

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 3: Intake	Effective Date: May 1, 2009
	Section 2: Creating a Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) Intake Report	Version: 3

POLICY

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will create a [Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect \(SF 114/CW0310\)](#) (Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) intake report) using the Indiana Child Welfare Information System (ICWIS) to document reports of alleged CA/N.

[NEW] DCS will utilize the domestic violence screening questions during each intake report of alleged CA/N to assess for the presence of domestic violence. Screening of all calls allows the intake worker to assess for:

1. Any pattern of domestic violence;
2. The presence and role of the child(ren) in domestic violence incidents; and
3. The presence of any factors which suggest a heightened risk of the potential for life threatening injury to the child(ren) and non-offending parent.

Note: The early identification of domestic violence is the first step in achieving positive and safe outcomes for adult and child victims.

Exception: Information and Referral reports will not be screened for domestic violence.

[NEW] Each DCS local office must establish a protocol with Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) regarding receipt of reports of domestic violence incidents where children are present. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) must be approved by the DCS Regional Manager.

DCS will hold confidential the identity of persons who report allegations of CA/N unless a court requires the reporter's identity to be disclosed at some point.

DCS will accept CA/N allegations from persons who wish to remain anonymous; however, DCS will strongly encourage all reporters to provide contact information so that follow-up can occur if more information is needed.

Code References

1. [IC 31-33-7-4: Written Reports](#)
2. [IC 31-33-18: Disclosure of Reports; Confidentiality Requirements](#)
3. [IC 20-50: Homeless Children and Foster Care Children](#)
4. [IC 34-6-2-34.5: Domestic or Family Violence](#)
5. [IC 5-26.5-1-3: Domestic Violence](#)
6. [IC 35-41-1-6.5: Crime Involving Domestic or Family Violence Defined](#)

PROCEDURE

The intake worker will:

1. Gather and document as much information as possible by thoroughly interviewing the reporter about:
 - a) The alleged incident,
 - b) The alleged child victim,
 - c) The alleged perpetrator, and
 - d) The alleged child victim's family, etc.
2. **[NEW]** Utilize the domestic violence screening questions for all CA/N reports. See below for screening questions.
 - a. Has anyone else in the family/household been hurt or assaulted?
 - b. Has anyone in the family/household made threats to hurt or kill another family/household member, pet or themselves? If yes, please describe what happened.
 - c. Do you know if the police have ever been called to the home to stop fighting? If yes, how many times? Do you know if anyone was arrested? If yes, who was arrested?
 - d. Most people think of weapons as guns or knives, but other objects can be used to hurt someone (e.g., lamps, ashtrays, lighters, etc.). Do you know if weapons have been used to threaten or harm a family member? If so, what kind of weapons? Are the weapons still present?
 - e. Are the children safe now? Are the parents safe now?

[NEW] Note: If domestic violence is suspected based on the answers to the screening questions above, see Practice Guidance for additional questions.

3. Review the information gathered and ask any additional questions needed to clarify vague, confusing, or incomplete statements;
4. Advise the reporter that his or her identity will not be disclosed by DCS to the alleged perpetrator unless the court orders the reporter's identity to be disclosed at some point;
5. Follow all confidentiality policies and procedures should the reporter ask if his or her report will be assigned for assessment. See separate policy, [2.6 Sharing Confidential Information](#);
6. Create a CA/N intake report in ICWIS. Ideally, this will occur during the initial call from the reporter. The CA/N intake report must be completed in ICWIS no later than 24 hours after the conclusion of the initial call from the reporter or after the information was received if by e-mail or mail; and
7. Evaluate the report to determine the appropriate DCS response. See separate policy, [3.4 Initial Evaluation of Child Abuse and/or Neglect \(CA/N\) Intake Reports](#).

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

The Quality of the CA/N Intake Report Impacts Child Safety

See Practice Guidance in separate policy, [3.1 Receiving Calls \(Overview\)](#) for details.

Excellent Customer Service is Imperative

See Practice Guidance in separate policy, [3.1 Receiving Calls \(Overview\)](#) for details.

Interview Guide

Note: The following interview guide is not intended to be used by the intake worker as a script, rather, it is provided to give guidance regarding the type of information that should be collected.

It is important to gather the most critical information about the victim **early on in the call**. That way, even if a call were to end before the interview was complete, DCS may have enough information to identify and locate the victim and initiate an assessment:

1. Information about the **child(ren)** that is/are the subject(s) of the reporter's concern(s):
 - a. Name, age, date of birth (DOB),
 - b. Is/are the child(ren) in danger?
 - c. Present location of child, (e.g. is the child alone at a shelter care facility, etc.)
 - d. Does the alleged perpetrator have access to the child(ren)?
 - e. What is the current physical and mental condition of the child?
 - f. If injuries, describe (e.g., location, type, etc.),
 - g. Developmental ability/any known disabilities,
 - h. Behaviors (e.g., violent, withdrawn, etc.), and
 - i. Relationship with alleged perpetrator.
 2. Information about the **alleged CA/N**:
 - a. What happened?
 - b. When it occurred?
 - c. Where it occurred?
 - d. Names of any persons who witnessed the CA/N, and
 - e. Are there other incidents of CA/N?
 3. Information on **other children** living in the household:
 - a. Name, age, DOB, and
 - b. Present location.
 4. Information about the **home environment** that could impact the safety of the child(ren), DCS staff and other responders:
 - a. Weapons (e.g., guns, knives, etc.),
 - b. Domestic violence,
 - c. Drugs (if yes, what type – meth lab suspected?), and
 - d. Dangerous pets or other animals.
 5. Information about the **alleged perpetrator(s)** and all **caretaker(s)** of the child(ren), including those that are and are not living in the household:
 - a. Name, age, DOB,
 - b. Household address,
 - c. Household type (e.g., single, married, etc.),
 - d. Behavioral issues (e.g., violence, substance abuse, mental health issues criminal history, etc.),
 - e. Prior history with DCS, and
 - f. Current stressors.
- Note:** Intake worker does not ask this question, but documents if it comes up in conversation.

6. Information about the **reporter**:
 - a. Name (if willing),
 - b. Contact information in case follow-up is necessary (if willing), and
 - c. Relationship of the reporter to the household,
7. Any additional information needed to clarify vague or unclear statements, partial information, etc.

[NEW] Additional Questions When Domestic Violence is Being Reported or is Identified Through Initial Screening Questions:

1. Do you know where the child(ren) were during the incident?
2. Do you know if the child(ren) saw or heard the incident?
3. Did the child(ren) try to stop or intervene in the violence?
4. Was the child(ren) injured during the incident? What was the impact of the incident on the child(ren) and/or adult victim?
5. How long has the fighting been going on? Does the violence seem to be getting more serious?
6. Are any of the family/household members using drugs or alcohol?
7. Has anyone threatened to take the child(ren)? Who was it? What happened?
8. Do you know if the victim has contact with other family or community members?
9. Have any of the family/household members left home to escape the fighting and violence? Where did they go? How long were they gone?
10. How have you seen the violence affect the child(ren) (The purpose of this question is to establish a pattern of violence and/or long term effects on the child(ren))?
11. Do you know who is protecting the child(ren) right now?

Clarifying Confusing or Incomplete Statements

It may be necessary for the intake worker to ask the reporter to clarify confusing or incomplete statements. Example: The reporter says, “The man molested the little girl.” In this example, the intake worker should ask for more information, such as “Please give me the details of what exactly the man did to the little girl.” This is necessary because people may have different ideas about what the term “molest” means.

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect \(SF 114/CW0310\)](#) – Available in ICWIS

RELATED INFORMATION

[NEW] Domestic Violence

Domestic violence typically involves a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors that an individual uses against his or her intimate partner with the intent to degrade, humiliate, or instill fear in him or her. These behaviors typically fall into five (5) general categories:

1. Physical assaults;
2. Sexual assaults;
3. Psychological assaults;
4. Economic coercion; and/or

5. The use of children to control the adult victim.

[NEW] Domestic violence is a serious issue with potentially fatal implications for all family members. Exposure to domestic violence can have long lasting effects on children. Children who are exposed to domestic violence in their homes are more likely to experience:

1. Childhood behavioral, emotional, and social problems;
2. Cognitive and attitude problems; and
3. Long-term problems such as higher levels of adult depression and trauma and a greater likelihood to be involved in a violent adult relationship than their peers.

[NEW] In recognition of the negative impact exposure to domestic violence may have on children and the prevalence of child abuse in families experiencing domestic violence, DCS will assure that every CA/N report is screened for the presence of domestic violence.

[NEW] Information and Referral

Refers to situations where the intake worker gives information or refers a caller based on the content of the request. Examples include but are not limited to, giving information to the caller what constitutes CA/N, giving the caller the number to child support or other social service agencies, advising the caller to contact LEA, etc. See separate policy, [3.1 Receiving Calls \(Overview\)](#) for more information.