	Division/Section	Child Welfare
	Chapter No./Name	4 – Child Protective Services (CPS)
	Part No./Name	5 – Conducting Investigations of Reports of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Families
	Section No./Name	Conducting Investigations of Reports of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Families
	Document No./Name	4-555 Local Office Follow-Up Notifications
	Effective Date	August 27, 2019

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is the policy of Department of Children and Family Services to provide notification to parents of the findings of an investigation, according to the Children's Code Article 615 (B) Disposition of Reports.

II. PROCEDURES

A. INFORMING THE PARENT OR CARETAKER OF THE FINAL FINDING

The CPS worker shall inform the parent/* caretaker ** of the final finding for valid, invalid, and inconclusive findings for all investigations of families. In addition, the worker will notify any other caretakers who were alleged perpetrators of the final finding with regards to their involvement.


1. Valid Final Finding Status

When the final finding status is valid, * the worker is responsible for informing the parent/caretaker ** *** of the * valid finding in-person or by telephone prior to case closure. If phone or in-person contact cannot be made, diligent efforts shall be documented in ACESS. The parent/caretaker shall also receive a written notice via the CW [Form 472](#), Notice to a Parent-Legal Custodian of a Valid Investigation Finding, that is auto-generated at case closure.

Both the in-person and/or phone contact shall include the following discussion:

- The information that the finding is valid, specific allegations, and the reason for the validity;
- The worker asking if there is any additional information that the client would like to provide. If additional information to the case is provided, the worker must verify/reconcile the information prior to case closure;
- The worker informing the client that they will receive a letter notifying them of their right to appeal once the case has been closed; and
- The worker verifying the client's address.

In addition, during this contact the parent/caretaker is advised in-person, if possible, of any agency recommendations and of any referral to Family Services and/or to community service providers, if that has not occurred earlier during the investigation. If an in-person contact is not possible, the parent/caretaker ** should be informed of any recommendations either by telephone or mail.

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* Once completed, this contact with the parent/caretaker needs to be documented as an interview in ACESS along with updating the address in the client's Contact Screen if the client reports there is a change. **

2. Invalid Final Finding Status

If the finding is invalid, the parent/* caretaker may be informed by telephone, or in-person, and shall also be informed by mail with the CW [Form 471](#), Notice to Subject of an Invalid Report. The form is auto-generated in ACESS at case closure and mailed through Central Printing. Both the written and the telephone or in-person notifications are expected to include the information that the finding is invalid; the record retention time period, and the confidentiality of the investigation information. For cases involving “another caretaker perpetrator”, the CW [Form 471](#) is also used to notify him regarding the finding for his involvement. The form is ** mailed via ACESS Central Printing *** * at case closure. **

3. Invalid and Valid Final Findings


When the final finding for the parent/* caretaker is invalid and the finding regarding “another caretaker perpetrator” is valid, the parent is informed in-person of the findings whenever possible. The parent is also informed in writing using the CW [Form 473](#). It is auto-generated ** in ACESS and mailed through ACESS Central *** * at case closure. **

4. Inconclusive Findings

a. Notification to the Parent/* Caretaker

When the final finding is inconclusive, the parent/caretaker shall be advised in writing of the finding with the CW [Form 474](#), Notice to a Subject of an Investigation with an Inconclusive Finding, at case closure. The parent/caretaker ** is also to be advised in-person, whenever possible. Both the in-person and written notifications shall include the information that the finding is inconclusive, the record retention time period, and the confidentiality of the information about the investigation. Refer to Section [1-715 D. 2](#).

The parent/caretaker is also advised in-person of any agency recommendations including a referral to Family Service and/or community service providers if such

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a referral is appropriate when this did not occur earlier during the investigation. If an in-person contact is not possible, the parent/* caretaker ** should be informed of any recommendations by telephone and by mail (CW [Form 474](#)).

b. Notification to Other Caretakers

When a caretaker other than a parent or * caretaker ** is an alleged perpetrator for whom the involvement and investigation finding is inconclusive, whenever possible they are notified in-person, of the inconclusive finding and the maintenance of the information. They are also notified in writing using the CW [Form 474](#), Notice to a Subject of an Investigation with an Inconclusive Finding at case closure. **

B. NOTIFICATION TO A NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT


When parents who do not reside with the child (legal and non-legal) have been contacted during the investigation, the worker will advise them of the final finding and of any services and/or care that the agency is recommending for their child. This may be a telephone contact when they are not perpetrators. When they are perpetrators, they are advised as per 4-555 A., above.

When a parent who does not reside with the child is not involved in the investigation nor contacted during the investigation, and the agency is not recommending out of home placement of the child, the parent is not contacted regarding the finding, unless he or she is aware of the investigation. When aware of the investigation and requesting information, such a parent is advised of the finding and any agency recommendations involving their child. This may be a telephone contact.

C. ADOPTION PETITION WORKER

When the CPS worker has knowledge that a client in an investigation is an Adoption Petition Home family member, the Adoption Petition Worker is notified once the investigation is completed * and the client's appeal rights have exhausted, if it is a valid case.

When the final finding for the investigation is valid and the appeal rights have exhausted, ** the worker will send a copy of the *** Safety Assessment, *** the Form 10, * and the ** Investigation Summary from the ACCESS investigation case, with cover memorandum advising the worker that the investigation has been completed. The cover memorandum shall include any additional pertinent information, not included in the summary, needed by the Adoption Petition worker and supervisor for case decision making and for inclusion in the Adoption Petition court report.

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When the final finding for the investigation is invalid or inconclusive, the worker will send a memorandum stating there is no additional information to be included in the court report. The memorandum will not include a reference to the investigation or the finding. Refer to Section [1-520 C. 2. c.](#), Investigations with Invalid and Inconclusive Findings.

D. * INTERNAL AGENCY NOTIFICATION

When the investigation involved a family active in **Family Services (FS), Foster Care (FC), or Home Development (HD)**, the CPS worker will advise the **FS/FC/HD** worker of the investigation findings in a staffing. The staffing is required regardless of the final finding for the investigation. The CPS worker is responsible for scheduling the staffing. The CPS worker and supervisor as well as the Family Services, **Foster Care, or Home Development** worker and supervisor are expected to attend, if possible. When that is not possible, either the CPS worker or supervisor must attend along with either the **FS/FC/HD** worker or supervisor. If neither the CPS nor **FS/FC/HD** ** supervisor is able to attend, a designee, such as a Child Welfare Manager or other supervisor is expected to attend.

The staffing should occur as soon as possible once the investigation has been completed, but it is expected to be held within five working days of the determination of the finding. The purpose of the staffing is to discuss the findings of the investigation, the safety and risk assessments completed by CPS and any recommendations of CPS staff regarding the findings and/or the case. * Should the investigative findings be valid, CPS shall remind FS/FC/HD that the client still has the right to due process should their appeal rights not be exhausted yet. (Policy [4-1900](#)) **

The staffing is documented in the ACESS investigation case on the Staffing page. The *** Safety Assessments, and the Form 10, investigation summary, are printed and given to * **FS/FC/HD** ** staff during the staffing. In addition, CPS staff shall provide information obtained during the investigation needed by FS staff for their safety assessment, Structured Decision Making (SDM) risk assessment, and case planning.

III. FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS


[Form 471 / Instructions](#) Notice to Subject of an Invalid Report

[Form 472 / Instructions](#) Notice to a * **Parent/Legal Custodian** of a Valid **Investigation Finding**

[Form 473 / Instructions](#) Notice to a **Parent/Legal Custodian** of their Invalid Finding and a Valid Finding for Another Caretaker

[Form 474 / Instructions](#) Notice to a Subject of an **Investigation with an** Inconclusive Finding

Form 10 Investigation Summary

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IV. REFERENCES

Children’s Code Article 615 (B) Disposition of Reports