Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect Flowchart

You Suspect Child Abuse or Neglect
  • You have reason to suspect that child abuse or neglect has occurred. For instance, a child either disclosed to you or you recognized the signs of child abuse or neglect.

Call the Hotline: 1-800-482-5964
  • Organize the information for your report
  • Immediately notify the Hotline:
    * Phone: 1.800.482.5964
    * Fax: 1.501.618.8952
    Fax reports may only be made by a mandated reporter providing his or her contact information. Fax reports may only be made in non-emergency situations using the CACD Hotline Form.
    * If the Hotline worker is NOT available, you will hear the following recording while on hold: “Please hold, all calls are answered in the order they are received.”
  • A Hotline worker accepts your call.
  • You report information on what you have seen and heard.
  • You will be told whether the report will be accepted.
  • If a Hotline worker does NOT accept your report and if you disagree, you may ask to speak to the Hotline Supervisor. You may request references to appropriate resources.

Investigation
  • Once a call is accepted, the investigation will begin within 24-72 hours depending on the severity.
  • The investigator determines whether the report is valid.
    * If the report is valid, the local police department and the Prosecutor’s office will be notified of the alleged crime. A police investigator may contact you in addition to the state police or DCFS investigator.
    * If the report is NOT determined to be valid for child abuse or neglect, the investigator determines if any safety concerns exist for the child.
  • DCFS investigator determines if there are safety concerns for the child.
  • DCFS works with the family to develop a safety plan.
  • An investigator interviews you and may speak to other family members, potential witnesses or professionals as part of their investigation.
Finding

• Investigator determines “by preponderance of the evidence” whether the perpetrator committed the abuse or neglect.
  * If no abuse/neglect occurred, the case is **unsubstantiated**. However, DCFS may refer the child and family to appropriate community services.
  * If yes, child abuse/neglect occurred, the case is **substantiated**.
• The report is retained in the state Central Registry and DCFS will recommend services to stabilize the family and protect the child.
• In cases of serious abuse reported by school personnel, DCFS send a notification of true findings to the child’s school. The report is confidential.
• As a Mandated Reporter, you will receive a letter informing you of the finding in a case you report. Other specific information about the report cannot be released.
You have reason to suspect that child abuse or neglect has occurred, (i.e. a child disclosed to you or you recognized signs of child abuse or neglect)

Organize the information for your report

Immediately notify the Hotline:
Phone: 1.800.482.5964
Fax: 1.501.618.8952*

A Hotline worker is available to accept your call

You report information on what you have seen and heard

You hear the following recording while on hold: “Please hold, all calls are answered in the order they are received.”

A Hotline worker accepts your report. You have the right to ask for their full name or to speak to their supervisor if you don’t agree with their decision.

The investigation will begin within 24-72 hours depending on the severity

You will be told whether the report will be accepted. If you disagree, you may ask to speak to the Hotline Supervisor. You may request references to appropriate resources.
Investigator determines if the report is valid

The local police department and the Prosecutor’s office will be notified of the alleged crime. A police investigator may contact you in addition to the state police or DCFS investigator.

DCFS investigator determines if there are safety concerns for the child.

DCFS works with the family to develop a safety plan.

An investigator interviews you and may speak to other family members, potential witnesses or professionals as part of their investigation.

Investigator finds “by preponderance of the evidence” that the perpetrator committed child abuse or neglect.

the case is substantiated

the case is unsubstantiated

last update January 7, 2013
The report is retained in the state Central Registry and DCFS will recommend services to stabilize the family and protect the child.

DCFS may refer the child and family to community services. You have the right to request a second review of the final decision.

In cases of serious abuse reported by school personnel, DCFS sends a notification of true findings to the child’s school. The report is confidential.

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