

# **Memorandum of Understanding**

## **Adopt-A-Social Worker Community Partner**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets forth the terms and understanding between Care in Action Minnesota, the Community Partner \_\_\_\_\_ and the County Social Worker Partner \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ County .

### **Background**

Many families in our community are struggling to meet critical basic needs. This lack of resources can have long lasting impacts that delay healing or reunification, and perpetuate risk and inequity. Through Care in Action Minnesota's Adopt-a-Social Worker program, passionate individuals bring people together and leverage their contributions to "adopt", or partner, with a County Social Worker; in order to provide critical support that improves the quality of life of children impacted by abuse, strengthen families, and help prevent child maltreatment.

Social workers see the needs on the front-line's every day. In the era of COVID, where kids are unable to have access to mandated reporters, like teachers or regular doctor visits, Social Workers serve as our best defense against child-maltreatment. This collaboration-based, preventive model and unique opportunity to have direct impact, has been successfully adopted in multiple states. As an Adopt-a-Social Worker Community Partner, you will join a committed network of localized partnerships, providing needed goods and services for children who have experienced or are at-risk of experiencing abuse and neglect.

The Adopt-A-Social Worker program consists of individuals, community, faith, voluntary groups and organizations that commit to partnering with one designated County Social Worker and help meet the needs the best they can. Through these localized partnerships, we seek to provide a continuum of asset-based, community-initiated impact, where groups learn firsthand from their local social worker of what is going on in their community and are provided with an opportunity to respond. Those who have participated find it's a meaningful way to serve their community.

### **What to Expect**

These partnerships are arranged to be responsive to the unique needs of the community. An initial introduction meeting with CIAM staff, Social Worker Partner and the ASW Community Partner will be conducted with new partners to discuss priorities, communicate preferences, and expectations. Typically, the social worker will share needs with the group primary contact as they come up via email, or other agreed upon method. ASW Community Partners typically receive 1-2 requests per month. Sometimes requests may be for an item that someone may be willing to donate, such as an air conditioner, crib, or appliance; other times a monetary request may be made that would prevent or end homelessness for a family, or cover the cost of other crucial basic needs. Also, ASW Community Partners may request to receive regular updates on the impact and use of the resources they provide.

### **The ASW Community Partner Agrees to:**

- Designate a primary contact person to coordinate with Social Worker partner & CIAM staff.
- Primary contact receiving requests will share it with other members in the group to consider each one, in whatever format works best (Facebook, Email, next scheduled meeting, etc.).
- Let their Social Worker partner know whether they can meet the request in a timely manner.
- Provide the resources within seven days from confirming with Social Worker ability to do so. If unable to meet this timeframe, communicate timeline with Social Worker.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of those receiving your support by using vague details and thoughtful language in describing impact or personal stories publicly.
- Fill out a [Monthly Support Report Form](#), found at [www.careinactionmn.org/adopt-a-socialworker/](http://www.careinactionmn.org/adopt-a-socialworker/).
- If ASW Community Partner wishes to end their participation with the program for any reason, they will inform CIAM and Social Worker partner.
- Refrain from encouraging a recipient to join or support the partner's belief system, or to make joining or supporting the partner's belief system a condition of support. The recipient is free to join or support the partner, but the partner must not encourage or require this.

### **Social Worker Agrees to:**

- Only request resources from Partners when all other options have been exhausted.
- Requests made must be related to one or more of CIAM's [Impact Areas](#).
- If requested by their ASW Community Partner, provide a regular update on the utilization and impact of resources provided.
- If ASW Community Partner is not able to fulfill a need, Social Worker partner may also reach out to CIAM for assistance in meeting the need, using the [Social Worker Request Form](#).

### **Care in Action Minnesota (CIAM) Agrees to:**

- Be available to all partners involved, by phone, video, email or in-person contact to provide support in all facets.
- Collect, analyze and disseminate the impact of the ASW program to all partners involved.
- The Executive Director, Peter Singer, and Program Coordinator, Katherine Sims, will be the main contacts between all partners involved and can assist with any needs that emerge.

### **Reporting**

ASW Community Partners will fill out and submit a Monthly Support Report Form, that can be found on [careinactionmn.org/adopt-a-socialworker/](http://careinactionmn.org/adopt-a-socialworker/). Partnering Social Worker's may be asked to fill out occasional feedback forms or surveys as well. CIAM staff will evaluate effectiveness and

adherence to the MOU on an annual basis; consolidating partner form responses, analyzing and disseminating the impact of the ASW program to all partners involved.

**Funding & Duration**

This MOU is at-will and may be modified by mutual consent of the parties involved. This MOU is not a commitment of funds by any party. There is no set amount that ASW Community Partners must contribute. Additionally, this commitment is on a fully voluntary timeline. This MOU shall become effective upon signature by the parties involved and will remain in effect until modified or terminated by any one of the partners.

**Confidentiality for Children, Youth & Families Receiving Resources**

ASW Community Partners will work through the County Social Worker case manager and therefore will usually not meet recipients of resources or receive confidential information for any of the families who receive resources unless the family and worker request contact. Additionally, ASW Community Partners must respect the confidentiality and privacy of those receiving your support by using vague details and thoughtful language in describing impact or personal stories of those served, if sharing publicly (i.e. never sharing real names, saying “infant” instead of “8 month old girl”, etc.).

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ASW Community Partner - Team/Organization Name

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ASW Community Partner - Primary Contact Name

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County Social Worker Partner Name

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CIAM Staff

## Other Frequently Asked Questions

### **Who Can Become An Adopt-A-Social Worker Community Partner? Is there a minimum amount of people needed to “adopt” a Social Worker?**

The Adopt-A-Social Worker program consists of individuals, couples and friends, community, voluntary, faith groups and even local businesses that commit to partnering with one designated County Social Worker and continually respond to requests and help provide critical, timely, life-changing support to families in their communities that need it most.

The minimum amount of people needed to “adopt” a Social Worker is ONE! That’s right, it just takes one person to decide to make a difference in the lives of local families in need. However, inviting others to join you will not only allow you to create more direct impact, but also continually help raise awareness of the issues impacting the most vulnerable in our own community.

### **What is the timeframe for responding to a request for resources?**

Once the initial request has been made to the Partner, the Partner should mail or deliver the resources requested within 7 days. If the resources cannot be mailed, delivered, or if more time is needed, the Partner should contact the child protection case manager to make other arrangements or see if they can pick up.

### **How will the Partner know the benefits that the resources produced?**

The Partner may request a monthly update from the child protection case manager on utilization and benefits of resources received.

### **For what child and family needs will requests be made?**

County Social Workers will only request resources from Partners when all other options have been exhausted. Oftentimes, requests may be for an item that someone in the group may be able to donate, such as an air conditioner, crib, or appliance; other times a monetary request may be made that would prevent or end homelessness for a family, or cover the cost of other crucial basic needs. All requests made will fall in to at least one of CIAM’s Impact areas:

- **Sustainable Livelihoods** – Assuring access to basic needs & critical goods for youth & families (i.e. Food/Groceries, Glasses, Clothing, Dental Care, Diapers etc.).
- **Housing Stability** – Preventing & ending homelessness for youth & families. (i.e. portion of past-due rent for a single mother who had fallen behind, transitional housing for emancipating foster youth).
- **Strengthening Learning Opportunities** – Combating inequity and creating opportunity (i.e. School supplies, Career Exploration & Life Skills Classes, STEM kit & Book subscriptions for kids, etc.).
- **Childhood Enrichment** – Enhancing quality of life and bringing joy (i.e. Holiday Gifts; Arts & Cultural Opportunities; Summer Camps & After school programs; Tickets for kids).

### **Do Partners need to give for all categories of resources requested?**

ASW Community Partners always reserve the option to not fulfill a request at their discretion. The ASW Community Partner should make arrangements with their Social Worker if any category of resources will not be given or if they have a particular interest in supporting particular impact areas. For example, some local realty firms have committed to support requests contributing to housing stability in their community.