



<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES</b> <b>CHILD WELFARE POLICY</b>	
<b>Chapter 4:</b> Assessment	
<b>Section 36:</b> Linking and Withdrawing a Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect (310)	
<b>Effective Date:</b> September 1, 2023	<b>Version:</b> 6

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## POLICY OVERVIEW

Linking a new Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect (310) to an open assessment or withdrawing a 310, when used appropriately, may avoid duplication of effort. Linking or withdrawing of a 310 should never occur at the expense of child safety and well-being.

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## PROCEDURE

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) may **link** a 310 to an open assessment in the case management system, regardless of maltreatment type, when the new 310 includes allegations that meet the statutory definition of Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) and:

1. The same alleged perpetrator;
2. The same alleged child victim; and/or
3. A household member that was not listed in the open assessment.

Linking a new 310 to an open assessment does not eliminate initiation timeframe requirements. Decisions as to whether a linked 310 requires an additional face-to-face contact will be determined at the supervisory level. A separate assessment may not need to be conducted, but appropriate steps must be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the child. Any additional allegations in the linked 310 must be assessed.

**Note:** Once a new 310 is linked to an existing assessment, it may not be unlinked.

A 310 should **not** be linked in the case management system when:

1. Individuals listed in the new 310 are not entitled to information contained in the open assessment (see policy 2.06 Sharing Confidential Information); and/or
2. The assessments are initially assigned to separate counties.

**Note:** If it is determined the 310 should **not** be linked to an open assessment, the 310 should be assigned, when possible, to the FCM completing the open assessment.

DCS may **withdraw** a 310 in the case management system when:

1. The 310 was approved for assessment in error; or
2. "Unknown" profiles listed on the 310 became known and are identified in an open assessment and there is no ability to link.

**Note:** The assessment with “unknown” profiles should be “withdrawn due to duplicate” and the 310 should be uploaded to the original assessment in the case management system.

Upon receipt of a new 310 involving a family for which there is an open assessment, the Family Case Manager (FCM) Supervisor will:

1. Check the case management system to determine if the 310 meets the linking or withdrawing criteria listed above and proceed with one (1) of the following:
  - a. Complete the approval process to link the new 310 to the existing assessment, or
  - b. Withdraw the 310 in the case management system.
2. Notify the FCM of the linked 310, when approved, and confirm receipt of the linked report;
3. Staff each new 310 with the FCM assigned to the existing assessment, and review the progress of the existing assessment, the information provided in the new 310, and the safety and well-being of the alleged child victim; and

**Note:** The new 310 may include a new household member (i.e., an alleged perpetrator or alleged child victim) that was not listed in the open assessment. If a new household member is not automatically added to the open assessment, the household member should be added manually.

4. Ensure the FCM takes all appropriate actions, including but not limited to:
  - a. Contacting the family, and
  - b. Conducting a new Safety Assessment, Initial Family Risk Assessment, Safety Plan and/or Plan of Safe Care.
5. Ensure the FCM has documented the following in the case management system:
  - a. The initial and subsequent child safety for each linked 310
  - b. The reason the following are not required, if applicable:
    - i. A face-to-face contact with each alleged child victim, and
    - ii. A Safety Assessment.

Upon receipt of the linked 310, the FCM will:

1. Review the response time and the allegations in the linked 310;

**Note:** If the existing assessment has not been initiated, the FCM and FCM Supervisor should review the initiation timeframes and determine the appropriate action to take to ensure the safety of the child.

2. Contact the Report Source for each linked assessment;
3. Notify the parent, guardian, or custodian of all allegations for each new 310;
4. Ensure all allegations are assessed within the appropriate timeframe and determine the appropriate action to ensure the safety of the child (see policy 4.38 Assessment Initiation);

**Note:** A new face-to-face interview must be completed with the child victim if the new 310 has a different allegation and/or maltreatment type that was not previously addressed in the open assessment. Additional consent to speak to the child must be

obtained unless exigent circumstances exist (see policy 4.06 Exigent Circumstances for Interviewing Alleged Child Victims).

5. Document whether each linked 310 requires additional face-to-face contact, any exigent circumstances, and any extenuating circumstances in the Assessment Initiation Tracking Tool;
6. Ensure all allegations are addressed in the Assessment of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect (311) (see policy 4.25 Completing the Assessment Report); and

**Note:** If the same incident is alleged in multiple linked 310s, those allegations must have a consistent decision outcome (i.e., unsubstantiated or substantiated). The decision outcome of each allegation must be documented for each 310 in the conclusion statement of the 311.

7. Generate a Forty-five (45) Day Report of Assessment for each applicable report source and include the statutorily required information outlined in policy 4.21 Forty-five (45) Day Report of Assessment.

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## RELEVANT INFORMATION

### Definitions

N/A

### Forms and Tools

- Assessment Initiation Tracking Tool- Available in Salesforce
- Assessment of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect (SF 113) (311) – Available in the case management system
- [Forty-Five \(45\) Day Report of Assessment \(SF 54854\)](#)
- Initial Family Risk Assessment- Available in the case management system
- [Plan of Safe Care \(SF 56565\)](#)
- Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect (SF 114) (310) – Available in the case management system
- Safety Assessment- Available in the case management system
- [Safety Plan \(53243\)](#)

### Related Policies

- [2.06 Sharing Confidential Information](#)
- [4.06 Exigent Circumstances for Interviewing Alleged Child Victims](#)
- [4.21 Forty-Five \(45\) Day Report of Assessment](#)
- [4.25 Completing the Assessment Report](#)
- [4.38 Assessment Initiation](#)

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## LEGAL REFERENCES

- [IC 31-33-7-4: Written reports; contents](#)
- [IC 31-33-8-1: Investigations by the department of child services; time of initiation; investigations of child care ministries](#)

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## PRACTICE GUIDANCE- DCS POLICY 4.36

*Practice Guidance is designed to assist DCS staff with thoughtful and practical direction on how to effectively integrate tools and social work practice into daily case management in an effort to achieve positive family and child outcomes. Practice Guidance is separate from Policy.*

N/A

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