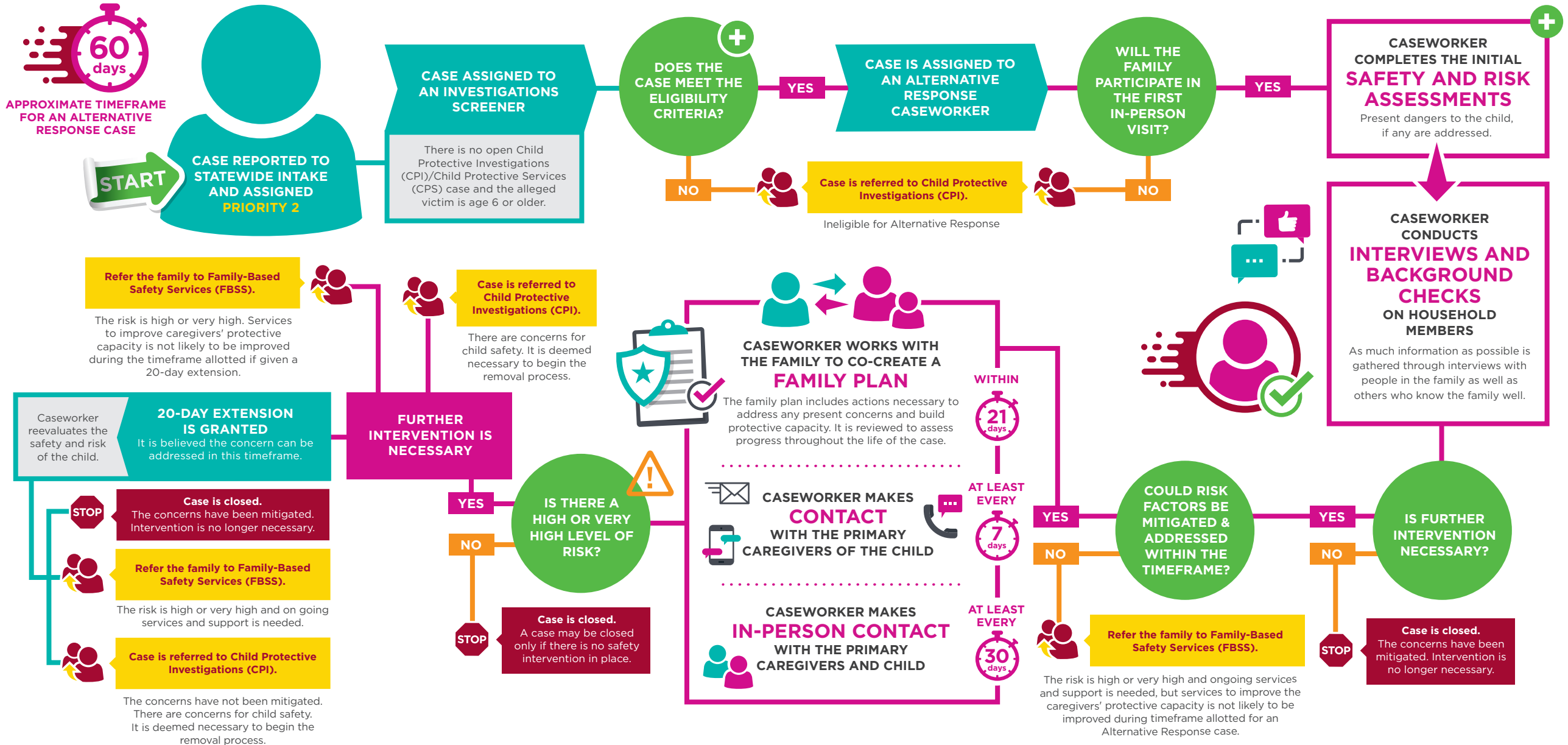




HOW THE ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE PROCESS WORKS

LEGEND

- Learn more on the reverse side
- Case is assigned or referred to another stage of service
- Case is closed





ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Case is routed to Alternative Response if the following are true:

- Intakes assigned as a Priority 2
- Allegations meet the statutory definition of abuse or neglect in the Texas Family Code, and the report cannot be closed at intake
- Risk of harm is low or moderate
- Does not meet any of the ineligibility criteria listed below

Case is Ineligible for Alternative Response and assigned to Child Protective Investigations (CPI) if the following are true:

- The alleged perpetrator is a:
 - School employee/volunteer and the allegations do not involve their own children or family
 - DFPS employee, volunteer, or contractor
 - Foster parent or prospective adoptive parent
- A household member is a designated or sustained perpetrator of a child fatality brought on by physical abuse
- An intake was initially assigned as a Priority 2 and later upgraded to a Priority 1
- There is concern for sexual abuse or sex trafficking
- There are concerns for serious physical injury due to physical abuse
- There is an open CPS case in any stage of service
- There is a child age 5 or younger in the home
- There is a child fatality alleged to have occurred due to abuse or neglect

SAFETY ASSESSMENT

Alternative Response caseworkers assess safety throughout the entire life of a case. There are times when they more formally utilize the Safety Assessment tool.

The Alternative Response caseworker conducts an initial Safety Assessment:

- During the initial in-person visit with the family, which occurs within the first five days of the case being transferred
- Within 24 hours of implementing a safety intervention even if the caseworker has not interviewed or observed the children
- Within 24 hours of the priority response time if there was an in-person interview with at least one child
- Within 24 hours of an in-person interview with at least one child, even if the caseworker was unable to interview any of the children initially during the priority response time

The Alternative Response caseworker conducts a Safety Reassessment:

- Prior to a child returning home from a Parental Child Safety Placement
- When a new intake with different allegations or incidents is received
- If more than 30 days has passed since the last Safety Assessment was completed prior to requesting an extension
- Within 24 hours of a threat to the child's safety
- Prior to closing a case without a referral to Family-Based Safety Services (FBSS) if:
 - the last safety finding was "Safe" and if there has been more than 60 days since the last Safety Assessment, or
 - the last safety finding was "Unsafe" or "Safe With a Plan," unless the family cannot be found
- If it has been longer than 60 days since the last Safety Assessment and before referring an Alternative Response case to Family-Based Safety Services (FBSS), unless:
 - the Family-Based Safety Services (FBSS) caseworker has been working with the family and knows the child is safe;
 - there have been no changes in circumstances; and
 - both stages of service and the family agree that the safety plan is working

RISK ASSESSMENT

Alternative Response caseworkers assess risk throughout the entire life of a case. There are times when they more formally utilize the Risk Assessment tool.

- The Alternative Response caseworker conducts the initial Risk Assessment as soon as possible after meeting the family
- The Alternative Response caseworker conducts a Risk Assessment when closing a case unless:
 - It is being submitted for administrative closure
 - The family is unable to locate
 - The case is being transferred to Child Protective Investigations

See back of "How an Investigation is Performed" flowchart for more information on what is included in the Safety and Risk Assessments.