

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY	
	Chapter 4: Assessment	Effective Date: October 1, 2016
	Section 2: Preparing for the Assessment	Version: 6

STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will take all foreseeable and necessary precautions to protect the safety of the alleged child victim(s), the Family Case Manager (FCM) and/or other responders during the assessment.

To the extent possible, FCMs will take the necessary steps for adequate preparation prior to initiating any interviews or assessment of home conditions.

DCS will begin identifying the appropriateness of utilizing the Child and Family Team (CFT) meeting process with families in which DCS serves during the assessment preparation stage.

Code References

1. [IC 5-26.5-1-3: "Domestic violence"](#)
2. [IC 34-6-2-34.5: "Domestic or family violence"](#)
3. [IC 35-42-3.5: Human Trafficking](#)

PROCEDURE

Before initiating any interviews and assessment of home conditions, the FCM will:

1. Be familiar with all policies related to interviewing, including, but not limited to:
 - a. [2.21 Human Trafficking](#),
 - b. [4.4 Required Interviews](#),
 - c. [4.5 Consent to Interview Child](#),
 - d. [4.6 Exigent Circumstances](#),
 - e. [4.8 Entry into Home or Facility](#),
 - f. [4.09 Interviewing Children](#),
 - g. [4.10 Interviewing the Parent, Guardian, or Custodian](#),
 - h. [4.11 Interviewing the Alleged Perpetrator](#),
 - i. [4.13 Home Environment Assessment](#),
 - j. [4.14 Examining a Child and Photographing a Child and/or Trauma](#), and
 - k. [4.30 Institutional Child Protection Services \(ICPS\) Unit Assessments](#).
2. Arrange interpreter services if the parties to the assessment are non-English speaking (see policy, [GA-3 Language Services](#));
3. Develop an interview plan,
 - a. Determine who would need to be interviewed,
 - b. Determine whether, it is best for family members to be interviewed separately or together.
 - c. Determine the best order for the interviews to occur.
4. Assess the appropriateness of the utilization of a CFT meeting;

5. If domestic violence was identified during the Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) intake, prior to contacting the family:
 - a. Contact Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) to determine if the family has had previous domestic violence contacts and/or police runs to their home for violence;
 - b. Determine if a detective has already been assigned to the case. If a detective has been assigned, discuss working together during the assessment with the detective; and

Note: DCS will not delay the initiation or completion of any assessment, regardless of LEA involvement. See policy, [4.29 Joint Assessments](#).

- c. Consider the safety of all family members prior to scheduling interviews.

6. If human trafficking was identified during the CA/N intake, prior to contacting the family:
 - a. Consider the safety of the alleged victims of human trafficking prior to scheduling interviews. For further guidance, see policy [2.21 Human Trafficking](#).

Note: It is important that the suspected trafficker not be present during the interview, as the trafficker may intimidate the victim or not allow him or her to speak for himself/herself. The child's parent, guardian, or custodian may be the child's trafficker or the trafficker may be dishonest and identify himself/herself as the child's parent, guardian, or custodian.

- b. Be familiar with the [Indiana Human Trafficking Screening Tool](#) and contact information to request a forensic interview if needed. [See Practice Guidance](#) for further information.

7. Plan interviews with law enforcement if the CA/N allegations are of a criminal nature. See policy, [4.29 Joint Assessments](#);
8. To the extent possible and practical, plan the location of each interview with the goal of optimizing the safety of the child, the FCM, and any other responders;
9. For each location where an interview will occur, consider any known or suspected safety risks and determine appropriate safety precautions (e.g., law enforcement assistance. Seek supervisory input when necessary);
10. Gather necessary paperwork and/or forms as well as maps and/or driving directions;
11. Confirm that all equipment is in working order (e.g., cell phones, cameras, video recorders, audio recorders, etc.); and
12. Start the assessment. See policy, [4.03 Conducting the Assessment](#).

The Supervisor will:

1. Review all information pertaining to the risk of the situation and assist the FCM in planning and preparing for the assessment as needed; and
2. Ensure that all FCMs have access to appropriate, functioning assessment (interview) equipment (e.g., cell phones, cameras, video recorders, audio recorders, etc.)

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Interpreter Services

All DCS local offices should have a plan for the availability of interpreter services when needed both for persons who are non-English speaking and for those who communicate using American Sign Language, see Administrative Policy [GA-3 Interpreter Services](#).

Note: In cases of suspected human trafficking, it is not appropriate to use a neighbor, friend, or family member to serve as the interpreter, as the interpreter may be allied with the trafficker and/or involved in the trafficking.

Considering the Risk of the Situation

What environmental factors might pose a danger to child safety and FCM safety? Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. History of domestic violence;
2. Locations that are extremely isolated or in high-crime areas;
3. Indications of mental illness, substance abuse, human trafficking, or volatile behavior;
4. Firearms or other weapons in the home;
5. Indications of illegal drug manufacturing in the home (see related document, [Indiana Drug Endangered Child Response Protocol](#));
6. Family members that are criminal suspects and have outstanding arrest warrants; and
7. Dangerous pets and/or animals.

Assistance from Law Enforcement

Request assistance when any risk factors have been identified that could threaten the safety of the child(ren), the FCM and/or other responders. See policy, [4.29 Joint Assessments](#).

Human Trafficking Expertise and Consultation

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Federal Department of Homeland Security may investigate labor trafficking and sex trafficking for international and domestic victims. Due to the complexities of human trafficking, these federal agencies are available to consult and/or provide assistance on cases in which human trafficking is present or suspected and the need for special expertise warrants federal involvement.

Contact an agency listed below to request an interviewer if human trafficking is identified during the CA/N intake or the FCM observes [indicators of human trafficking](#) and it is determined a [human trafficking forensic interview](#) is appropriate and should be completed by federal agency partners.

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI): 317-595-4000, select option 2
Homeland Security: 1-800-973-2867

Note: For non-emergencies, contact the Office of the Attorney General's tip-line at humantraffickingtip@atg.in.gov.

Indicators of Human Trafficking¹

If any of the following indicators or a combination of several indicators of human trafficking are observed during the course of an assessment, the FCM should complete the [Indiana Human Trafficking Screening Tool](#).

Child Indicators:

1. Child may not be able or willing to speak on his or her own behalf;
2. Child may not be able to speak English;
3. Child may not be allowed to speak to the FCM alone;
4. Child may not have access to identification and/or travel documents;
5. Child may work long hours and receive little or no pay;
6. Child may not cooperate with the FCM during the interview (e.g., provide wrong information about identity and living situation);
7. Child may not attend school or has large gaps in his or her education history;
8. Child may live at his or her workplace or with his or her employer and many other people in a small area;
9. Child may have a **heightened** sense of fear and distrust of authority;
10. Child may have engaged in prostitution or commercial sex acts;
11. Child may have a significantly older boyfriend or girlfriend;
12. Child may be a runaway; and/or
13. Child may be in a public place (e.g., hotel) and found in possession of drugs/alcohol.

Indicators in the Home:

During each home visit, the FCM will observe for the following potential signs of human trafficking. If the FCM believes that human trafficking may be occurring, the FCM will speak to his or her supervisor to determine if a human trafficking forensic interview is needed.

1. The child's home lacks personal effects (e.g., no toys) or the child has a small room that is different from the rest of the house;
2. The yard may be fenced and access to phones is denied;
3. The child may live in the same place he or she works (e.g., behind a restaurant, in a motel with other workers, etc.);
4. The child may be unaware of the location of his or her home due to multiple moves or the human trafficker may lie to the child about his or her whereabouts;
5. The child may be isolated and have no relationships outside of the home (e.g., the child does not attend school or play with other children in the neighborhood); and/or there may be multiple, unrelated people living in the home.

Types of Questions to Ask During an Interview for Possible Cases of Human Trafficking

When allegations of human trafficking have been made or the FCM observes indicators of human trafficking during the interview with the child, the following questions should be asked to help determine if a [human trafficking forensic interview](#) is needed:

1. Tell me about your friends. What activities do you do with them? Where do these activities occur? (These questions will help determine if the child is able to leave the home, play, and visit friends- this can indicate levels of control and possible trafficking.)
2. Tell me about what you do in a typical day. What do you do outside of the home (e.g., work, extracurricular activities, etc.)? Do you like your work/doing these activities? Has someone told you/pressured you to participate in these activities? What happens if you

¹ State of Florida Department of Children and Families (2009). *Human Trafficking of Child Indicator Tool*. Retrieved from <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/humantrafficking/docs/HumanTraffickingOfChildrenIndicatoTool0109.pdf>.

do not participate in these activities? (These questions will help determine if the child feels forced to work or participate in other activities and what the consequences are if they do not participate.)

3. How long have you been working? How many hours do you work each week? How much money do you make from work? How often are you paid? What do you do with your money after you are paid? Do you owe anyone any money, if so, how much do you owe and what led to the debt? (These questions will help determine if the child is forced to work to pay off any "debt", such as travel expenses, clothing, food, and/or rent. The number of hours the child works may also indicate if the child's work interferes with school attendance.)

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Indiana Drug Endangered Child Response Protocol](#)

[Indiana Human Trafficking Screening Tool](#)-available in the case management system

RELATED INFORMATION

N/A