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| Review of a decision made by Child Protection under a protection order |
| Information for young people |
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Child Protection is involved with you because the Children’s Court has made a protection order. A child protection practitioner (your child protection worker) is working with you under the protection order made by the Children’s Court. Child Protection may make decisions about you as part of the decision-making process after the protection order has been made.

Child Protection must prepare a case plan for you. The case plan must line up with the protection order, and any conditions made by the Court[[1]](#footnote-1). The case plan includes significant decisions Child Protection has made about your care and wellbeing.

### Decisions made by the Court

Please note that depending on the nature of the protection order, some decisions are made by the Court, rather than Child Protection. If you disagree with a decision made by the Court, you should seek advice from the Court or a legal practitioner.

## What if I don’t agree with the decisions made by Child Protection?

During the protection order, Child Protection may make decisions about you. You have a right to have decisions explained to you by the person who makes them. If you disagree, you can ask for a review by a more senior person in the department. This is called an internal review.

It will help if you say what decision you want changed and why, and what you would like the decision to be. It helps if you put this in writing. There is a form called ‘Request for review of a Child Protection decision' that you can fill out or you can get help from your worker, a friend or relative.

You need to ask for a review no more than 28 days from the date the decision was made. If there is a good reason that you do not ask for the decision to be made by this date, a review might still happen. You will be told within two weeks by a senior person in the department whether the review will occur.

## What then?

A review meeting with a senior person in the department will be arranged as quickly as possible after your request has been received[[2]](#footnote-2). You may have someone else with you at the review meeting to help you explain what you are unhappy about and what you want to happen.

#### What will happen at the meeting?

The person running the meeting will ask you what you think is wrong with the decision. Other people at the meeting will be asked to say what they think as well. The person running the meeting will think about the things discussed at the meeting. They might find out more about your situation to help them decide. They must make a decision they believe is in your best interests. They will tell you in writing what they have decided and why.

## What if I still disagree?

You may apply to the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) for the decision to be reviewed. You will need to apply to VCAT within 28 days after the outcome of the internal review.

VCAT is independent of Child Protection and can be contacted by telephone on 1300 018 228 , email or post – see [www.vcat.vic.gov.au](https://www.vcat.vic.gov.au/) for details. Ask your worker about how to apply or talk to a lawyer about VCAT.

## What if I have other concerns?

Child Protection staff will attempt to work cooperatively with you, however if you are unhappy with any of the department’s actions, you may contact the Child Protection Operations Manager/Director.

If your complaint cannot be resolved at your local office, you can make a complaint by contacting the department’s complaints line via the online form at www.dffh.vic.gov.au or phone 1300 884 706 (cost of a local call).

You may also contact the Victorian Ombudsman via their website [www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au) or by telephone on 1800 806 314. The Ombudsman can investigate complaints about government departments. It is a free and independent service.

## What if I have difficulty understanding English?

If you have difficulty understanding English, ask your child protection practitioner to get an interpreter and explain about internal reviews and talk about your concerns.

## Contact information

My child protection practitioner is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Their office is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Their contact number is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My Case Planner’s name is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Their contact number is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Child Protection Operations Manager/Director is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Their contact number is: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. Where Child Protection assesses that a permanency objective consistent with the current order is no longer achievable, they will discuss this with you, prepare a new version of the case plan and apply to the Court for an order consistent with the permanency objective they have assessed is in your best interests. The Court will then decide if it will make the order Child Protection recommends, and the permanency objective will depend on the Court’s decision. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Unless you are advised by the senior divisional officer that the internal review will not proceed. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)