

Reviewing a decision about your child

An Easy Read booklet for parents



How to use this booklet



The Victorian Government Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) wrote this booklet. When you see the word 'we', it means DFFH.



We wrote this booklet in an easy to read way. We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold

We wrote some important words in **bold**.

Not bold

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these important words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 14.



This Easy Read booklet is a summary of another document.

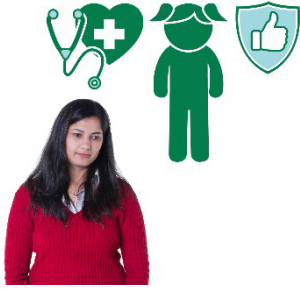


You can ask for help to read this booklet. A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.

What is in this booklet?

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Why did we give you this booklet?



We gave you this booklet because a **child protection worker** is worried about your child's safety.

A child protection worker:



- works for the government



- talks to people to find out if a child is safe



- works to keep children safe.



We might make decisions you do not:

- understand
- agree with.

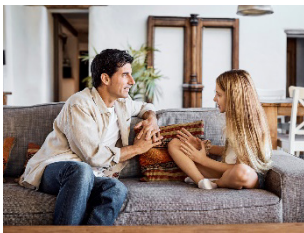
These decisions might be about:



- where your child lives



- what your child needs



- who can talk to your child.



If you don't agree with any part of the decision, you can ask for someone to **review** it.



A review is a way to check if something:

- works well
- could be better.

Reviewing a decision



If you do not agree with a decision the child protection worker makes about your child, you can ask for a review.



You can ask for a statement of reasons.

This means the child protection worker must write a document that explains why they made a decision.



You must ask for a statement of reasons within 28 days after a decision is made.



If you ask for a review more than 28 days after the decision is made, you need a reason why you didn't ask earlier.



You can ask for a 'Request for review of a child protection decision' form.



The form has the name of the senior officer who will review the decision.

The form has space for you to tell them:



- which decision you want reviewed
- why you want that decision reviewed
- what you want to happen instead.



You can get help to fill out the form.



You can get help from:

- the child protection worker
- a family member or friend
- an advocate – someone who helps you speak up for yourself.

You can also:



- write a letter to ask for a review
- ask the child protection worker for the name and address of the senior officer
- send it to the senior officer.



In your letter, you should write about:

- which decision you want reviewed
- why you want that decision reviewed
- what you want to happen instead.



The senior officer will tell you within 2 weeks if they will review the decision.

What happens next?



If the senior officer reviews the decision, they will set up a meeting with you.



They will have this meeting as soon as possible after you asked them to review the decision.

You can bring someone with you to:



- support you



- help you talk to the senior officer.

At the start of the meeting, the senior officer will talk about:



- what they do
- why they are worried about your child.

They will ask you to talk about:



- why you're not happy with the decision about your child
- what you want to happen instead.

If other people are at the meeting, the senior officer will talk to them too.



The senior officer will tell you who else will be at the meeting.



After the meeting, the senior officer will think about what was talked about in the meeting.

The senior officer will send you a letter about:



- the decision they made about your child



- why they made that decision.

What if you don't agree with the senior officer's decision?



If you don't agree with the senior officer's decision, you can ask the **Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)** to review it.



VCAT helps solve legal problems for people in Victoria.



VCAT will only review the decision if the senior officer has already looked at the decision about your child



VCAT will also only review the decision if you asked for a review within 28 days after:

- a decision was made
- you received the statement of reasons.



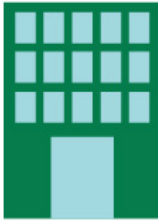
You can call VCAT.

1300 018 228



You can email VCAT.

humanrights@vcat.vic.gov.au



You can go to VCAT's office.

55 King Street, Melbourne

What if you speak a language other than English?



If you speak a language other than English, tell the child protection worker.



The child protection worker will call the Telephone and Interpreter Service (TIS) so you can talk to an **interpreter**.

An interpreter is someone who:



- speaks your language
- helps you understand what someone is saying.

Word list

This list explains what the **bold** words in this document mean.



Advocate

An advocate is someone who helps you speak up for yourself.

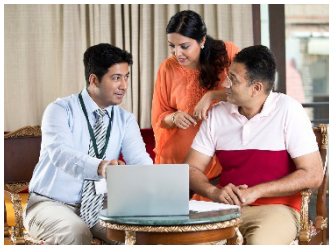


Child protection worker

A child protection worker:

- works for the government
- talks to people to find out if a child is safe
- works to keep children safe.

Interpreter



An interpreter is someone who:

- speaks your language
- helps you understand what someone is saying.



Review

A review is a way to check if something:

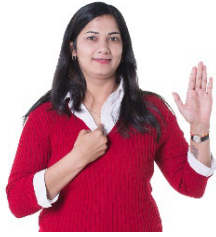
- works well
- could be better.



Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)

VCAT helps solve legal problems for people in Victoria.

Contact information



The child protection worker's name is:



Their phone number is:



Their email address is:



The child protection worker's manager is:



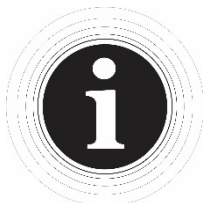
Their phone number is:



The senior officer who does the review is:



Their phone number is:



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