

## *Morrow County Job & Family Services*

# *Morrow County Family & Children Services*



## *Intake, Assessment & Investigation Unit*

*619 W. Marion Rd. Door A  
Mt. Gilead, OH 43338  
# (419) 947-9111*



## *How to Contact Us?*

*Morrow County Family & Children  
Services is a unit of Morrow County  
Job & Family Services and is located  
at:*

*619 W. Marion Rd. Door A  
Mt. Gilead, OH 43338*

*Office hours are:  
Monday thru Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
(or by appointment)*

*Phone # (419) 947-9111  
Toll Free # 877-947-5437  
Fax # (419) 947-5447*

*After Hour Emergencies:  
For emergencies which occur after  
normal business hours, on the weekend,  
or holidays, the on-call worker can be  
contacted by calling the Morrow County  
Sheriff's Office at # (419) 946-4444*

## *Vision Statement*

*Morrow County Job and Family  
Services will assist Morrow County  
residents to meet their needs to  
become self-sufficient.*

## *Mission Statement*

*To provide eligible County  
residents the highest quality of  
professional services...medical,  
financial, and supportive...creating  
the opportunity to achieve self-  
sufficiency and strengthen families.*

## *Values*

*Consistent treatment of the  
clients and staff. A match between  
attitudes and actions.*

## **What does the Intake, Assessment & Investigation Unit do?**

The unit is mandated by law to investigate reports of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional maltreatment and neglect, as defined by the state. The unit is required to complete the following during an investigation:

- ✓ make face to face contact with the alleged child victim
- ✓ ensure the safety of the alleged child victim
- ✓ complete a risk assessment with all household members
- ✓ complete an interview with the alleged perpetrator
- ✓ notify all required parties of the outcome of the investigation
- ✓ work with law enforcement and other community agencies

## **Initiating a Report**

The state mandates a report is initiated within 24 hours of being received. There are several ways in which a report can be initiated.

- 1) The intake worker can make face to face contact with the alleged child victim. -Or-
- 2) The worker may call a collateral resource, which is a person(s) who has seen the child(ren) and can state the general well-being and safety of the child(ren).

The intake worker is required to talk to the alleged child victim and discuss the allegations reported. The intake worker may not need the permission of the custodial parent/ guardian to speak with the child, if the allegations present immediate harm to the child; or if the alleged perpetrator has immediate access to the child.

## **What is a Risk Assessment?**

The risk assessment is a tool provided by the state for caseworkers to use in determining the future risk of a child(ren) in their home. The state requires the risk assessment to be completed before a case can be closed. The intake worker is required to complete the risk assessment with all household members, even if that member is not related to the

family. If the family has shared parenting or joint custody of the child(ren), the agency is required to investigate both homes; even if one home is not inside Morrow County. The risk assessment enables the worker to get a view of how the family is currently functioning and determines the overall future risk level to the child(ren). The levels of risk are low risk to high risk. The risk assessment is mandated to be completed within 30 days of when the report was received. If circumstances warrant extra time to complete the investigation, the case can be extended out to 45 days. The majority of reports received are closed after the risk assessment and investigation has been completed.

## **What if the child is at risk of serious harm?**

If a child is found to be at risk of serious harm, Morrow County Family & Children Services may request the parent/guardian of the alleged child victim to sign a safety plan. A safety plan shows written steps which the parent/ guardian will follow in order to ensure the safety of the child(ren). Morrow County Family and Children Services can also provide the family with voluntary or court ordered on-going services through the Family Intervention Unit. These services can help reduce the risk of harm to the alleged child victim in order to maintain them in their own home, or assist in reunification if the child(ren) has been removed. A small percent of children are removed from their home, but if needed, a child may be placed with a relative, family friend, or in foster care.

## **Interviewing an Alleged Perpetrator**

Morrow County Family & Children Services is mandated to interview all alleged perpetrators. This includes perpetrators under the age of 18 yrs. old. The caseworkers are trained in interviewing techniques. However, when a case may have pending criminal charges, Family and Children services can request law enforcement to complete perpetrator interviews.

## **Reporter Sources**

Under Ohio law any person(s) who report child abuse or neglect in good faith are protected, and may not be disclosed. Mandated reporters, such as doctors, teachers, law enforcement, and counselors, are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect.

## **Investigative Outcomes**

Morrow County Family & Children Services is required by law to notify the custodial parent, alleged child victim, and alleged perpetrator of the outcome of the investigation. A resolution/ disposition letter is sent to the custodial parent and child. This letter indicates the level of risk to the child in the home. The letter also states whether the allegation was unsubstantiated, indicated, or substantiated. Unsubstantiated means there was no evidence of abuse or neglect. Indicated means there was some evidence present. Substantiated means there was significant evidence present, such as a statement from the alleged child victim, physical evidence, witness statements, information from collateral resources, an/or admittance from the alleged perpetrator.

## **Client Rights**

Any client of Morrow County Family and Children Service, whether they are a victim or perpetrator, has the following rights:

- ✓ The right to be treated with respect and courtesy.
- ✓ The right to receive services without discrimination on the basis of age, race, gender, religion, or income.
- ✓ The right to know the outcome of the agency's investigation.
- ✓ The right to file a grievance with the agency if they disagree with the handling of the investigation.
- ✓ The right to not cooperate with an investigation (unless court ordered) and know the resulting consequences.

Any alleged perpetrator, who disagrees with the outcome of an investigation, can file a grievance with the agency to have the disposition change. A copy of the grievance police is available upon request.