



Key Concept: **Protective Action**

The **Protective Action** is an immediate, same day, short-term plan sufficient to protect a child from a safety threat in order to allow the completion of the CPS assessment.

A caseworker must assure that the **Protective Action**:

- **Is in place before they leave the home;**
- **Is focused on the particular family behaviors, conditions or circumstances representing the safety threat;**
- **Controls the identified safety threats until sufficient information can be gathered and analyzed to determine the need for an ongoing safety plan;**
- **Does not use the parent or caregiver, who is the alleged perpetrator of physical abuse or sexual abuse, to provide protection;**
- **Includes safety service providers who can manage the safety threats for the child and have been confirmed to be suitable to do so (relatives, neighbors, community partners);**
- **Never is in place after the CPS assessment is complete.**

Protective Actions should be simple and the caseworker should:

- **Find support people within or close to the family network – keeping in mind the need to establish the Protective Action before they leave the home.**
- **Consider ways to separate the child from the threat for a temporary period of time.**
- **Ensure that everyone is aware the Protective Action is a “brief holding action.”**

Protective Actions are not ongoing safety plans. Ongoing safety plans are based on full information and are developed at the conclusion of the initial assessment after sufficient information is gathered and organized. **Protective Actions** are based on more limited, first encounter information.



Protective Actions are not voluntary. If parents reject the **Protective Action**, child welfare may take legal action.

For more information about **Protective Action**, you are encouraged to reference the Child Welfare Procedure Manual, Chapter 2, Assessment, Section 8 and Appendix 2.6. The Procedure Manual can be found at http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/safety_model/index.html#pm

Definitions from Oregon Child Welfare Administrative Rule that support this concept are as follows:

Ongoing safety plan means a documented set of actions or interventions that manage a child's safety after the Department has identified one or more safety threats to which the child is vulnerable and determined the parent or caregiver is unable or unwilling to protect the child. An ongoing safety plan can be in-home or out-of-home and is adjusted when necessary to provide the least intrusive interventions.

Protective action means an immediate, same day, short-term plan sufficient to protect a child from a safety threat in order to allow completion of the CPS assessment.

Safety services mean the actions, assistance, and supervision provided by safety service providers to manage the identified safety threats to a child.

Safety service provider means a participant in a protective action or ongoing safety plan whose actions, assistance, or supervision help a family in managing a child's safety or increasing the protective capacities of the child's parent or caregiver.

Safety threat means family behavior, conditions, or circumstances that could result in harm to a child.