

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Administrative Procedures

Field Safety while on Department Business, Field Accompaniment

While out in the field, direct service workers must be cautious and alert, paying special attention to the environment and the events going on around them. Workers must avoid confrontations and shall not hesitate to leave an area to do so.

Also, workers must be vigilant in the event that they are being followed, while on foot or by car, and should change their daily routes either on their way home or while performing their daily responsibilities.

There are certain circumstances wherein an employee should request, or a supervisor direct, that he/she not make a home visit or intervene in a situation unless accompanied by a police officer or fellow worker. When an employee or supervisor is aware of a potentially dangerous situation, the employee shall call for police assistance and shall not be expected to make the visit unless accompanied by the police.

A fellow worker may also accompany an employee making a home visit; however, the accompanying worker must be fully informed of the situation, its possible dangers and be willing to

be present throughout the visit, and to assist by contacting the police when hostile or threatening actions arise.

Such circumstances include but are not limited to situations where:

- A documented history of violence including assault and/or battery convictions, weapon violation, etc., exists;
- There is a documented or alleged history of criminal activity, such as drug usage and/or drug dealing in the home or in the immediate area;
- Protective custody is anticipated; or
- The SCR report indicates that the alleged perpetrator is dangerous or is known for potential violence.

In the event that the worker is being followed, the worker should:

- Immediately call 911 or the appropriate emergency phone number of the local police department;
- Go to the nearest congested area;
- File a police report;
- Remember as much detail about the person following you as possible; and
- Upon returning to the office, notify your supervisor and complete a CFS 119, Unusual Incident Report form, as instructed in Procedures 331, Unusual Incidents.

There are some other situations in which field accompaniment should also be considered. These situations should always be discussed with and approved by the employee's supervisor.

Such situations include but are not limited to:

- Geographic locations that are very isolated or in an area known to be dangerous;
- Visits made late at night/very early mornings; or
- (When) a single employee will be responsible for a number of children of different ages and sexes.

SOURCE: ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES