

# Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

## Division of Children and Family Services

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Nebraska Abuse Neglect Hotline

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# A Shared Mission in Child Abuse and Neglect

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**HHS - Helping people live better lives**

**Medical Professionals, Law Enforcement, School System, Courts**

We all have our Roles and Responsibilities in protecting children

Awareness of the importance of the collaborative process and information sharing to address abuse and neglect

Learn why and how decisions are made at the hotline regarding child abuse and neglect.

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# Who should report child abuse and neglect?

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Per Nebraska State Statute, child abuse or neglect is: knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causes or permits a minor child to be placed in a situation that endangers his/her life or physical or mental health, cruelly confined or punished, deprived of necessary food, clothing shelter and care, a child 6 or younger left unattended in a motor vehicle, and/or sexually abused or sexually exploited

Mandatory Reporter is “anyone” who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect

Reports can be made Anonymously to the Hotline, but it is helpful if a worker can contact you for additional information.

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# Reporting to HHS or LE?

**CPS Hotline 1 800 652-1999 or report online**

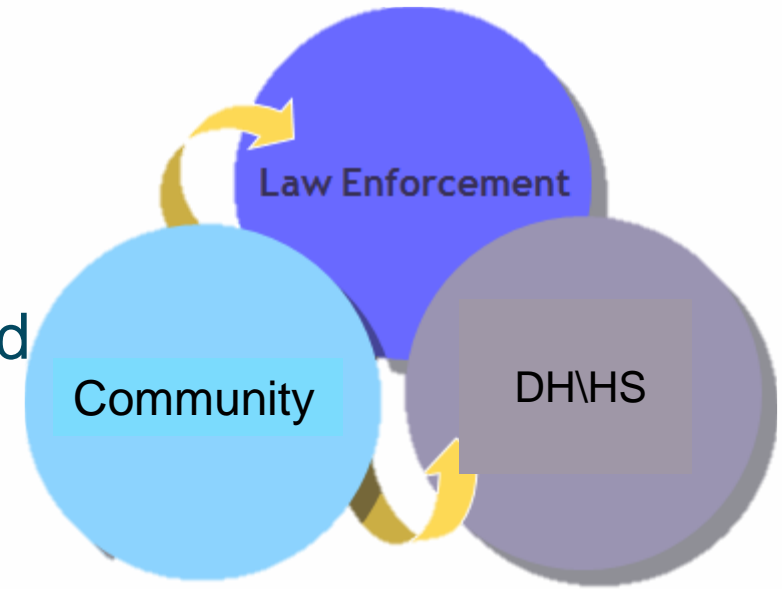
**<https://neabusehotline-dhhs.ne.gov>**

HHS is looking for threats of safety and risk to the child

**Call 911 or local LE in the event of an emergency**

LE looking for immediate safety and criminal activity

Both agencies are responsible to respond to child abuse and neglect. 911 should be called for any situation that a child is in immediate harm or risk of harm due to a crime occurring.



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# DHHS Abuse and Neglect Hotline



The Hotline receives about approximately 6500 calls per month and another 300+ reports weekly via email, or fax 24/7 and 365 days per year. We have also introduced an online reporting portal where reports are processed daily as well.

February 2025: 6500 calls handled and over 5000 intakes were generated for APS & CPS

The Hotline is staffed by CFS Specialists who will interview the Reporter to gather necessary information regarding:

- the situation surrounding the maltreatment
- child and adult functioning
- protective capacities of the caregivers

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# What to expect before reporting to the Hotline

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Per the statute, the State will maintain a hotline 24/7 to accept reports of abuse and neglect. The information needed is as follows:

Helpful information needed:

- **the child's name and address**, dob or age and address of the child's residence
- **the parent's name** and address/Or caretaker involved
- **the circumstances**, nature and extent of the child abuse or neglect **or** the concerns and conditions of the child(ren) involved
- **access** of alleged perpetrator to child
- any known parenting concerns, daily functioning, mental health, domestic violence or substance use concerns for the family

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# What happens when a call is made to the Hotline

CFS Intake Specialist will gather information from caller – current, history, thresholds



Determine immediate safety concerns (phone call direct to local LE): unsafe children, sex trafficking or to report marks, bruises, injuries from abuse or neglect

The CFS worker will determine if a report meets criteria and how it will be closed: Accepted or Not Accepted

All Reports are sent to local Law Enforcement for their own review as required by state Statute.

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# SDM Intake Screening and Closure

Screening and Priority Decision is made using the definitions and thresholds in the **SDM Intake Policy and Manual** that align with DHHS policy, state and federal laws

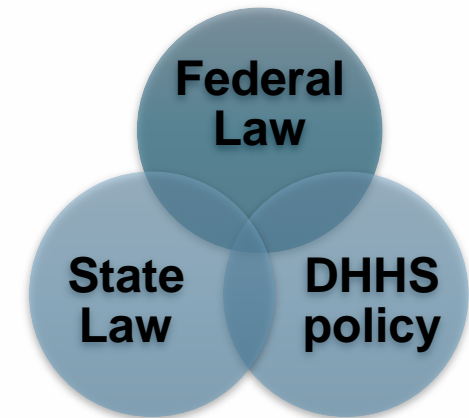
- allegations, history of actions by alleged perpetrator, strengths and supports

## Abuse

- ▶ **Physical abuse**
- ▶ **Unreasonable Confinement**
- ▶ **Cruel Punishment**
- ▶ **Drug exposed infants**
- ▶ **Emotional Abuse**
- ▶ **Sexual abuse**
- ▶ **Sexual exploitation**
- ▶ **Sex Trafficking**
- ▶ **Dependency cases**

## Neglect

- ▶ **Physical Neglect**
- ▶ **Abandonment**
- ▶ **Medical Neglect**
- ▶ **Emotional Neglect**
- ▶ **Educational Neglect**
- ▶ **Sexual Acting out**
- ▶ **Domestic Violence**



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# SDM Intake Screening and Closure

**Accepted** – an intake assigned to a DHHS worker for assessment and determination of safety and risk and need for services

P1 0 - 24 hrs

P2 0 –5 days

the expectation for an IA worker to make contact with children and family on intakes accepted for HHS Assessment

**Multiple Report-** an intake that is Accepted for Assessment, AR or LE investigation from a different reporter.

**Law Enforcement** - alleged perpetrator is a non caregiver and not a household member of the victim child

**Not Accepted-** an intake that Does Not Meet Definition for maltreatment, referred to DD, Behavioral Health, Licensing, Public Health, or Community Response or other community service provider

**Placement Concern-** involving a foster home but does not rise to the Level of Acceptance- CPS to have follow up regarding the concerns

**INFO Only-** no allegation of maltreatment involved

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# Intakes and information sharing with LE

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Per statute, the hotline will share all reports involving an allegation of child maltreatment with local Law Enforcement. A copy of the intake is sent via email, fax or hand delivery.

Per statute, law enforcement is also to send any report involving an allegation of child maltreatment to DHHS, via the hotline. Our staff will receive these reports via phone call, email or fax.

When a person is charged with a child abuse/neglect crime, law enforcement should report to the hotline by phone or sending a copy of the report to ensure proper tracking of the individual on the Central Registry data base.

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# Case Coordination with CAC- Accepted Intakes

The hotline will notify the CAC regarding cases that require case coordination. Per statute, these cases are regarding a child exposed to or involved in:

- a serious injury caused by physical abuse or neglect
- victimization of sexual abuse, sex trafficking or sexual exploitation
- witness of a violent crime or domestic violence resulting in a serious injury
- being found in a drug endangered environment
- recovered from a kidnapping

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# Intake Process Review

## P R O C E S S

1st  
Determination

- Gathering information and determine immediate safety concern?

Screening  
Decision

- Is CPS intervention appropriate?

Priority

- How quickly should HHS respond?

Notifica  
tion

- Who else may know about the circumstances?

Collateral

- Who else needs to know about the report

Referral

- What can assist with unmet needs?

Closure

- Share/ Send report to local LE

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# Investigations of Families

Initial Assessment investigates CAN reports and Alternative Response

## Placement Assessments:

- Accepted maltreatment by a caregiver or person in a foster home
- Child victim is a foster child in the home
- Initial assessment worker will conduct the assessment

## Out Of Home Assessment:

- Group home or DD foster home through an agency
- Daycare Center
- Allegation is involving an employee of these entities and children residing or attending there are victims
- Child Care Licensing may also investigate separately

## Initial Assessment:

- Investigations on a caregiver to their children
- Alternative Response- Works with families to provide services- no allegations
- Law Enforcement Only

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# Investigation Process

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If a report is Accepted for investigation:

- Initial Assessment worker will be assigned, and they have response time frames of 24hours to 5 days depending on priority of concern.
- Interviews of the children will be held as well as any alleged perpetrators. Additional information may be obtained through other sources.
- Safety threats will be reviewed, and decisions will be made regarding next steps. If concerns are valid, steps for safety planning will be taken and also possible coordination with the county attorney if more invasive measures are warranted.

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# FINDINGS

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- Unfounded
  - Agency Substantiated
  - Court Pending (if County attorney has filed)
  - Court Substantiated
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- Findings letter is sent to Alleged Perpetrator

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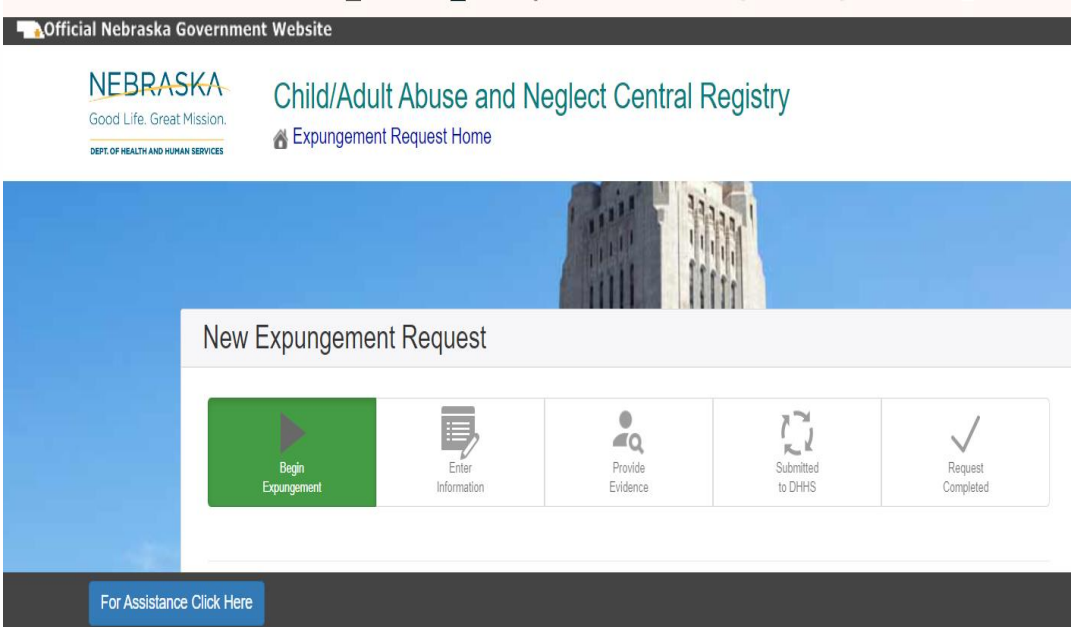
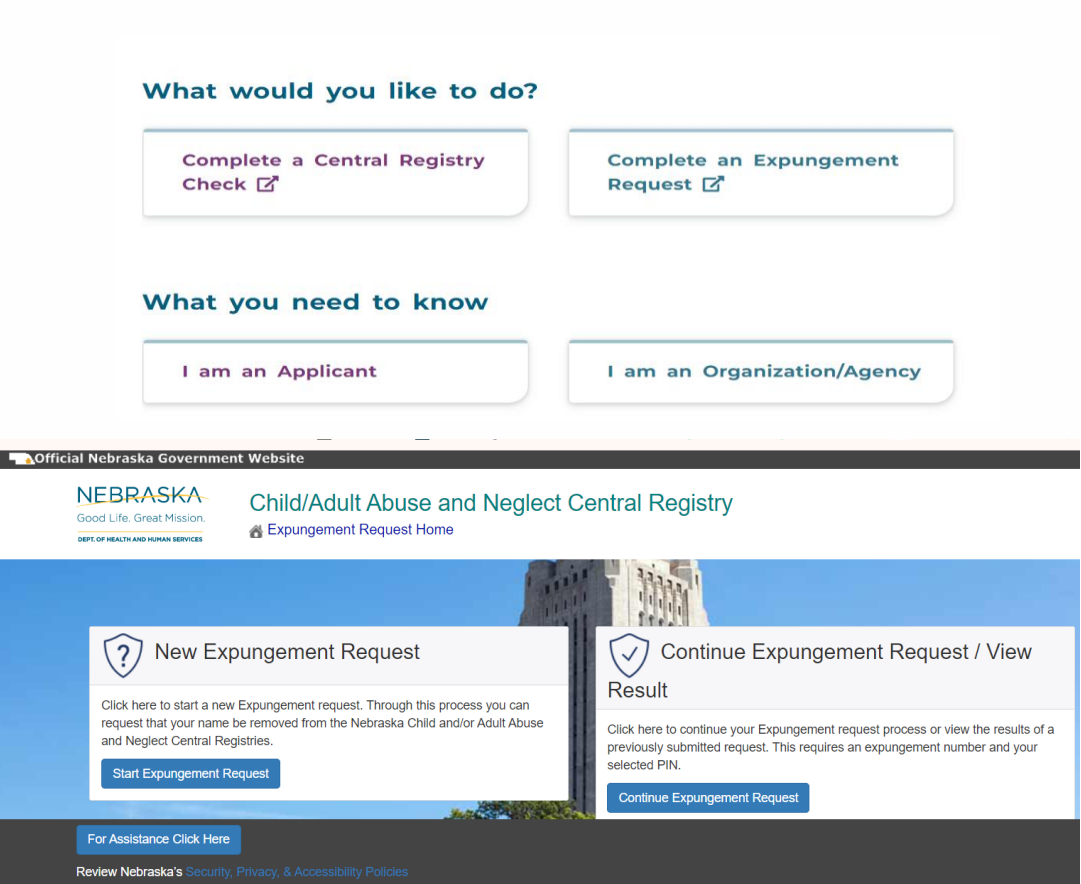
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# Expungements

➤ <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Abuse-and-Neglect-Central-Registry.aspx>



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## Q and A

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# Report Abuse and Neglect to the Hotline at:

Phone 1800-652-1999 (24/7)

Fax (402)595-1354

Email [DHHS.ChildAdultANHotline@nebraska.gov](mailto:DHHS.ChildAdultANHotline@nebraska.gov)

Online Reporting: <https://neabusehotline-dhhs.ne.gov/>

INFO: <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Child-Abuse.aspx>

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