



# Iowa Department of DHS Human Services

## How-Do-I? Guide CPS Intake

### OUTCOMES:

- Child safety
- Appropriate reports accepted for assessment

### DECISIONS:

- Accept or reject reports for assessment
- Establish response time frame
- Determine transfer

### CRITERIA:

- Victim is a child under age 18
- Person responsible is a caretaker
- Incident/allegation falls within Iowa's definition of abuse

### RECEIVING THE INTAKE

Policy	Procedure	Practice Guidance
<p><b>Receive Reports</b></p> <p>Iowa Code sections 232.69, 232.70, 232.73</p>	<p>Complete form 470-0607, <i>Child Protective Services Intake</i>, for every intake call, walk-in, or written document received by the Department, when a report of child abuse is made, regardless of whether the report contains all necessary information to become a case.</p> <p>Engage with the reporter by providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A thorough and courteous interview.</li> <li>■ Oral and written notification whether the report will be accepted or rejected.</li> <li>■ Referral to, where appropriate, other service resources for the family or the child.</li> <li>■ Assurance that the reporter is immune from liability when making a report in good faith.</li> <li>■ Assurance that the reporter's identity will be safeguarded during the assessment process.</li> <li>■ Explanation that the court may release the identity of the reporter during the court process.</li> </ul>	<p>Intake is a legally mandated function of DHS. Intake also has a customer service function as it is often the only contact the community has with DHS. To the community, the intake staff provides the first impression of the level of public service available through DHS.</p> <p>A thorough intake improves the public awareness of the Department's roles and responsibilities.</p>

## ASSESSING THE INTAKE: GATHERING INTAKE INFORMATION

Policy	Procedure	Practice Guidance
<b>Type of Reporter</b> Iowa Code section 232.69	Identify the type of reporter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Permissive reporters are those not required by law to report child abuse.</li> <li>■ Mandatory reporters are those required by law to report child abuse.</li> </ul> Document the type of reporter on the <i>Child Protective Services Intake</i> , form 470-0607.	Iowa law requires certain professionals to report suspected child abuse. Anyone is permitted to report suspected child abuse.
<b>Gather Information</b> Iowa Code section 232.70, subsection 5	Obtain critical information regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Child</li> <li>■ Parent or caretaker</li> <li>■ Person responsible for the abuse</li> <li>■ Reporter and other sources</li> <li>■ Other children in household</li> <li>■ Other adults in household</li> <li>■ Description of incident</li> </ul>	The intake worker's ability to gather pertinent information is critical to the assessment process. It is the first step to initiate safeguards for children who are at risk or who have been abused. A thorough intake improves safety for children.
<b>Gather Information</b>	Complete records check: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ FACS, STAR, ABC, ACAN</li> <li>■ Criminal history</li> </ul>	Reports of abuse may not have all of the demographic and historical information about a family. A records check may supply additional critical information essential to ensuring child and worker safety. Complete a criminal record check online if child or worker safety is in question and for each adult member in the household.

## ASSESSING THE INTAKE: EVALUATING INTAKE INFORMATION

Policy	Procedure	Practice Guidance
<b>Processing Information</b> Iowa Code sections 232.67, 232.71B	Determine the reporter's basis for making the report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Guess</li> <li>■ Suspicion</li> <li>■ Belief</li> <li>■ Knowledge/observation</li> </ul>	Iowa law requires mandatory reporters to make a report of child abuse when that person reasonably believes the child has been abused. The law does not preclude people from making a report based upon a guess or suspicion.
<b>False Reports</b> Iowa Code section 232.71B	Determine the report as false because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The same person has made three earlier reports that resulted in CPS assessments, and</li> <li>■ The reporter named the same caretaker as the person allegedly responsible for the abuse of the same child in the three reports, and</li> <li>■ The three earlier CPS assessments found the allegations entirely false and without merit.</li> </ul> Consult with supervisor and SAM for approval.	Iowa law allows reports to be deemed as false due to their spurious or frivolous nature.

Policy	Procedure	Practice Guidance
<p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>Iowa Code sections 232.71B(1), 232.68(1)</p>	<p>Determine if the victim is a child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Child is under age 18</li> <li>■ The child's age is unknown</li> </ul>	<p>In order for a report to become a case there must be reasonable belief that the alleged abuse occurred to a child.</p>
<p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>Iowa Code sections 232.71B(1), 232.68(7)</p>	<p>Determine whether the person responsible for the abuse was a caretaker as he or she was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Meeting the child's basic needs, even temporarily.</li> <li>■ Considering himself or herself to be the caretaker.</li> <li>■ Exercising implicit or explicit delegated authority over the child.</li> <li>■ Assuming caretaker responsibilities.</li> <li>■ Previously acting as a caretaker hence the child would assume that person's authority.</li> <li>■ Accepting or rejecting caretaker role.</li> </ul>	<p>Iowa law requires that the person responsible for the abuse must be a caretaker for an intake to be accepted. Caretaker is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Parent, guardian, custodian</li> <li>■ Childcare provider (licensed, registered or nonregistered)</li> <li>■ Facility staff</li> <li>■ Babysitter</li> <li>■ A person perceived by the child as the caregiver</li> <li>■ Foster parent</li> <li>■ Person residing with child who assumes care or supervision</li> <li>■ Any person who provided care or supervision to child</li> </ul>
<p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p>Iowa Code sections 232.71B(1), 232.68(2)</p>	<p>Determine there is an allegation of child abuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Physical abuse:</b> Nonaccidental injury, or injury at variance with explanation or injury is reasonably inferred from the description of the caretaker's action.</li> <li>■ <b>Mental injury:</b> Impairment to the child's psychological or intellectual capacity to function within the normal range of behavior due to acts or omissions of the caretaker.</li> <li>■ <b>Sexual abuse:</b> Reasonable belief that a sexual offense has occurred and the child suffered the sexual offense as the result of acts or omissions of the caretaker.</li> <li>■ <b>Child prostitution:</b> Services of the child in a sex act were sold or purchased or offered for sale and the caretaker has allowed, permitted, or encouraged the child to engage in prostitution.</li> <li>■ <b>Denial of critical care:</b> Caretaker has failed to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, health care, mental health care, proper supervision, has failed to respond to an infant's life threatening condition, or gross failure to meet emotional needs.</li> </ul>	<p>In order for a report of child abuse to become a case there must be a reasonable belief that the alleged abuse falls within the definition of child abuse and that the abuse was caused by the acts or omissions of the child's caretaker.</p> <p>Iowa law has defined nine allegations of abuse. When a reporter calls, he or she may not report a specific allegation but rather an incident. Through the intake worker's engagement and interviewing skills enough information is collected for the intake worker to be able to assign an allegation. The <i>Intake Guidance Tool</i>, form 470-4131, contains questions which help elicit enough information about the incident to determine if it falls within one of these nine allegations.</p>

Policy	Procedure	Practice Guidance
<b>Criteria (Cont.)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Presence of illegal drugs:</b> Presence of illegal drugs in the child's body which is the result of a direct and foreseeable act or omission of the child's caretaker.</li> <li>■ <b>Manufacturing or possession of dangerous substances:</b> Unlawful manufacture of a dangerous substance in the presence of the child, or the caretaker allows the manufacture by another person in the child's presence, or possesses a product containing ephedrine in the presence of a child with the intent of using it in the manufacture of a dangerous substance.</li> <li>■ <b>Bestiality in the presence of a minor:</b> Sex act between a person and an animal in the presence of a child and the person resides in the home with the child and the act was committed due to the acts or omission of the caretaker.</li> <li>■ <b>Cohabits with a registered sex offender:</b> Knowingly resides with a sex offender.</li> </ul>	

### MAKING THE INTAKE DECISION

Policy	Procedure	Practice Guidance
<b>Time Frames</b> Iowa Code section 232.71B	Determine the supervisory time frame for making an intake decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>One hour:</b> High risk injury or there is an immediate safety threat.</li> <li>■ <b>12 hours:</b> No high risk injury and there is no immediate threat to the child.</li> </ul> Obtain supervisory review and approval.	Safety of the child is a primary outcome of all aspects of the Life of the Case beginning with intake.  When reports allege an immediate threat to child safety there are clear time frames for an immediate response to safeguard the child.
<b>Intake Determination</b> Iowa Code sections 232.70, 232.71B	Accept or reject a report for assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Accept if the child is under 18 or age unknown and an allegation can be assigned, and the person responsible is defined as a caretaker.</li> <li>■ Reject if the call fails to meet any above criteria.</li> <li>■ Notify reporter orally within 24 hours and complete <i>Notice of Intake Decision</i>, form 470-3789, within 5 days.</li> <li>■ Refer the reporter of rejected intakes to appropriate community services.</li> </ul> Document accepted intakes on STAR and the <i>Child Protective Services Intake</i> , form 470-0607.  Document date, time, and reason for rejection on STAR and the <i>Child Protective Services Intake</i> , form 470-0607.	In order for a report of child abuse to become a case, there are three elements which must be present. Once this decision has been made it is documented on the <i>Child Protective Services Intake</i> , form 470-0607, and the reporter is notified of this decision in a timely manner.

## ASSIGNING THE CASE AND TRANSFER

Policy	Procedure	Practice Guidance
<p><b>Observation Time Frame</b></p> <p>Iowa Code section 232.70, 232.71B</p>	<p>Determine assessment response time frame:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ <b>One hour:</b> High risk injury or an immediate safety threat.</li><li>■ <b>24 hours:</b> No high risk injury and no immediate safety threat but the person responsible has access to the child.</li><li>■ <b>96 hours:</b> No high risk injury and no immediate safety threat and the person responsible does not have access to the child.</li><li>■ <b>Law enforcement:</b> Rejected intake with high risk injury or immediate threat to the child. Contact law enforcement within one hour.</li></ul> <p>Document observation time assigned on the <i>Child Protective Services Intake</i>, form 470-0607.</p>	<p>Safety of the child is a primary outcome of all aspects of the Life of the Case beginning with intake. When reports allege an immediate threat to child safety there are clear time frames for a timely response to safeguard the child.</p> <p>Time frames for observation of the child by the child protective worker are assigned at intake. The criteria for these time frames are based upon the child's immediate safety and the access to the child by the person named responsible for the abuse.</p> <p>In cases of immediate threat to the child that do not meet the criteria for acceptance, a law enforcement referral is made within one hour.</p>