

ALTERNATIVE NIA GUIDE FOR CASE WORKERS AND SUPERVISORS

WHEN CAN AN ALTERNATIVE NIA BE USED?

In 3 Circumstances, “The Family Resides Outside of Nevada” or “Patently Unfounded” or “Child fatality and there are no other children in the home”

1. When the child and family, or any other adult who is legally responsible for the care of the child, **do not reside or no longer reside in the state of Nevada.**

(Note: An Alternative NIA must NOT be used if the agency pursues custody beyond protective custody or if the family resides in another Nevada jurisdiction)

2. When the investigation has been initiated through face-to-face contact and the allegations are found to be **patently unfounded.**

Patently Unfounded means all information contained in the report has no basis in fact as demonstrated by compelling evidence which directly refutes the allegation/information contained in the report.

Patently unfounded may be used when:

There is no present or impending danger

All information and evidence collected is consistent and indicates the information and allegation(s) are untrue

The family must not have any of the following CPS history:

- Any reports of domestic violence within the last 12 months; and
- Any screened-in reports for any caregiver within the last 12 months; and
- No prior reports at any time for the same or similar allegations; and
- The Agency does not have a current open case on the family.

Patently unfounded may not be used for the following allegations:

- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse with **any** injuries, regardless of what the family reports the injuries are from
- Domestic violence
- Any allegation against a child who is vulnerable due to untreated injury, illness or other physical, mental or emotional condition

3. When there is **a child fatality and there are no other children in the home.**

4. When there is **a new allegation received on an open Permanency Case.**

ALTERNATIVE NIA GUIDE FOR CASE WORKERS AND SUPERVISORS

WHAT SHOULD A CASE WORKER DO IF THE ALTERNATIVE NIA MAY APPLY?

The Case Worker should discuss this with the supervisor. If both agree the Alternative NIA may be used, the Supervisor must discuss with the Manager/Coordinator who must give approval to use the Alternative NIA.

WHAT IS THE SUPERVISOR'S ROLE WITH THE ALTERNATIVE NIA?

- Discuss with Manager/Coordinator to request approval to use the Alternative NIA.
- Ensure Alternative NIA requirements are met and documented as outlined here.
- Let Manager/Coordinator know when Alternative NIA is completed and ready for review.
- Conduct regular supervision with Case Worker to ensure Alternative NIA requirements are met and there are no new concerns identified that would indicate Alternative NIA may not be appropriate for use.

HOW DOES THE CASE WORKER DOCUMENT THE ALTERNATIVE NIA IN UNITY?

- ✓ Documentation must be clear enough that anyone reading the case would understand why decisions were made and all gaps in information must be reconciled
- ✓ Complete case notes/NIA contact log to include all information gathered and notifications made
- ✓ Complete the Present Danger Assessment.
- ✓ For the NIA:
 - ✓ Complete the Extent of Maltreatment section
 - ✓ Complete the Nature section
 - Include all information gathered from all sources
 - Include justification for use of Alternative NIA and which circumstance applies
 - If patently unfounded, document all criteria (see list above) that allowed for the Alternative NIA to be used in this circumstance
 - ✓ Type "Alternative NIA" in Adult Functioning, Child Functioning, Discipline and Parenting General sections
 - ✓ Mark all protective capacities as "unknown"
 - ✓ Mark all impending danger threats as "no"
 - ✓ Conclude the NIA as "safe"
- ✓ Complete investigation closure windows pursuant to Agency procedure.

WHAT OTHER THINGS DOES THE CASE WORKER NEED TO COMPLETE FOR AN ALTERNATIVE NIA?

- ✓ For families residing outside of Nevada, make a cross report to the appropriate jurisdiction. Document in a case note:
 - How the agency confirmed the family resides outside of Nevada
 - What jurisdiction the cross report was made to,
 - Who the agency spoke with; and,
 - Reference number, if available.
 - Complete the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) inquiry
- ✓ Complete the Nevada Rapid Indicator Tool (NRIT) for any child over the age of 10.
- ✓ If applicable to the circumstance, complete the TANF application.

WHEN DOES THE INVESTIGATION NEED TO BE CONCLUDED IN UNITY?

Within 25 calendar days from the receipt of the report.