

Child Abuse Reporting Video Transcript

Let's take a look at how a case makes its way into our system. Intake units throughout the state handle all calls from their communities' reporting allegations of child abuse and neglect during regular business hours. These calls may originate from professionals, family members, neighbors, friends, relatives, or any other concerned citizen. Social workers will determine if a child is at imminent risk for harm and if so, an immediate intervention is necessary then the social worker can call law enforcement and request a well-child check. If there is no imminent risk, then a referral will be assigned to the appropriate investigation unit for further assessment and follow up services.

Based on the assessment, a contact will be made with the family by the local DCFS staff. This may be through a direct home visit investigation or through a referral to an alternative response, such as a contracted agency serving families that are assessed at a lower risk. If the department determines that the child or children are at imminent risk for harm, proper steps will be taken to remove the children from their home and either place them with a relative or in a licensed foster home and within 3 working days of placement a dependency petition may be filed. There then will be a shelter care hearing in juvenile or tribal court to determine if the child remains in custody or is able to return to the biological family.

The judge will decide whether the child is a dependent of the state. Further court hearings will take place to review a child's continued need for placement. As well as a permanent plan of progress being made by the biological family. More detailed information about the legal process will be delivered during the pre-service training and you may also want to view a workshop on our website that deals with the dependency process. Our website address is fosterparent.dshs.wa.gov

****Transcript developed by Successful Solutions****