



# MICHAEL A. ADKINSON, JR., SHERIFF

## Office of the Sheriff, Walton County

### Standard Operating Procedure

Title: **Handle With Care**

Number: **1.21.1**

Effective Date: **01/03/23**

Amends: **08/21/19**

#### Applicable Standards

CFA: None

FCAC: None

Approved by:

Sheriff Michael A. Adkinson, Jr.

**I. Purpose:** To establish guidelines for the Handle With Care Program.

**II. Authority:**

Chapter 30, Florida Statutes

General Order 1.21 Citizen Services

**III. Definitions:**

**Handle With Care** – A notification to the Walton County Sheriff’s Office in regards to an adult or child with a physical, behavioral, or psychological special need or a Walton County student with an emotional special need. The notification serves as a reminder to first responders of an individual they may come in contact with or encounter during a call for service.

**Agency Liaison** – A Walton County Sheriff’s Office member designated to coordinate between the citizen and the Lead Communication Office and manage the Handle with Care Program.

**School Resource Deputy (SRD)** – A Walton County Sheriff’s Office Deputy assigned to a Walton County School.

**Citizen Reporting Form** – The Agency approved form used by citizens to notify the Agency of a Handle With Care individual (to include juveniles).

**Student Reporting Form** – The Agency approved form used by Agency Members to identify a Handle With Care student attending a Walton County School.

**IV. General:** None

**V. Procedures:**

A. Citizen Reporting

1. [Handle With Care Citizen Reporting Form:](#)

- a) The citizen or family member may download the Handle With Care Citizen Reporting Form from the Walton County Sheriff's Office website at <https://waltonso.org/community-programs/Handlewithcare/> or request a form from the Agency Liaison.
- b) The form can be turned in to any Walton County Sheriff's Office member or emailed to [handlewithcare@waltonso.org](mailto:handlewithcare@waltonso.org).
- c) Once a family member or citizen completes the form and turns it in to the Walton County Sheriff's Office, it will be forwarded to the Agency Liaison for processing.

2. Agency Member Responsibilities:

- a) The Agency member shall be cognizant of any individuals they come in contact with whom may meet the criteria of an individual who may need special attention or services. The Agency member shall make contact with the individual's family member or caretaker and make them aware of our Handle With Care program.
  - (1) The following are examples of some of the conditions that would merit a family member or caretaker requesting for an individual to be placed in the Handle with Care program:
    - (a) Autism / Asperger's
    - (b) Diagnosed Behavior Disorders
    - (c) Cerebral Palsy
    - (d) Dementia
    - (e) Diagnosed Developmental Delays
    - (f) Diagnosed Mental Disorders
    - (g) Down Syndrome
    - (h) Hearing Impaired
    - (i) Immobility
    - (j) Neurological Disabilities
    - (k) Seizure Disorder
    - (l) Speech Impaired
    - (m) Visual Impaired
- b) If the family member or caretaker wishes to enroll an individual the Agency member will assist in downloading, completing and/or turning in a completed form to the Agency Liaison.

(1) Completing and turning in form:

- (a) Electronically: The citizen or family member can complete the form digitally and email the completed form to [handlewithcare@waltonso.org](mailto:handlewithcare@waltonso.org).
  - (b) Manually: The citizen or family member can print the form out and complete the form manually and drop the completed form off at one of the designated Sheriff's Office Substations.
  - (c) The family member or caretaker should provide all information available requested on the form for best service.
- c) If an Agency member receives a completed form, the form will be forwarded to the Agency Liaison by the end of the member's shift.

3. Agency Liaison Responsibilities:

- a) The Agency Liaison will verify the form is completed and ensure there is a contact person and phone number listed on the form.
- b) The Agency Liaison will call the contact person on the form within three (3) business days to verify the information is correct and then complete the bottom of the form.
- c) If the form is accepted, the Agency Liaison will mail or meet with the family member or caretaker citizen and provide them with the appropriate amount of "Handle With Care" stickers based on the needs of the citizen.
- d) If the Agency Liaison determines the applicant does not meet Agency standards, the applicant form will be forwarded to Crime Prevention Supervisor. The Crime Prevention Supervisor will meet with the family member or caretaker concerning the qualifications and intensions of the program.
- e) The Agency Liaison will have a Handle with Care call generated. The Handle With Care client, emergency contact(s) and any vehicles associated with the client will be placed in the CAD prior to closing the call.
- f) The Agency Liaison will complete the Alert(s) request per the instructions in Training Bulletin TB-18-14.

4. Annual Verification

- a) Prior to each new year (January 1) each District Lieutenant will provide a list of Handle With Care clients within their district to their assigned Community Service Officer (CSO) or their designee.
- b) The CSO or designee will conduct a yearly follow up verification of each Handle With Care client assigned to them.

- c) Annual verification will begin January 1 and be completed by March 1 of every year.
- d) The CSO or designee will verify and update the following information
  - (1) Personal information
  - (2) Emergency contact information.
  - (3) Associated vehicle information.

B. Student Reporting:

1. Student Reporting Form:

- a) Mandatory reporting requirements:
  - (1) All domestic disturbances with child(ren) present
  - (2) Child abuse cases (where child is victim or witness)
  - (3) All arrests where the child is present
  - (4) All runaway cases
  - (5) A death in the child's household.
  - (6) A child that has been evicted or is homeless
  - (7) Involuntary examination of the child or their parent
  - (8) Narcotics complaint in the household
  - (9) Fire at the child's residence
  - (10) Traffic crash involving serious injury or death of a family member
  - (11) Other known incident exposing the child to a possible traumatic event.

NOTE: The Student Reporting Form does not substitute for calling the Abuse Hotline when applicable and is only applicable to Walton County Students.

- b) Reporting Procedure:
  - (1) If an Agency member determines a student has been exposed to an incident that has the potential to cause any physical, emotional, or psychological harm to a juvenile who is enrolled in any school within Walton County, the Agency member shall:
    - (a) Complete the Handle with Care Student Reporting Form either digitally, or by completing the physical form if the online form is unavailable.

- (b) Forward the form to the SRD group email if using the physical version.
  - (2) The SRD supervisor will do the following:
    - (a) The SRD supervisor will assign the Handle with Care to a SRD.
    - (b) The SRD supervisor will forward the form to the SRD by email
    - (c) If the form was submitted electronically, the SRD Supervisor will review and verify the information in the form and approve the form for additional processing. The automated processing of the form includes the emailing of the information to the assigned SRD and all appropriate school staff at the respective campus.
  - (3) The SRD will do the following:
    - (a) Generate a call for service under SRD Activity.
    - (b) Document an interaction with the child(ren) involved in the incident and check their welfare.
    - (c) Determine if there are any other services needed for the child and make any other notifications or referrals as needed
  - (4) The SRD supervisor will ensure the Student Reporting process was completed.
- C. The Lead Communication Officer, Analysts, and/or their designees will ensure the requested alerts are properly added to each individual's global jacket.