

Subpoena: guide to child protection documents

Types of child protection documents

The Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services ('department') holds a vast amount of information in relation to child protection matters in Queensland. The department produces documents from the database known as the Integrated Client Management System (ICMS) for the majority of subpoenas. Being specific in the subpoena about the types of documents asked for reduces delay, reduces the number of documents produced and consequently reduces the costs associated with production. The following list contains the main types of documents held on this system:

Intake Process

The purpose of **intake** is to receive information about child protection concerns and provide a response to the information in accordance with the responsibilities of the department and inform the community about the role of the department and provide information about child protection services.

Record of Concerns

Includes all key information provided by the notifier, focusing on any harm or risk of harm to the child, any relevant contextual information and an analysis of any child protection history. The notifier's details are confidential.

Screening Criteria and Response Priority

The **screening criteria** tool assists with decision making about whether child protection concerns received by the department meet the threshold for recording a notification. The **response priority** recommends a response timeframe for commencing an investigation and assessment if the concerns have reached the appropriate threshold.

Child Concern Report

Where the decision is made that the concerns do not meet the criteria in the screening criteria tool, the matter is 'screened out' and recorded as a **child concern report**.

Pre-notification check

A record of an enquiry by a child safety officer to another professional, an external agency or an interstate or international child protection jurisdiction, to gather further information about allegations of harm to a child.

Notification

Information received about a child who may be at harm or at risk of harm which has reached the threshold for an investigation and assessment response. A notification is also recorded on an unborn child when there is reasonable suspicion that they will be at risk of harm after they are born.

Investigation and assessment process

Investigation and assessment results from an intake where a notification is recorded, the purpose is to determine if the child/ren is safe. Child safety officers investigate the allegations of harm and risk of harm, undertake a holistic assessment of the child and family, determine if the child is in need of protection and decide whether further intervention is required.

Investigation and Assessment Plan

Record of considerations for investigation and assessment including child protection history, cultural considerations, joint investigations with police, safety issues, use of powers to gain access to the child etc.

Information gathering

Outlines a summary of the departmental history on paper files and records information gathered from external agencies in relation to the child protection concerns or their involvement with the subject child/ren and family.

Record of interviews

Document which records information in relation to interviews and information gathered from children, parents and other persons.

Record of use of powers

This document is used if any of the following provisions of the *Child Protection Act 1999* have been exercised during the investigation and assessment:

- section 16, contact with a child at immediate risk of harm
- section 17, contact with a child in school, a child care centre or family day care
- section 18, taking a child at immediate risk of harm into custody.

Assessment and Outcome

A document which provides a clear rationale for the outcome of the investigation and assessment, based on evidence and professional opinion that supports decision-making regarding harm, future risk of harm and parental willingness and ability to protect the child from harm.

Family Risk Evaluation

This is a tool which aids in the evaluation about the probability of further incidents of abuse or neglect by a parent in the family, which may result in harm to a child.

Safety Assessment

This is a tool used to guide decisions regarding the threat of immediate harm to a child in the household and what interventions are required to maintain safety.

Ongoing intervention

Ongoing intervention refers to departmental intervention that occurs with a child and family following the completion of an investigation and assessment. Ongoing intervention may occur with either the authority of a child protection order, or with the consent of the parents, pregnant woman or young person.

Child Strengths and Needs Assessment

The **child strengths and needs assessment** tool is used to identify the child's strengths, as well as the needs that must be addressed in order to ensure their safety and improve their well-being. This tool informs the development or review of a case plan.

Parental Strengths and Needs Assessment

The purpose of the **parental strengths and needs assessment** tool is to provide a snapshot of the parent/s functioning at a specific point in time to inform the development or review of a case plan for a child.

Record of a Family Group Meeting

A **Family Group Meeting** involves family, extended family, services and support people in a forum that allows for participative planning for the protection of children.

Case plan

A **case plan** is developed during a Family Group Meeting and has an overall goal as the focus of intervention. A case plan addresses the needs identified in the strengths and needs assessments for both the parent/s and child, provides clear actions and outcomes to achieve the overall goal.

Review Report

All case plans must be reviewed. The **review report** documents the outcome of this review in consideration of the case plan goal, actions and outcomes. A revised case plan is developed if further intervention is required.

Court work

Temporary Assessment Order (TAO)

Application for TAO

This is a 3 day assessment order which enables the chief executive to take actions considered essential for the completion of the investigation and assessment. This can include contact with the child, take the child into or keep the child in the custody of the chief executive, authorise medical examination or treatment, direct a parent about contact or enter a premises and search for a child.

Court Assessment Order (CAO)

Application for CAO

Affidavits

This order enables the chief executive to undertake the same measures for assessment as a Temporary Assessment Order; however the duration of Court Assessment Order is 28 days.

Child Protection Order (CPO)

Application for CPO

Affidavits

Once a decision is made that the child is in need of protection and an order is needed to meet their protection, the chief executive can make application for a child protection order. This can be directive order, a supervision order, a short-term custody order or a long-term guardianship order.

Interim Court Orders

Children in out of home care

Out of home care is used for a child when it is assessed that the separation of a child from their family is required to ensure the child's safety. Out of home care provides a safe, supportive and therapeutic environment for a child, while working towards either family reunification or an alternative permanency option.

Authority to Care

A form confirming the carer's authority to provide for the child's daily care.

Placement agreement

The placement agreement records the agreed support and services to be provided to the carer, based on the assessed level of the child's needs.

Care agreement

A care agreement is a voluntary agreement between parents and the department to place a child in an out-of-home placement for an initial period of 30 days or less.

Foster / kinship carer assessments

Assessments conducted by the department regarding a person's suitability to care for children.

Child Health Passport

Records the child's basic health information.

Education Support Plan

The Education Support Plan is a document addressing the child's educational goals and outcomes, and strategies to achieve those outcomes.