

What are my rights?

If DHS is assessing a report of abuse, you have the rights to:

- Be treated with dignity and respect, free from discrimination;
- Have your language or other special needs accommodated;
- Be notified if you are alleged to be responsible for abuse, to be told general information about the report and why a CPS assessment is being conducted;
- Know the outcome of the CPS assessment;
- Speak to a manager if you have concerns regarding DHS's actions;
- Participate in developing a safety plan for your child;
- Visit any child removed from your home, if appropriate;
- A court hearing if your child is removed from your home;
- Be notified of and take part in hearings involving your child, be represented by a lawyer, receive copies of all documents filed with the court, call and cross-examine witnesses, request court hearings and appeal decisions made by the court.

Will I have to go to court?

- Whether or not you have to go to court depends on the circumstances for your particular family. If your child has been removed or DHS is requesting custody or removal of your child, DHS will notify parents of the date, time and place of the court hearing.
- Parents must be told when a child has been taken into custody, the reasons why the child was taken into custody, general information about the child's placement and how to contact the local DHS office.

At this hearing, the judge will determine if the child should be placed in foster care or returned to a parent.

Legal parents have the right to have an attorney present at all hearings.

What can I do to help?

- **Cooperate.** You can help by providing all requested information to the worker.
- **Participate.** You can help by participating with the safety planning and services.
- **Stay in touch.** Make sure to update your CPS worker if you move and if your circumstances change.
- **Ask questions.** Feel free to ask questions several times, if needed. You need to understand what is happening.

Contact information

Your CPS worker is:

Telephone number:

The CPS supervisor is:

Telephone number:



You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact Child Welfare at 503-945-5605. We accept all relay calls or you can dial 711.

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What you need to know about a Child Protective Services Assessment



The Oregon Department of Human Services, Child Welfare must investigate reports of abuse. This pamphlet answers questions you may have about a Child Protective Services (CPS) assessment.

Why has DHS contacted my family?

The Oregon Department of Human Services has contacted your family in response to a report of suspected abuse. DHS must assess reports of abuse to make sure children, and when applicable young adults, are safe. Reports of abuse may come from anyone in the community.

Will the police or anyone else be notified of DHS's involvement?

- The police will be notified. All suspected reports of abuse must be reported to the police.
- Police are sometimes asked to help DHS assess a report of abuse.

What can I expect during a CPS assessment?

- A CPS worker will meet with you and your family. A CPS worker will also interview your children. The worker will attempt to contact you prior to interviewing your child unless it could compromise safety.
- The CPS worker will visit your home as part of the CPS assessment.
- The CPS worker may take photographs of your home and your child.
- Your child may receive a medical exam as part of the CPS assessment. A DHS worker may ask you to help take your child to the doctor.
- A parent, guardian or caregiver may agree to voluntarily leave the home while DHS completes a CPS assessment. If a parent, guardian or caregiver voluntarily leaves the home during a sexual abuse assessment, the CPS worker will notify that person's county district attorney's (DA) office. The parent, guardian or caregiver who voluntarily left the home during the CPS assessment may ask the DA to have the county child abuse team review the case.

- DHS will contact the parents of the child, including a parent who does not live with the child, unless contact with that parent would put an adult victim or child in danger.

When will I have the results of the CPS assessment and what could those results be?

- DHS has 60 days to complete the CPS assessment. However, if there is specific information that cannot be gathered within 60 days, DHS may need extra time to complete the assessment.
- After a CPS assessment is complete, DHS will decide whether the report of abuse is founded, unable to determine or unfounded. DHS will also decide if the case needs to remain open in order to keep the child safe.

What is a CPS disposition?

The three possible CPS assessment dispositions are:

- **"Founded"** or **"substantiated"** means there is reasonable cause to believe abuse occurred.
- **"Unfounded"** or **"unsubstantiated"** means there is no evidence abuse occurred.

"Unable to determine" or **"inconclusive"** means there is some indication abuse occurred, but there is insufficient evidence to conclude there is reasonable cause to believe abuse occurred.

Can I challenge the results?

A person with a founded CPS assessment will receive a letter from DHS explaining that they have the right to request a review.

Can DHS remove children?

- Police and CPS workers can remove child without a court order to a safe location if there is a reason to believe the child is not safe in their home.
- Before DHS removes a child from an unsafe home, the CPS worker must consider whether any actions can prevent the child from being removed from the home.
- If your child is removed from the home, the CPS worker will ask about relatives or family friends who may be able to provide a safe, temporary home for your child.
- The CPS worker will give you information about the court hearing and what to expect next.

