

What to Do if DCF Contacts You About a Considered Removal Meeting

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT DCF INVESTIGATING YOUR FAMILY CAN BE DIFFICULT.
THIS FLYER CAN HELP YOU ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY.



WHAT IS A CONSIDERED REMOVAL MEETING?

- Most meetings with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) are not Considered Removal Meetings. A Considered Removal Meeting only happens within 48 hours of a report to DCF and when DCF is considering removing your child from your care and bringing an official court case. It can prevent the removal of your child but is also part of DCF's investigation against you. What you do and say matters!
- During the meeting, DCF will ask you questions about the report against you and about how you plan keep your child safe. DCF may want to develop a "Safety Plan" with you, which is an agreement between you and DCF on how you will care for your child moving forward.
- You can bring an advocate (like a lawyer or a family member) with you. You can ask DCF to provide an interpreter if you want one.



WHAT SHOULD I DO AT THIS MEETING?

- To help avoid DCF removing your child or gathering evidence against you, remember:
 - ❖ Anything you say can be used against you by DCF. For example, If DCF asks if you know why you are meeting, ask them to tell you instead.
 - ❖ Focus on the future rather than the report itself. This can include your plan to address DCF's concerns and keep your child safe, either in your care or with someone you trust.
- DCF might ask to contact providers or programs you or your child work with, especially if DCF is concerned about mental health or substances. If this happens, let your provider know DCF may call them.
- Ask for the "Summary Report" that the meeting facilitator writes and keep any paperwork that DCF gives you—it can help to take pictures with your phone.
- If a "Safety Plan" is developed, assume that DCF will check if you are following it.
- If DCF removes your child from your care, they will start a court case in about a week, and you will be able to apply for a lawyer if you cannot afford one. In the meantime, ask how you can contact or visit your child by phone or in-person.