action may be invited.

Any professional who is personally involved in the case (e.g., the person alleged to be the perpetrator or related by consanguinity or affinity to the alleged perpetrator) shall be excluded from the case management team and in any case conference pertinent to the subject child victim.

4. In any context other than that of child protection, information given and shared during the case conference is confidential and shall not be disclosed to any other person or agency without the permission of the contributor and the case manager.

5. The focus of the case conference is not only the prosecution of the abuser but primarily for the protection of the child.

6. It is not only the subject child who shall be the sole focus of intervention but all the other children in the household. There must be risk and needs assessment of all the children in the household.

7. The members shall consider the following:

   * The level of risk to the child and other children in the household;
   * Welfare planning to protect the child, such as,
     * To return the child to live with parents/guardian
     * To live with relatives
     * To remove from home and be placed in a temporary shelter or at a foster home
   * Parenting capability;
   * The opinion of the subject child; and
   * The need to involve other members of the family.

8. The members shall perform the following tasks:

   * Examine the cause for concerns and analyze the available
information;

* Share, if available, the results of the joint investigation/interview and the decision of the immediate case assessment;

* Assess the level of risk and whether the child and siblings should be placed under protective custody;

* Agree and record clearly an inter-agency plan to protect the child(ren);

* Identify other professionals and/or agencies who may be necessary to implement welfare plan and follow-up interventions to protect the child; and

* Decide how the child and the child’s parents will be informed of the case conference outcome and decisions, if they are not present in the conference.

9. The members shall perform the following tasks:

* Oversee the development of the case;

* Ensure and monitor the implementation of decisions arrived at the case conference;

* Inform all individuals and agencies involved in the treatment or care of the child or parents of all relevant aspects concerning the case;

* Discuss the need to call for subsequent case conference, as circumstances may require;

* Ensure that before a child is removed from temporary placement, all relevant personnel and/or organizations are informed of the impending change;

* Ensure that in the event of a change of case manager, all relevant information and documents are endorsed to the next case manager; and

* Prepare the child of any decisions affecting the child victim.
10. If, subsequently, any individual or agency is unable to implement an agreed plan of action, the concerned individual or agency must inform the case manager as soon as possible.

11. Whenever appropriate and considering the evolving capacity of the child, his/her views must be heard and considered in all decisions affecting or involving him/her.

The child may be invited to attend the case conference subject to his/her readiness and capacity. If appearing in the conference will pose emotional or psychological harm or risk to the child, such appearance should not be required.

12. Parents or guardians may be required to appear in the case conference especially in cases as follows:

* When their views on the child’s custody is necessary particularly when suspension or termination of parental authority would be the likely recommendation;

* When their views are necessary for planning appropriate interventions for the child’s best interest; and

* When monitoring actions taken or progress of actions taken in relation to the intervention plan.
Inquest / Preliminary Investigation

The Prosecutor General, Provincial Prosecutor, or City Prosecutor exercises a quasi-judicial role in the conduct of inquest or preliminary investigation of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation cases. Whether it is an inquest or a preliminary investigation, the Investigating Prosecutor shall exert best efforts to make the investigation process as child-appropriate and sensitive and observe the following:

1. Child abuse cases shall be prioritized, over and above all other cases.

   If the case is under inquest investigation, upon receipt of the accomplished preliminary investigation (PI) form, affidavit of arrest, investigation report, sworn statements of complainant/s and witness/es, and other supporting evidence, commence and terminate the inquest investigation and file the criminal information with the appropriate court/s within the 12, 18, or 36-hour reglementary period stated under Article 125 (delay in the delivery of detained persons to the proper judicial authorities) of the Revised Penal Code.

   If the case is under preliminary investigation, issue a notice of preliminary investigation to all parties upon receipt of a complaint or referral form with attached sworn statements and other supporting evidence endorsed by the LEA. Set the case for preliminary investigation and resolve the matter within 60 days from receipt of the same.

   The CSPC Chairperson may assign a prosecutor to assist the LEA in case build up.

2. Send all preliminary investigation subpoena and processes to the child’s given address. Furnish the LEA that conducted the investigation (e.g., for Minor AAA c/o RIDMD IV-A, et. al.) of all subpoena and other processes.

3. Observe color-coding of case folders (e.g., pink for child abuse-related cases, violet for VAW-related cases).

4. A trained prosecutor shall conduct the investigation in a language or dialect understood by the child. Legal jargon must not be used in the presence of a child.

   The investigating prosecutor must explain to the child legal terminologies uttered during the proceedings.
As much as possible, the investigating prosecutor shall require the presence of a social worker in all stages of the preliminary investigation.

5. The calendar of cases for preliminary investigation must not indicate the name of the child to protect his/her identity and privacy. Instead, the calendar of cases shall use the child’s alias as indicated in the LEA endorsement letter and in the child’s sworn statement.

6. During preliminary investigation, the presence of the child shall only be required when:

* Taking his/her oath before an administering officer when subscribing his/her sworn statement and/or reply-affidavit; and

* Answering clarificatory questioning by the Investigating Prosecutor

On any other preliminary investigation settings, the child need not be present and may be represented by his/her parents, guardian, social worker, or counsel.

7. Before administering the oath, explain to the child the nature and obligation of an oath and ascertain that he/she understands it.

8. If the affidavit of the child is clear and sufficient, no clarificatory questions shall be propounded to avoid multiple interviews that could re-traumatize the child.

If parties are represented by respective counsels, send notices to counsels directing them to submit their list of questions for the child three (3) working days before the scheduled preliminary investigation. Only the investigating prosecutor shall talk to the child and propound clarificatory questions using simple, developmentally-appropriate, and non-threatening words.

9. Face-to-face confrontation between the child and the alleged perpetrator must be avoided at all times. Screens, one-way mirror, and other devices that could shield the child from the perpetrator shall be used. To avoid threatening the child, the identification of the perpetrator shall be done after clarificatory hearing is completed.

10. Before requesting the child to affix his/her signature or thumb mark in any
minutes or record of the proceedings, the Investigating prosecutor must take time to explain to the child the contents of any documents he/she is about to sign.

11. Direct all parties and their counsels, if there are any, not to discuss the case and the proceedings with anyone who is not directly involved therein.

12. The media must not be allowed to cover any part of the investigation, interview or take photos of the child and other parties involved in the case. Refer to media guidelines.

13. No complaint shall be dismissed on the mere basis of an affidavit of desistance or recantation submitted by the child and his/her family or guardian. The Investigating prosecutor shall exert all efforts to find out the real cause for the submission of the affidavit of desistance. Attached as Annex “F” is DOJ Circular No. 54.

14. The criminal information shall not indicate the name of the child. The alias as indicated in the child’s affidavit shall be used to protect the child’s identity.

   The real name of the child shall be typewritten at the back page of the resolution and the criminal information.
The Role of the Social Worker and the LEO at Inquest or Preliminary Investigation

The LSWDO social worker (or SWAD team or SWO II, in the absence of a licensed LSWDO social worker) or NGO social worker and the LEO shall work with the child and the child’s family in the case build-up against the alleged perpetrator. Without compromising the Investigating prosecutor’s impartiality and the integrity of the proceedings, the social worker and the LEO shall continue to assist the child and endeavor to make the proceedings child and gender-sensitive.

During inquest or preliminary investigation, the social worker shall do any of the following:

1. If the child and the child’s family are not assisted by counsel, the LSWDO or NGO social worker shall accompany them to the preliminary investigation to lend moral support.

2. If the child is under protective custody or in a child-caring facility or a foster home, the LSWDO or NGO social worker shall make necessary arrangements with the house parent, the foster parent, or the LEO who conducted the investigation to accompany the child during the preliminary investigation at the Prosecutors’ Office. If the attendance of any of the foregoing cannot be secured, the LSWDO or the NGO social worker shall accompany the child.

3. If the family is pressuring the child to withdraw or desist from the case, the social worker shall inform the Investigating prosecutor. A family assessment report explaining the effect of family pressure on the child shall be submitted to the Investigating prosecutor.

4. If necessary, the social worker shall refer the child for free legal counseling and representation to any of the following:

   * Integrated Bar of the Philippines’ Legal Aid
   * NGO with pro bono services to victims of violence against women and children
   * Office of Legal Aid of any law school
   * Volunteer lawyers
   * Public Attorneys Office

5. Once the resolution and criminal information are released and the case of the subject child involved a violent crime (e.g., rape), the social worker shall assist
in filing the application for financial assistance at the Department of Justice’s Board of Claims within six (6) months from the commission of the incident. The social worker shall help the child and family fill up the application form; secure certified true copies of the resolution and criminal information; and gather the NSO-certified copy of the birth certificate, police report; and medico-legal report.

The social worker shall also assist the child and family claim financial assistance at the Commission on Human Rights. Annexed as Annex “G” is a sample application for victim’s compensation/financial assistance.

On the other hand, the investigating LEO shall help expedite the inquest or preliminary investigation by doing the following:

1. Facilitate the immediate disposition of the investigation by locating the witnesses and securing their attendance at the inquest investigation or preliminary investigation.

   In inquest investigation, the LEO must strictly observe the 12, 18, or 36-hour reglementary period stated under Article 125 (delay in the delivery of detained persons to the proper judicial authorities) under the Revised Penal Code.

2. Attend the inquest or preliminary investigation.

3. Upon receipt of any subpoena or notice of preliminary investigation, notify the child and case manager. If the child is staying in a temporary shelter, coordinate with the LSWDO or NGO social worker to accompany the child whose attendance in the preliminary investigation is required by the Investigating prosecutor.

4. Upon verification and confirmation of any information about possible flight by the alleged perpetrator, assist the child and her family in informing the Investigating prosecutor and submitting a letter-request to the Secretary of Justice to file the necessary written request to the Bureau of Immigration (BI) for respondent’s inclusion in the alert list. Attached as Annex “H” is a sample letter to the Secretary of Justice to request Bureau of Immigration for inclusion of a respondent’s name in the alert list.
Trial

A courtroom is an adult-dominated and controlled environment. It can be threatening to any witness, whether child or adult. Effective coordination among the Prosecutors’ Office, the social worker, and the LEO can set a positive tone for the child who will enter and participate in a court proceeding. With their help, the child can prepare for the court testimony and communicate effectively with the Court and follow up the expeditious resolution of cases.

The Role of the Social Worker Before and During Trial

1. Enroll the child in a “Kids Court Program,” if one is available in the area. In the absence of such program, bring the child to court before his/her appearance to ensure the child is familiar with the physical set-up, the characters (i.e., judge, prosecutor, defense counsel, court interpreter, and other court staff), and the procedure.

   Enroll the child’s parents or guardian in a similar program so they, too, will understand the court process and appreciate how they can help the child prepare for the court testimony.

2. Several days before the scheduled hearing, arrange a meeting between the child and the Public Prosecutor for rapport building and orientation for court testimony.

3. Act as guardian ad litem (GAL) or support person who will accompany the child to court.

4. If the child is not a resident of the area where the court sits, arrange temporary accommodation for the child before the child testifies.

5. Coordinate with the court social worker, if there is any, and/or the public prosecutor and provide information requiring immediate court intervention (e.g., issuance of protection or provisional orders).

6. If the social case study has not been submitted yet, furnish the Court, thru the Public Prosecutor, Private Prosecutor, if there is one, or the court social worker, a copy to help the latter determine and order other interventions.
that the child needs. If the social case study is not yet completed, submit the accomplished intake interview form and preliminary assessment report to the Court.

7. If subpoenaed by the prosecution, testify and give the assessment and recommendation. Otherwise, share relevant and crucial information and issues that affect the child’s willingness to participate in the court process with the Public Prosecutor and Court, if necessary.

8. Periodically communicate with the Public Prosecutor to monitor the status of the case filed.

9. Help the child and family understand court process and procedures.

The Role of the LEA During Trial

1. Upon receipt of *subpoena duces tecum ad testificandum*, appear and bring to court the evidence gathered.

2. Help the Public Prosecutor identify relevant evidence and locate missing witnesses.

3. When information about alleged perpetrator’s possible flight is verified and confirmed, inform the Public Prosecutor who shall request the Court to issue a hold departure order.

4. Help enforce provisional or protection orders issued by the Court.

5. Attend multi-disciplinary case conferences, if requested by the case manager.
1. Prepare the child and other witnesses before their court testimony.

2. On a case-to-case basis, identify the sequence of witnesses that will best help and facilitate the child’s testimony. If the child has post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), present first other witnesses or seek continuance of proceedings until the child is able to testify.

3. With the help and in the presence of the parent, legal guardian, or social worker, interview the child and prepare the child for court.

4. Arrange with the Court a one-day trial or marathon hearing to reduce time in court, minimize child’s school absence, and disruption of the child’s daily routine.

5. Move for exclusion of the public or conduct of hearing in chambers to protect the identity of the child and ensure the confidentiality of proceedings.

6. Ensure that there is no direct confrontation between the child and the alleged perpetrator. Screens, one-way mirrors, and other devices such as live-link monitors to shield the child from the accused must be used.

7. If the child is hearing impaired or differently-abled, move for an appointment of a sign language expert or other professionals (e.g., special education teacher) who may help him/her effectively communicate with the Court.

   If there is danger to the safety of the child, file a motion for reception of child’s testimony through alternative means, e.g., Skype or video conferencing, or motion for change of venue of the case.

8. If the child has developmental delay, and such delay incapacitates the child to competently testify in court, present the testimony of a developmental pediatrician to explain to the Court the reason why the child cannot testify.

9. If the child is suffering from PTSD, present a psychiatrist to explain the condition of the child; the adverse effects of the abuse on him/her; and share recommendations to hasten or facilitate the child’s healing and recovery.
10. After the child has testified, de-brief the child with the help of the parent, legal guardian, or social worker; explain what will happen next; and give the child the opportunity to ask questions about the process, the case, and articulate other related issues.

11. If the child is unavailable, prosecute the case by presenting other witnesses and evidence deemed sufficient to prove the alleged perpetrator’s guilt. The child is unavailable in any of the following:

   * Deceased, suffers from physical infirmity, lack of memory, mental illness, or will be exposed to severe psychological injury; or
   
   * Absent from the hearing and attendance in court by the child cannot be procured by process or other reasonable means.

   The child’s hearsay evidence (e.g., audio-taped or videotaped interview) shall be admissible if corroborated by other admissible evidence such as the testimony of the forensic interviewer and the person who recorded, preserved, and observed the chain of custody of the audio or video interview.

12. Upon the recommendation of the social worker, request the Court to issue provisional and/or protection orders for the child.

13. Tap the assistance of PNP and NBI to locate missing witnesses.

14. Upon receipt of verified and confirmed information about alleged perpetrator’s possible flight, request the Court to issue a hold departure order.

15. Communicate with the Court the child’s immediate and long-term concerns and issues.

16. Keep the child informed about the development of the case.

17. If requested by the case manager, attend a case conference to help thresh out child’s issues and concerns that also impact the case.
The Role of the Judge and the Court Staff

1. Except for election and habeas corpus cases, trial of child abuse cases must take precedence over all other cases.

2. Dismissal of a child abuse case is prohibited solely on the basis of an affidavit of desistance or recantation submitted by the child and/or the child’s family.

3. Any record regarding the child shall be confidential and kept under seal. The name of the child must not be indicated in the calendar of cases and in the Court decision. During the arraignment, the name of the child must not be publicly read in open court. The child’s alias as indicated in the sworn statement, resolution, and criminal information shall be used to protect the child’s identity.

4. Set the schedule of the child’s testimony at the time most appropriate and sensitive to the child’s age and condition. The child should testify only when well rested. Long delays and waiting time must be avoided.

5. The child shall not be exposed to the public. The Court shall prepare a waiting room for child victims separate from the waiting room used by children in conflict with the law, other witnesses, and litigants.

6. The child may testify in open court only after the public has been excluded. Alternatively, hearing in chamber can be conducted to prevent exposing the child to the public.

7. Before the child testifies, the Court must, in simple language, introduce the main characters (judge, prosecutor, defense counsel) and their roles; explain the basic rules in a Court proceeding; and give the child an opportunity to ask questions.

8. Without violating the alleged perpetrator’s right to confront the witness face to face, the Court shall use screens, one-way mirrors, other devices, or live-link monitors to receive the testimony of the child and to prevent direct confrontation with the alleged perpetrator.

9. The use of testimonial aids (e.g., dolls, anatomically-correct dolls, puppets, anatomical drawings, and other appropriate demonstrative device) shall be permitted to facilitate child’s testimony.
10. The Court shall ensure that examination of the child be conducted with the use of simple, developmentally appropriate, non-threatening, and non-victim blaming words.

11. Proper court decorum must be maintained. Badgering and other oppressive behavior towards the child is prohibited.

12. Whenever necessary and to facilitate the child’s testimony, the Court shall appoint any of the following:

* **Support person** - preferably, a person chosen by the child who can accompany the child during Court testimony to lend the child moral support.

* **Facilitator** - a person who can pose questions to the child if unable to understand or respond to questions asked; may be a child psychologist or psychiatrist, social worker, guidance counselor, teacher, religious or tribal leader, parent, or relative.

* **Interpreter** - a person whom the child understands and who understands a child who does not understand English or Filipino language, or is unable to communicate due to developmental level, fear, shyness, disability, condition, or other similar reason. The interpreter shall take an oath or affirmation to make a true and accurate interpretation.

* **Guardian ad Litem (GAL)** - a person who shall explain legal proceedings to the child; advice the Court regarding the child’s ability to understand the proceedings and questions propounded; advise the Public Prosecutor concerning the ability of the child to cooperate as a witness for the prosecution; attend the trial; and monitor and coordinate child’s concerns and needs with the Court.

13. In controversial child abuse cases, a gag order shall be issued to protect the identity of the child and the confidentiality of the proceedings.

14. On its own or upon motion by any party, the Court may issue protection orders to protect the privacy and safety of the child and/or to order other appropriate intervention (e.g., immediate medical attention, referral to mental health professional, placement in a temporary shelter, and the like).
15. After the child has testified, the Court must order the DSWD, the LSWDO, or the NGO social worker to continue monitoring the child’s safety and requirements for other intervention.

**Healing, Recovery, and Reintegration**

The child can be further protected and the adverse effects of the abuse may be reduced through programs and services designed for the child victim’s recovery and reintegration with the family and the community. The social worker, with the help of the other team members, plays a crucial role in determining other psychosocial interventions geared towards healing, recovery and reintegration. These psychosocial interventions, however, must be commenced right after the first contact with the child and not when the child is about to be reintegrated to the community. The social worker must consider the following:

1. Convene the multidisciplinary team and discuss the case plan based on the comprehensive assessment made with specific goals and interventions for the protection, recovery and reintegration of the child victim.

2. Actively involve the participation of the child, the child’s family, and the barangay in the development of the recovery and reintegration plan.

   Tap the barangay help desk person as focal person with whom the monitoring of the child and family’s shall be coordinated with.

3. If the child is in the custody of the family, the social worker shall continue providing the interventions as agreed upon with the child, family, and the barangay.

4. The parenting capability of parents or guardians must be fully assessed. If found to be lacking or poor, the parents and guardians must be enrolled in parenting capability enhancement program. Other interventions for the family such as family case conferencing and therapy shall also be explored and extended, if necessary.

   If the child is under protective custody, determine the time line and duration of the child’s stay in the temporary shelter or foster home.
If the child is under protective custody in a child-caring agency/facility or foster home, identify appropriate interventions to address the needs of the child victim such as individual and group counseling, therapeutic activities, life skills education, vocational training, etc.

The interventions must prepare the child for reintegration with the family, if they are found capable to care, nurture and protect their child. Otherwise, placement in other parental arrangements or adoption shall be explored.

The child, who is nearing 18 years old and who expressed a desire for independent living after discharge from the temporary shelter, shall be given assistance and sufficient information to help him/her make such transition.

In close coordination with LSWDO social worker (or SWAD team or SWO II), the temporary shelter or foster home's social worker will be responsible for the implementation of these interventions.

5. The LSWDO/NGO social worker shall assist the child’s family to address their identified problems such inadequate income to meet basic needs, poor health, out-of-school children, lack of knowledge on proper parenting, and rights of children, etc. Interventions may be in the form of parent education, self-employment assistance, vocational/skills training, educational assistance for the children, family counseling/therapy, etc.

Before any reintegration is done, the case manager must ensure that the parents and other family members are able to provide a safe, protective and nurturing environment for the child.

The case manager shall conduct an evaluation conference with the multidisciplinary team to assess the readiness of the child and the family for the eventual reintegration.

6. Once the child is discharged from the child-caring agency or foster home, the social worker must facilitate the provision of after-care services to sustain the gains and achieve healing and recovery process.

If the parents are found to be unfit and incompetent, the child shall be placed under an alternative family care.

Arrangements for the child’s continuing education and medical services, etc. shall be made by the social worker before discharge.
7. In close coordination with the social worker, the barangay help desk person shall constantly monitor the child’s progress in the community.

8. If both the child victim and the minor perpetrator live in the same community, the LSWDO social worker shall ensure that there are two (2) social workers who are separately handling and monitoring each child.

9. The child and the family should be prepared by the social worker before the transfer to address fears, apprehension, doubts, among others to build and sustain the child’s and family’s trust on the receiving social worker.

Aside for the submission of transfer summary to the new social worker in case of transfer of case, the following should also be accomplished:

* Submit pertinent reports and records to the agency receiving the case
* Call a case conference for the transfer.

The conference will be called by either the agency that will transfer the case or the agency that will receive the case.

The case conference shall be convened after the receiving agency received the pertinent reports/records; the social worker that will transfer the case shall accompany the child to the receiving agency at which the conference may be conducted.

Other reasons for closure can be transfer of residence of the child and family outside the jurisdiction of the social worker. In such case, arrangement for the transfer of the case to the social worker of the area shall be made by sending a transfer summary for the guidance of the new social worker.