

## What does an Immediate Safety Plan usually include?

Immediate Safety Plans often involve **short-term changes** to reduce danger, such as:

- Another adult staying in the home or spending increased time with the family,
- Children staying with relatives or trusted adults, or
- One adult temporarily living elsewhere.

These steps are **not meant to be permanent**.

They are used to reduce danger quickly while maintaining important connections, as longer-term solutions are explored.

## Do I have to agree to an Immediate Safety Plan?

You do not have to agree to creating an Immediate Safety Plan.

Talking with DCF helps everyone understand whether a plan can keep children safe without removal.

If DCF believes children cannot be kept safe without an Immediate Safety Plan, they may need to consider other options **to protect the children**.

Open conversations help everyone decide what is possible.



## What if the plan isn't working?

If parts of the safety plan are not working, the first step is to talk with the DCF worker and safety network so the plan can be adjusted.

If DCF believes children are still not safe, they may ask the police or a judge for help. The officer or judge will listen to everyone's perspective and then decide what, if anything, needs to happen to keep children safe.

## What might this feel like?

Safety planning conversations can feel **stressful, emotional, or scary**.

Many families worry about what might happen next.

DCF's role is to reduce danger as quickly as possible while keeping families together whenever it is safe to do so.

**An Immediate Safety Plan is a short-term agreement, not a court order. It focuses on keeping children safe and connected to their family while the danger is addressed.**

## Contact Information

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Appendix 2Q REV Jan. 2026

# Immediate Safety Planning

A guide for families



## Why am I being asked to talk about an Immediate Safety Plan?

An Immediate Safety Plan is used when DCF is worried that a child could be seriously hurt soon—within the next few days or weeks.

The goal of an Immediate Safety Plan is to:



**Remove the danger**, so the child can stay at home.



Keep children **safe in the care of people they know**, whenever possible.

This plan is used when DCF believes removal might be necessary **unless something changes quickly** to protect the children.

## What is an Immediate Safety Plan?

An Immediate Safety Plan is a **short-term plan** that explains:



The danger DCF is worried about **right now**,



Who will help **keep the children safe**, and



What will be done to **protect the children**.

It focuses on what needs to happen **right now** to prevent harm and avoid separation, while decisions are made and longer-term planning begins.

## How long does an Immediate Safety Plan last?

Immediate Safety Plans are **short-term by design**.

An Immediate Safety Plan stays in place until the danger has been reduced enough that separation is no longer needed to keep children safe.

The Immediate Safety Plan is a **starting point**. While it is in place, everyone works together to build a longer-term plan that is more sustainable for the family.

## Who is involved in creating the plan?

The safety plan is built with:



Parents or caregivers,



Children (when appropriate),



Family members, friends, or other trusted adults **chosen by the family**, and



The DCF worker.

**Safety cannot depend on one person alone.**

The plan is built by the family, with support and agreement from DCF to make sure it can keep children safe.

It depends on a supportive group of people who know:



What the danger is.



What to do.



When to step in.

## What will be discussed in the conversation?

The safety planning conversation will focus on:



What life looks like when things are calm and safe.

So the plan can be built from family strengths.



What danger DCF is worried about.

So everyone understands why DCF is concerned.



What might trigger the danger to start again.

So people know when extra support is needed.



What early signs tell people the danger may be returning.

So people can act early.



What each person will do to support parents and protect children.

So the agreements that will be in the plan are clear.

