

Child Protective Services: Intake

2103.4 Receiving Reports

County Departments of Family and Children Services have responsibility to receive reports of physical and sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation; to screen every report received and to assure that timely and appropriate response is initiated (O.C.G.A. 19-7-5).

Procedures/Practice Issues

- Help the reporter understand what information is needed;
- Accept an anonymous report as any other report. Encourage anonymous reporters to identify themselves, especially if they appear to be a mandated reporter;
- Explain immunity against liability when the report is made in good faith;
- Refer the reporter to the correct reporting resource if the report does not contain the components of a CPS report (See 2103.7); and
- Inform reporters that a copy of the report is sent to local law enforcement and that it may be necessary to appear in court if court action is initiated to protect a child. A case record may be subpoenaed as a result of court proceedings. If this happens, the reporter cannot be assured that confidentiality will be fully protected. If asked or compelled in court to name the reporter, the SAAG/case manager will request that the reporter's identity be disclosed in the judge's chambers.

Not all reports are assigned for an assessment (investigation), i.e., Information and Referral and screened-out cases (See 2103.18). The supervisor approves and signs all reports not opened.

Verbal acknowledgement may be given to a reporter, mandated or non-mandated, of the receipt and/or acceptance of the report, as to whether an assessment (investigation) occurred and the determination (substantiated or unsubstantiated) of the assessment (investigation). Only the mandated reporter shall receive such information upon request. Limited information regarding the results of child maltreatment assessments (investigations) can be given to non-mandated reporters.