Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST)

Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families
Policy: 700.0100
Effective Date: ***October 20, 2011*** ***Version 1***

The Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST) is the Department's automated information system to record our work on behalf of our clients and the state. It is the required method of documenting the Department's work. RICHIST includes information relating to:

- Individuals and families (service management),
- Client services (provider management),
- Finances (financial management) and
- Staff (staff management).

Timely, accurate and accessible information is necessary to ensure that decisions related to child safety and well-being and Department resource allocations for children and families are fact-based. RICHIST allows for better integration of services, makes information more accessible and improves communication. Current and reliable information in RICHIST enables the Department to pay caretakers and service providers and to obtain benefits for children in care, and to seek and receive reimbursement from the federal government in a timely manner.

Reports generated by RICHIST are essential for administrative decisions and to justify the Department's resource requests to the Governor and General Assembly. The federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (P.L.105-89) requires RICHIST generated data to be reported to the federal National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) and the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD). State and federal authorities use these data reports to assess performance to improve outcomes for child safety and well-being.

All staff performing case related functions must be able to retrieve the case information necessary for them to make fact-based decisions related to their specific child welfare and youth-related responsibilities. For this reason, a standardized format for documentation is provided through RICHIST to record case events, including initial and periodic assessments, services and progress. All documentation is objective, factual and chronological providing complete information in a concise manner. To successfully maintain an integrated system, all client, case, provider and staff information is completed in RICHIST in a timely manner including, but not limited to:

- case assignment,
- child abuse investigations,
- personal and familial characteristics,
- court activity and legal status,
- placement and living arrangements,
- service plans,
- case narratives and assessments,
- adoption information,
- vendor payroll/payment, and
- eligibility information.

~~Access to RICHIST is controlled by the use of passwords, which are not to be shared with other staff. Because protecting the confidentiality of the children, youth and families served by the department is of paramount importance, all RICHIST users are required to accept a confidentiality pledge in order to utilize this system. All state and federal law and policies regarding confidentiality are fully applicable to use of Departmental computers and information systems, paper or electronic.~~

~~Related Procedure~~

~~Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST)~~

~~Related Policy~~

~~Access to Computerized Information Maintained by the Department~~

~~Computer Use~~~~Computer_Use~~

~~Documenting the Results of CPS Investigations in RICHIST~~

Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST)

Procedure from Policy 700.0100: Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST) Rhode_Island_Children_Information_System_RICHIST_Policy

A. All client, case, provider, and staff information must be completed in RICHIST in its entirety, including all functions within RICHIST that involve children and youth who are in the Department's care. Recording information in RICHIST:

1. Critical information, including critical information contained in case activity notes, must be entered into RICHIST by the end of the primary worker's shift. Critical information includes all information that must be accessible to other staff or divisions about the care of a child in the absence of the primary worker.
2. The following information must be recorded in RICHIST within one working day:
   a. case openings and closings,
   b. placements, and
   c. changes in legal status.
3. Other changes in case circumstances, such as updates to person and provider information or additional information regarding active children must be recorded in RICHIST within two working days.
4. Case activity notes contain all data necessary to facilitate ongoing case work decisions and to document the Department's efforts.
   a. Entries include who was involved in the contact, when the contact occurred, how the contact was made, where the contact occurred and what transpired.
   b. Case activity notes are factual, objective, concise and comprehensive.
   c. Case activity notes are kept current and routine information is entered into RICHIST no later than 15 working days after the event described. Routine information includes routine contacts in which no critical information is received or no major changes are made.
   d. Case activity notes are frozen after they are entered into RICHIST. A supervisor, if necessary, can edit the note.
   e. Supervisors periodically review worker's case activity notes to ensure compliance with policy.
5. Time frames for completing individual functions in RICHIST are addressed in the policies, procedures and practices related to the specific function. This includes, but is not limited to:
   a. investigations and intakes,
   b. adoptions,
   c. court and legal activities,
   d. treatment and service plans,
   e. assessments,
   f. case activity notes,
   g. provider and licensing information,
   h. fiscal and eligibility actions,
   i. staff and worker information.

B. ~~Primary responsibility for entering information into RICHIST rests with the assigned worker. However, other staff, including supervisory and clerical staff, may also enter information in RICHIST when appropriate or necessary.~~

C. ~~If more than one staff member from the major operating divisions of the Department is assigned to the same case, he/she must notify other staff assigned to the case when:~~

1. ~~Initially assigned to the case;~~
2. ~~Terminating an assignment to the case;~~
3. ~~Preparing to close the case to the Department.~~

D. ~~The Department provides technical and training resources to assist staff with completing work in RICHIST. These include training through the Child Welfare Institute, on-site technical support and the Help Desk.~~

E. ~~The RICHIST Help System provides staff on-line instruction on completing required work processes:~~

1. ~~RICHIST Contents/Index/Find: Provides users with the ability to search for and find help on all RICHIST topics and windows.~~
2. ~~RICHIST Window Help: Provides users with general instructions on the desktop windows and tab features.~~
3. ~~How Do I? Provides step-by-step instructions on the use of all RICHIST procedures and functions related to all topics.~~
4. ~~Policy Contents/Index/Find: Provides users with on-line access to Department policies and procedures.~~

F. ~~All utilization of RICHIST conforms with **DCYF Policy 100.0015, Access to Computerized Information Maintained by the Department**. All laws and policies regarding confidentiality are fully applicable to use of Departmental computers and information systems, paper or electronic.~~