

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
Chapter 4: Assessments Section 29: Joint Assessments with Law Enforcement Agency (LEA)		
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 6

POLICY OVERVIEW

Working together has many benefits for both the child and the professionals involved in assessing Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N). When the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) and Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) coordinate their responses and conduct joint assessments it may:

1. Reduce the number of interviews with the child;
2. Minimize the number of people involved in the assessment;
3. Speed up the delivery of assistance and services to the child and/or family; and
4. Improve the quality of evidence collected.

POLICY STATEMENT

DCS will:

1. Contact LEA and ask for a joint assessment when a report with CA/N allegations include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Reports needing a two (2) hour response time;
 - b. Child fatalities and near fatalities (see policy [4.31](#));
 - c. Child sexual abuse (see policy [3.08](#)); and
 - d. All reports of human trafficking (see policy [4.47](#)).
2. Join in interviews with the child and family, conducted by LEA when possible.

Note: During a criminal investigation of CA/N, DCS will cooperate with the county or district prosecutor and LEA. DCS will not act as law enforcement by gathering evidence or interviewing person for the sole purpose of a criminal investigation. DCS will focus on assuring the safety of the child.

3. Start the assessment on time even if LEA is delayed, unless:
 - a. The home may have dangerous and/or controlled substances present, or
 - b. Other safety concerns exist for the responding Family Case Manager (FCM) and an interview with the child at an alternate site is not practical.

The DCS Institutional Child Protection Service (ICPS) Unit may ask for a joint assessment for licensed childcare homes, residential childcare centers, or schools (including their employees or volunteers). DCS ICPS Unit will **not** do an assessment involving an unlicensed registered child care ministry without LEA involvement, unless the childcare ministry accepts Child Care Development Fund (CCDF).

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-9-2-31: "Custodian"](#)
- [IC 31-33-7-7: Law enforcement agency investigation and communication of information](#)
- [IC 31-33-8-1: Investigations by the department of child services; time of initiation; investigations of child care ministries](#)
- [IC 31-33-8-2: Investigations by Law enforcement agencies](#)