

2. CPS Assessment Response Timelines

The timeline for the department's response refers to the amount of time between when the report is received at screening and when the CPS worker is required to make an initial contact. Every CPS assessment is assigned one of the following response timelines at screening, and the CPS worker must make an initial contact within the assigned response timeline. It is understood that even after significant efforts the CPS worker may not be able to accomplish this. It is important that the CPS worker document all such attempts to make contact.

A. Within 24 hours

This response timeline is required when the information received constitutes a report of child abuse or neglect as defined in ORS 419B.005 in which a child is alleged to be unsafe, unless the "within five calendar days" timeline applies. Once the "within 24 hours timeline" is assigned, the CPS worker must decide how soon, within the 24 hours, to respond. This decision is based on what is occurring, the location of the child, access to dangerous people and the preferred approach to initiating the contact.

When responding within 24 hours, it is recommended a CPS worker break down that response even further to respond in 0-2 hours or 2-24 hours based on the behavior, conditions or circumstances. The following examples are intended to help the worker determine which reported situations indicate a 0-2 hour response and which indicate a 2-24 hour response.

Within 0-2 hours

Reports containing any of the following factors should be considered emergency reports requiring a plan for intervention and safety within 0-2 hours:

- Serious physical injuries which create a substantial risk of death, disfigurement or impairment. Serious injuries include fractures, subdural hematoma, dislocation, sprains, internal injuries and burns.
- Current non-accidental injury to the head or face of any child such as welts, bruises, lacerations and abrasions.
- Current allegations of sexual abuse, where the alleged perpetrator has access to the victim.
- A young child or a child with disabilities or other special needs is currently left unsupervised and/or inadequately supervised for any period of time or left in the care of an inappropriate caregiver to the extent that the child's immediate needs go unnoticed or unmet.
- Abuse or neglect such as failure to thrive, malnutrition, poisoning or ingestion of/exposure to noxious substance in which the child's safety is immediately threatened.
- Serious illness or life-threatening medical conditions for which the parent is unwilling or unable to obtain medical advice or treatment.
- Cruel, unconscionable, intimidating or terrorizing acts or statements (e.g., deliberate

threats to the child's life, or intimidating acts with firearms or animals).

- Situation compromises child's safety and may reflect a real and immediate potential for harm (e.g., domestic violence where there is an immediate risk of substantial harm to child, grossly inappropriate discipline, or access of an alleged perpetrator who has seriously harmed or abused a child in the past).
- No protective caregiver available.
- Police request immediate response.

Some things to keep in mind regarding a 0-2 hour time response

- The harm reasonably can lead to severe injury, disability, severe trauma or death.
- 0-2 hour response is for family behaviors, conditions or circumstances that threaten a child's safety right now.

Within 2-24 hours

Examples of information indicating a recommended response between 2-24 hours are:

- Reports of prior abuse to children four years of age or younger (injuries need not be visible).
- Current non-accidental injury to any child such as welts, bruises, lacerations and abrasions. If the injuries are to the head or face it would most likely fall into the 0-2 hour response timeframe.
- Child abuse or neglect such as failure to thrive, ingestion of, or exposure to, noxious substances, drug-exposed infants, failure to provide adequate food to meet nutritional needs, failure to provide clothing consistent with climatic conditions, and failure to provide medical care. Exceptions would be if the report alleges that the condition is immediately life threatening.
- Reports of unsanitary living conditions where very young children are present. Conditions include feces on the floor that young children could crawl in or put in their mouth, or moldy food accessible to them.
- Reports of domestic violence and the perpetrator still has access.
- Access to a child by a person who has seriously harmed or abused a child in the past, the individual has experienced a prior termination of parental rights, or is a previously convicted, untreated sex offender.
- Allegations of caregiver substance abuse which inhibits caretaking abilities but may not be occurring at the time of the report.

Exceptions

Exceptions related to complying with this safety-related 0-24 hour timeline could include specific compelling circumstances such as:

- Law enforcement assistance is necessary because the information indicates a crime may have been committed or worker safety is in question and no law enforcement assistance is immediately available.
- Due to the child's location, access within the timeline is not possible (e.g., roads are closed due to extreme weather, or child on out-of-state field trip).
- Needed time and demand for planning logistics of the intervention (e.g., child needs to be interviewed separately from the parents and already has left school). When a child is reported as being in a safe place, (e.g., school or hospital) the judgment about the time of the response must take into account the location of the safe place, how long the child will be there, access others have to the child's location, and a plan to keep the child safe until CPS can respond.

B. Within five calendar days

This response timeline must be used only when the screener has clearly documented how the information indicates the child's safety will not be compromised by not responding within 24 hours. The screener's judgment must have taken into account the location of the child, how long the child will be in that location, access others have to the child's location, and whether an intentional delay to allow for a planned response is less likely to compromise the safety of the child.

Examples of information requiring contact within a timeline not to exceed five calendar days are:

- A child currently in foster care reports past child abuse by a biological parent and the department has not previously assessed the allegation.
- The department receives a police report regarding a domestic violence incident where children were present. The report indicates the police have made contact with the family. The screener confirms there is a history of prior violence, the alleged abuser was arrested and remains incarcerated and will be for at least the next week.

Note: The timeframe for the department's response begins when the screener receives the report. The date and time on the screening form begins the 24 hours or five days, NOT when the CPS worker receives the referral.

C. Change or extension of response timeline

A supervisor may change the initial contact timelines established at screening as follows:

- The supervisor may change the response timeline from within five calendar days to within 24 hours.
- The supervisor may change the response timeline from within 24 hours to within five calendar days, but the supervisor must explain in writing why the timeline was changed and how the child's safety needs were considered when the change was approved.
- If the screener was granted an extension to complete the screening process, the CPS supervisor may adjust the initial contact timelines as follows:
 1. Within 24 hours: The CPS worker must make an initial contact within 24 hours of the end date of the last screening extension or the date the CPS assessment was assigned, whichever is earlier.
 2. Within five calendar days: The CPS worker must make an initial contact within five calendar days of the end date of the last screening extension or the date the CPS assessment was assigned, whichever is earlier.