

Tips for Dealing with Child Safety

Anyone can talk to a lawyer for free at Tasmania Legal Aid.

To get free legal information call 1300 366 611, drop into our Hobart or Launceston office (no appointment necessary) or use the Legal Talk chat function on our website. We are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

A lawyer can listen to your story and help identify the next steps you can take.

A checklist of things to do to be prepared for meeting with and dealing with Child Safety.

Tips for meeting with Child Safety workers

1. Make a plan

Make a list of the things you want to say and questions you want to ask.

2. Ask questions

Sometimes you need information on Child Safety's concerns, the options available to you, and your rights and responsibilities to help you make decisions about what to do next. Write down your questions before you meet with Child Safety. Child Safety workers should answer your questions, but they cannot tell you who made the report.

3. Bring a support person

You may want to bring a family member, friend, support worker or advocate to support you at the meeting.

Other tips to follow

1. Get support

If you or your kid are having troubles, it is important you get the support you need. Think about what support might be useful to you and your kid and ask for help to contact these services if you need to. Child Safety workers may also ask you to speak with a support service such as parenting support, counselling, or alcohol or other drug support services.

2. Ask for information

You can ask Child Safety workers for information about why they are involved with your family and what their concerns are. You can ask for this information in writing. You can also ask to see any related documents, such as case plans developed by Child Safety for your kids.

3. Understand the report

Get all the information about a report, even if you disagree with what has been reported.

4. Communicate

The way you communicate with Child Safety and other services can affect what decisions they make. Try to stay calm when speaking with them. You have the right to ask for support to help you communicate with Child Safety.

5. Address concerns

Address the concerns that Child Safety tell you about. If they ask you to talk to a service or attend a course, show Child Safety that you have done this by keeping letters or notes from these services. You can also ask services that you are working with or have worked with to write support letters for you to provide to Child Safety. If you don't agree with Child Safety, get legal advice.

6. Work together

You do not have to agree with Child Safety, but it is important to work with them so you are involved in the process.

7. Get legal support

If a Child Safety worker asks you to sign an agreement or another document, check with a lawyer before you sign. A lawyer can also give you advice about what information that agreement should include, such as an end date or arrangements for seeing your children if they are not living with you.

This is written for people who live in or who are affected by the laws of Tasmania, Australia. The law changes all the time – this information is not legal advice. If you have a legal problem, you should talk to a lawyer before making a decision about what to do.