

# ALTERNATIVE NIA GUIDE MANAGERS/COORDINATORS

## WHEN CAN AN ALTERNATIVE NIA BE USED?

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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.**

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

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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.

## WHO DOCUMENTS APPROVAL OF THE USE OF THE ALTERNATIVE NIA?

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The Manager/Coordinator that approves the use of an Alternative NIA must complete case note documentation of their approval utilizing an "ALTERNATIVENIA" case note type.

## WHAT NEEDS TO BE DOCUMENTED IN THE CASE NOTE?

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- Select "ALTERNATIVENIA" case note type.
- Identify which circumstance allowed for the use of the Alternative NIA: "The Family Resides Outside of Nevada" or "Patently Unfounded" or "Child Fatality – no other children in the home"
- Identify information that justifies use of the Alternative NIA:
  - The Family Resides Outside of Nevada: The family does not reside or no longer resides in Nevada and how the Case Worker has verified that the family does not reside in Nevada.
  - Patently Unfounded: Explain how the circumstances are patently unfounded and how it was verified that the case meets all criteria (see list above).
  - Child Fatality – there are no other children in the home.

## WHEN DOES THE INVESTIGATION NEED TO BE CONCLUDED IN UNITY?

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Within 25 calendar days from the receipt of the report. When collateral information has been verified verbally, but the Agency is waiting for documentation or records, the Manager/Coordinator may extend the timeframe. This must be documented in a case note.

## WHO APPROVES THE ALTERNATIVE NIA WHEN IT IS COMPLETED?

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The Manager/Coordinator must review and approve the Alternative NIA. The Manager or Coordinator must:

- ✓ Verify the Alternative NIA was appropriate for use as it met criteria of one of the circumstances.
- ✓ Verify the case worker has completed necessary documentation.
- ✓ Document an "ALTERNATIVENIA" case note type and include which situation allowed for an Alternative NIA to be used and verification that criteria was met.
- ✓ Enter Alternative NIA information into the Agency's Alternative NIA tracking spreadsheet.

## WHO CONCLUDES THE INVESTIGATION IN UNITY?

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The Supervisor and Manager/Coordinator may decide who is concluding the investigation in UNITY.

## WHAT IF IT IS DETERMINED THE ALTERNATIVE NIA SHOULD NOT BE USED?

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Consult with Supervisor and Case Worker to discuss next steps, which must include completing a full NIA.