



**DSCYF**

Department of Services for  
Children, Youth & their Families

**FAMILY SERVICES**

# ***The Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families***

*Division of Family Services  
Office of Children's Services*

## **Parent Handbook**

### **Mission Statement**

To promote the safety and well-being of children and their families through prevention, protection, and permanency.

### **Vision Statement**

Our children.  
Our Future.  
Our Responsibility.



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## INTRODUCTION

### **Purpose of the Parent Handbook**

This handbook was designed with you in mind. It is intended to provide you with an overview of our services and should answer many common questions.

Your caseworker can explain and provide answers to questions you may have which do not appear in this handbook.

### **What is your authority?**

The **Division of Family Services (Division)** is one of four Divisions within the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families (DSCYF).

16 *Del. C.*, Ch. 9 describes the Division's statutory authority. The law requires that all child abuse and neglect reports in Delaware be made to the Division. The Division must conduct an investigation for any allegation that would constitute a violation against a child, but may utilize a family assessment approach for other allegation types. The investigation and family assessment pathways make up what is known as a Differential Response System (DRS). A DRS enables the Division to provide a response that is proportional to the allegation type. The two pathways will be discussed in the chapters that follow.

The Division is responsible for investigating/assessing intra-familial child abuse and neglect. By policy, the Division also investigates/assesses when a child may be at risk of being abused, neglected or dependent.

## How are child abuse and neglect defined?

A **child** means any person who has not reached his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

According to 10 *Del. C.* §901, child abuse and neglect are defined as follows:

**“Abuse” or “abused child”** means that a person:

- (a) causes or inflicts sexual abuse on a child; or
- (b) has care, custody, or control of a child, and causes or inflicts:
  - a. physical injury through **unjustified force** as defined in § 468 of Title 11;
  - b. emotional abuse;
  - c. torture;
  - d. exploitation; or
  - e. maltreatment or mistreatment.

According to *Delaware Code*, **unjustified force** “...includes, but is not limited to...Throwing a child, kicking, burning, cutting, striking with a closed fist, interfering with breathing, use of or threatened use of a deadly weapon, prolonged deprivation of sustenance or medication, or doing any other act that is likely to cause or does cause physical injury, disfigurement, mental distress, unnecessary degradation or substantial risk of serious physical injury or death...”

**“Dependency” or “dependent child”** means that a person:

- a. Is responsible for the care, custody, and/or control of the child; and
- b. Does not have the ability and/or financial means to provide for the care of the child; and
  - 1. Fails to provide necessary care with regard to: food, clothing, shelter, education, health care, medical care or other care necessary for the child's

emotional, physical or mental health, or safety and general well-being; or

2. The child is living in the home of an "adult individual" who fails to meet the definition of "relative" in this section on an extended basis without an assessment by DSCYF, or its licensed agency; or

3. The child has been placed with a licensed agency which certifies it cannot complete a suitable adoption plan.

In making a finding of dependency under this section, consideration may be given to dependency, neglect, or abuse history of any party.

**"Intrafamilial child abuse or neglect"** is any child abuse or neglect committed by:

- a. A parent, guardian, or custodian;
- b. Other members of the child's family or household, meaning persons living together permanently or temporarily without regard to whether they are related to each other and without regard to the length of time or continuity of such residence, and it may include persons who previously lived in the household such as paramours of a member of the child's household;
- c. Any person who, regardless of whether a member of the child's household, is defined as family or a relative in this section or as an adult individual as defined in § 1009(b)(3)a. [repealed] of this title.

**"Neglect" or "neglected child"** means that a person:

- a. is responsible for the care, custody, and/or control of the child; and
- b. has the ability and financial means to provide for the care of the child; and

1. fails to provide the necessary care with regard to: food, clothing, shelter, education, health, medical or other care necessary for the child's emotional, physical, or mental health or safety and general well-being; or
2. chronically and severely abuses alcohol or a controlled substance, is not active in treatment for such abuse, and the abuse threatens the child's ability to receive care necessary for his or her safety and general well-being, or
3. fails to provide necessary supervision appropriate for a child when the child is unable to care for his or her own basic needs or safety, after considering such factors as the child's age, mental ability, physical condition, the length of the caretaker's absence, and the context of the child's environment.

## Who reported me?

The Division of Family Services policy protects the identity of any person making a child abuse or neglect report. Your caseworker is required to keep the reporter's identity confidential.

Anyone participating in good faith in making a report shall have immunity from liability.

## How did you get the report about my family?

The Division of Family Services operates a report line, **24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This includes all weekends and holidays.**

The statewide toll free report line number is **1.800.292.9582**. Reports may also be made online at [iseethesigns.org](http://iseethesigns.org).

## What are my rights as a parent or caretaker?

If you are the parent or caretaker of a child, you have the right to:

- be informed of any allegation made against you
- be informed of the outcome of the investigation
- be informed if your family case will be referred for ongoing treatment services
- appeal critical decisions
- request access to your family case record
- consult with an attorney of your choosing

You have the right to raise your child in a manner that best suits your family and child, as long as you do not abuse or neglect your child.

## What are my child's rights?

Your child has the right to appropriate physical and emotional care which includes: adequate food, shelter, clothing, education, and medical care including diagnosis and treatment of medical and emotional issues.



## **CHAPTER I - INVESTIGATION**

### **What happens during an investigation?**

The following case activities will occur as a part of the investigation process:

- Interviews of all adults in the home
- Interview of non-custodial parent
- Interviews of all children in the home and/or observation if non-verbal
- Gathering of additional information from sources outside the family home, such as school and medical personnel, daycare providers, law enforcement officers, family, and friends.
- Assessment of substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence in the household
- Any other activities deemed necessary to ensure child safety

### **What else happens during the investigation?**

Depending upon the report, your caseworker *may*:

- Require that your child be examined by a doctor
- Ask you to sign the DSCYF Authorization for Release of Protected Health Information form
- Request that your child(ren) be forensically interviewed at the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) to reduce duplicative interviews by the investigative agencies (law enforcement , Division of Family Services, and the Department of Justice) who will observe the interview(s). This is known as the MDT or Multi-Disciplinary Team.

### **What is the Division's policy on confidentiality of client information?**

During your involvement with the Division, you will be asked to sign the DSCYF Authorization for Release of Protected Health

Information form. By signing this form, you allow the Division to share protected health information with other agencies within our Department. Furthermore, by signing this form, you give the Division permission to receive protected information from other providers whom you list (e.g. doctors, therapists, etc.).

The Division's management of confidential client information is consistent with applicable statutes, regulations, and professional practice. Except in limited circumstances, the Division shall not disclose any confidential information, except with your written informed consent, and the release or request for confidential information shall be limited to that which is necessary for case planning and service delivery.

### **Will the Division pay for the medical examination of my child if it is needed during the investigation?**

18 *Del. C.* §3557 states that a group or blanket insurance policy for a child who resides in Delaware or receives medical services in Delaware cannot limit coverage when referred by the Division of Family Services or law enforcement for suspected child abuse or neglect. Also, referral by a primary care physician is not required.

### **How long does the investigation take?**

Although each investigation is different, generally an investigation will be completed within 45 calendar days.

### **What will happen if I don't cooperate with the Division?**

The Division of Family Services recognizes the impact and intrusion our involvement may have on your family. It is often this feeling of intrusion that leads individuals not to want to cooperate with our efforts.

If you decide not to cooperate, the Division may need to take other action in order to conduct its investigation. For example,

your caseworker may seek to compel your cooperation through the Department of Justice and Family Court.

### **I've heard that if I don't cooperate with DFS, you'll take my child away from me.**

Your caseworker will make every attempt to work with you in order to keep your child safe in your home. If, however, your child cannot be kept safe, your worker may contact Family Court to seek temporary custody and permission to remove your child from your home.

### **I've heard you can have me arrested.**

By law, when the reported allegations indicate that a crime may have been committed against your child, the caseworker is required to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency and the Department of Justice.

### **What are the possible outcomes of an investigation?**

The Division is required to make two decisions at the conclusion of its investigation:

1. Decide whether there is a preponderance of the evidence (50% or greater likelihood) to substantiate child abuse or neglect, and
2. Decide whether continued services are necessary for your family. Services may also be provided if the Division determines your child is at risk of child abuse or neglect.

### **How does a person know they have been substantiated for an incident of abuse or neglect?**

The caseworker will send a Notice of Intent to Substantiate for Abuse and Neglect, informing the person that the Division intends to substantiate them for an incident of abuse or neglect. The letter will specify the recommended Child Protection Registry level, as well as next steps.

If your caseworker intends to substantiate you for an incident of abuse or neglect, you have the right to request a hearing in Family Court prior to having your name entered on the Child Protection Registry. You must submit your request for a hearing within 30 days of the postmarked date of the notice, or your name will automatically be entered on the Registry without a hearing.

## **What is the Child Protection Registry?**

The **Child Protection Registry** contains the names of individuals who have been substantiated for incidents of abuse or neglect. The substantiated incidents shall be designated at one of four Levels: I, II, III, and IV.

## **What do the different levels on the Child Protection Registry mean?**

- **Child Protection Level I** – A person who is substantiated for abuse or neglect at Child Protection Level I shall not be entered on the Child Protection Registry, will not be reported to employers required to check the Registry, and is eligible for employment in a child care facility, health care facility, or public school. However, your name and other case information will remain in the DFS internal information system and will be reported in response to inquiries related to application for employment in the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families, foster and adoptive parent decisions, child care licensing decisions, reporting pursuant to 31 *Delaware Code* §309 or 16 *Delaware Code* §906(e).

Conviction of any of the following crimes when based on the same incident of abuse or neglect as alleged in the Notice of Intent to Substantiate shall be deemed to present a low risk of future harm to children and shall be designated Child Protection Level I: *violation of compulsory school attendance requirements or truancy.*

- **Child Protection Level II** – A person who is on the Registry at Level II will remain on the Registry for 3 years, and will be reported to employers required to check the Registry for as long as the name remains on the Registry, but the employer will also be told you are eligible for employment in a child care facility, health care facility, or public school while on the Registry at Level II. Your name will automatically be removed after 3 years and will no longer be reported to employers, provided you do not have additional substantiations while on the Registry. Your name and other case information will remain in the DFS internal information system and will be reported in response to inquiries related to application for employment in the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families, foster and adoptive parent decisions, child care licensing decisions, reporting pursuant to 31 *Delaware Code* §309 or 16 *Delaware Code* §906(e).

Conviction of any of the following crimes when based on the same incident of abuse or neglect as alleged in the Notice of Intent to Substantiate shall be deemed to present a moderate risk of future harm to children and shall be designated Child Protection Level II: *interference with custody*

- **Child Protection Level III** – A person who is on the Registry at Level III will remain on the Registry for 7 years, and will be reported to employers required to check the Registry for as long as the name remains on the Registry. The employer will also be told that you are ineligible for employment in a child care facility, health care facility, or public school while on Child Protection Level III. Your name will automatically be removed from the Registry after 7 years and will no longer be reported to employers, provided you do not have additional substantiations while on the Registry. Your name and other case information will remain in the DFS internal information system and will be reported in response to inquiries related to application

for employment in the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families, foster and adoptive parent decisions, child care licensing decisions, reporting pursuant to 31 *Delaware Code* §309 or 16 *Delaware Code* §906(e).

Conviction of any of the following crimes when based on the same incident of abuse or neglect as alleged in the Notice of Intent to Substantiate shall be deemed to present a high risk of future harm to children and shall be designated Child Protection Level III: *offensive touching, sexual harassment, menacing, reckless endangering in the second degree, assault in the third degree, terroristic threatening, unlawful imprisonment in the second degree, unlawful administration of drugs or controlled substances, abandonment of a child, indecent exposure in the first/second degree, misdemeanor endangering the welfare of a child, or child abuse in the third degree.*

- **Child Protection Level IV** – A person who is on the Registry at Level IV will remain on the Registry indefinitely and will be reported to employers required to check the Registry. The employer will also be told you are ineligible for employment in a child care facility, health care facility, or public school. In addition, your name and other case information will remain in the DFS internal information system and will be reported in response to inquiries related to application for employment in the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families, foster and adoptive parent decisions, child care licensing decisions, reporting pursuant to 31 *Delaware Code* §309 or 16 *Delaware Code* §906(e).

Conviction of any of the following crimes when based on the same incident of abuse or neglect as alleged in the Notice of Intent to Substantiate shall be deemed to present the highest risk of future harm to children and shall be designated Child Protection Level IV: *vehicular assault,*

*vehicular homicide, criminally negligent homicide, assault in the first or second degree, murder, manslaughter, murder by abuse or neglect, incest, rape, unlawful sexual contact, sexual extortion, sexual solicitation of a child, bestiality, continuous sexual abuse of a child, possession of child pornography, unlawfully dealing in child pornography, felony endangering the welfare of a child, dangerous crime against a child, kidnapping, coercion, dealing in children, unlawful dealing with a child, sexual exploitation of a child, promoting suicide, reckless endangering in the third degree, unlawful imprisonment in the first degree, child abuse in the first/second degree, felony sex offender  
unlawful sexual conduct against a child, felony sexual abuse of a child by a person in a position of trust in the first/second degree, or trafficking of persons and involuntary servitude.*

### **What if I disagree with the Division’s civil finding?**

The Notice of Intent to Substantiate will include a Hearing Request Form. This must be returned within 30 days of the postmarked date of the letter.

### **What does the Division do after I return the Hearing Request Form?**

The caseworker must file a Petition for Substantiation in Family Court within 45 days of receiving your request.

### **Is there anything I can do if I do not believe my conviction for child abuse or neglect is based on the same incident investigated by the Division?**

If the Division of Family Services determines from its investigation that it intends to enter a person on the Child Protection Registry as a result of a conviction on Levels II, III, or IV, the Division shall send a Notice of Substantiation to the person informing them of

the substantiation and notifying them of the right to file a Petition for Limited Purpose Hearing in Family Court within 30 days of the Notice of Substantiation. The petition must explain why the conviction is not based on the same incident of abuse or neglect investigated by the Division.

### **What if I have been substantiated more than one time?**

If you are substantiated for abuse or neglect while on the Registry, the imposed conditions for each incident must be completed consecutively, with the conditions for the most restrictive Child Protection Level or Levels being completed before those for the less restrictive level or levels.

### **What if my substantiations are on different Child Protection Levels?**

A person who has partially completed a level when assigned to a more restrictive level is given credit for the partial completion when he or she has completed the conditions for the more restrictive level or levels.

### **Who has access to Child Protection Registry information?**

Employers in child care, health care, and public schools are required to check the Child Protection Registry and do so with your written consent.

Information is maintained with the strictest of confidentiality rules being applied on your behalf. The only time information can be shared about your involvement with the Division without your consent is when the information is requested by the Department of Justice or Law Enforcement agencies while conducting a criminal investigation of child abuse and neglect.

## **Can I have my name removed from the Registry?**

### Automatic Removal

A person who is entered on the Child Protection Registry at Child Protection Level II or Level III will be automatically removed from the Registry, provided that person has not been substantiated for another incident of abuse or neglect while on the Registry.

### Early Removal

A person who is entered on the Child Protection Registry at Child Protection Level II or Level III may file a Petition for Removal in Family Court prior to the expiration of the time designated for the Level.

The Family Court shall have the discretion to remove the person from the Child Protection Registry. In making this determination, the Court shall consider all relevant factors, including:

- (1) The nature and circumstances of the original substantiated incident;
- (2) Any substantiated incidents of abuse or neglect while on the Registry;
- (3) The criminal history of the person, including whether the person's criminal record of arrest or conviction of the incident leading to placement on the Registry was expunged;
- (4) Compliance with the terms of probation, if applicable;
- (5) The risk, if any, the registrant poses to the victim, the community, and to other potential victims;
- (6) The impact of registration and employer notification on the victim, community and other potential victims;
- (7) The rehabilitation, if any, of the person, or successful completion of a program of evaluation and treatment, including any court-ordered or division-recommended case plan; and

- (8) The adverse impact of registration on the person and the rehabilitative process, including the impact on employment opportunities.

### **Is it possible to have my name removed from the Registry if I was entered on it as a child?**

A person who was entered on the Child Protection Registry on any level as a child, may, at any time after his or her eighteenth birthday, file a Petition for Removal from Child Protection Registry For One Entered as a Juvenile in the Family Court. The Family Court shall have the discretion to remove the person from the registry. In making this determination, the Court shall consider all relevant factors, including Numbers 1-8 under Early Removal (above).

### **What happens if the Division decides that my family needs services?**

The caseworker will begin by making visits to discuss the issues identified during the investigation and to become familiar with your family.

Together you will work to develop a Service Plan to address your family's needs and the safety issues of your children. It will help you track your progress, and it will assist your worker in determining your family strengths, as well as your needs.

Your participation is important since it serves as a way to measure your progress towards making improvements and ensuring the safety of your children.

Many services are available to help families. Some may be obtained on your own and some may require a referral by the caseworker. The services may be received in or out of your home.

## **What happens if the Division determines my child is not safe and must be removed from my home?**

When possible, the Division will try to convene a Team Decision Making (TDM) meeting either immediately prior to placement or within 48 hours after placement to discuss safety concerns that are making the Division consider obtaining custody. The TDM meeting provides a place for you and those close to your family to come together to discuss the family's strengths, knowledge, experiences, and resources to create a plan that ensures the safety of the children in your family.

### **Who comes to the TDM meeting?**

The meeting may include your family, other relatives, friends, church members, or others in your community. You and your caseworker will decide who to invite. The meeting may also include people from your community who provide services to you and your family, such as a family counselor.

### **What happens at the TDM meeting?**

The meeting is led by a trained facilitator who is not your worker and has no involvement with your family. Meetings begin with team members being introduced to each other. Following introductions, you and the Division caseworker will talk about what brought the family to the attention of the Division and what the safety concerns are. The team will then work together to select an idea that is doable, realistic, and that will provide safety for your children. There can be a range of possible outcomes, including placing your child in out-of-home care.

If your child is placed in foster care, the caseworker will reach out to as many relatives as possible to explore whether they might be a placement resource or provide some other supportive service to yourself and/or your child.

## **What are my rights if my child has been removed from my home?**

While your children are in foster care, you have the following rights:

- To understand the reasons why your children are in foster care
- To have reasonable visitation with your children
- To receive assistance in overcoming the problems that led to foster care placement
- A written Service Plan which clearly states what must be achieved in order for your children to return home
- To have a periodic review of your progress
- To participate in planning for your children's needs while in foster care, including education
- To receive information about your children's adjustment to foster care, school progress, physical and mental health
- To consent to marriage, entry into the armed forces, and changes in religious affiliation for your children
- To consent to any medical treatment, remain informed about their children's condition, and wherever possible, participate in any medical decision making. However, in your absence or unavailability, the Division will make the decisions in the best interest of the children.

## **Will I be allowed to visit my child if they are placed in foster care?**

We recognize the importance for you to maintain *regular* contact with your children. Your caseworker will work with you in scheduling your visits. Visits may occur at our office, at a supervised visitation center, or in your home. In most cases, these visits will be supervised or monitored.



## **How do I get my child back?**

A Service Plan will be developed with the approval of Family Court. Family Court will review the plan periodically as long as your child is in care.

## **How long do I have to work towards having my children returned home?**

Since foster care is temporary and children need permanent families, the goal of reunification must be reached before your children have been in foster care for twelve months. If you do not make sufficient progress within the first twelve months of your children entering foster care, other permanency goals may be identified. Those other goals include relative custody, guardianship, and termination of parental rights and adoption.

**Your participation is key to successful reunification.** Failure to cooperate with your Service Plan may indicate to your caseworker and to the Family Court that you are unwilling to make the positive changes necessary to provide a safe home for your child. If the Division is unable to reunify your child with you, your worker will explore permanency options.

## **I've heard some parents have permanently lost custody of their children. Could this happen to me?**

We are required under the Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act to develop a permanent plan for all children who have been

in out of home care for 12 or more months. To terminate parental rights (TPR), the Division must petition the Family Court, and a termination hearing must be held to make a final decision.

At the same time you are receiving assistance and working towards your children's return home, the Division of Family Services will also be exploring other options for your children, should you not be able to meet your goals. If circumstances change and you are no longer actively working towards the goal of return home, the Division may change the goal to other permanency goals as indicated above.

### **Does anyone else have the authority to take my child into custody?**

According to Delaware law, any law enforcement officer or physician who reasonably suspects a child is in imminent danger of suffering serious physical harm or threat to life as a result of abuse or neglect may take a child into *Temporary Emergency Protective Custody* for up to 4 hours. The law enforcement officer and physician must contact the Division of Family Services, who will conduct an investigation. In addition, the Division of Family Services shall have this same authority, provided the child is located at a school, day care facility, or child care facility.

### **What is the Safe Arms for Babies Act?**

The *Safe Arms for Babies Act* allows a parent of an infant up to 14 days old to surrender the infant to a hospital emergency room in Delaware anonymously. The hospital will contact the Division of Family Services and a safe home will be found for your child. A parent who surrenders an infant through the Safe Arms for Babies Act will not be subject to an investigation and will not be placed on the Child Protection Registry. You may call 1.800.262.9800 for more information about this program.

## **CHAPTER II – FAMILY ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION RESPONSE (FAIR)**

### **What is FAIR?**

FAIR, Family Assessment and Intervention Response, is an alternative to the traditional investigation response. Generally, FAIR services are targeted for child abuse and neglect reports that are low to moderate risk and do not require a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Response.

FAIR is an approach that responds to allegations of child abuse and neglect by:

- Ensuring children are safe
- Working in partnership with parents and children
- Working on solving problems instead of placing blame
- Building on a family's strengths
- Identifying a family's needs
- Providing a family with needed services
- Assisting a family to connect to community resources.

### **What happens during FAIR?**

During a FAIR case, the caseworker will assess whether your children are safe. Usually the caseworker will meet with the entire family to learn about any events, issues, or situations that are creating conflict or raising concerns about your child's current safety or future well-being. This process may require multiple family team meetings. If problems are identified impacting the care of your child, your caseworker will work with you to develop a plan to address and resolve those problems.



## **What if I don't want to participate in FAIR services?**

Your family's participation in FAIR services is voluntary, but your involvement with the Division is not. If you choose not to participate in FAIR, the Division will be required to conduct a traditional investigation. During an investigation, the Division determines whether child abuse or neglect occurred. If abuse or neglect is found to have occurred, it may result in entry on the Child Protection Registry.

## **Can I be placed on the Child Protection Registry if I participate in FAIR?**

Your participation in FAIR services will not result in a finding that may enter you on the Child Protection Registry; however, if the Division receives a new report requiring an investigation or Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) response, the results of the investigation for that report could result in a finding of child abuse or neglect.

## **How long does FAIR take?**

The FAIR caseworker typically meets with the family for a period of 60-90 calendar days. If your family requires services beyond 90 days, your case will be transferred to ongoing Treatment services.

## CHAPTER III – OTHER SERVICES AND PHONE NUMBERS

### Who can I contact if I am unable to resolve an issue with my caseworker?

The Division recommends you address your concerns using the following steps.

*Step 1* - Contact your caseworker's **Supervisor**. If the supervisor is unable to resolve your complaint; then,

*Step 2* - Contact the **Assistant Regional Administrator** where your caseworker is employed. The regional office telephone numbers are as follows:

- New Castle County 302.660.3578
- Kent County 302.739.4800
- Sussex County 302.856.5450

*Step 3* – Contact the **Regional Administrator** where your caseworker is employed at the numbers above.

*Step 4* - Contact the Office of Children's Services (**OCS Administrator**) at 302.633.2654.

### Who can I speak to about unprofessional conduct of Division staff?

You are encouraged to follow the same steps you would follow to address a case related issue (Steps 1-4 above); however, you may also discuss your concerns with the Division's **Constituent Relations Liaison** at 302.633.2714.

### What other services are offered by the **Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families**?

The **Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services** (DPBHS) provides voluntary prevention services, early

intervention services, and public behavioral healthcare to children and their families statewide. Their mission is to provide effective prevention and treatment services for children through collaboration with families and service partners.

DPBHS provides services to children through age 17 who are without insurance; or are enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP *and* who require services more intensive than 30 hours of outpatient treatment in the Medicaid basic child health benefit provided through Managed Care Organizations (MCO).

DPBHS services include:

- Prevention/Early Intervention Services
- Information and Referral
- *Child Priority Response (Crisis)*
- Outpatient Services
- Behavioral Health Aides
- Therapeutic Respite
- Day Treatment
- Individual Residential Treatment
- Residential Treatment
- Psychiatric Hospital
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

### *Child Priority Response (Crisis)*

When a child is in a behavioral health or substance abuse crisis and could cause self-harm or harm someone else or has recently been exposed to a traumatic or violent event, call 1.800.969.HELP (4357).

*Child Priority Response (Crisis)* service includes:

- Statewide on-site response when needed
- Mental health risk assessment
- Intensive follow-up care for child/family for up to 30 days in the child's home, school or community

- Short-term supervised crisis bed for clinical observation and safety when indicated

Note: *Child Priority Response* service may not transport or use physical restraint with any child due to legal and safety issues. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, please call 911 first. Additional information about DPBHS or available community-based services is available online at <http://www.kids.delaware.gov/pbhs/pbhs.shtml>.

The **Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services (DYRS)** provides services including detention, treatment, probation and aftercare services to youth in the State of Delaware who are ordered to its care by Family Court. DYRS is responsible for assessing the individual needs of youth and collaborates with their families, schools and community partners. It is the goal of DYRS to coordinate services and resources in an effort to rehabilitate youth into becoming positive citizens within their communities. For more information call 302.633.2620 or look online at <http://www.kids.delaware.gov/yrs/yrs.shtml>.



**Delaware.gov**  
The Official Website of the First State



**If you need to talk to someone, call**

- **CONTACT Lifeline:** 1.800.262.9800  
*24/7 Crisis Helpline, Sexual Assault Counseling, Online Support*
- **Help Me Grow:** 211

8:00 am – 8:00 pm, Monday - Friday

*For young children, links families to appropriate health or community-based programs*

**To report child abuse, call**

- **Child Abuse Report Line** 24/7 1.800.292.9582  
*Delaware Division of Family Services*  
*Online reporting is also available. [Iseethesigns.org](http://Iseethesigns.org)*

**To report elder abuse, call**

- **Delaware Adult Protective Services** 1.800.223-9074  
*Delaware Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities*  
E-mail: [DelawareADRC@state.de.us](mailto:DelawareADRC@state.de.us)

**To get help about domestic violence, call**

- **Domestic Violence Hotline** 24/7  
*Child, Inc. – bilingual staff available*
  - NCC: 302.762-6110
  - KC and SC: 1.800.874.2070
- **Peoples Place** 24/7 KC and SC: 302.422.8058
- **Abriendo Puertos** SC: 302.745.9874 24/7 *Spanish speaking*

**To report animal cruelty, call**

- **Delaware SPCA**
  - NCC Chapter: 302.998.2281
  - SC Chapter: 302.856.6361*Online reporting is also available*

**If you need legal help, call**

- **Community Legal Aid Society, Inc.**  
*For low-income, elderly or disabled*
  - NCC: 302.575.0660 or 1.800.292.7980
  - KC: 302.674.8500 or 1.800.537.8383
  - SC: 302.856.0038 or 1.800.462.7070
- **Delaware Volunteer Legal Services (DVLS)**  
*Must meet federal poverty income standards*  
*For domestic violence, landlord matters, family law, child support, estate planning*
  - NCC: 302.478.8850
  - KC and SC: 302.225.0582

**To file a petition for custody, guardianship or Protection From Abuse (PFA), call**

- **Family Court of the State of Delaware**
  - NCC: 302.255.0300
  - KC: 302.672.1000
  - SC: 302.855.7400

**For assistance with child support, call**

- **Delaware Division of Child Support Enforcement**
  - NCC: 302.577.7171
  - KC: 302.739.8299
  - SC: 302.856.5386

**For help with victim advocacy, call**

- **Office of the Child Advocate**
  - NCC: 302.255.1730
  - SC: 302.856.5720
- **DE Center for Justice, Inc.:** 302.658.7174

**For programs providing emergency shelter, help with basic needs and food pantries, immigration assistance, help for pregnant teens/women, and low income energy assistance, call**

- **Catholic Charities**
  - NCC: 302.655.9624
  - KC: 302.674.1600
  - SC: 302.856.9578

**For counseling/mental health services, call**

- **Children & Families First** 1.800.220.3092 (Statewide)
- **Delaware Guidance Services**
  - Wilmington: 302.652.3948
  - Newark: 302.455.9333
  - Dover:: 302.678.3020
  - Lewes: 302.645.5338
  - Seaford: 302.262.3505
- **Jewish Family Services**
  - NCC 302.478.9411
- **Latin American Community Center**
  - NCC 302.655.7338

- SOAR (sexual abuse)
  - NCC: 302.655.6593
  - KC: 302.422.3811
  - SC: 302.645.4903

**For help with alcohol or drug abuse, call**

- Aquila
  - NCC: 302.999.1106
  - SC: 302.856.9746:
- Brandywine Counseling and Community Services
  - NCC: 302.656.2348
  - SC: 302.856.4700
- Crossroads of Delaware, Inc.
  - NCC: 302.652.1405, ext.113
  - KC: 302.744.9999
- Fellowship Health Resources, Inc.
  - SC: 302.934.7318
- SODAT 1.800.551.6464  
(Statewide)

# Division of Family Services Offices

## Administrative Offices:

### **Delaware Youth and Family Center**

1825 Faulkland Road  
Wilmington, DE 19805  
302.633.2657

## New Castle County:

### **Regions I, II & V – Churchman’s Corporate Center**

92 Christiana Road  
New Castle, DE 19720  
302.660.3578

## Kent County:

### **Region III - Barratt Building & Robbins Building**

821 Silver Lake Blvd., Suite 200  
Dover, DE 19901  
302.739.4800

## Sussex County:

### **Region IV – Thurman Adams State Service Center**

546 South Bedford Street  
Georgetown, DE 19947  
302.856.5450

### **Riverwalk I & II**

247 N.E. Front Street  
Milford, DE 19963  
302.422.1400

### **Edward W. Pyle State Service Center**

Rt. 2, P.O. Box 281-1  
Frankford, DE 19945  
302.732.9510

### **Anna C. Shipley State Service Center**

350 Virginia Avenue  
Seaford, DE 19973  
302.628.2024

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## **State of Delaware**

**The Department of Services for Children,  
Youth and Their Families**

**Division of Family Services**

Web Site: <http://www.kids.delaware.gov>