



What Happens After a CPS Hotline Call?

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Hotline Call (“Referral”)

Call made to Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline (usually by mandated reporter-- school, police, hospital), called a "referral", assessed by hotline worker to either ignore ("evaluate out") or move to investigation stage.

Referral Investigation

Hotline forwards to emergency investigation team who visits child at home or school to assess claims. Either closes the referral (finding it "unfounded" or "inconclusive") or “substantiates” the referral and moves to assessment.

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Risk/Safety Assessment

If substantiated, social worker will do a risk and safety assessment to see what DCFS's response should be. Risk factors often considered include: drug or alcohol use, domestic violence, criminal or DCFS history. Safety factors often include: a parent CPS considers safe, relative support, treatment plans, alternate temporary care with a relative.

Possible Outcomes

1. Remove child & open court case
2. Leave child at home but continue to supervise family with a plan to follow to avoid removal
3. Make a safe plan agreement without continued supervision
4. No action

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