
TIME FRAME FOR COMPLETION OF FIELD INVESTIGATION

The standard of promptness (SOP) for completing an investigation is 30 days from the department's receipt of the complaint. This includes completion of the safety assessment; risk assessment; family and child assessments of needs and strengths; DHS-154, CPS Investigation Report; services agreement, as needed; and case disposition in MiSACWIS.

Extenuating Circumstances

In some situations, completing an investigation may require an extension of the 30-day standard of promptness (SOP). To allow for extenuating circumstances, supervisors may approve an extension. A face-to-face contact with each alleged child victim(s) and a safety assessment must be completed prior to requesting an extension. Submit the request for supervisory approval of an extension of the SOP by completing the extension request **prior** to the end of the initial 30-day period. The request must document the reasons for the extension. **Extensions are not to be approved solely for the purpose of meeting the SOP.** Supervisory approval can only occur for the following circumstances:

- Arranging travel and coordinating interview schedules with the alleged victims who do not reside in the county or are not available for immediate interviews.
- Obtaining a second medical opinion to verify an injury was not accidental or related to an existing medical condition.
- Coordinating interviews of sexual abuse victims with law enforcement.

Regardless of the approval of the extension request, face-to-face contact **must** be made every 30 days from the date of the complaint, with each alleged child victim(s). For all CPS cases involving a child 12-months of age or younger living in the home, CPS must observe the infant's sleep environment and record the observation in their social work contacts; see [PSM 714-1, Safe Sleep](#).

Extension Approval

If an extension is approved, the time frame for the completion of the investigation must be outlined (for example, 10 days past the original due date of the investigation). This extension must be consistent with the time required to complete the investigation. If an extension of the 30-day SOP is approved, this extension must be reviewed and/or reauthorized at least every 30 days until the investigation is complete. Prior to reauthorizing the extension, a face-to-face contact with each alleged child victim(s) and a safety reassessment must be completed.

No Extension Request

Face-to-face contact must be made with the alleged child victim(s), and at minimum a collateral contact with the parent/caretaker. Regardless of overdue case status, a safety reassessment must be completed every 30 days.

COMPLETION OF INVESTIGATION OVERVIEW

The investigation must include the systematic and objective examination of facts and evidence which support the determination that a **preponderance of evidence** of child abuse/neglect exists or does not exist. See Other Factors section in this item regarding other factors to consider while making a determination of whether a preponderance of evidence of abuse/neglect exists and how to best provide any needed services to the family.

No Preponderance of Evidence of Abuse/Neglect

If a preponderance of evidence of abuse/neglect is not found to exist, the case must be classified as a Category V or IV. Document the facts and evidence which support the determination that abuse/neglect did not occur. No evidence decisions (Category V) are appropriate for investigations in which all allegations were based on false or erroneous facts, when unable to locate the family, or when the court is asked to order cooperation but declines.

Preponderance of Evidence of Abuse/Neglect

If a preponderance of evidence of abuse/neglect is found to exist, the case must be classified as a Category III, II or I. Document the facts and evidence which support the determination that a given individual(s) is(are) the perpetrator(s) and is(are) the victim(s). See [PSM 713-08, Special Investigative Situations, Coordination with Friend of the Court](#), for requirements on determining if the family has an open Friend of the Court case when a preponderance of evidence of abuse and/or neglect is found to exist.

Note: If the perpetrator is unknown and the case is kept open for services, attempts to identify the perpetrator must continue.

Preponderance of Evidence and Maltreatment in Care (MIC)

A preponderance of evidence finding on a licensed/registered provider or employee of a child caring institution or licensed foster family home requires their name to be placed on central registry. This applies regardless of risk level, if the children live in the home of the perpetrator or reside in a facility where the perpetrator is employed. When a preponderance of evidence finding exists, the CPS-MIC worker must override a low or moderate risk to a high-risk level.

The results of a CPS investigation on a licensed/registered provider or an employee of a child caring institution (CCI) or licensed foster family home of abuse/neglect of their own children **cannot** be shared with their employer.

If a preponderance of evidence of abuse/neglect is found in a CCI, CPS-MIC must forward (by fax or e-mail) a copy of the DHS-154, Investigation Report, to The Division of Child Welfare Licensing (CWL) within five business days of completion.

See [PSM 712-6, CPS-Intake - Special Cases \(Abuse by an Adult Outside of the Home\)](#), PSM 713-08, Special Investigative Situations (Maltreatment-in-Care), and PSM 716-9, New Complaint When Child is in Foster Care, for additional CPS-MIC Policy.

CWL Investigations

Upon completion of the Division of Child Welfare Licensing (CWL) investigation, CPS must request and obtain a copy of the CWL report. This information **must** be maintained within the client's file.

Birth Match

Birth Match is an automated system that notifies the local MDHHS office when a new child is born to a parent who has previously had parental rights terminated in a child protective proceeding, caused the death of a child due to abuse and/or neglect or has been manually added to the birth match list. A perpetrator's name must be manually added to the birth match list in serious child abuse/neglect cases when termination of parental rights will not be requested or ordered. Examples of when this may occur include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A nonparent adult is the perpetrator of child abuse/neglect and the abuse/neglect includes any of the factors under MCL 722.638(1)(a) (murder, severe physical abuse, sexual abuse, etc.).
- The court does not terminate parental rights even though reunification of the parent and child is not sought; such as when children are placed in a guardianship, or the court order in the custody case is changed to no contact with that parent, or when the court will not terminate parental rights to only one parent.

To have a perpetrator's name added to the birth match list, contact CPS program office at (517) 335-3704. CPS program office will review the information and determine whether the perpetrator should be added to the birth match list.

Concurrent Complaints Assigned for Investigation

Separate DHS-154, CPS Investigation Reports, must be completed on each complaint assigned for investigation on the same family.

Subsequent Investigations on Open CPS Cases

When a new complaint is assigned for investigation and there is already an open case, the assigned worker must complete a new DHS-154. The next DHS-152, Updated Services Plan, (USP) on the open case should summarize the new investigation. The social work contacts section of the USP should also include the social work contacts of the new investigation.

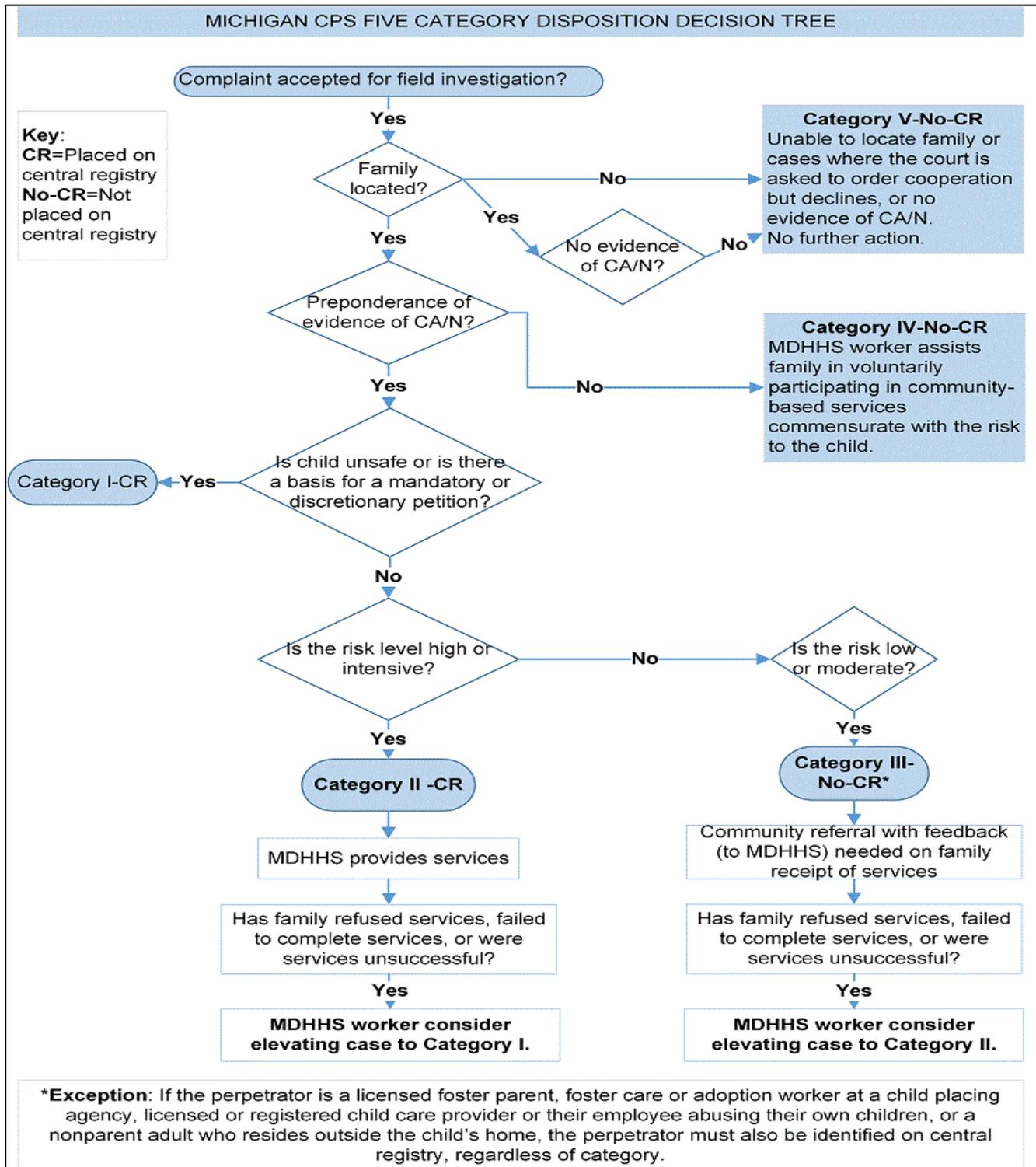
If a preponderance of evidence of child abuse and/or neglect is found on the new complaint, the worker must open or maintain the case with the higher risk level. If both cases result in Category I dispositions, the worker must keep the case open that resulted in out-of-home placement.

FIVE CATEGORY DISPOSITION

The Child Protection Law (MCL 722.628d) defines five categories for CPS investigation dispositions and the department's response required for each category. The Decision Tree below is a guide to the five category dispositions and the department's response.

For those cases that require that the perpetrator be listed on central registry, see [PSM 713-13, State Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry \(CA/NCR\)](#).

FIVE CATEGORY DISPOSITION DECISION TREE



Other Factors

Consider the following factors while making a determination of whether a preponderance of evidence of abuse/neglect occurred and how to best provide any needed services to the family.

Historical Information

Within 30 days of receipt of the complaint, the worker must review historical information on all complaints, investigations and services for the family, including any informal history of CA/N, voluntary out-of-home placements, etc. See [PSM 713-10, CPS Investigation Report](#), CPS History Tab section, for detailed instructions on what information should be compiled and reviewed and how it should be documented.

In cases with a history of domestic violence, document any failure or inability of the non-offending caretaker to protect the child from violence over a sustained period of time. See [PSM 713-08, Special Investigative Situations](#), Domestic Violence section, for more information on investigating complaints that include allegations and/or evidence of domestic violence.

Denial/Alternative Explanation of Event

The denial or alternative explanation of an alleged abuse/neglect event by a person responsible must be weighed in light of all evidence and/or information gathered, including:

- Child's credibility.
- Child's motive.
- Evidence the child was coached.
- Child provides several explanations of how the incident occurred.
- Evidence or time lines made it impossible for the abuse/neglect to have occurred.
- Child's version of events is not consistent with other witness accounts.

See [PSM 713-08, Special Investigative Situations, Guidelines For Investigation When A Child Denies Abuse/Neglect](#) section.

Single Parent Families

In single-parent families, particular attention is to be given to the parent's living-together-partner (male or female) and other nonparent adults, not necessarily living in the same home, who might be a person responsible because of their relationship and contact with the family.

In the instance of extended family households, clarification of roles and relationships of the individuals residing or spending a significant amount of time in the household is required.

Multiple Complaints

When there have been three or more CPS complaints (rejected or assigned for investigation) and the current complaint includes any child age three or under, the supervisor must conduct a face-to-face meeting with the investigating worker prior to disposition. The meeting must include discussion concerning the disposition of the investigation and any post-investigative services. This meeting and its results must be documented in the DHS-154.

Service Provision

When a child needs protection and can remain safely in his or her own home, offer services to the caretakers which will enable them to participate in the planning and use of services. The parents' strengths are to be identified and built on. Services must be identified and implemented that will adequately safeguard the child from imminent risk of harm in his or her own home.

Protective services may be continued without initiating legal action if a child can remain in his/her own home safely, and the caretakers are willing and able to voluntarily participate in services to improve conditions for the child. The decision, to continue protective services, must include an assessment of the parents':

- Strengths.
- Abilities and limitations related to protecting the child from harm.
- Ability to provide the child with better care.
- Capacity to secure the child's safety.

- Desire and capacity to use help in bringing about positive change in their behavior or attitudes.
- Their interest and desire to maintain their own family.

Relative care and/or other family resources may provide support to the parents as they improve their skills and work with protective services. See [PSM 714-1, Post-Investigative Services](#), for more information on providing services and when service provision is required.