

# CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

## INVESTIGATIVE ASSESSMENT



**BUNCOMBE COUNTY  
HEALTH & HUMAN  
SERVICES**  
BUNCOMBECOUNTY.ORG/HHS

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE INVESTIGATIVE ASSESSMENT?

N.C. law requires that local county departments of social services ensure children's safety in their homes. A child protective services investigative assessment determines whether abuse or neglect has occurred and whether other services may be needed to help the family.

### WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

Buncombe County Health and Human Services social work staff knows that family members are experts on their family. As the investigation takes place, we seek to balance risk while answering 4 questions:

1. What are we worried about in relation to the child and the family? (Has there been Harm to the child/ children and are there worries for the future which we call Danger?)
2. What is working well in the family? (Which we call Strengths and Existing Safety)
3. What needs to happen to make sure the child is safe in the future? (Which we call Safety Goals and Safety Planning)
4. How safe is the child, from zero (very dangerous for the child) to ten (the child is safe)?

There are different tools that may be used in gathering information from children including 3 Houses, Safety House, and a Words and Pictures explanation of what happened.

### NEXT STEPS:

- **INTERVIEWS** with each child living in your home must occur. These interviews will be done privately between the child and a HHS social worker. The social worker has the right to interview the child without your permission or presence.



- You will be informed as quickly as possible of what was reported to HHS and that your child has been interviewed. You should be interviewed the same day your child was seen unless other arrangements are made between you and the social worker.
- A social worker will complete a safety assessment with you regarding any concerns that have been found. This safety assessment might be about child supervision, placing your child with relatives, or the type of discipline you use in your home.
- Medical and/or mental health evaluations may be requested to assist the social worker with the investigation.
- State law requires that other professionals such as teachers, counselors, and doctors be contacted for information if they have knowledge of a family's situation. This information will only be used to assist the social worker with the investigative assessment.
- State law requires that a visit be made to any home that your child(ren) reside in. It also requires that EVERYONE living in your home be interviewed.
- You will be notified of the case decision, **IN WRITING**, at the end of the investigative assessment. The assessment should be completed in 30 days, unless the social worker is unable to gather the needed information in that time frame.

### CLIENT'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As A Client Your Family Has The Right:

1. To be treated with dignity, respect, and courtesy.
2. To know HHS's legal authority and right to intervene.
3. To know any possible action which HHS might take, including asking for court intervention.
4. To know HHS's expectations of your family, along with what you can expect from HHS.
5. Phone calls to HHS should be returned within one working day.

**AFTER HOURS  
EMERGENCY  
OR  
MAKE A REPORT  
(828) 250-5900**

# PROTECTING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

- The social worker will be available to answer any questions you might have at any point of the CPS investigation.
- If the social worker is not available, or your phone calls are not returned, you should call the social worker's supervisor.

STATE LAW WILL NOT ALLOW US TO REVEAL THE NAME OF THE REPORTER

Social Worker:

Phone Number:

Supervisor:

Supervisor Number:

Partnering with our community to strengthen our health, safety and self-sufficiency



**BUNCOMBE COUNTY**  
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
[BUNCOMBECOUNTY.ORG/HHS](http://BUNCOMBECOUNTY.ORG/HHS)



**IN PERSON**

35 Woodfin Street  
Asheville, NC 28801



**BY PHONE**

**SOCIAL WORK SERVICES:** (828) 250-5900  
**ECONOMIC SERVICES:** (828) 250-5500  
**HEALTH SERVICES:** (828) 250-5000



**ONLINE**

**VISIT**  
[buncombecounty.org/HHS](http://buncombecounty.org/HHS)

## Additional Resources



Call **2-1-1** or visit [nc211.org](http://nc211.org) to find out about other local resources.



Apply for **Medicaid** and **Food Assistance** online at [ePASS.NC.GOV](http://ePASS.NC.GOV)

### Other Services we provide...

- WIC
- Immunizations/Travel Vaccines
- Nurse Family Partnership
- Work First Employment Services
- Disease Control
- Free and Reduced School Lunches
- Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)
- Food Assistance
- Family and Children's Medicaid
- Child Care Subsidy
- STD/HIV Testing
- Emergency Assistance

## Interpreter services available at no cost

Servicios de intérprete están disponibles sin costo alguno  
Услуги переводчика предоставляются бесплатно  
If you have problems getting interpreter help, please call  
**Title VI Compliance Officer at 828-250-5587**

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