

CARELINE AND INTAKE

Intake

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Policy

The Department of Children and Families shall, immediately after a report is made, determine whether an allegation of suspected child abuse or neglect meets the statutory and policy criteria to warrant a child protective services response.

The Department of Children and Families shall apply a differential response approach to all accepted child protective services reports. The differential response approach ensures child safety by tailoring the process by which DCF responds to reports of abuse and neglect to the severity of the case.

There shall be two available responses:

- Child Protective Investigations; and
- Family Assessment Response (FAR).

Cross reference: DCF Policy 22-2-2, "Child Protective Investigations", 22-2-1, "Family Assessment Response" and "The Family Assessment Response (FAR) Practice Guide."

Legal reference: Conn. Gen. Stat. §17a-101g.

Receiving the Referral

Allegations of suspected abuse or neglect of a child are reported through the DCF Careline.

If a person attempts to make a report by telephone without going through the Careline, he or she shall be instructed to contact the Careline directly at 1-800-842-2288.

If a report is received in written form (including a DCF-136), the ISWS shall determine if it is a follow up to a previous report and, if not, fax it immediately to the Careline.

If a person walks into a DCF office to make a report, the ISWS, or designee shall assist the person with calling the Careline.

Cross reference: DCF Policy 22-1 "Child Abuse and Neglect Careline."

Response Times and Track

Child protective services reports for which Careline designates a response time of less than 72 hours shall be assigned to the investigations track.

Determination

Following completion of the SDM Screening and Response Priority Tools, the Careline shall review all accepted child protective services reports that have been designated for a 72-hour response time and determine whether the report will be assigned to the investigations track or the Family Assessment Response (FAR) track based on "rule out" criteria.

The following rule outs shall require the investigation track:

- a new CPS report on an active ongoing services case (excluding Voluntary Service Program cases) or a new report connected to an active investigation;

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Response Times and Track Determination (Continued)

- a report involving congregate care, foster care (excludes allegations involving biological or adoptive children of the foster parent) or a person entrusted;
- a current report with allegations of sexual abuse against a parent, guardian or person given access to the child by a parent or guardian;
- prior child maltreatment fatality and substantiated perpetrator is the alleged perpetrator of this allegation; or
- an adjudication of abuse or neglect in Superior Court for Juvenile Matters within the last five years.

The remaining 72-hour reports shall be assigned to the FAR track.

Prior to case assignment, the ISWS may modify the response track from FAR to an investigation when:

- new information becomes available that makes the case ineligible for FAR (*i.e.*, a rule out has been identified); or
- a new CPS report is accepted and designated as an investigation by the Careline.

For the remaining 72-hour reports assigned to the FAR track, a track change to investigations shall be determined based on an assessment of the family following face-to-face contact.

Note: CPS reports designated by Careline as requiring an investigation response cannot be changed to a Family Assessment Response.
