



CONNECTICUT

Department of Children  
and Families



2025-2029

Child and Family Services Plan  
(CFSP)

Disaster Plan

## Contents

Overview & Background .....	3
Lessons Learned from Covid-19 Pandemic Response.....	3
DCF Approach to Disaster Planning & Continuity of Operations .....	5
Disaster Preparation & Response .....	6
Alternate & Continuity Facilities .....	7
Alternate/Continuity Facility Logistics .....	8
Alternate/Continuity Facility Orientation .....	8
Disaster Response Equity .....	8
Disaster Plan Key Components and Procedures .....	9
Disaster Response for Children in Care (Personnel Accountability) .....	9
Continuity of Child Welfare Case Management.....	10
Disaster Response Communications.....	11
Information and Data Continuity & Integrity .....	12
Cross-Agency, Inter-State, & Federal Partners Information Sharing .....	13

## Overview & Background

The goal of a Disaster Plan is to ensure that the State of Connecticut can continue its vital governmental services and operations under all conditions. For this to take place, state agencies must have plans in place to carry out their departmental essential program functions without interruption, including those activities that enable an agency or office to carry out emergency response actions, provide vital services, protect the safety and well-being of the citizens of the State, and maintain the economic base of the State.

The State has undertaken several Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) activities. In 2006, the State began a planning initiative to create a State Influenza Pandemic COOP. Led by the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and Connecticut Department of Information Technology (DOIT), state task groups were organized to plan around this eventuality. The planning focused on state employees and how essential agency functions would be continued during high absences of state employees due to their own illness or caring for the illness in others or for fear of coming to work and contracting the illness.

After the development of agency Influenza Pandemic COOPs, DAS has requested annually that agencies submit their plans and participate in training and exercises. In addition, some agencies have developed COOP for other types of events, such as loss of facilities, natural disasters, and other catastrophic events.

In 2013-2014, the State developed an all-hazards Base COOP Plan, with state agency annexes for those agencies most critical in an emergency response situation. The preparation in developing a comprehensive plan was instrumental in guiding the agency through the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan allowed the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF, Department) to continuously meet all the needs of the families served. The Plan has been and continues to be updated for non-pandemic disasters, based on what we learned during the pandemic and to reflect current practices and mobility efficiencies gained during the pandemic, specifically the expansion of telework capabilities.

The Department's Disaster Plan was fully activated, tested, and revised as necessary over the past 12 months.

## Lessons Learned from Covid-19 Pandemic Response

As detailed by the Brookings Institute's Center for Economic Security and Opportunity, COVID-19 created a perfect storm of factors for the U.S. child welfare system, including "a sharp increase in unreported cases of child abuse and neglect, as children were cut off from interactions with teachers and professionals, confined at home with caregivers and relatives, and families dealing with the stress of job loss and economic uncertainty." Individuals most impacted by the pandemic were those that were already economically and socially marginalized due to historical inequities, including low-income families with children, children, youth, and families of color, youth in foster care and those who aged out, as well as children and youth living with disabilities.

According to a study published in 2021 by the US Department of Health & Human Services, COVID-19 had significant impacts on the development, emotional and behavioral health, and social and economic well-being of children and youth, including:

- The COVID-19 pandemic created a disruption in early care and education (ECE) services for children and families.
- Virtual services proved challenging for many young children and families and the ECE programs serving them.
- Food insecurity intensified as millions of children lost access to free or subsidized school lunches and healthy snacks.
- Social isolation, disruption in routines, stress, and concerns about the health and safety of loved ones had a negative impact on the emotional and behavioral health of young children.
- Children (age zero to five) from lower income households, single-parent families, and Black households, as well as young children with disabilities, experienced the largest increases in emotional or behavior problems, including depression.
- During the pandemic, youth's mental health challenges increased and access to school-based mental health services decreased.
- For youth and college students, the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on educational plans, current labor market participation, and future employment expectations.
- The disruption of daily lives and schedules caused by COVID-19 increased risk factors of maltreatment for families and resulted in fewer opportunities for professionals to detect risk and support families.
- As social services agencies curtailed in-person services and courts closed to all but essential activities, opportunities for strengthening families as well as for reunifying children in foster care became limited.
- Youth in and transitioning out of foster care are at particular risk for experiencing impacts from the pandemic due to their experiences, existing hardships, and structural barriers.

Responding to COVID-19 required immediate and fundamental shifts in the way in which child welfare agencies and the workforce operated. With this change, DCF must understand the new dynamics affecting both “the work” and “the workforce” of the Department to better assess the evolving needs of the children served across Connecticut.

The Kentucky Child Welfare Workforce Wellness Initiative conducted a study using biometric analytic devices which shed light on understanding the immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on child welfare professionals in terms of their physiological health. The study revealed that participants experienced 17.5 hours per day in a state of elevated physiological stress and less than 2 hours in a state of physiological relaxation. As noted by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI), the health and wellness of the child welfare workforce is critical to both the individual worker and the families they serve, and if unaddressed can lead to poor health for workers, turnover and retention problems, and impact the effectiveness of services for families and children.

The DCF strategy will include a holistic look at the factors facing its workforce in this post-pandemic environment. The needs of the child welfare workforce will continue to evolve following the COVID-19 pandemic. According to NCWWI, some of the common responses in requests for

creating an optimal work environment included leveraging virtual platforms in child welfare work, as well as creating programs to better support work from home options. The survey indicated several positive outcomes from child welfare professionals working in a remote capacity. Some of the benefits included increased client engagement (fewer barriers to access due to transportation), schedule flexibility, and a better work-life balance. In addition to a focus on traditional human capital management strategies (e.g., talent acquisition, retention, workforce development, career planning and progression, etc.), it will be important to address the broader supports provided to the workforce to promote worker health and well-being.

Planned activities targeted at improving performance toward CFSP goal and objectives for DCF's workforce are included in *CFSP Chapter 2: Workforce, beginning on p. 51*.

## DCF Approach to Disaster Planning & Continuity of Operations

The Department of Children and Families' mission is to work together with families and communities to improve child safety, ensure that more children have permanent families, and advance the overall well-being of children. To accomplish this mission, DCF must ensure its operations are performed efficiently with minimal disruption, especially during an emergency. This document provides planning and program guidance for implementing DCF's All Hazards COOP to ensure the organization can conduct its essential missions and functions under all hazards and conditions. While the severity and consequences of an emergency cannot be predicted, effective contingency planning can minimize the impact on DCF missions, personnel, and facilities.

For this All-Hazards COOP, essential program functions are those activities that enable an agency or office to carry out emergency response actions, provide vital services, protect the safety and well-being of the citizens of the State, and maintain the economic base of the State. The COOP also enhances the State's readiness by focusing on the Executive Branch agencies/offices support of the State's emergency response and recovery efforts as identified in the [State Response Framework \(SRF\)](#).

To best be prepared for disaster situations, DCF has formulated a baseline set of assumptions that address the overarching planning assumptions used in developing the Pandemic COOP. The assumptions highlight the agency staff, functions, other individuals (children and families), and organizations that provide valuable resources and services.

### Agency Staff Assumptions:

- There will be an uneven distribution of staff across the agency's offices and facilities statewide.
- Skill sets of staff shall be identified and may be redeployed to help maintain essential agency functions in locations where staff absences have compromised operations.
- Staff may be affected personally and be fearful of exposure and may want to work from home if applicable.
- All staffing resources shall be utilized, and staff may need to work out of their job class.

### Organizational Assumptions:

- There will be an impact on the children and families in our care.

- There will be an effect on the individuals and organizations on which we depend, such as foster parents, residential care and community-based service providers, as well as vendors.
- Actionable plans and procedures will be necessary to assist in the ability to remain operational during a pandemic. Plans and procedures may include social distancing protocols, personal protection equipment (PPE), and temporary suspension of some non-essential activities.

Pre-planning strategies are critical to maintain essential operations throughout a pandemic or natural disaster, including:

- Identification of Essential Personnel
- Staff communication and dissemination of CDC and state guidance
- Daily health check, state testing, and contact tracing protocols
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Dissemination of laptops for teleworking capacity
- Facility assessment of needs and capacity planning
- Provider coordination and planning
- Case planning strategies
- Procuring funds for cleaning supplies, PPE, and vendors for cleaning contacts

Planned activities targeted at improving performance toward CFSP goal and objectives for safety are included at the end of *CFSP Chapter 2: Safety, p. 31*.

## Disaster Preparation & Response

In order to address disaster situations, it is important to maintain effective strategies to ensure that Uninterruptible and Critical Functions identified in the All Hazards COOP are not interrupted to ensure operations are maintained and functioning. Response steps include the following

- Convene Agency Unified Command
- Activate the agency's COOP and initiate communications by using the personnel notification rosters and Everbridge Mass Notification System, if necessary.
- Hold agency's response meeting at predetermined site.
- Assemble supporting elements required for reestablishing and performing essential functions including documents, vital files, records, databases, critical software and necessary equipment.
- Coordinate computer connectivity and phone line transfers to the designated location.
- Identify if Teleworking capabilities are necessary.
- Ensure drive away kits are complete and ready for transfer.
- Coordinate procurement of any additional equipment and other needs as required through vendors or State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC)
- Begin movement of agency key personnel to the continuity location in addition to identified COOP Incident Management Team (IMT), if necessary.
- Develop status report and track restoration efforts of all essential functions.
- Provide daily briefings and communications as it relates to the hazard identified.

The Careline Operations section of the COOP is specific to continuity planning required for a loss of data/telecommunications network connection within Central Office, specifically for the CARELINE 24/7 operations.

Careline staff will be notified of the data/telecommunications outage through the *Everbridge Mass Notification System*.

- Employees who arrive for duty and were advised of a data/telecommunications outage at 505 Hudson St. will report to their designated work areas.
- Employees will be asked to sign in at the guard station in the rear or front lobby.
- If the issue is not going to be resolved in a *two (2) hour* time frame, steps will be taken to invoke the Central Office Response / COOP.
- If remote access to data/telecommunications systems is verified through standard telework systems and processes, staff may be relocated to home.
- The relocation of any DCF staff to a WRA will be coordinated by the Chief of Engineering and the Safety Officer.

In the event of an emergency and/or immediate evacuation, staff will continue to work from Central Office 5<sup>th</sup> floor, pending the following factors: AC/heating issues, weather reports, staffing issues. In the event that the data/telecommunications outage extends more than 4 hours, COOP relocation plans shall be initiated. If the CARELINE Operations division is required to relocate to an alternate facility, without relocation of the entire Central Office/Central Office IMT, the alternate/continuity facility is located at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School (CJTS) at 1225 Silver Street, Middletown, CT 06457.

## Alternate & Continuity Facilities

DCF alternate/continuity facilities provide the following in sufficient quantities to sustain operations for up to 30 days or until normal business activities can be resumed:

- Space and equipment, including computer equipment and software. The alternate/continuity facility can accommodate personnel as identified in this plan. Facility floor plans are available through the Engineering Division at Central Office. Equipment inventory is designated at each site through identified fiscal liaisons, and the Division of Information Systems (IS) is responsible for oversight of computer equipment and software.
- Capability to perform external essential functions within 12 hours of plan activation for up to 30 days or until normal operations can be resumed.
- Reliable logistical support, services, and infrastructure systems. Details on these infrastructure systems are available at Central Office from the Division of IS.
- Consideration for health, safety, security, and emotional well-being of personnel.
- Considerations including standard operational requirements including computer/phone access, workspace, recreational space, secure access/security guard presence, and proximity to restaurants and/or medical facilities.
- Interoperable communications for effective interaction.
- Capabilities to access and use Essential Records.

- Systems and configurations that are used in daily activities. IT support and details on the systems and configurations are available through the agency's
- Emergency/back-up power capability. Details on the power capability are available at the Division of Engineering and through each local site.

The above-listed resources are available at each alternate/continuity facility.

## Alternate/Continuity Facility Logistics

DCF's continuity facilities maintain pre-positioned or detailed site preparation and activation plans to achieve full operational capability within 12 hours of notification. The site preparations (coordinated by the Engineering Division) and activation plans identified in this plan also include transportation guidance.

DCF maintains a transportation support plan that describes procedures for no-warning and with-warning events. During these events, advance team and continuity personnel are transported to the alternate/continuity facility via state vehicles, with assistance from the Central Transportation Unit. Notifications are made through communications with IMT personnel and or the Everbridge System.

## Alternate/Continuity Facility Orientation

DCF regularly familiarizes its continuity personnel with its continuity facilities. DCF accomplishes this orientation through various communications and updates with staff orientation sessions, distribution of plans, annual reviews, and on-site briefings. This familiarization training is reflected in organization training records located at 505 Hudson Street, Hartford CT.

## Disaster Response Equity

DCF is committed to ensuring equity in its disaster response efforts. In times of crisis, it is imperative that every child and family receives the support they need, regardless of their background or circumstances. DCF recognizes that disasters can disproportionately impact marginalized communities; therefore, we are dedicated to implementing strategies that address these disparities and promote fair treatment for all.

Equity in disaster response means that resources and assistance are distributed in a manner that acknowledges and addresses the unique challenges faced by different populations. DCF will ensure that our response plans are inclusive, taking into account the specific needs of diverse communities, including those with disabilities, those from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and those who are economically disadvantaged. Our goal is to provide tailored support that helps all families recover and rebuild with dignity and respect.

To achieve this, DCF will engage in ongoing collaboration with community organizations, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders to better understand and address the varied needs of Connecticut's children and families. By leveraging these partnerships, we aim to enhance our outreach, improve access to services, and foster a more resilient and equitable response system. Through these concerted efforts, DCF reaffirms its commitment to equity, ensuring that all children and families receive the care and support they deserve during times of disaster.



# Disaster Plan Key Components and Procedures

This Disaster Plan is a comprehensive framework designed to ensure the safety, security, and continuity of services during emergencies. Key components of the plan include robust information and data continuity measures, which safeguard critical data and ensure uninterrupted access to essential information. The plan also encompasses detailed procedures for maintaining data integrity, protecting it from unauthorized alterations or corruption. By integrating regular data backups, redundant systems, disaster recovery strategies, data encryption, and stringent access controls, DCF's Disaster Plan aims to mitigate the impact of disasters, ensuring the resilience of its operations and the continued support for the communities it serves.

## Disaster Response for Children in Care (Personnel Accountability)

Disaster response for children in care is of paramount importance due to their vulnerability and dependency on adult supervision and support. Personnel accountability during a disaster ensures the safety, well-being, and continuity of care for children.

### **Safety and Security**

**Immediate Protection:** Personnel accountability ensures that all children are accounted for and safe from harm. This involves knowing the whereabouts of every child and ensuring they are not exposed to dangerous situations.

**Emergency Evacuation:** In the event of an evacuation, accurate accounting of children and staff ensure that children in care are evacuated promptly and safely.

### **Emotional and Psychological Support**

**Reassurance:** Children in care often face heightened anxiety and fear during disasters. Familiar caregivers provide crucial emotional support, reducing trauma and helping them cope with the situation.

**Continuity of Care:** Maintaining consistent contact with familiar caregivers helps provide stability and reassurance during chaotic times.

### **Coordination and Communication**

**Efficient Response:** Accountability allows for effective coordination among caregivers, emergency responders, and authorities. Clear communication ensures that everyone involved is aware of their roles and responsibilities.

**Resource Allocation:** Knowing the number and needs of children in care helps allocate resources such as food, shelter, and medical supplies appropriately.

### **Legal and Ethical Responsibilities**

**Duty of Care:** Caregivers have a legal and ethical obligation to protect the children in their care. Accountability ensures that these responsibilities are met, and children's rights and well-being are prioritized.

**Regulatory Compliance:** Many child welfare agencies operate under strict regulations that require detailed records and accountability during emergencies. Compliance with these regulations helps avoid legal repercussions and maintains trust in the care system.

### **Health and Medical Needs**

**Access to Medical Care:** Accountability ensures that children with specific health needs or medical conditions receive the necessary attention and care during a disaster.

**Preventing Disease Spread:** Accurate tracking and care can help prevent the spread of illnesses, especially in emergency shelters or temporary housing situations.

### **Reunification with Families**

**Accurate Records:** Keeping detailed records of children and their statuses helps in reuniting them with their families as quickly and safely as possible after the disaster.

**Reducing Trauma:** Quick reunification minimizes the emotional and psychological impact on children and their families.

### **Post-Disaster Recovery**

**Assessment and Support:** Accountability allows for a thorough assessment of the needs and conditions of children after the disaster, facilitating appropriate long-term support and recovery efforts.

**Documentation for Future Preparedness:** Detailed records and lessons learned from the disaster response contribute to improving future disaster preparedness and response plans.

In summary, personnel accountability during a disaster response for children in care is essential to ensure their safety, provide necessary emotional and physical support, comply with legal responsibilities, and facilitate efficient and effective disaster management and recovery.

## **Continuity of Child Welfare Case Management**

The continuity of child welfare case management during a disaster is crucial for DCF to ensure that vulnerable children continue to receive the protection, care, and support they need. Maintaining uninterrupted case management has several critical implications.

In terms of ongoing monitoring, continuity ensures that children's safety is continuously monitored, and any immediate risks are promptly addressed, even during a disaster. Also, regular check-ins and case reviews help prevent neglect, abuse, or any other harm that might occur if case management is disrupted. Continuity of care also provides a sense of stability and normalcy for children who are already in vulnerable situations, helping to mitigate trauma and anxiety associated with the disaster. Children and families will receive ongoing support and resources, which are essential for coping with the stress and disruption caused by the disaster.

Child welfare agencies are legally mandated to provide continuous care and oversight. Maintaining case management ensures compliance with these legal requirements, avoiding potential legal

repercussions. Continuity ensures adherence to established protocols and procedures, ensuring that all actions taken are within the scope of legal and regulatory frameworks.

In the event of staff changes or relocations due to the disaster, continuity ensures that case information is transferred seamlessly, preventing any loss of critical information. Ongoing case management facilitates clear and consistent communication among all parties involved, including social workers, caregivers, and external agencies to help ensure children and families continue to have access to necessary services such as medical care, mental health support, and educational resources. Additionally, continuity allows for the proper allocation of resources and services to those most in need, ensuring that children and families receive timely and appropriate support.

Ongoing case management ensures that all interactions and interventions are properly documented, which is vital for accountability and future reference. Maintaining detailed records and documentation promotes transparency and trust in the child welfare system, ensuring that all actions are traceable and justifiable.

The continuity of child welfare case management during a disaster is essential for ensuring the safety, stability, and well-being of children in care. It supports legal compliance, effective coordination, and resource allocation, and facilitates family reunification and permanency planning, all of which are crucial for the holistic support and protection of vulnerable children.

Planned activities targeted at improving performance toward CFSP goal and objectives for permanency are included in *CFSP Chapter 2: Permanency, beginning on p. 35*.

## Disaster Response Communications

Effective disaster response communications are vital for the Department to ensure that important information is disseminated promptly, accurately, and efficiently during a disaster. This communication is crucial for coordinating efforts, maintaining safety, and providing support to children, families, and staff.

DCF can ensure child and family safety by having timely alerts. Effective communication systems allow DCF to quickly alert children, families, and caregivers about imminent dangers, such as evacuations or shelter-in-place orders. Providing clear instructions on safety protocols and emergency procedures helps protect children and families from harm.

### **Coordination Among Stakeholders**

Clear communication within DCF ensures that all staff members are informed about their roles and responsibilities, facilitating a cohesive and organized response and effective communication with other agencies, emergency responders, and community organizations to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive disaster response.

For resource allocation and logistics, accurate communication helps in the swift deployment of resources, such as food, medical supplies, and temporary housing, to the areas and individuals most in need. Coordination helps prevent duplication of efforts and ensures that resources are used effectively and efficiently. Keeping families informed about the status of services, such as child welfare case management, medical assistance, and counseling, ensures continuity and minimizes disruption. Communication channels are an important consideration since they allow

for the adaptation and modification of services to meet the changing needs of children and families during a disaster.

Effective disaster response communications are essential for DCF to protect children and families, coordinate efforts, allocate resources efficiently, maintain service continuity, provide emotional support, ensure accountability, fulfill legal obligations, and facilitate post-disaster recovery. Robust communication strategies enable DCF to respond swiftly and effectively to the needs of vulnerable populations during disasters.

## Information and Data Continuity & Integrity

Information and Data Continuity & Integrity are critical components of disaster management and recovery as detailed below.

### Importance of Information and Data Continuity

1. **Business Continuity:** Maintaining access to critical information and data during a disaster ensures that business operations can continue with minimal disruption, reducing downtime and maintaining service levels to customers and stakeholders.
2. **Decision Making:** Accurate and timely information is essential for making informed decisions during a disaster. Continuity ensures that decision-makers have access to the necessary data to manage the crisis effectively.
3. **Compliance and Legal Requirements:** Many industries are subject to regulations that require the protection and availability of data. Ensuring data continuity helps in meeting these legal and regulatory requirements, avoiding potential fines and legal actions.
4. **Customer Trust and Reputation:** Continuity of information and data helps in maintaining customer trust. If customers know their data is safe and business operations are reliable even during a disaster, it enhances the organization's reputation.

### Importance of Data Integrity

1. **Accuracy and Reliability:** Data integrity ensures that information is accurate, reliable, and free from unauthorized alterations. This is crucial for maintaining the trustworthiness of data, which is vital for operational and strategic decisions.
2. **Prevention of Data Corruption:** During a disaster, systems and databases are vulnerable to corruption due to unexpected failures. Ensuring data integrity protects against data loss and corruption, preserving the quality and usability of data.
3. **Compliance and Reporting:** Many regulatory frameworks require organizations to maintain data integrity to ensure accurate reporting and compliance. Protecting data integrity helps in meeting these standards and avoiding legal complications.
4. **Security and Risk Management:** Data integrity is closely tied to data security. Protecting data from unauthorized access and modifications reduces the risk of breaches and other security incidents, which are particularly critical during a disaster when systems may be more vulnerable.

Ensuring Information and Data Continuity & Integrity during a disaster involves implementing strategies and measures to maintain, protect, and quickly restore access to data, ensuring its

accuracy and reliability. Strategies for ensuring Information and Data Continuity & Integrity are as follows:

1. **Data Backups:** Regularly back up data to secure, off-site locations to ensure it can be restored in case of a disaster.
2. **Redundant Systems:** Implement redundant systems and failover mechanisms to maintain access to critical information and data.
3. **Disaster Recovery Planning:** Develop and regularly update disaster recovery plans that include specific measures for protecting and restoring data integrity and continuity.
4. **Data Encryption:** Use encryption to protect data in transit and at rest, ensuring it remains secure and unaltered during a disaster.
5. **Regular Audits and Testing:** Conduct regular audits and disaster recovery tests to ensure systems and processes are effective in maintaining data continuity and integrity.
6. **Access Controls and Monitoring:** Implement strict access controls and continuous monitoring to detect and prevent unauthorized access or alterations to data.

By focusing on these aspects, DCF can better prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters, ensuring that critical information and data remain accessible, accurate, and reliable throughout the event.

## Cross-Agency, Inter-State, & Federal Partners Information Sharing

During a disaster, DCF relies heavily on effective information sharing with cross-agency, inter-state, and federal partners to ensure a well-coordinated and comprehensive response. This collaboration is crucial for safeguarding the welfare of children and families, optimizing resource allocation, and enhancing the overall efficacy of disaster management efforts. By engaging in seamless information exchange, DCF can ensure that all critical aspects of disaster response are addressed promptly and efficiently.

One of the primary benefits of information sharing with various agencies is the ability to coordinate a unified response. By exchanging real-time data and updates with local, state, and federal agencies, DCF can ensure that resources such as medical supplies, food, shelter, and personnel are allocated to where they are most needed. This coordination helps to avoid duplication of efforts and ensures that all agencies are working towards common goals with a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities. This unified approach not only enhances the effectiveness of the response but also ensures that children and families receive comprehensive care and support.

Inter-state information sharing is particularly important for addressing the needs of displaced families and children. During a disaster, families may be forced to relocate across state lines, and ensuring continuity of care and services is paramount. By collaborating with child welfare agencies in other states, DCF can track the whereabouts of displaced children, facilitate their reunification with families, and ensure they continue to receive necessary services without interruption. This coordination is essential for maintaining the safety and well-being of vulnerable populations during times of crisis.

Moreover, information sharing with federal partners unlocks access to additional resources and expertise that can significantly bolster DCF's disaster response efforts. Federal agencies can

provide vital aid, grants, and specialized resources that may not be available at the state or local level. Additionally, federal guidelines, best practices, and expert advice can enhance the overall effectiveness of the response strategies implemented by DCF. This collaboration ensures that all available resources are leveraged to support children and families during and after a disaster.

Cross-agency, inter-state, and federal information sharing is a cornerstone of DCF's disaster response strategy. It facilitates a coordinated and efficient response, ensures the continuity of care for displaced families, and leverages additional resources and expertise to support vulnerable populations. Through effective collaboration and information exchange, DCF can enhance its disaster management capabilities, ensuring the safety and well-being of children and families in the face of emergencies.

Planned activities targeted at improving performance toward CFSP goal and objectives for well-being are included in *CFSP Chapter 2: Well-Being, beginning on p. 39.*