



## Tips for Advocates: Child Protective Services (CPS)

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### Supporting a Survivor Working with CPS

- Navigating the CPS system can be complex and overwhelming. TCFV launched a page for [advocates](#) and a page for [survivors](#) on our website to provide resources, both tools and information for working with CPS. Contact TCFV for specific CPS technical assistance at 512-794-1133.
- The [Survivors' Rights Palm Card](#) lists rights and responsibilities when working with CPS. Review this palm card with the survivor and offer support to a survivor as they navigate the CPS system. Download the palm card in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).
- Within the bounds of your confidentiality requirements, work with your program's CPS liaison to address questions and concerns, staff cases, and understand CPS laws, rules, and policies. Refer to the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) to guide communication with CPS staff.
- Always safety plan with a survivor who has CPS involvement. Consider the risks and benefits with the survivor around following the steps of the CPS safety or service plan, and after obtaining a release, discuss any concerns with the assigned investigator.
- Help a survivor articulate the protective actions they have taken to enhance the safety of their children.
- A survivor should enter into conversations with program staff fully aware of the mandatory reporting requirement for abuse and neglect. Staff must thoroughly explain what qualifies as [abuse and neglect](#), when staff must report, and how program staff will support the survivor during the reporting process. Refer to [Texas Family Code 261.101](#) to guide the development of best practices around mandatory reporting and consider contacting the Policy Team at TCFV.

### Considerations for Closed CPS Cases

- If CPS determines a survivor as the “perpetrator” in a CPS case, the survivor has 45 days after receiving the DFPS “Notice to Designated Perpetrator” letter to make a written request for an Administrative Review of Investigative Finding (ARIF) hearing ([DFPS Rules, 40 Texas Administrative Code §700.516](#)). If you have not assisted a survivor with an ARIF before, contact TCFV or a trusted advocate or attorney with experience with this process.
- When CPS “rules out” an investigation into child abuse, individuals have an entitlement to the removal of role information. The law stipulates that DFPS shall mail notice explaining the its requirement to follow this procedure ([DFPS Rules, 40 Texas Administrative Code §700.523](#)).
- Discuss ongoing safety plans for a survivor and their children following a CPS case and steps to take to prevent future involvement with the Department.