

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTEMNT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

Subject : No Response To Contact

What risk does it present

Occasionally, adults who are eligible for services and who may be at risk, are unable to be located. These individuals are listed as Active in the Department of Developmental Services' database, and may not be actual missing persons. These individuals or their guardians will not respond to calls, letters, visits, or other attempts to contact them. If they are class members, individuals may have very specific rights under a settlement agreement, and it is the responsibility of the Department to make every effort to contact and inform them. If an individual is under guardianship, the Department should be assured that the guardian is acting in the best interest of the individual when choosing to not communicating with the Department. The steps below should be carried out in the event that we have a current address, but have been unable to contact the individuals, a class member or their guardian. Each step must be documented in the Meditech record.

How is it managed?

- The SC must attempt to call the individual at his/her home number. If they cannot reach them by phone, a letter should be sent requesting the individual or their guardian contact the AO. This letter should include the SC name and phone number.
- If these contacts fail, the SC, or other accompanied AO staff, must visit the address to see if the individual and/or the guardian can be located. They should verify the address as it is written in the record. If no contact is made, leave a copy of the letter sent previously. NOTE: If there is a compelling reason why this visit may jeopardize the safety of the AO staff, then a written statement by the Area Director must accompany this protocol, including what other steps were taken to contact the class member in lieu of a home visit.
- If the visit does not yield a contact, the SC should review the list of alternative contacts they may have for the individual or the guardian (i.e., work, extended family, clinical services, Rep Payee, possible contacts from other involved agencies, Social Security Administration, etc.), and attempt to contact the individual or class member through these channels.
- If these efforts fail to establish a contact with an individual under guardianship or who is a class member, a summary should be forwarded to the Regional Director and regional risk manager for a case status (Page 67) review.