

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 4: Assessment Section 04: Required Interviews	
	Effective Date: January 1, 2026	Version: 7

POLICY OVERVIEW

During a child abuse or neglect (CA/N) assessment, interviews are needed with certain people to gather information about the child's safety.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Indiana Department of Services (DCS) **will** complete the following steps during the assessment of CA/N, to the extent that is reasonably possible:

1. Check the nature, extent, and cause of suspected CA/N;
2. Learn about other children in the home and how they are doing;
3. Evaluate the child's caregiver and what the home is like; and
4. Gather other important details to help with the assessment.

The assessment **may** also include:

1. Visiting the child's home;
2. Talking with the child (if parents agree, a court orders it, or there is an urgent reason); and
3. A physical or mental health exam of any child in the home.

If parents or caregivers do not cooperate, DCS **may**:

1. Ask the court for permission to visit the child's home or school or to do exams;
2. May ask the court to order the parents to make the child available; and
3. May interview the child, with or without a parent present, upon court approval.

When interviewing a child at school:

1. DCS **may** interview the child alone if the worker shows identification (ID); and
2. Provides a written note saying they have permission (parental consent or court order) or exigent circumstances exist as defined by Indiana Code (see References).

If the child's parent or guardian is in the military, DCS **must** tell the military's Family Advocacy Program about the case if asked.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-9-2-44.1: "Exigent circumstances"](#)
- [IC 31-33-8-7: Scope of assessment by department of child services: order for access to home, school, or other place, or for mental or physical examinations; petition to interview child; order; requirements](#)