

THE INTAKE PROCESS

Utah Law requires any person, who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse, neglect or dependency to immediately notify the nearest DCFS office, a peace officer or law enforcement agency. This notification is called a referral.

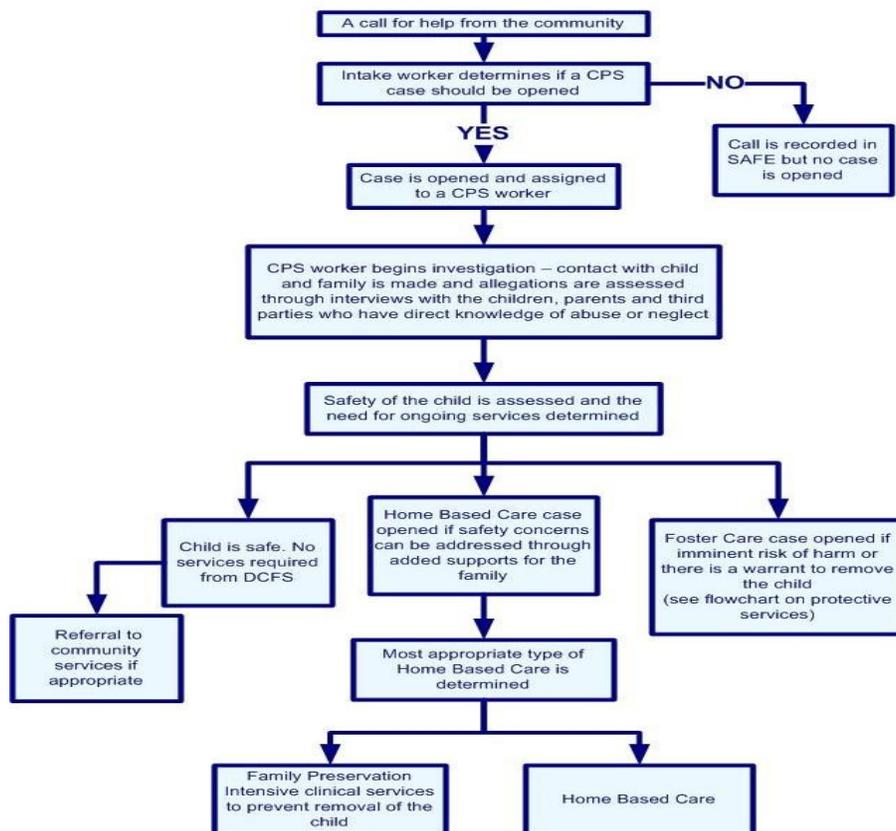
What Happens When A Referral Is Made?

Based on information gathered during the referral, the intake worker assesses the immediate risk/danger to the child and determines a "priority." The priority determines the timeframe in which DCFS will respond to the referral. Three referral priorities are considered:

Priority 1: Immediate need of protection—face-to-face contact required within 60 minutes

Priority 2: Risk of physical evidence being lost—face-to-face contact required within 24 hours

Priority 3: Low risk to child—face-to-face contact required by midnight on the third working day



QUICK FACTS

- 38,168 intake referrals were received regarding 38,035 children.
- 20,294 referrals were investigated.
- 81% of referrals were categorized as a Priority 3.
- 34% of the cases were substantiated/supported.

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Initial Assessment and Investigation

When a report of child abuse or neglect is received, the caseworker who receives the report via our 24-hour hotline must determine if it meets statutory definition of child abuse or neglect. If it is determined that a Child Protective Services (CPS) case must be opened, the assigned caseworker will conduct an investigation of the allegation(s). This investigation may include the following:

- Face-to-face interviews with the child, the child's parent(s) or guardian(s), and alleged perpetrator(s).
- Contact with the referent (individual who made the report of child abuse or neglect to our Hotline) and any friends, relatives or professionals that may provide relevant information regarding the family.
- A visit to the family's home.
- A review of any necessary documents including DCFS case history, medical reports, police reports etc.

Case Findings and Closure

After the investigation has been completed the caseworker will determine the appropriate finding at the closure of the case. For each allegation on a case, one of the following findings will be made:

- Supported,
- Unsupported
- Without Merit

What to Expect if You Make a Referral

As a referent in a case, you can expect the following:

- Your information will remain confidential.
- You will be contacted during the investigation by the caseworker to confirm details or gather more information about your report.
- You will be notified of the case closure, dependent on your role and relationship to the child, you may not be entitled to any other information regarding the case.

Service Provision

The main objective and responsibility of a CPS caseworker is to assess the child's safety. They will also assess future risk of abuse and/or neglect for the child, and gather information about the strengths and needs of the family. This allows the caseworker and other community professionals to determine if services are needed, and if so what type of services will be the most effective in ensuring safety and reducing risk for the child. Services that may be offered include community-based services, in-home services, and out-of-home services.

Services are provided to keep families together and children safely in the home whenever possible, and reunify children with their families as quickly as possible if safety cannot be assured in the home.



QUICK FACTS

- 15% of child victims were placed in foster care for their safety.
- Substance abuse was a contributing factor in 66% of foster care cases.
- 82% of referrals were categorized as a Priority 3.
- 34% of the cases were substantiated/supported.