

§ 7B-1406.5. Local Teams; county work.

(a) Local Team for Each County. – Each county in the State shall have its own Local Team or participate in a multicounty Local Team, as determined in accordance with subsection (b) of this section.

(b) Participation in a Single County Versus Multicounty Local Team. – Each county's local board of county commissioners shall evaluate and determine whether the county will have its own Local Team or be part of a multicounty team. This determination shall be made through consulting all of the following:

- (1) The director of the local health department.
- (2) The director of the local departments of social services, or if applicable, the consolidated human services director.
- (3) The guidance created by the State Office that addresses the formation and implementation of single versus multicounty teams and includes a model agreement to be used between or among counties who agree to be part of a multicounty team.

(c) Mandatory Review of Deaths. – Each Local Team shall review all child deaths of resident children under age 18 in the county or counties comprising the Local Team that fall under one of the following categories of death:

- (1) Undetermined causes.
- (2) Unintentional injury.
- (3) Violence.
- (4) Motor vehicle incidents.
- (5) Pursuant to criteria set forth in G.S. 7B-1407.5, deaths related to child maltreatment or child deaths involving a child or child's family who was reported or known to child protective services.
- (6) Sudden unexpected infant death.
- (7) Suicide.
- (8) Deaths not expected in the next six months.
- (9) Additional infant deaths according to the criteria established by the State Office under G.S. 7B-1407.6.

For cases in which a Local Team is uncertain whether a death falls under a category specified in subdivisions (1) through (9) of this subsection, the State Office shall consult with the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner and appropriate medical professionals to make that determination.

(d) Permissive Review of Deaths. – Each Local Team may review child deaths that fall outside the categories specified in subdivisions (1) through (9) of subsection (c) of this section.

(e) Permissive Review of Active Child Protective Services Cases. – At the request of a director of a local department of social services and pursuant to G.S. 7B-1410(b), a Local Team may elect to review an active case in which a child or children are being served by child protective services. The Local Team is not required to make findings or create reports based upon such reviews. However, the Local Team may develop recommendations based on such reviews to be submitted to the citizen review panel serving the area in which the Local Team is located and may also include in its recommendations to boards of county commissioners pursuant to G.S. 7B-1407.10(d) recommendations stemming from the review of such cases.

(f) Periodic Training and Best Practices. – Local Teams shall participate in periodic training provided by the State Office. Local Teams shall make every effort to employ best practices in conducting child death reviews, gathering information, selecting participants, and making reports as outlined in guidance provided by the State Office. (2023-134, s. 9H.15(f).)