

Chapter 9 Matters of concern

Purpose

Child Safety Services has a legislative responsibility to ensure that children in out-of-home care receive a level of care that is consistent with the standards of care outlined in the statement of standards (*Child Protection Act 1999*, section 122).

When it is indicated that the standards of care have not been met for a child, Child Safety Services will respond through the matters of concern process to ensure the safety and well-being of the child.

The process of assessing and responding to matters of concern will be conducted in a manner consistent with Child Safety Services' procedures and the principles, rights and responsibilities outlined in the [Statement of Commitment between the Department of Child Safety, foster care services and the carers of Queensland](#).

Key steps

1. Decide whether information constitutes a matter of concern
2. Assess a child placement concern report
3. Investigate and assess a matter of concern notification
4. Develop and monitor an action plan

What ifs - responding to specific matters of concern matters

Standards

1. All matters of concern are finalised **within six weeks**.
 2. An action plan is developed whenever a breach of standards has occurred.
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Practice skills (Key areas for reflection)

- Have I gathered and considered all available contextual information prior to the decision about whether the concerns constitute a matter of concern?
 - Have I undertaken an holistic assessment of the matter of concern, including consideration of Child Safety Services' history and where possible, verified information obtained from other sources?
 - Have I actively engaged with the subject child and approved carer or staff member in a way that enables their meaningful participation in the process?
 - Have I responded to the child's safety and support needs within the placement and identified the approved carer's or staff member's supervision, support and training needs?
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Authority

- *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 5, 6, 7, 9, 14, 74, 82(1), 122, 130, 187 and 188
 - *Child Protection Regulation 2000*, section 9 and 12
 - Policy No. 395-2: Administrative access to child safety records
 - Policy No. 295-5: Complaints management
 - Policy No. 391-3: Critical Incident Reporting
 - Policy No. 604-1: Positive behaviour support
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Key steps - Matters of concern

1. Decide whether information constitutes a matter of concern

- 1.1 What constitutes a matter of concern
- 1.2 The CSSC responsible for a matter of concern
- 1.3 Gather information
- 1.4 Consult with relevant people
- 1.5 Seek CSSC manager approval for the decision
- 1.6 Complete a critical incident report
- 1.7 Recording and approval requirements

2. Assess a child placement concern report

- 2.1 Decide who will conduct the assessment
- 2.2 Provide required information prior to planning
- 2.3 Plan the assessment
- 2.4 Arrange meetings with the child and the approved carer or staff member
- 2.5 Conduct the assessment
- 2.6 Decide the assessment outcome
- 2.7 Actions required following the assessment
- 2.8 Provide required information following the assessment

3. Investigate and assess a matter of concern notification

- 3.1 Decide who will conduct the investigation and assessment
- 3.2 Provide required information prior to planning
- 3.3 Plan the investigation and assessment
- 3.4 Arrange interviews with the child and the approved carer or staff member
- 3.5 Conduct the investigation and assessment
- 3.6 Assess the information gathered during the investigation and assessment
- 3.7 Decide the investigation and assessment outcome
- 3.8 Actions required following the assessment
- 3.9 Provide required information following the investigation and assessment

4. Develop and monitor an action plan

- 4.1 When to develop an action plan
- 4.2 Who will develop the action plan
- 4.3 Who will participate in the development of the action plan
- 4.4 Review suitability as part of the action plan
- 4.5 Develop the action plan

- 4.6 Implement and monitor the action plan
- 4.7 Review the action plan

What ifs - responding to specific matters of concern matters

1. What if **additional concerns** are received?
2. What if there is harm by **another household member**?
3. What if there is harm by a person living **outside the care environment**?
4. What if the child **needs to be moved** to a new placement?
5. What if the concerns received are **historical**?
6. What if the notifier is **vexatious or malicious**?
7. What if there are **multiple** matters of concern?
8. What if assistance is required from the **Matters of Concern Review Unit**?
9. What if a staff member is responsible for **concerns of a serious nature**?
10. What if a matter of concern coincides with the **renewal of approval** for a carer?
11. What if a person wants to make a **complaint or seek a review**?
12. What if there is a request for a **copy of Child Safety Services' records**?

1. Decide whether information constitutes a matter of concern

The matters of concern procedures **only** apply to children in the custody or guardianship of the chief executive or subject to a care agreement and placed with an approved carer, a licensed care service or another entity.

These procedures **do not apply to**:

- a child who is not in out-of-home care but who resides in, or regularly frequents, the care environment
- a child in the custody of a relative under a short-term child protection order
- a child in the long-term guardianship of a relative or another suitable person
- the biological children or step-children of an approved carer or staff member.

For these children, standard intake procedures apply, as outlined in [Chapter 1. Intake](#).

Structured decision making tools are not used as part of the response to matters of concern.

Decision making timeframe

Within two working days of the receipt of the information provided by the notifier, the following decisions must be made:

- whether the information received indicates a breach of the standards
- if so, the most appropriate response to the matter of concern.

1.1 What constitutes a matter of concern

A matter of concern is recorded when an approved carer or staff member has provided inadequate or poor quality care (for a child in out-of-home care) that fails to meet the standards of care detailed in the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 122. This may include behaviours, actions or inactions of the approved carer or staff member. There are two levels for matters of concern, either:

- a child placement concern report
- a matter of concern notification.

When considering whether the information gathered constitutes a matter of concern, ensure that the child's welfare and best interests are paramount.

Child placement concern report

Record a child placement concern report, in response to a matter of concern, where the information gathered indicates that:

- an approved carer or staff member has provided inadequate or poor quality care (for a child in out-of-home care) that fails to meet the standards of care detailed in the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 122
- a child has not suffered harm, is not suffering harm and is not at unacceptable risk of suffering harm, as defined in the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 9, due to the actions or inactions of an approved carer or staff member of a licensed care service or another entity.

When making the decision to respond to a matter of concern through a child placement concern report, consider the following matters:

- how the reported actions or inactions of the approved carer or staff member breach the standards of care
- which standards may have been breached
- the impact, or potential impact, on the child
- what is reasonable, having regard to the length of time the child has been in the care of the approved carer or staff member and the child's age and development (*Child Protection Act 1999*, section 122(4)).

Matter of concern notification

Record a notification, in response to a matter of concern, where the information gathered indicates that either:

- an approved carer or staff member has provided inadequate or poor quality care (for a child in out-of-home care) that fails to meet the standards of care detailed in the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 122
- a child in out-of-home care **has** experienced harm or risk of harm by an approved carer or staff member of a licensed care service or another entity.

To meet the threshold for a matter of concern notification, the concerns must meet the legislative definition of harm, as outlined in the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 9. For further information about the definition of harm, refer to the practice resource [Matters of concern - key concepts and definitions](#).

Once the decision is made to record a matter of concern notification, commence the investigation and assessment in accordance with [3. Investigate and assess a matter of concern notification](#).

Where there is uncertainty

Where it is determined that there has been a breach of the standards of care, but there is uncertainty about whether to record a child placement concern report or a matter of concern notification, record a child placement concern report in the first instance.

Assessing historical concerns

When the information received about a child in out-of-home care is historical, that is more than 12 months old, or about a child who is now over the age of 18 or in relation to a carer or staff member that is no longer approved or employed, refer to [5. What if the concerns received are historical?](#)

1.2 The CSSC responsible for a matter of concern

Decide if information constitutes a matter of concern

The CSSC with responsibility for the approved carer, licensed care service or another entity is responsible for **deciding** whether concerns about the standards of care constitute a matter of concern and if so, **the appropriate response**.

Actions required when concerns are received by the CSAHSC

When information is received by CSAHSC over a weekend or holiday period that may constitute a matter of concern, the CSAHSC will undertake the relevant steps to determine whether the information

constitutes a matter of concern. CSAHSC responsibility for a matter ends on the following business day, once the CSSC is open for business.

Where it is determined that the information constitutes a matter of concern, but no action by the CSAHSC is required, the CSAHSC will:

- record the information in ICMS in a 'placement' case note in the 'placement' event, and include the notifier's contact details and whether they request feedback (if from a government or non-government agency)
- fax the information to the CSSC responsible for the approved carer, licensed care service or another entity, and call them on the next business day to ensure they have received the fax, are aware of the matter and are able to locate the 'placement' case note in ICMS.

The CSSC with responsibility for the carer or service is then responsible for responding to the matter of concern in accordance with normal matter of concern procedures.

Where it is determined that the information constitutes a matter of concern notification and action by the CSAHSC is required, the CSAHSC will:

- seek approval for the decision to record a matter of concern notification from the relevant CSSC manager
- take action to ensure the safety of the children and commence the investigation and assessment within the 24 hour response timeframe, where necessary
- record the concerns and all actions taken in either the 'MOC notification' event or a 'MOC - I&A' event in ICMS
- fax the information to the CSSC responsible for the approved carer, licensed care service or another entity, and call them on the next business day to ensure they have received the fax, are aware of the matter and are able to locate the relevant information in ICMS.

The CSSC is then responsible for completing the investigation and assessment of the matter in accordance with normal matter of concern procedures.

Actions required when concerns are received by another CSSC

Where it is determined that concerns received by a CSSC that does not hold current responsibility for the approved carer, licensed care service or another entity constitutes a matter of concern, the CSSC that is contacted by the notifier will:

- record the information obtained from the notifier as a 'placement' case note in the 'placement' event in ICMS, including the notifier's contact details and whether they request feedback (if from a government or non-government agency)
- contact the CSSC responsible for the approved carer, licensed care service or another entity, and **ensure the intake officer is advised** of the concerns
- advise the CSO at the applicable CSSC, where to locate the 'placement' case note in the 'placement' event in ICMS.

The CSSC is then responsible for responding to the matter of concern in accordance with normal matter of concern procedures.

Decide which CSSC will respond to the matter of concern

The CSSC with responsibility for the approved carer, licensed care service or another entity is responsible for **assessing** the child placement concern report or **investigating and assessing** the matter of concern notification and deciding the outcome.

Where an approved carer has moved to the geographical area of another CSSC but the former CSSC has not officially transferred responsibility for the approved carer to the new CSSC, the former CSSC is responsible for completing the assessment or **investigation and assessment**, either directly, or through negotiation with the nearest CSSC.

In circumstances where multiple CSSCs are serviced by a licensed care service or another entity, the CSSC responsible for the assessment will be determined by local protocols within and across zones, by agreement by each CSSC.

In circumstances where there is another CSSC responsible for any child currently placed with the approved carer or staff member subject to a matter of concern, the responsible CSSC must:

- inform the other CSSC of the decision to record a child placement concern report or matter of concern notification
- coordinate the response to the child placement concern report or matter of concern notification
- negotiate for specific tasks to be undertaken by the other CSSC, where identified as necessary or preferable based on valid case specific considerations (for example, to overcome significant geographical distances), to enable the responsible CSSC to finalise the assessment or the investigation and assessment.

1.3 Gather information

A decision about the level of the concerns and the appropriate Child Safety Services' response must be made **within two working days** from the receipt of the information and the information gathering process must occur as a matter of priority in order to meet this timeframe.

Gather information from the notifier

Gather information from the notifier in accordance with [Chapter 1, 1.1 Gather information from the notifier](#). In addition:

- gather specific information in order to determine:
 - whether there appears to have been a breach of the standards and which standards have been breached
 - the impact of the actions or inactions of the approved carer or staff member on the child
- gather the following contextual information about the child's approved carer or staff member from the notifier, where known:
 - their level of experience
 - the number and details of other children in the placement
 - placement support details (including frequency of contact with a Child Safety Services' support worker or staff of a licensed care service or another entity)
 - information about their characteristics and supports, including their emotional and physical condition, behaviour, history, view of the child and child-rearing practices
 - the degree of stress the approved carer or staff member is currently experiencing

- the nature and outcomes of previous matters of concern (including existing or emerging patterns), where known to the notifier.

Any information received from the notifier, regarding allegations of harm to a child that may have involved the commission of a criminal offence relating to the child, is to be immediately notified to the QPS using the [Police Referral Fax](#), in accordance with the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 14(2). For further information refer to [Chapter 10.3 Statutory obligation to notify the Queensland Police Service of possible criminal offences](#).

Respond to the notifier

When obtaining information from the notifier, advise the notifier of the confidentiality provisions under the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 22(1)(a) and 186, including some legislative exceptions. For further information refer to the practice resource [Notifiers and mandatory notifiers](#).

When government or non-government agencies contact Child Safety Services with concerns that constitute a matter of concern, advise the notifier that they **will be** advised about the Child Safety Services' response, and respond in accordance with [Chapter 1, 4.4 Provide feedback to government and non-government agencies notifiers](#).

Conduct child protection history checks

When a notifier reports concerns relating to the standards of care provided to a child, conduct Child Safety Services child protection history checks on the child and the approved carer or staff member - refer to [Chapter 1, 1.2 Conduct a child protection history check](#).

Gather information from additional sources

When determining what constitutes a breach of the standards, the same action or inaction, in the context of a long-term stable placement, may have a very different impact on a child who has had a recent traumatic experience and is new to the placement. This highlights the complexity of decision-making and the critical need for consultation and discussion with all those who have relevant information when making a decision about the level of the concern and the most appropriate response.

In addition to gathering information from the notifier:

- collate relevant information in relation to the child, including:
 - the current case plan
 - their placement history
 - the length of the current placement
 - any developmental and care needs (particularly factors that may increase the child's vulnerability such as age, disability or behavioural issues)
- consult with the CSO with case responsibility for the child
- contact the following people and, where applicable, provide details of the concerns raised and obtain relevant information about the child, approved carer or staff member and the placement:
 - the Community Services Team (CST) manager of the zone with responsibility for the licensed care service or another entity
 - the licensed care service or another entity
 - the CSO who has case responsibility for any child currently residing in the placement
 - a recognised entity, where the child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

- obtain the views of all parties about whether a breach of the standards is indicated.

In addition, where the child currently receives a significant level of intervention by a service provider as part of their case plan (for example, intervention by Evolve Interagency Services or an intensive family intervention service), contact the person directly responsible for the provision of these services and obtain relevant information to inform decision-making.

Assistance by the Matters of Concern Review Unit

The Matters of Concern Review Unit may be contacted, by the CSSC manager or senior practitioner only, where it is considered that assistance is required in any aspect of the matters of concern process. For further information refer to [8. What if assistance is required from the Matters of Concern Review Unit.](#)

1.4 Consult with relevant people

Team leader and senior practitioner

When all of the information has been gathered, consult the team leader and senior practitioner to:

- discuss the concerns raised in the context of all the information gathered and determine whether the information gathered indicates a breach of the standards by the approved carer or staff member
- clarify which standards of care appear to have been breached, if applicable
- determine whether the concerns relate to all, or only some, of the children in the placement or to any other children in the household of the approved carer or staff member, based on information about the impact, or likely future impact, of the concerns received
- determine the recommended level of response to the information gathered.

Recognised entity, if applicable

The recognised entity must be given the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process if a matter of concern notification response is indicated for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child - refer to [Chapter 10.1 Decision-making about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.](#)

1.5 Seek CSSC manager approval for the decision

Following this consultation, provide the CSSC manager with all the relevant information and a recommendation about the appropriate Child Safety Services' response. Within two working days of the receipt of the information provided by the notifier, the CSSC manager will:

- consider the information and recommendation provided to ensure the Child Safety Services' response is proportional to the nature and seriousness of the concerns raised
- ensure the recognised entity for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child, has been provided with an opportunity to participate in deciding the appropriate Child Safety Services' response, if applicable
- ensure consultation with MOCRU occurs where this is considered necessary
- make the final decision about whether the information indicates a matter of concern and the appropriate level of response to the matter of concern.

Where the CSSC manager decides that the information is a matter of concern, create a 'Matter of Concern' event in ICMS and complete the Record of Concerns.

Where the CSSC manager decides that the information is not a matter of concern:

- record all relevant information in the above-mentioned details in the original 'placement' case note in the 'placement' event in ICMS
- contact each CSO responsible for any child currently placed with the approved carer or staff member and inform them of the decision not to record a matter of concern
- advise the CSO at the applicable CSSC where to locate the 'placement' case note in ICMS, documenting the CSSC manager's decision.

Following the decision not to record a matter of concern, it is the responsibility of the CSSC for any child currently placed with the approved carer or staff member to respond to the information raised as part of the ongoing case work, and record the response as a further case note.

1.6 Complete a critical incident report

Where the CSSC manager decides that a matter of concern notification involves the commission of a criminal offense, it constitutes a 'Level 2' critical incident. In this circumstance, complete a Critical Incident Report in accordance with the Critical Incident Reporting policy.

1.7 Recording and approval requirements

Under the *Child Protection Regulation 2000*, section 12, the chief executive is required to keep records of details of any report given to the chief executive about:

- harm caused, or suspected to have been caused, to a child who is in the care of an entity mentioned in the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 82(1)
- a breach, or claimed breach, of the statement of standards
- the results of any investigation of a matter of concern.

When a matter is decided as a matter of concern, ensure all the information is recorded as soon as practicable in a 'Matter of Concern' event in ICMS, with the level of response as either:

- MOC - child placement concern report
- MOC - notification, with a 24 hour response timeframe, **within 24 hours** of the decision to record a matter of concern.

Ensure that the 'Matter of Concern' event in ICMS includes details of:

- **all** subject children to whom the concerns relate
- all other children subject to a placement under the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 82(1), residing in the care environment but not considered to be subject children
- all other children residing in, or regularly frequenting, the care environment (for example, the approved carer or staff member's own children or relative children, and children subject to a child protection order granting long-term guardianship to an approved carer)
- all other persons residing in the care environment
- checks and consultations conducted in the information gathering stage
- the rationale for the decision to record a matter of concern and the associated response

- when and how the recognised entity was provided with an opportunity to participate in decision-making, where applicable
- the concerns and the impact on the subject child, including:
 - which standards of care appear to have been breached (where the response is a child placement concern report)
 - the notified harms (where the response is a matter of concern notification)
- any additional information considered in the decision-making process about the matter of concern.

Once the 'Record of checks and consultation' form has been completed in ICMS, either the Child Placement Concern Report or MOC Notification will be generated.

Note: When one of the children in out-of-home care in the placement is the alleged person responsible for harm to another child in out-of-home care in the placement, do not record both children as subject children in the same notification. For further information, refer to [2. What if there is harm by another household member.](#)

Following the completion of the 'Matter of Concern' event, the team leader is responsible for:

- the electronic approval of the child placement concern report in ICMS following the completion of the assessment
- the electronic approval of the matter of concern notification in ICMS.

Where it is decided that the information gathered does not indicate a breach of the standards, or harm or risk of harm to the child, and a matter of concern is not warranted:

- record the relevant information, decision and rationale in a 'placement' case note in the 'placement' event in ICMS, including what action was taken to resolve the issues with the child and the approved carer or staff member
- place a copy of the 'placement' case note on the approved carer's Child Safety Services' file, where applicable.

2. Assess a child placement concern report

When a child placement concern report is received, the CSSC manager is responsible for ensuring that the following actions **are** completed **within a six week timeframe**:

- meet with the child and the approved carer or staff member in the care environment **within five working days**
- implement all aspects of the information provision requirements throughout the process
- complete and record the assessment of the child placement concern report
- ensure an action plan is developed where a breach of the standards of care is indicated
- have the child placement concern report, and where applicable, the action plan approved by a team leader in ICMS.

The [Checklist for assessing a child placement concern report](#) is available to assist staff in the assessment process.

2.1 Decide who will conduct the assessment

The CSO with case responsibility for the child is responsible for assessing the child placement concern report, except where either:

- the CSSC manager decides, based on the circumstances of the case, that it is appropriate for someone other than the CSO to conduct the assessment, or for two Child Safety Services' officers to conduct the assessment
- the approved carer or staff member indicates a preference for two Child Safety Services' officers to conduct the assessment.

2.2 Provide required information prior to planning

Prior to planning the assessment, provide verbal advice of the decision to record a child placement concern report to the following persons, where applicable:

- the CSO responsible for any child currently placed with the approved carer or staff member
- the recognised entity, where the child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander - refer to [Chapter 10.1 Decision-making about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children](#)
- the manager or coordinator of the licensed care service or another entity.

Advise the parents of a child subject to a care agreement about the concerns, which standards of care the concerns relate to and the planned Child Safety Services' response as soon as possible.

When a child is subject to a child protection order, incorporate the timeframe for informing the parents of the matter of concern, into the assessment plan.

2.3 Plan the assessment

Prior to meeting with the child and the approved carer or staff member, develop an assessment plan in consultation with the team leader and senior practitioner, and where applicable, the licensed care service or recognised entity. In some circumstances, it may also be appropriate to involve:

- another entity
- the CSO responsible for any child currently placed with the approved carer or staff member
- the Community Support Team (CST) manager of the zone with responsibility for the licensed care service or another entity.

As part of the planning process:

- review relevant information from Child Safety Services' files, including the case plan, case notes and all child protection history, including previous matters of concern
- consider and decide the following matters:
 - additional sources of information potentially informing the assessment
 - the appropriate sequence of assessment actions, including whether to have face-to-face contact with the child before, or following, the discussion with the approved carer or staff member
 - when to verbally inform the child's parent of the child placement concern report and the actions to be taken by Child Safety Services
 - how the child and the approved carer or staff member will be provided with access to a

support person or advocate throughout the assessment process

- the roles and responsibilities of each person involved in the assessment process
- contingency plans for responding to issues and difficulties that may impact on the assessment process.

Record the assessment plan in ICMS, and provide a copy to all persons who are responsible for activities associated with undertaking the assessment.

2.4 Arrange meetings with the child and the approved carer or staff member

Within five working days of the CSSC manager deciding that the information constitutes a child placement concern report, arrange and hold a face-to-face discussion, in the care environment, with the child and the approved carer or staff member. When phoning the child (where age and developmentally appropriate) and the approved carer or staff member to arrange the meeting:

- tell them about the child placement concern report
- provide them with sufficient information regarding the process and which standards may have been breached, to ensure their full participation throughout the assessment process
- inform them of their right to have a support person or advocate present throughout the assessment process (including during the meeting), and assist in identifying possible options for accessing a support person
- determine whether they would prefer to be provided with the following information sheets prior to, or at the commencement of, the meeting:
 - the Information sheet for children and young people
 - the Information sheet about support persons and advocates in matters of concern
- schedule the meeting time with the child and the approved carer or staff member
- advise them that the CSO will contact the child's nominated support person, to arrange their attendance at the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting with the child and the approved carer or staff member is to:

- assess whether a breach of the standards of care has occurred in relation to the child
- assess the impact on the child
- identify measures that can be implemented to enable the approved carer or staff member to care for the child (and other children requiring future placements with the approved carer or staff member) in a way that meets the standards of care in the statement of standards.

The face-to-face discussion with the child, however, will not occur in the presence of the approved carer or staff member.

A discussion of the child placement concern report must be held with all approved carers listed on the certificate of approval. If the concerns appear to relate solely to the primary carer, and it is difficult to include another approved carer in the face-to-face discussion, for example, due to hours of employment, discussion with that person may occur by phone if requested by the approved carers, and considered appropriate by Child Safety Services.

Following the telephone conversation to arrange the meeting time, post the relevant information sheets (where agreed) to the child and the approved carer or staff member. Otherwise, provide the information sheets at the commencement of the meeting.

2.5 Conduct the assessment

Minimum requirements

When conducting the assessment of a child placement concern report:

- have face-to-face contact with each subject child and the approved carer or staff member to whom the concerns primarily relate
- ensure that the face-to-face discussion with the child does not occur in the presence of the approved carer or staff member
- have verbal contact with any other person listed on the certificate of approval
- ensure that any support person or advocate in attendance, understands their role and is made aware of the requirement for confidentiality under the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 188, prior to commencing discussions - for further information refer to the practice resource [The role of a support person](#).

Commence the assessment

The assessment of a child placement concern report is commenced when the child is sighted or sighted and interviewed, as age and developmentally appropriate, by a CSO.

The CSSC manager is responsible for seeking the zonal director's advice in situations where it is not possible to commence the assessment **within five working days** of the decision to record a child placement concern report.

Move the child during the assessment, if necessary

In circumstances where it is considered necessary to remove the child from their care environment during the assessment, refer to [4. What if the child needs to be moved to a new placement?](#)

Discuss and assess the concerns

Provide information about the concerns raised to the child and the approved carer or staff member, and facilitate discussions in order to be able to assess the following matters:

- whether the child has any concerns about the standards of care or the care environment
- the impact, if any, of the approved carer or staff member's actions, inactions or behaviour on the child
- whether the approved carer or staff member has failed to meet (through their actions, inactions or behaviour) the legislated standards of care and if so, which standards
- whether the approved carer or staff member has the ability and willingness to meet the standards of care, immediately and on an ongoing basis
- whether the approved carer or staff member has had their supervision, support and training needs met by Child Safety Services or licensed care service or another entity and whether there are additional or varied supervision, support and training needs that need to be addressed.

To assist in assessing the above matters, take into account both general risk and protective factors and factors specific to assessments within an out-of-home care environment, including:

- the child's views about the alleged concerns
- the length of the child's placement, previous history of harm, current case plan and other contextual factors
- the nature of the approved carer or staff member's relationship with the child's family and culture
- the use of force, corporal punishment or other behaviour management strategies prohibited by the statement of standards (that is, punishment that humiliates, frightens or threatens the child in a way that is likely to cause emotional harm)
- the views of the approved carer or staff member about the alleged concerns and any action or decision by Child Safety Services that may have contributed to the child placement concern report
- prior matters of concern and the implementation and outcomes, or progress, of previous or existing action plans, where applicable
- the current level of stress within the care environment, including:
 - any overcrowding in the care environment
 - whether the placement matches the child's assessed needs
 - lack of supervision, support and training available for the approved carer or staff member
 - any systemic issues that have contributed to any breach of the standards of care.

Where during the assessment, it becomes apparent that a child has experienced harm and the alleged harm may have involved the commission of a criminal offence relating to the child, **immediately** notify the QPS, in accordance with [Chapter 10.3 Statutory obligation to notify the Queensland Police Service of possible criminal offences](#).

Actions required when harm or risk of harm become apparent

If during the assessment of the child placement concern report, it becomes apparent that the child has suffered harm, is suffering harm, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering harm:

- discuss the information with the team leader, senior practitioner and CSSC manager
- where agreed by the CSSC manager that a matter of concern notification is to be recorded, record the relevant information and select the outcome 'breach of standards - notification' in the child placement concern report - do not delete the child placement concern report
- record a matter of concern notification
- conduct the investigation and assessment in accordance with [3.5 Conduct the investigation and assessment](#) (noting that many of the investigation and assessment activities will have already been undertaken during the assessment of the child placement concern report)
- complete an investigation and assessment plan in ICMS, which will include actions from the assessment plan and any additional investigation and assessment activities that are still to be completed.

Record additional concerns

When there is an existing child placement concern report that has not been approved by the team leader, and further information is received that constitutes a matter of concern, record the new concerns

received by Child Safety Services as 'additional notified concerns', unless exceptions apply. For further information refer to [1. What if additional concerns are received?](#)

2.6 Decide the assessment outcome

To decide the most appropriate outcome for each child:

- consult the team leader, senior practitioner and, if required, the CSSC manager
- provide the recognised entity with an opportunity to be involved in the decision-making process for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child
- take into account the contextual factors specific to the child and the approved carer or staff member.

Child placement concern report outcomes

There are three possible outcomes for the assessment of a child placement concern report, as outlined below.

1. Breach of standards - notification

This outcome is recorded when:

- the approved carer or staff member's actions, inactions or behaviour indicate a breach of the legislated standards
- the concerns have had, or are likely to have, a significant detrimental effect on the child and meet the threshold for a notification.

2. Breach of standards

This outcome is recorded when:

- the approved carer or staff member's actions, inactions or behaviour indicate a breach of the legislated standards in that the care provided is inadequate or poor quality
- there is no identified impact on the child
- there may be some impact for the child however the provision of inadequate or poor quality care has not had, and is unlikely to have, a detrimental effect of a significant nature.

3. No breach of standards

This outcome is recorded when:

- no harm or risk of harm to the child is indicated
- the approved carer or staff member's actions, inactions or behaviour do not indicate a breach of the legislated standards of care
- the decision is made not to conduct an assessment, in accordance with [Chapter 1, 5. What if the notifier is vexatious or malicious?](#)

When the 'no breach of standards' outcome is selected on the basis that the notifier is vexatious or malicious, refer to [Chapter 1, 5. What if the notifier is vexatious or malicious?](#) and clearly document the rationale as to why the matter is considered to be vexatious and malicious, and the details of the decision-maker, in the child placement concern report.

Where the assessment is commenced, but not completed **within six weeks**, the CSSC manager will advise the carer or staff member in writing of the delay, the reasons for the delay and an estimated completion date.

2.7 Actions required following the assessment

Develop an action plan

Where the child placement concern report outcome is 'breach of standards', an action plan for addressing the concerns must be developed for the approved carer or staff member of licensed care service or another entity, in accordance with [4. Develop and monitor an action plan](#).

Finalise the child placement concern report

To finalise the child placement concern report:

- ensure the following information is recorded in ICMS:
 - the information gathered during the meeting with the child and the approved carer or staff member
 - contextual factors that may have contributed to the matter of concern, for example, high levels of stress or overcrowding in the care environment
 - the outcome and the rationale for the outcome
 - the action plan, if required
 - the reasons for any delays, if the assessment is not commenced or completed within the specified timeframes
- forward the child placement concern report and action plan, where applicable, to the team leader for approval
- attach hard copy notes from the meeting with the child and the approved carer or staff member to the child's file (for a meeting with the child or a staff member) and the approved carer's Child Safety Services' file (for a meeting with the approved carer)
- file a copy of the action plan (where applicable) on the approved carer's Child Safety Services' file, or for a staff member, on the child's file.

Once the CPR is completed, the team leader will advise the CSSC manager of the assessment outcome and where applicable, the details of the action plan.

2.8 Provide required information following the assessment

Provide verbal advice

Following the completion of the assessment, provide verbal advice only to:

- the child (having regard to their age and developmental level)
- the recognised entity, where the child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- the CSO responsible for any child currently placed with the approved carer or staff member
- at least one parent of the child.

In addition, alert all parties to applicable complaints and review mechanisms. Refer to [11. What if a person wants to make a complaint or seek a review?](#)

Provide verbal and written advice

Following the completion of the assessment, provide both verbal advice and written advice to the following people, using the [Letter to approved carer/staff member - CPCR outcome](#), as outlined:

- provide the original letter to the approved carer or staff member
- provide a copy of the letter and where applicable, the action plan, to:
 - the manager or coordinator of the licensed care service or another entity, if applicable
 - the CST manager of the zone with responsibility for the licensed care service or another entity, if applicable
 - staff of the relevant department, for example, Disability Services, where another entity is not funded or regulated by Child Safety Services
- file a copy of the letter on the child's file
- file a copy of the letter and, where applicable, the action plan on the approved carer's Child Safety Services' file.

Where the outcome is 'breach of standards', also provide a copy of the letter and the action plan to the zonal director.

The CST manager, where the approved carer or staff member is affiliated with a licensed care service, will:

- forward a copy of the letter and the action plan to the nominee of the licensed care service
- file a copy of the letter and the action plan on the licensed care service's or another entity's file.

3. Investigate and assess a matter of concern notification

When a matter of concern notification is recorded, the CSSC manager is responsible for ensuring that the following actions are completed **within the six week timeframe**:

- commence the investigation and assessment **within 24 hours** of the decision to record a matter of concern notification
- implement all aspects of the information provision requirements throughout the process
- assess whether a breach of the standards of care has occurred, and where it has, assess whether the child has experienced harm or is at risk of harm
- complete and record the investigation and assessment
- ensure an action plan is developed where a breach of the standards of care has occurred
- have the investigation and assessment, and where applicable, the action plan approved by a team leader in ICMS.

The [Checklist for investigating and assessing a matter of concern notification](#) is available to assist staff in the investigation and assessment process.

The 'MOC - I&A' event will be automatically generated in ICMS once the 'MOC notification' form is submitted for approval.

Where the information indicates that a staff member of a licensed care service may be responsible for harm of a serious nature, refer to [9. What if a staff member is responsible for concerns of a serious nature?](#)

Critical incident report

Following the decision to record a matter of concern notification, where the alleged harm or risk of harm to a child in out-of-home care may have involved the commission of a criminal offence, complete and submit a Critical Incident Report Form, no later than close of business the following day, in accordance with the [Critical incident reporting](#) policy.

The **team leader** is responsible for informing the CSSC manager of the investigation and assessment outcome and where applicable, the details of the action plan.

The **CSSC manager** is responsible for ensuring that:

- a Critical Incident Report Form is completed, if required
- written information provision requirements have been completed.

Assistance by the Matters of Concern Review Unit

When issues cannot be resolved at the CSSC level, the **CSSC manager** or **senior practitioner only**, can request advice or assistance from the Matters of Concern Review Unit (MOCRU). For further information, refer to [8. What if assistance is required from the Matters of Concern Review Unit?](#)

3.1 Decide who will conduct the investigation and assessment

For a staff member of a licensed care service, the CSSC manager will nominate a team leader, senior practitioner or other experienced Child Safety Services' officer to conduct the investigation and assessment, along with the manager or coordinator of the licensed care service. This is due to the complexities associated with potential industrial relations matters in cases where a decision has been, or may be, taken to relieve staff of their usual responsibilities, whether on a temporary or permanent basis.

For all other matter of concern notifications, the allocated CSO will:

- be independent of the case, as far as possible
- will not be the CSO with case responsibility for the subject child
- will not be the CSO responsible for supporting the approved carer or staff member.

Unless a matter of concern relates to an employee of a licensed care service, interviews with the child and the approved carer or staff member will be conducted by two CSOs, or a CSO and the QPS, where a joint investigation with the QPS occurs.

The second CSO may be the CSO with case responsibility for the child, or another CSO determined by the CSSC manager.

3.2 Provide required information prior to planning

Provide verbal advice

Prior to planning the investigation and assessment, provide verbal advice of the decision to record a matter of concern notification to the following persons, where applicable:

- the CSO responsible for **any** child currently placed with the approved carer or staff member
- the recognised entity, where the child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander - refer to [Chapter 10.1 Decision-making about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children](#)

- the manager or coordinator of the licensed care service or another entity
- the Community Support Team (CST) manager of the zone with responsibility for the licensed care service or another entity
- staff of the relevant department, where another entity is funded or managed by another state or federal department.

Advise the parents of a child subject to a care agreement about the concerns, which standards of care the concerns relate to and the planned Child Safety Services' response as soon as possible.

When a child is subject to a child protection order, the assessment plan will incorporate when the parent will be informed.

Provide written advice

Following the provision of verbal advice, complete the [Letter to approved carer/staff member – advice of matter of concern notification](#) and:

- forward a copy of the letter to, where applicable:
 - the manager or coordinator of the licensed care service or another entity
 - the CST manager of the zone with responsibility for the licensed care service or another entity
 - staff of the relevant department, where another entity is funded or managed by another state or federal department
- file a copy of the letter on:
 - the child's file
 - the approved carer's Child Safety Services' file, where applicable.

The CST manager will file a copy of the letter, where applicable, on the licensed care service's or another entity's file.

The provision of written advice about the matter of concern notification will be provided to the approved carer or staff member during the investigation and assessment process.

3.3 Plan the investigation and assessment

Prior to commencing the investigation and assessment, develop an investigation and assessment plan in consultation with the team leader and senior practitioner, and where applicable, the licensed care service or recognised entity. In some circumstances, it may also be appropriate to involve:

- another entity
- the CSO responsible for any child currently placed with the approved carer or staff member
- the Community Support Team (CST) manager of the zone with responsibility for the licensed care service or another entity.

Planning is essential to ensure that:

- all the relevant activities required to undertake a targeted investigation and assessment of a child's safety and protective needs are identified
- all key people are involved and that interviews and information gathering occur in the most appropriate sequence

- the investigation and assessment is conducted in a manner which limits any unnecessary disruption to the child.

Planning requirements

When developing the investigation and assessment plan, consider the usual requirements associated with planning an investigation and assessment for a child in the general community, in accordance [Chapter 2, 1. Plan the investigation and assessment](#) and [Chapter 2, 4. What if a joint investigation with the Queensland Police Service is required?](#) In addition:

- review relevant information from Child Safety Services' files, including the case plan, case notes and all child protection history, including matters of concern
- consider and decide the following matters:
 - how the child and the approved carer or staff member will be provided with access to a support person or advocate as part of the process
 - whether children who previously have been placed in the care environment, or children who attend respite in the care environment require an interview
 - whether interviews will be pre-arranged, where it will not jeopardise the safety of the child, the integrity of the investigation and assessment process or potential criminal investigations
 - when to verbally inform the child's parents of the matter of concern notification and investigation and assessment.

Determine whether the information in the matter of concern notification meets the prescribed criteria for a referral to the SCAN AM Team, or if an emergency SCAN AM Team meeting is required – refer to [Chapter 2, 11. What if a matter needs to be referred to the SCAN System?](#) A referral can also be made once the investigation and assessment has commenced, if the referral criteria is satisfied.

Recording the investigation and assessment plan

Once the planning process is completed:

- record the 'MOC investigation and assessment plan' under the investigation and assessment planning tab in ICMS and gain verbal approval for the plan from the team leader, prior to the commencement of the investigation and assessment
- provide a copy of the investigation and assessment plan to all persons who are responsible for activities associated with undertaking the investigation and assessment.

In exceptional circumstances, where an urgent response is required to ensure the child's immediate safety, there may not be sufficient time to record the plan in ICMS prior to commencing the investigation and assessment. In this circumstance, complete a written plan and obtain verbal approval from the team leader, and complete the recording of the plan in ICMS once the child's immediate safety has been established, including the reason for the delay.

3.4 Arrange interviews with the child and the approved carer or staff member

Within 24 hours of the CSSC manager deciding that a matter of concern constitutes a notification, arrange (where approved as part of the investigation and assessment plan) to sight the child or interview the child and the approved carer or staff member. The interview with the child however will not occur in the presence of the approved carer or staff member.

When phoning the child (where age and developmentally appropriate) and the approved carer or staff member to pre-arrange interviews:

- tell them about the matter of concern notification
- provide them with sufficient information regarding the process and which standards may have been breached, to ensure their full participation throughout the investigation and assessment process
- inform them of their right to have a support person or advocate present throughout the investigation and assessment process (including during interviews - refer to the exception below), and assist in identifying possible options for accessing a support person
- inform them that at the commencement of the interview, they will be provided with the relevant information sheets:
 - the [Information sheet for children and young people](#)
 - the [Information sheet about support persons and advocates in matters of concern](#)
- advise them that the CSO will contact the child's nominated support person, to arrange their attendance at the interview
- schedule the interview times with the child and the approved carer (and any other persons listed on the certificate of approval) or staff member, and any other persons identified as requiring an interview.

A support person or advocate is unlikely to be allowed to participate in interviews when the investigation and assessment occurs as part of a criminal investigation and in this circumstance, it is unlikely that interviews will be pre-arranged.

3.5 Conduct the investigation and assessment

Minimum requirements

When conducting the investigation and assessment, ensure that:

- the interview with the child does **not** occur in the presence of the approved carer or staff member
- there is face-to-face contact with each subject child
- interviews are conducted with:
 - each subject child who is able to communicate, including children with disabilities who require assistance or aides - refer to [Chapter 2, 2.3 Interview and sight the child](#)
 - any other child in the out-of-home care environment who is able to communicate and any other children who are no longer in the care environment, but were in the care environment at the time of the concerns
 - **all** the alleged persons responsible for the concerns
 - the approved carer (and any other persons listed on the certificate of approval) or staff member - refer to [Chapter 2, 2.4 Interview the parents and other adults](#)
 - any adult household members, who may have information relevant to the investigation and assessment.

Note: Record all interview information in a 'Record of interview' form under the Information gathering and interviews tab in the 'MOC - I&A' event in ICMS.

Commence the investigation and assessment

The investigation and assessment is to be commenced **within 24 hours** of the decision that the matter constitutes a matter of concern notification. An investigation and assessment is commenced when the child is either sighted and sighted and interviewed (as age and developmentally appropriate) by a CSO.

In circumstances where a CSO cannot sight the child within the required timeframe a police officer or health professional may sight the child and provide information in relation to the safety of the child to Child Safety Services - refer to [Chapter 2, 2.1 Commence the investigation and assessment](#).

The CSSC manager is responsible for seeking the zonal director's advice in situations where it is not possible to commence an investigation and assessment within 24 hours.

Role of the support person or advocate

When conducting the investigation and assessment, ensure that the support person or advocate in attendance understands their role and is made aware of the requirement for confidentiality under the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 188, prior to the CSO commencing interviews with the child and the approved carer or staff member - refer to the practice resource [The role of a support person](#).

Move the child from the placement, if necessary

In circumstance where it is considered necessary to remove the child from their care environment during the investigation and asses, refer to [4. What if the child needs to be moved to a new placement?](#)

Investigate and assess the concerns

During interviews with the child and the approved carer or staff member, facilitate discussions and gather information that will enable an assessment of the following matters:

- **the impact**, if any, of the concerns on the child, including whether the child has experienced harm, is experiencing harm, or is at unacceptable risk of experiencing harm **in this placement** - for more information about assessing the impact, refer to [Practice guide: The assessment of harm and risk of harm](#)
- whether immediate placement action is required to ensure either:
 - the subject child's safety
 - the safety of any other child residing in the care environment
- whether any further placements can be made with the approved carer, staff member, licensed care service or another entity, while the investigation and assessment is being undertaken
- whether the approved carer or staff member has:
 - failed to meet the legislated standards of care and if so, which standards of care have not been met
 - the ability and willingness to meet the standards of care, immediately and on an ongoing basis
 - had their documented supervision, support and training needs met by Child Safety Services and/or the licensed care service or another entity
 - outstanding or additional supervision, support and training needs
- whether systemic issues have contributed to any breach of the standards of care and if so, what actions could be taken by Child Safety Services and/or the licensed care service or another entity (if applicable) to address identified issues.

To assist in assessing the above matters, take into account the same risk and protective factors that are considered for any child in the general community, as outlined in [Chapter 2. Investigation and assessment](#) (excluding the use of SDM tools), in addition to factors specific to assessments within an out-of-home care environment. These factors include but are not limited to the following:

- the child's views about the alleged concerns
- the length of the child's placement, previous history of harm, current case plan and other contextual factors
- whether the child has any concerns about the standards of care and/or the care environment
- the nature of the approved carer or staff member's relationship with the child's family and culture
- the use of force, corporal punishment or other behaviour management strategies prohibited by the statement of standards (that is, punishment that humiliates, frightens or threatens the child in a way that is likely to cause emotional harm) and is in accordance with the [Positive Behaviour Support](#) policy
- prior matters of concern and the implementation and outcomes, or progress, of previous or existing action plans, where applicable
- the current level of stress within the care environment, including:
 - any overcrowding in the care environment
 - the placement of a child in a care environment that does not match the child's assessed needs
 - current supervision, supports and training available within the care environment
 - any action or decision of the CSSC with responsibility for the child or children in the out-of-home care placement that may have contributed to the notified concerns.

Where during the investigation and assessment, it becomes apparent that the alleged harm may have involved the commission of a criminal offence relating to the child, **immediately** notify the QPS, in accordance with [Chapter 10.3 Statutory obligation to notify the Queensland Police Service of possible criminal offences](#).

Provide letter and information sheets

Prior to concluding the interview with the child and the approved carer or staff member, provide:

- the 'Information sheet for children and young people' to the child (where of an appropriate age and ability to understand)
- the following written information to the approved carer or staff member:
 - the [Information sheet about support persons and advocates in matters of concern](#)
 - the [Letter to carer/staff member - advice of matter of concern notification](#).

Harm to children not recorded as subject children

Where it is assessed that other children in out-of-home care who are living in the care environment may have experienced harm, or be at risk of harm, but were not recorded as subject children in the matter of concern notification, they will be recorded as subject children in the investigation and assessment and assessed as part of the investigation and assessment process.

If it is considered that a child who is not in out-of-home care may have experienced harm, or be at risk of harm, refer to the procedures for a child in the general community, as outlined in [Chapter 1. Intake](#).

Record additional concerns

When a matter of concern notification has been recorded and the investigation and assessment has not been approved by the team leader, record any new concerns received as 'additional notified concerns' in ICMS under the 'Information gathering / decision making' tab, unless exceptions apply. For further information refer to [1. What if additional concerns are received?](#)

3.6 Assess the information gathered during the investigation and assessment

The critical question when deciding the investigation and assessment outcome is not whether a child is in need of protection, as this has been decided in the context of their care by the parent. The critical question is whether the child has suffered harm, is suffering harm, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering harm in this placement.

In assessing harm, it is important to focus on the level of the detrimental effect, whether physical, psychological or emotional, or the risk of detrimental effect, experienced by the child, taking into account the impact of cumulative harm.

Assessing harm

In determining whether the child has experienced or is experiencing harm, it is not sufficient to only determine whether an alleged incident or abusive action has occurred. The child's experience must meet the legislative definition of harm, that is, 'any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional well-being'.

For a detrimental effect to be of a significant nature it must have more than a minor impact upon a child's physical, psychological or emotional well-being. The harm experienced, or being experienced, by the child must be substantial, serious and demonstrable - that is, measurable and observable on the child's body and/or in the child's functioning or behaviour.

A detrimental effect of a significant nature may also be indicated by the detrimental effect being likely to be long-term (more than transitory), or adversely affecting the child's health or well-being to an extent which would be considered by the general public to be unacceptable.

In assessing harm, it is important to focus on the level of detrimental effect, whether physical, psychological or emotional or the risk of detrimental effect experienced by the child, rather than on the actions or inactions of the approved carer or staff member alone.

Assessing risk of harm

In determining whether there is risk of future harm for a child, it is critical to assess what is an 'unacceptable risk of suffering harm'. This means that harm is likely to occur in the future. To be defined as 'unacceptable risk of suffering harm', the situation must meet both the following criteria:

- the level of harm likely to occur must constitute a detrimental effect of a significant nature
- the likelihood that the harm will occur must be probable or likely, rather than just possible.

Risk of harm also includes circumstances where either:

- the impact of the harm is not yet observable however, harm is a predictable result of what has occurred

- harm is likely to occur in the future if no action is taken to protect the child.

Outcomes are determined by the assessment of harm and risk of harm for the child - refer to [Practice guide: The assessment of harm and risk of harm](#), and to assist with the determination of whether a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

Where the investigation and assessment has commenced, but is not completed **within the six week timeframe**, the CSSC manager will advise the carer or staff member in writing of the delay, the reasons for the delay and an estimated completion date.

3.7 Decide the investigation and assessment outcome

To decide the most appropriate outcome for each child:

- consult the team leader, senior practitioner and, if required, the CSSC manager
- provide the recognised entity with an opportunity to be involved in the decision-making process for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child
- take into account the practice considerations usually associated with the assessment of harm and risk of harm for a child residing in the general community (excluding the use of structured decision making tools)
- take into account the contextual factors specific to the child, the approved carer or staff member and the care environment.

MOC investigation and assessment outcomes

There are five possible outcomes for the investigation and assessment of a matter of concern notification, as outlined below.

1. Substantiated - matter of concern

This outcome is recorded when:

- the child has experienced harm and/or is likely to experience future harm
- the actions or inactions of the approved carer or staff member have contributed to the harm or risk.

When this outcome is chosen, at **least one of the carers or a staff member must be recorded** as a person responsible. This outcome cannot be used if a person responsible is unable to be identified.

2. Substantiated - matter of concern - no breach of standards

This outcome is recorded when:

- the child has experienced harm and/or is likely to experience future harm however the actions or inactions of the approved carer or staff member have not contributed to the harm (for example, there is no indication of an approved carer or staff member's failure to protect a child)
- there is no indication that the approved carer or staff member has failed to meet the standards of care required under the *Child Protection Act 1999*.

When this outcome is recorded, the 'person responsible' for the harm will be either:

- another adult who resides in, or frequents, the approved carer or staff member's household
- another child (if aged 10 years or over and the child is assessed as having the developmental ability/capacity to understand the consequences of their actions)

- a 'person responsible unable to be identified'.

3. Unsubstantiated - matter of concern - breach of standards

This outcome is recorded when:

- the child has not experienced harm and is unlikely to experience future harm
- there is an indication that the approved carer or staff member has failed to meet the standards of care required under the *Child Protection Act 1999*.

4. Unsubstantiated - matter of concern - no breach of standards

This outcome is recorded when:

- the child has not experienced harm and is unlikely to experience future harm
- there is no indication that the approved carer or staff member has failed to meet the standards of care required under the *Child Protection Act 1999*.

5. Matter of concern I & A - no outcome

This outcome is recorded:

- only in exceptional circumstances where the investigation and assessment cannot be completed, for example, a historical matter of concern notification
- when the decision is made not to conduct an investigation and assessment, in accordance with the procedure for responding to vexatious or malicious notifiers - refer to [Chapter 1, 5. What if the notifier is vexatious and malicious?](#)

The team leader must consult with the senior practitioner prior to approving an investigation and assessment with this outcome, and provide a clear rationale for its use.

When this outcome is recorded on the basis that the notifier is vexatious or malicious, clearly document that the investigation and assessment was not completed, who made the decision and the rationale for the decision.

This outcome will not be used when the reason for non-completion is due to Child Safety Services' resources or workloads.

3.8 Actions required following the assessment

Develop an action plan

When the investigation and assessment outcome is either 'Substantiated - matter of concern' or 'Unsubstantiated - matter of concern - breach of standards', an action plan for addressing the concerns must be developed prior to finalising the investigation and assessment. To develop an action plan, refer to [4. Develop and monitor an action plan](#).

Record the investigation and assessment

To finalise the investigation and assessment:

- record the following information in ICMS:
 - relevant information in accordance with [Chapter 2, 4.2 Record the investigation, assessment and outcome](#)
 - the information provided in relation to the safety of the child by a police officer, recognised entity worker or health professional, where applicable

- information gathered regarding factors specific to assessments within an out-of-home care environment, including contextual factors that may have contributed to the matter of concern, for example, high levels of stress or overcrowding in the care environment
- where the investigation and assessment is not commenced and/or completed within the specified timeframes, the date of commencement and/or completion and the reasons for any delays
- the action plan, if required
- the reasons for the delay, if the investigation and assessment is not commenced or completed within the specified timeframes
- forward the investigation and assessment and action plan, where applicable, to the team leader for approval
- attach hard copy notes from the meeting with the child and the approved carer or staff member to the child's file (for a meeting with the child or a staff member) and the approved carer's Child Safety Services' file (for a meeting with the approved carer)
- file a copy of the action plan (where applicable) on the approved carer's Child Safety Services' file, or for a staff member, on the child's file.

3.9 Provide required information following the investigation and assessment

Provide verbal advice

Following the completion of the investigation and assessment, provide **verbal advice only** to:

- the child (having regard to their age and developmental level)
- the recognised entity, where the child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- the CSO responsible for any child currently placed with the approved carer or staff member
- at least one parent of the child.

In addition, alert all parties to applicable complaints and review mechanisms. Refer to [11. What if a person wants to make a complaint or seek a review?](#)

Provide verbal and written advice

Following the completion of the investigation and assessment, provide both verbal advice and written advice to the following people, using the [Letter to approved carer/staff member - advice of notification outcome](#), as outlined:

- provide the original letter to the approved carer or staff member
- provide a copy of the letter and where applicable, the action plan, to:
 - the manager or coordinator of the licensed care service or another entity, if applicable
 - the CST manager of the zone with responsibility for the licensed care service or another entity, if applicable
 - staff of the relevant department, for example, Disability Services, where another entity is not funded or regulated by Child Safety Services
- file a copy of the letter on the child's file
- file a copy of the letter and, where applicable, the action plan on the approved carer's Child Safety Services' file.

Where the outcome is either 'breach of standards', also provide a copy of the letter and the action plan to the zonal director.

The CST manager, where the approved carer or staff member is affiliated with a licensed care service, will:

- forward a copy of the letter and the action plan to the nominee of the licensed care service
- file a copy of the letter and the action plan on the licensed care service's or another entity's file.

4. Develop and monitor an action plan

The assessment or investigation and assessment in response to a matter of concern must be completed in a timeframe that allows for the action plan to be finalised and approved by a team leader **within six weeks** of the decision that a matter constitutes a matter of concern. The team leader is also responsible for advising the CSSC manager of the details of the action plan.

The CSSC manager is responsible for ensuring that:

- where there is a breach of the standards of care, or harm or risk of harm to the child by an approved carer or staff member, an action plan is developed to address the matters of concern
- appropriate mechanisms, including bring-up systems, are developed and implemented within the CSSC to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the action plan and taking action to address issues that remain unresolved or continue to arise.

4.1 When to develop an action plan

An action plan must be developed for all matters of concern that have one of the following outcomes:

- child placement concern report - 'Breach of standards'
- investigation and assessment - 'Substantiated - matter of concern'
- investigation and assessment - 'Unsubstantiated - matter of concern - breach of standards'.

There are **two exceptions** to this requirement. No action plan is required where:

- a decision is made to cancel an approved carer's certificate of approval, unless the decision is overturned by the Children Services Tribunal
- the child is removed from a kinship carer and there are no other children placed with the carer.

4.2 Who will develop the action plan

When an action plan is required:

- **Child Safety Services** is responsible for developing an action plan for an approved carer or a staff member of another entity
- the **licensed care service** is responsible for developing an action plan for a staff member of a licensed care service, given the legislative obligations of the licensed care service nominee under the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 130.

Licensed care service

Where the licensed care service is responsible for the development of an action plan, liaise with the licensed care service to ensure the development and review of an action plan and discuss:

- which persons are to be involved in the development of the action plan

- the key items to consider, and where appropriate include, in the action plan.

When the licensed care service is responsible for the development and review of an action plan, they are also responsible for providing the CSO and the Community Support Team (CST) manager with a copy of the completed action plan for addressing matters of concern.

Assistance by the Matters of Concern Review Unit

The Matters of Concern Review Unit may be contacted by the CSSC manager or senior practitioner only, where it is considered that assistance is required to develop a clear and effective action plan. For further information refer to [8. What if assistance is required from the Matters of Concern Review Unit?](#)

4.3 Who will participate in the development of an action plan

Child Safety Services or the **licensed care service** will involve the following persons in the development of an action plan:

- the child, where of an appropriate age and ability
- the CSO with case responsibility for the child
- the recognised entity, where the child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- the approved carer or staff member
- the approved carer's support worker (from the licensed care service, Child Safety Services or another entity)
- the manager or coordinator of the licensed care service, where relevant.

4.4 Review suitability as part of the action plan

Consideration will be given to a review of the approved carer or staff member's suitability where:

- the investigation and assessment outcome is 'Substantiated - matter of concern', and:
 - the nature of the harm or future risk of harm is considered very serious
 - the provision of protective intervention, for example, through providing direct services and enhanced supports and monitoring, would not adequately ensure the child's safety and well-being in the care environment
- the approved carer or staff member has more than one matter of concern where they are the person responsible for a breach of the standards or harm or risk of harm to a child in out-of-home care, or there is a pattern of similar concerns, irrespective of the outcomes
- identified concerns remain unresolved after **six months** from the original approval of the action plan, or where new matters of concern continue to arise leading up to the six month period.

Any decision that a review of the suitability of an approved carer or staff member is necessary, will be made by the CSSC manager, in consultation with the senior practitioner.

For an approved carer, document this decision in the action plan. For a staff member of a licensed care service, the CSSC manager will contact the nominee for the licensed care service and:

- request that a review of the staff member's suitability be conducted by the licensed care service
- discuss the rationale for the request
- request that the nominee's decision as to whether to conduct a review of the staff member's suitability be incorporated in the action plan.

If the nominee decides, following the discussion with the CSSC manager, that a decision to review the staff member's suitability is not necessary or appropriate, the CSSC manager will contact the zonal director to discuss whether action may be required to amend, suspend or cancel the licensed care service's license.

4.5 Develop the action plan

Prior to developing the key items

Where a change in the child's placement is being considered in response to the outcome of a matter of concern, discuss the matter with the **senior practitioner and CSSC manager**, prior to its inclusion in the action plan.

Where a decision is required about whether to take legislative action to amend or suspend an approved carers certificate of approval, discuss the matter with the **CSSC manager**, prior to its inclusion in the action plan - refer to [Chapter 8, 9. What if a foster or kinship carer's certificate of approval requires amendment, suspension or cancellation, other than on blue card grounds?](#)

Key action plan requirements

The action plan, developed by either Child Safety Services or the licensed care service will:

- incorporate all actions considered necessary to address the identified concerns and prevent further concerns from arising
- outline the responsibilities of the Child Safety Services, the approved carer or staff member and the licensed care service or another entity for implementing and monitoring the action plan tasks
- respond to the child's safety and support needs within the placement, particularly where the child presents with a history of behavioural disturbances or multiple placements
- respond to any systemic issues identified that have contributed to the breach of the standards of care, that can be addressed by the Child Safety Services, licensed care service or another entity
- identify the approved carer or staff member's specific supervision, support and training needs and how they will be resourced
- document strategies to deal with any systemic issues likely to impact on the ability of stakeholders to address the identified concerns
- incorporate when and how the review will take place - refer to [4.7 Review the action plan](#).

The action plan will also include specific actions considered necessary to address the breach of standards, such as:

- a review the current case plan for the child - refer to [Chapter 4. Case planning](#)
- a review of the appropriateness of the placement to meet the child's needs - refer to [Chapter 5, 1.1 Placement matching - an overview](#)
- a review of the placement agreement to:
 - clarify the goals and outcomes for the placement
 - identify any specific support needs for each child, for example, financial or therapeutic support, and the carer, to assist them meet the standards of care for the child
- more frequent home visits to the child and the approved carer or staff member
- a review of the foster carer agreement for an approved foster carer

- identifying whether any of the following actions are required:
 - a review of an approved carer's suitability
 - the decision to amend an approved carer's certificate of approval
 - the decision, by a licensed care service, to review a staff member's suitability.

The 'action plan' form is located in ICMS under the 'Assessment & outcome' tab in the 'MOC - I&A' event.

4.6 Implement the action plan

Provide a copy of the action plan to the child, where age and developmentally appropriate, the approved carer or staff member and all persons responsible for the implementation of the action plan.

The implementation of the action plan is to be documented by either Child Safety Services or the licensed care service, until such time that the matter of concern issues are considered by Child Safety Services and the licensed care service, if applicable, to be adequately resolved.

If actions do not relate to a specific child, record progress of the action plan in a 'MOC - action plan follow up' case note in the 'Support' event in ICMS. If the actions relate to a specific child, record the progress in a 'MOC - action plan follow up' case note in the 'Placement' event on ICMS.

4.7 Review the action plan

The review of an action plan will occur **within six months** of being approved, and the review is the responsibility of either Child Safety Services or the licensed care service that developed the action plan. The review meeting is to include all persons responsible for the implementation of the action plan, including the approved carer or staff member. Where the timeframe permits, the review may also be incorporated into the review of the placement agreement for the child or the review of the foster carer agreement.

Ensure that a copy of the minutes of the review meeting are filed on:

- the child's file
- the approved carer's Child Safety Services' file.

Where identified concerns remain unresolved **after six months**, or where new matters of concern have been recorded **within the six month period**, the team leader is required to consult with the CSSC manager, to determine the most suitable action to be taken. At this time, consideration must be given to either:

- the amendment, suspension or cancellation of an approved carers certificate of approval
- the amendment, suspension or cancellation of the licensed care service's license, if applicable
- whether it is considered necessary that the licensed care service take action in relation to the employment status of the staff member.

What ifs - responding to specific matters of concern matters

1. What if additional concerns are received?

When there is a current child placement concern report or matter of concern notification and investigation and assessment that has not been finalised and approved in ICMS, any further information or concerns will be responded to as part of the current matter of concern.

In this circumstance, unless an exception applies, as outlined in [Chapter 1, 2.6 Decide the response](#), record the new matter of concern in an 'additional notified concerns' form in either:

- the open 'Matter of Concern' event in ICMS
- the open 'MOC - I&A' event in ICMS.

In this circumstance, another 'Record of checks and consultation' form must complete prior to the decision to record the additional concerns.

Where further information is received by a CSSC that does not have responsibility for the assessment of the current child placement concern report, all relevant information is to be recorded in a 'placement' case note in a 'placement' event in ICMS, as outlined in the section on 'Actions required when concerns are received by another CSSC', in the relevant procedure. In this circumstance the assessment of the additional concerns must occur as part of the current assessment.

The additional concerns are to be assessed as part of the current assessment or investigation and assessment.

2. What if there is harm by another household member?

Where there are reported concerns about the care of a child in out-of-home care, by an adult other than the approved carer or staff member, or by another child who is also subject to out-of-home care and residing in the care environment:

- undertake information gathering requirements, including consideration of:
 - whether the approved carer or staff member is aware of the harm or risk of harm
 - the approved carer or staff member's protective capacity and response to the child (for example, whether they have rejected the child or are refusing to take action to ensure the child's safety)
 - the approved carer or staff member's willingness and ability to protect the child
- assess whether the standards of care have been breached by the approved carer or staff member
- consider any necessary actions, where appropriate, with respect to the approved carer or staff member's ongoing suitability to provide out-of-home care (particularly where the concerns relate to harm or risk of harm by another child or adult residing in the care environment)
- where the person responsible is another child subject to out-of-home care, consider and where applicable, respond to the needs of this child, as well as respond to the matter of concern - this will require the recording of a separate notification on the responsible child.

Where a child in the out-of-home care placement is the alleged person responsible, it may indicate unassessed needs for the child. The following practice guidelines apply to all harm or abuse types, although the examples provided relate to sexual abuse:

- where the alleged abuse was sexual, and there is no previous information recorded by Child Safety Services about any history of sexual abuse of, or by, the child - record a matter of concern notification on the child, and assess the child's protection needs
- where the alleged abuse was sexual, and there is no previous information known by Child Safety Services about any history of sexual abuse of, or by, the child but the information received indicates that the child may have been sexually abused while in the care of his or her parents, record a 'standard' notification on the child and assess the child's protection needs
- where the alleged abuse was sexual, and the child has a known history of either sexual abuse and/or sexually abusing other children, no additional notification is required unless there are any matters that have not previously been assessed.

3. What if there is harm by a person living outside the care environment?

Child Safety Services does not automatically record a matter of concern notification about harm or risk of harm to a child in out-of-home care when the alleged person responsible for the harm (whether a child or an adult) lives outside the approved carer or staff member's household, or does not work for the licensed care service or another entity.

Prior to deciding the appropriate response, use the known information to assess:

- whether the approved carer or staff member is aware of the harm or risk of harm
- the approved carer or staff member's protective capacity and response to the child (for example, whether they have rejected the child or are refusing to take action to ensure the child's safety)
- the approved carer or staff member's willingness and ability to protect the child, including whether they:
 - support the child, believe the child or blame the child for the harm
 - have an ongoing relationship with the alleged person responsible that will affect their ability to protect the child
 - are able to protect the child but are unwilling to do so, due to identified factors (for example, the alleged person responsible may be a relative or friend of the approved carer or staff member, or there may be conflict between the approved carer or staff member and the child, preventing the approved carer or staff member from acting protectively).

Where the information received does not raise concerns about the standards of care provided to the child by the child's approved carer or the staff member, the matter will be responded to in accordance with intake procedures relating to children in the general community, for example:

- a child in out-of-home care may experience sexual assault by another child who attends their school or be physically assaulted at a shopping centre by an adult with whom they have no relationship. In these circumstances:
 - immediately refer the matter to the QPS in accordance with the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 14(2), using a [Police Referral Fax](#)
 - record the matter, and the actions taken, in a child concern report

- support the child, as part of ongoing intervention, through the provision of counselling, medical services, if appropriate, and during any subsequent criminal investigations and court processes
- a child in out-of-home care may experience harm or risk of harm by their parent during a family contact visit. In these circumstances, as the harm or risk of harm is not related to the carer or staff member's actions or inactions:
 - record the matter as a 'standard' notification
 - undertake an investigation and assessment.

Where the approved carer or staff member's actions or inactions towards the child potentially contributed to the harm or risk of harm to the child, a matter of concern will also be recorded. For example, where an approved carer or staff member allows an unsupervised family contact visit to occur, despite the child's case plan and placement agreement requiring supervised visits, and the child was harmed by a parent.

4. What if the child needs to be moved to a new placement?

The matter of concern assessment or investigation and assessment process is to ensure continuity of the child's relationship with the approved carer or staff member and the stability of the child's placement, as far as possible, unless:

- the child requests a change in placement and the delegated officer is satisfied it is in the child's best interests
- for a **child placement concern report**, exceptional circumstances apply
- at any point during the **investigation and assessment** it becomes apparent that the child is at immediate risk of harm or unacceptable risk of future harm in the care environment, and protective intervention would not adequately ensure the child's safety and well-being in the care environment.

The decision to remove the child from their care environment as part of a matter of concern will be made by the CSSC manager or another delegated officer, including a CSAHSC team leader, where the matter is being responded to by the CSAHSC. Where it will not jeopardise the immediate safety or well-being of the child, the CSSC manager will make this decision following consultation with the senior practitioner, having regard to the views of:

- the child, where age and developmentally appropriate
- the recognised entity, where the child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- the approved carer or staff member, if applicable
- the licensed care service, if applicable.

Where the child's immediate safety and well-being necessitate their removal from the care environment prior to seeking the views of the above relevant persons, or where having regard to the views of relevant persons, the CSSC manager proceeds with the decision to remove a child:

- record the decision and the rationale for the decision
- explain the rationale for the decision to all persons affected by the decision
- implement applicable information provision and administrative requirements, in accordance with the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 90, and the Chapter 5, 4. Conclude an out-of-home care placement.

5. What if the concerns received are historical?

Responding to historical concerns

A child under 18 years of age

When information received relates to historical events, for example, over 12 months, and the subject child is currently under 18 years of age, irrespective of the amount of time elapsed since the concerns occurred, the matter must still be recorded and responded to as a matter of concern.

A carer who is no longer an approved carer

When historical concerns relate to a carer who is no longer an approved carer, or to a former staff member of a licensed care service or another entity, the information will still be recorded as a matter of concern and attempts will be made to conduct an assessment. This may take the form of written advice to the former approved carer or staff member about the concerns and a request to participate in the assessment process.

A former child in out-of-home care over 18 years of age

Once a child who was formerly in out-of-home care turns 18 years, Child Safety Services has no legislative authority to either:

- record a child placement concern report or a matter of concern notification
- conduct an investigation and assessment.

When information received relates to concerns about a child who was formerly residing in out-of-home care, the child is now an adult and the CSSC manager decides that the information constitutes a matter of concern:

- record the concerns as a 'MOC - Historical concerns' case note in a 'placement' event in ICMS and ensure that the text reflects that the case note relates to historical matters of concern for a former child in care who is now over 18 years of age
- make all reasonable attempts to discuss and assess the concerns with the former child in care, subject to their consent
- discuss the concerns with the approved carer or staff member (where they are currently approved or employed by the licensed care service or another entity)
- for a carer who is no longer approved or for a former staff member of a licensed care service or another entity, make all reasonable attempts to meet with them to discuss the concerns (subject to their consent)
- record the assessment and the outcome in the same 'MOC - Historical concerns' case note in ICMS
- file a copy of the 'MOC - Historical concerns' case note on the approved carer's Child Safety Services' file.

6. What if the notifier is vexatious or malicious?

In some circumstances Child Safety Services may become aware that a notifier is providing information about the child's approved carer or a staff member, which appears to be without grounds or with the intent of ill will. For an appropriate response to such matters, refer to [Chapter 1, 5. What if the notifier is vexatious or malicious?](#)

7. What if there are multiple matters of concern?

Where the approved carer or staff member presents with more than one matter of concern (indicating a breach of the standards and/or a substantiated investigation and assessment where the approved carer or staff member is recorded as the person responsible), or a pattern of similar concerns, irrespective of the outcomes, the CSSC manager will, on a case-by-case basis:

- give consideration to a review of the approved carer or staff member's suitability
- where recommended as a result of the review, take necessary action to amend, suspend or cancel the approved carer's certificate of approval - refer to [Chapter 8, 9. What if a foster or kinship carer's certificate of approval requires amendment, suspension or cancellation, other than on blue card grounds?](#)

For the review of an approved carer's suitability, due to multiple matters of concern, the zonal director is to determine whether:

- the senior practitioner who has had previous involvement with respect to the matter of concern process and/or decision, is to conduct the review
- they will negotiate for another senior practitioner who is independent of the case to conduct the review
- advice or assistance will be sought from the Matters of Concern Review Unit.

For the review of a staff member's suitability, the CSSC manager will contact the nominee of the licensed care service and request a review of suitability, in accordance with the procedure [4. Develop and monitor an action plan.](#)

In circumstances where there is an emerging pattern of matters of concern in relation to a licensed care service, consult with the relevant CST Manager and zonal director in relation to the licensed care service's compliance with licensing standards, and whether any additional action is required.

8. What if assistance is required from the Matters of Concern Review Unit?

The Matters of Concern Review Unit (MOCRU) is available to respond to requests for advice or assistance in relation to matters of concern, when issues **cannot be resolved** at the CSSC level.

Requests to MOCRU can only be made by a CSSC manager or senior practitioner. The range of services offered include:

- assisting staff to determine the most appropriate response to concerns received about a child placed in out-of-home care
- providing advice to staff who undertake matters of concern assessments
- assisting with the development of an assessment plan
- providing feedback on the matters of concern assessment outcome
- assisting the CSSC to develop clear and effective action plans, where it is assessed there has been a breach of the standards of care.

In addition, at the request of a zonal director, the MOCRU is available to:

- undertake or assist in the review of an approved carer, through:
 - supporting CSSC staff in the review process by providing advice
 - completing a file review of the approved carer, to inform the CSSCs review
- assume full responsibility for the review of the approved carer
- undertake complex reviews relating to matters of concern.

A request for MOCRU to undertake a complex review may also be made by the Executive Director, Child Safety Services Division, the Deputy Director-General or the Director-General.

9. What if a staff member is responsible for concerns of a serious nature?

Where a staff member of a licensed care service or another entity is the alleged person responsible for concerns of a serious nature, such as those requiring criminal investigation, there are industrial relations issues to be considered when completing the matter of concern.

Investigation and assessment timeframe

Where a staff member has been suspended from their duties pending the outcome of an investigation and assessment, the average period of time that a licensed care service can suspend a staff member on full pay is **four weeks**. In this circumstance, make every effort to investigate and assess a matter of concern and advise relevant parties of the outcome, as soon as possible and **within a period of 4 weeks**.

Provision of information outlining the substantiated concerns

Where there are substantiated concerns of a serious nature, such as matters resulting in criminal proceedings, these should be clearly documented and provided to all relevant parties, including the manager of the licensed care service (refer to [Letter to approved carer/staff member - advice of notification outcome](#)). Licensed service providers require clear information about the substantiated concerns. In cases where dismissal of a staff member may be considered, organisations must provide clear grounds for dismissal in order to minimise their likelihood of being summoned to the Unfair Dismissal Tribunal. Processes need to be transparent, accountable and recorded and employers need clear information on which they can act.

10. What if a matter of concern coincides with the renewal of approval for a carer?

In circumstances where an approved carer is due to have their certificate of approval renewed at the same time as they are subject to a matter of concern, advise the carer of the following:

- the [Application for approval - Form 3 APA \(APA form\)](#) - Part C **must** still be submitted, in accordance with [Chapter 8, 5. Renewal](#)
- the renewal process will then be put on hold until the matter of concern is finalised

This will ensure that:

- the carer will not be required to undergo an initial approval process following the completion of the matter of concern, due to their current approval expiring

- any child placed with the carer will not need to be removed, due to the carer's approval expiring.

11. What if a person wants to make a complaint or seek a review?

Child Safety Services' clients, approved carers or staff members of a licensed care service or another entity may:

- make a complaint by contacting the local CSSC, the child safety zonal office or the Complaints, Case Review and Investigation Branch
- make a complaint or express concerns about Child Safety Services' decisions and actions relating to matters of concern through the CCYPCG
- seek external review of Child Safety Services' decisions and actions through the Children Services Tribunal, in circumstances prescribed by legislation (decisions able to be reviewed are prescribed in the *Child Protection Act 1999*, schedule 2).

An internal review of the decisions or actions of the CSO may be:

- requested by the zonal director
- undertaken by the CSSC manager
- assisted or undertaken by MOCRU (at the request of the zonal director, Executive Director, Child Safety Services Division, the Deputy Director-General or the Director-General).

12. What if there is a request for a copy of Child Safety Services' records

Should an approved carer or staff member request a copy of Child Safety Services' information in relation to the assessment, they should be referred to Freedom of Information Branch by telephone on 1800 809 078.

Administrative release of documents under the *Child Protection Act 1999*, section 187(4), to a person should only occur following consultation between the CSSC manager and the Freedom of Information Branch.

Should an approved carer or staff member request that information be changed in, or added to, records associated with the assessment, the CSO, licensed care service or another entity will:

- refer the approved carer or staff member to relevant review mechanisms
- invite the approved carer or staff member to provide their response in writing, to be placed on:
 - the approved carer's Child Safety Services' file
 - the licensed care service's or another entity's file
 - the child's file, referenced to the child placement concern report the child's file, referenced to the investigation and assessment.

Resources

Forms and templates

- Application for approval - Form 3 APA
- Letter to approved carer/staff member - CPR outcome
- Letter to approved carer/staff member - advice of matter of concern notification
- Letter to approved carer/staff member - advice of notification outcome

Child Safety Services' resources

- Checklist for assessing a child placement concern report
- Checklist for investigating and assessing a matter of concern notification
- Critical Incident Report
- Information sheet about support persons and advocates in matters of concern
- Information sheet for children and young people
- Police referral fax
- Practice guide: The assessment of harm and risk of harm
- Practice resource: Matters of concern - key concepts and definitions
- Practice resource: Notifiers and mandatory notifiers
- Practice resource: The role of a support person
- Statement of Commitment between the Department of Child Safety, foster care services and the carers of Queensland