

How do I find out who is investigating a licensing complaint?

Contact offices in the following areas:

Region 1 OFCL

1313 Atlantic, Suite 2000
Spokane, WA 99201
(509) 363-3488

(Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Stevens, Okanagon, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Lincoln, Grant, Adams, Whitman counties)

Region 2 OFCL

1002 N. 16th Avenue
Yakima, WA 98909
(509) 225-6570

(Kittitas Yakima, Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield, Asotin counties)

Region 3 OFCL

840 N. Broadway, Building B, #540
Everett, WA 98201
(425) 339-2961

(Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, Island, San Juan counties)

Region 4 OFCL

2809 26th Avenue S.
Seattle, WA 98144
(206) 721-6610

(Seattle, North King County, Bellevue, Bothell, Burien, Kirkland, Renton, Kent, Auburn and vicinity)

Region 5 OFCL

1949 S. State Street
Tacoma, WA 98405
(253) 983-6434

(Pierce, Kitsap counties)

Region 6 OFCL

6860 Capitol Blvd. S., Bldg. #342
Tumwater, WA 98504
(360) 725-6765

(Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, Mason, Pacific, Lewis, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, Thurston, Skamania, Clark, Klickitat counties)

Who do I call if I have further concerns?

Children's Administration Constituent Relations	1-800-723-4831
Office of the Family & Children's Ombudsmen	1-800-571-7321

DSHS 22-451(X) (Rev. 4/02)



Foster Home Complaint Process

What happens when there is a complaint about a Foster Home?



FROM:

Please staple or tape when mailing.

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Foster Home Complaint Process

This brochure explains what happens when complaints about foster homes are registered with Children's Administration Intake. Complaints can be investigated by the Division of Licensed Resources, Child Protective Services (DLR) (CPS) or Office of Foster Care Licensing (OFCL) licensors, depending on the type of complaint.

When a person is concerned about a situation in a family foster home, they can call the local Children's Administration Intake to make a referral.

Foster Care Providers

Providers may be contacted after a person complains to Children's Administration Intake about a situation in family foster homes.

What happens next?

All referrals/complaints are entered in the Department of Social and Health Services Children's Administration computer system for tracking.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, either the OFCL licensor or the DLR CPS worker will investigate.

What determines if the complaint is investigated by CPS or OFCL?

DLR CPS staff investigate complaints about child abuse and neglect. These complaints include:

Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse
Physical Neglect	Exploitation
Emotional Abuse	Medical Neglect
Supervision-related Neglect	Death of a Child

OFCL staff investigate complaints regarding violations of licensing rules in family foster homes. These complaints include:

Lack of Supervision for Foster Children	Over Capacity
Corporal Punishment for Foster Children	Discipline for Foster Children
Nurture/Care	Nutrition
Health/Sanitation	Other Violations
Substance Abuse	

If DLR-CPS determines the complaint should be investigated, based on its criteria, what happens next?

DLR CPS workers:

- Notify you of the allegations as early as possible without jeopardizing the investigation and get your side of the story.
- Conduct a thorough and unbiased investigation of the facts including interviews with alleged victims, witnesses and others with relevant information.
- Determine whether or not the alleged incident occurred as described and if so, is considered to be Abuse or Neglect of a child according to state law (RCW 26.44)

It is important that you understand that even if DLR/CPS staff determine that you did not abuse or neglect a child in your care, it may be necessary for your licensor to continue working with you about licensing violations that may have become apparent during the investigation. If serious violations were found to have occurred, it may be necessary for your licensor to take action against your license.

If the complaint involves allegations of licensing violations, the licensor may take the following actions:

- Interview children
- Interview foster parents
- Visit the home either announced or unannounced
- Observe the child
- Interview other witnesses
- Review child's individual supervision plan, if applicable
- Review child's physical and behavioral issues
- Contact collateral sources of information
- Continually assess the safety of the children as additional information becomes available.

THE LICENSOR IS RESPONSIBLE TO THE PROVIDER TO:

- Describe concerns and issues clearly and respectfully.
- Offer open communication and accept provider feedback.
- Offer technical assistance.
- Give information about the investigation proceedings, within disclosure guidelines.
- Determine the outcome together with the provider, if possible.
- Treat all parties with respect regardless of the allegation.
- Write a "Compliance Agreement" when necessary.

What does OFCL do when the investigation of the complaint is completed?

- OFCL will inform the person making the complaint, the foster home provider, and other involved parties of the results of the investigation, and actions taken as a result of the investigation.
- If licensing violations are found, licensors will develop a plan with the foster parent to correct the situation. Licensors will monitor the home to ensure compliance with the plan.
- If the plan is not successful, or if the past history of noncompliance, or the immediate situation warrants, the licensor may take licensing action. This may include, changing the license status, suspending, or revoking the home license.

THE LICENSOR WILL RESPOND TO PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE COMPLAINT AT TWO POINTS:

- 1) When it is determined whether the complaint is being investigated by DLR/CPS or OFCL staff.
- 2) At the conclusion of the investigation.