

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 3: Intake	Effective Date: November 1, 2005
	Section 9: Initiation Times for Investigations (Assessments)	Version: 1

POLICY

- The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will initiate every child abuse/neglect (CA/N) investigation (assessment) within the appropriate timeframe as determined by Indiana Law.
- An investigation (assessment) will be considered “initiated” when:
 1. The FCM makes **face-to-face contact** with the alleged child victim and notifies, in-person or via phone, the parent/guardian/custodian; **and**
 2. The FCM has assessed, and is able to reasonably assure, the safety of the child.
- Investigations (assessments) will be initiated within the following timeframes:
 1. Within one (1) hour if the allegations would cause a reasonable person to believe that the child is in imminent danger of serious bodily harm; or
 2. Within twenty-four (24) hours if the allegations involve abuse but the conditions in item 1 above do not apply; or
 3. Within five (5) days if the allegations involve neglect and none of the conditions in items 1 or 2 above apply.
- Response times are measured from the conclusion of the initial call from the reporter. This means for one-hour investigations (assessments), the FCM must make face-to-face contact with the child, notify the parents, and assure the safety of the child within one-hour of the conclusion the initial call from the reporter.
- Investigations (assessments) will be initiated regardless of the time of day (or night), and regardless of weekends or holidays, in order to meet the appropriate timeframes.
- DCS will request assistance from law enforcement when circumstances exist that prevent DCS from being able to initiate one-hour investigations (assessments) in a timely fashion.

Code References

- [IC 31-33-8-1 Investigations by local child protection service; time of initiation](#)
- [IC 31-33-8-6 Investigatory duties of local child protection service; purpose](#)

PROCEDURE

The intake worker or supervisor will:

- Consider all known information about the CA/N allegations.
- Make a determination about the appropriate initiation timeframe.
- Compare the selected timeframe to the one assigned by ICWIS and make any appropriate overrides.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

- N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

- N/A

RELATED INFORMATION

- N/A

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