

	GEORGIA DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY MANUAL			
	Chapter:	(14) Resource Development	Effective Date:	March 2015
	Policy Title:	Reporting Allegations of Abuse and Neglect in Approved Homes		
	Policy Number:	14.21	Previous Policy #:	1015.24, 1015.32

CODES/REFERENCES

Title IV-E of the Social Security Act Section 471(a)(9)

REQUIREMENTS

The Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) and Child Placing Agency (CPA) staff must immediately report any suspected or known instances of child abuse or neglect (see policy [4.5 Intake: Mandated Reporters](#)).

DFCS will report known or suspected instances of physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, or negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child receiving aid under titles IV-B or IV-E under circumstances that indicate that the child's health or welfare is threatened.

DFCS shall not move forward with permanency (i.e., adoption, guardianship) until concurrence is received from the State Office regarding the outcome of a Child Protective Services (CPS) investigation.

PROCEDURES

If a Resource Development (RD) or Social Services Case Manager (SSCM) receives information or becomes aware of situations regarding inappropriate treatment of a child in an approved home they will:

1. Immediately review the information with the applicable Supervisor to determine if it pertains to abuse and/or neglect or a DFCS policy violation.
2. Follow the standard procedure for making a CPS report if it is determined that there are allegations of abuse and/or neglect.
3. Notify the County Director of the report.
4. Promptly share information with the CPS Intake Case Manager and CPS Investigator.
5. Participate in any staffing related to the investigation.
6. Provide support to the caregiver and child (after the CPS Investigator has made initial contact) without compromising the integrity of the CPS Investigation and safety of the child.
7. If there is a pending permanency issue regarding the child, notify the State Permanency Unit.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

RD Case Managers should be careful not to interfere with a CPS Investigation and should maintain neutrality throughout the investigative process. Foster parents or adoptive parents may have an Adoptive and Foster Parent Association of Georgia (AFPAG) advocate present

at all portions of investigations of abuse and neglect at which an accused foster parent is present. Foster and adoptive parents are provided with a “Notification of Rights” brochure at the initial CPS investigation meeting, which informs them of their right to an advocate and instructions on requesting an advocate. CPS investigations including applicable response timeframes are not impacted by the presence or absence (if requested by the foster parent) of advocates.

CPS Investigations of an Adoptive Home prior to finalization

If a CPS Investigation is initiated on an adoptive home prior to finalization, the adoption finalization cannot proceed. The child’s case manager should contact the family’s attorney to withdraw the adoption finalization petition until such time as DFCS consents to the adoption again. DFCS must receive a concurrence letter from the State Office prior to releasing the child and consenting to the adoption.

Foster Parent Appeal of Decisions

The decision to close a home as a result of CPS investigations may not be grieved under the Foster Parent Grievance Procedure. However, there is a CPS Administrative Review process. Foster parents may request the appropriate forms from their RD case manager if not provided by the CPS investigator (see policy [5.10 Investigations: CPS Administrative Reviews](#)).

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Adoption and Foster Parent Association of Georgia](#)