

HOW AN INVESTIGATION IS PERFORMED



Learn more on the reverse side



Case is assigned or referred to another stage of service



Case is closed



A PERSON SUSPECTS **ABUSE, NEGLECT, OR EXPLOITATION OF A CHILD AND MAKES A REPORT**





REPORT IS RECEIVED BY STATEWIDE INTAKE (SWI)

SWI is a division of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).





AN INTERVIEW IS **CONDUCTED BY AN INTAKE SPECIALIST**

This is the initial assessment, obtaining relevant and available information to assess if the allegation meets the legal definition of child abuse and/or neglect as defined in the Texas Family Code

CHILD IS DEEMED

UNSAFE

The family is eligible

for services.

YES

A case may be closed only if there is

no safety intervention in place.

The family may be referred to other

services outside of the CPI/CPS system.

Case is closed if the legal definition is not met.



COULD THE

ALLEGATION

RESULT IN DEATH

OR SERIOUS

HARM?

CASE IS ASSIGNED

ORITY NONE (PN)

Case is closed or

services are suggested.

CASE IS ASSIGNED TO AN INVESTIGATIONS **SCREENER AFTER IT'S ASSIGNED A PRIORITY**

CASE IS ASSIGNED PRIORITY 1 (P1) YES

An Investigator has 24 hours to initiate the investigation.

CASE IS ASSIGNED (P2)

Is there an alleged victim age 6 or older and an open Child Protective Investigations (CPI)/Child Protective Services (CPS) case?

> Case is assigned to Alternative Response (AR).

YES

SUPERVISOR

Case is closed or services are suggested.

APPROXIMATE TIMEFRAME FOR AN INVESTIGATION

WHO ASSIGNS THE CASE **CASE IS ASSIGNED TO** TO AN INVESTIGATOR **AN INVESTIGATIONS** WHO BEGINS AN



INVESTIGATOR COMPLETES A SAFETY

INVESTIGATION

ASSESSMENT

IS THE CHILD

TO DETERMINE PRESENT DANGER OF SERIOUS HARM

YES

Child cannot remain safely in the home and the removal process begins.



CHILD CAN REMAIN **IS REMOVED**

WITH SERVICES

The family may participate voluntarily or by court order.



Refer the family to Family-Based Safety Services (FBSS).

Case is closed after receiving services to mitigate the Department's concerns.

SAFELY IN THE HOME IF THE PERPETRATOR

CHILD CAN REMAIN SAFELY IN HOME



STOP

IS THERE A **HIGH OR VERY HIGH LEVEL** OF RISK?

INVESTIGATOR ATTRIBUTES A **RISK FINDING**

It should be noted that there can still be a presence of risk even if abuse and/or neglect is unsubstantiated. Similarly, risk factors may be mitigated even if abuse and/or neglect has been substantiated.

> Dispositions are informed by the investigative process and safety assessment.

INVESTIGATOR GIVES A DISPOSITION

This indicates if child abuse or neglect is likely to have occurred. Child abuse or neglect can either be substantiated or unsubstantiated.

The Risk Assessment (if conducted) and disposition finding occur concurrently;

INVESTIGATOR COMPLETES A RISK ASSESSMENT

TO DETERMINE IF THE CHILD WILL BE SAFE IN THE FUTURE



DEEMED **SAFE RIGHT** NOW?

Investigator works with the family to put a safety intervention in place to ensure the safety of the child or the removal process begins.



INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

Before initial contact with the child or family, the Investigator:

- Reads the intake for indications of safety and risk concerns
- Confers with the supervisor to identify issues needing attention (this occurs throughout the investigative process)
- Arranges a joint investigation with law enforcement, if necessary
- Contacts the reporter, if appropriate
- Checks abuse/neglect histories on the following:
 - Alleged victim and perpetrator
 - Parent or legal guardian of the child/victim
 - Caretaker
 - Other adults in the home
- Conducts comprehensive criminal background reviews on all those who are 14 years and older living in the home

The Investigator assesses:

- Patterns of maltreatment
- Previous conditions in the home related to serious harm of the child
- The family's ability to protect the child from harm in the past
- The child's vulnerability to harm
- Success of prior interventions and the family's response to interventions
- Previous investigations closed as Unable to Complete

The Investigator interviews:

The alleged victim and perpetrator, parent or legal guardian
of the child, caretaker, other children and adults in the home,
collateral sources (i.e., school personnel, medical
professionals, neighbors, friends, family members not living
in the home but who can provide information about the
family, etc.)

SAFETY ASSESSMENT

The Investigator completes a Safety Assessment by reviewing the following:

Child vulnerability:

- Child's age (0-5)
- Medical or mental health diagnosis or suspected diagnosis
- · Lack of support system
- Diminished mental or physical capacity

Current Indicators of Danger:

- Serious physical harm or threat of serious physical harm
- Suspected sexual abuse of the child
- Unwillingness/inability of the caregiver to protect the child from serious harm
- Inconsistent or questionable explanation of an injury
- Unmet basic, supervision, and/or physical/mental health needs
- Hazardous or threatening physical living conditions
- Impaired ability of the caregiver to supervise, protect, or care for the child due to substance use, emotional instability, developmental status, or cognitive deficiency
- Domestic violence posing imminent danger of serious physical and/or emotional harm
- Child considered a danger to self or others as a result of the caregiver's language and behaviors toward the child
- Family is uncooperative (refusing access/hiding child)
- Child maltreatment patterns combined with current circumstances

Protective Capacity:

- Strengths of those in the household
- Protective actions/strategies

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Investigator completes a Risk Assessment by reviewing the following:

- · Current referral information
- · Quality of care provided to the child
- Number of children involved
- · Caregiver support network
- · Age of the youngest child
- CPS history of adults in the home (as an adult or child) and if ongoing services were previously provided
- Caregiver characteristics, including psychological/emotional support and disciplinary practices
- Previous and current characteristics of the child in the home, to include fragility, drug exposure, disabilities, mental health, or behavior issues
- · Caregiver perception of the incident
- Previous and current mental health and substance use issues for caregivers in the home
- Domestic violence in the home in the past year
- Housing

DISPOSITION

The Investigator gives a disposition

- Administrative Closure There are no longer grounds for a CPI investigation
- Unable to Complete Before a conclusion could be made, the family moved and could not be located or the family refused to cooperate with the investigation
- Unable to Determine There is no preponderance of evidence of child abuse or neglect, it is not reasonable to conclude child abuse or neglect has not occurred, and the family did not move or become unable to locate.
- Ruled Out Based on available information, child abuse or neglect did not occur
- Reason to Believe Based on the preponderance of evidence, it is believed that child abuse and/or neglect occurred