

Chapter 9

HOTLINE SUPERVISOR CONSULTATIONS

9-1. Purpose. This chapter defines, provides guidance, and describes the process and procedures of a Hotline Supervisor Consultation.

9-2. Definition. A consultation, as defined for the purposes of this chapter, is an interaction between a Hotline counselor and a supervisor or appropriate designee that formally explores the sufficiency of information collected during an assessment, the result of which impacts the final decisions made by the counselor regarding the screening decision or response priority of an intake.

9-3. Requirements. Quality consultations are key opportunities for Hotline supervisors to assess and develop a counselor's critical thinking skills to enhance and guide assessment and decision-making.

a. Whereas a Hotline Supervisor Review may involve a formal query by a supervisor into decisions and actions performed by a Hotline Counselor after a call has been completed, a Hotline Supervisor Consultation is requested and implemented by a counselor during an assessment. Supervisor consultations should not replace or substitute for supervisor reviews, and should be encouraged as appropriate.

b. A supervisor consultation will include, but is not limited to, assessment by the supervisor of the information gathered from the reporter by the counselor, the recommended maltreatment(s) selected, the quality and sufficiency of documentation presented to the supervisor by the counselor, any appropriate history of the subjects reported, and the overall decision made by the counselor at the time of the consultation based on information available. The supervisor will request or identify the counselor's purpose for the consultation in order to encourage critical thinking and facilitate guidance versus directive consultation.

c. Supervisor consultations should occur whenever needed, but are required in the following instances:

(1) When a counselor suspects that a report does not meet criteria for acceptance, but there is knowledge of a child fatality in the family's history, whether alleged by the reporter or documented in FSFN, the counselor must consult with a supervisor before making the decision to screen out the report.

(2) When the counselor determines that the allegations in a report have been previously investigated by the Department, as indicated by a closed prior intake, the counselor must consult a supervisor to confirm that the report is a duplicate prior to screening it out.

(3) When a report meets all of the intake acceptance criteria except for a means to locate, but some demographic information for the participants is known, the counselor must consult a supervisor and document their efforts to search for the family in all available systems prior to making the decision to screen out the report.

9-4. Process/Procedures.

a. A consultation may commence via telephone, web-based chat, or face-to-face. The medium selected must allow for the counselor to refer to their notes on the allegations during the consultation. The supervisor should request or identify the counselor's purpose for the consultation and use open ended questions to ascertain the counselor's decision regarding the assessment. This encourages critical thinking and facilitates guidance versus directive consultation.

b. The main information constructs that the supervisor will consider during a consultation related to a counselor's assessment are:

(1) Sufficiency of information collected to support the recommended decisions. The counselor has fully assessed/described the context and/or specifics of the situation and conditions being reported.

(2) Discrepancies in information presented by the counselor are identified and reconciled prior to consulting on appropriate decision making.

(3) Identification of any information that the counselor needs to further pursued from the reporter or from other resources to make an appropriate decision. *When information is deemed insufficient, the supervisor is responsible for facilitating discussion around the relevant information to "complete the picture."*

(4) Determining the quality of the counselor's assessment in regards to the recommended maltreatment(s), household participant identification and inclusion, recommended screening decision, and response priority, as appropriate.

(5) Determining if the information provided warrants or suggests the need for communication with external partners, such as law enforcement.

9-5. Documentation.

a. When a Supervisor Consultation affects the decisions made by the counselor regarding the screening decision or response priority, the counselor will note in the FSFN intake the following: "Supervisor Consultation with (name of Supervisor) occurred, resulting in the decision to (initiate/not initiate) an investigation, and/or resulting in the decision to assign a (24 hour/immediate) response time."

b. When a Supervisor Consultation impacts the decisions made by the counselor regarding the screening decision or response priority, the Hotline Supervisor or designee will note the sufficiency and quality of the following information constructs in the reporter narrative of the FSFN intake:

(1) Overall sufficiency of information collected;

(2) Effective reconciliation of information;

(3) Quality of recommended decisions;

(4) Demonstration of critical thinking; and,

(5) Demonstration of knowledge of Florida Statute, Florida Administrative Code, and Operating Policy and Procedure.

