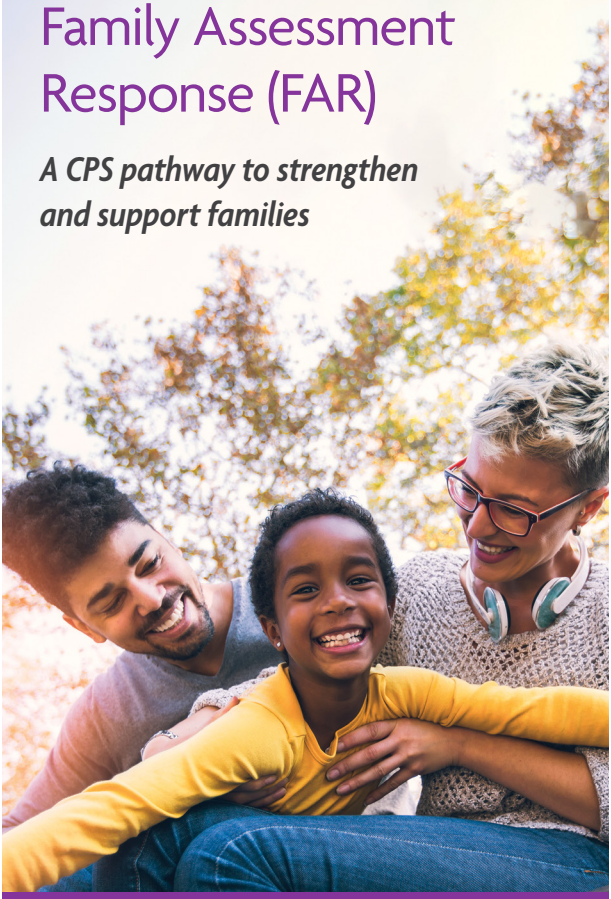
Family Assessment Response (FAR)

A CPS pathway to strengthen and support families



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

What is Family Assessment Response (FAR)?

FAR is a different way for Washington State Child Protective Services to respond to some reports of child abuse and neglect. Before FAR, CPS responded to reports of child abuse and neglect with an investigation.

FAR WORKS WITH FAMILIES TO:

- Support them when they are in crisis without finding parents responsible for child abuse or neglect.
- Help them connect with their communities.

BOTH INVESTIGATORS AND FAR CASEWORKERS:

- Work with families to keep children safe.
- Identify families' needs.
- Build on parent and community strengths and resources.
- Find services to ease stressful situations that make it hard to focus on children's needs.

INVESTIGATIONS:

- Determine whether child abuse or neglect occurred.
- Identify who is responsible for the alleged abuse or neglect.a finding about whether child abuse or neglect occurred. This is kept in DCYF records, and may affect future employment with children or vulnerable adults.

How does Family Assessment Response work?

When DCYF receives a report about your family, a FAR caseworker will meet with you to talk about your children's safety.

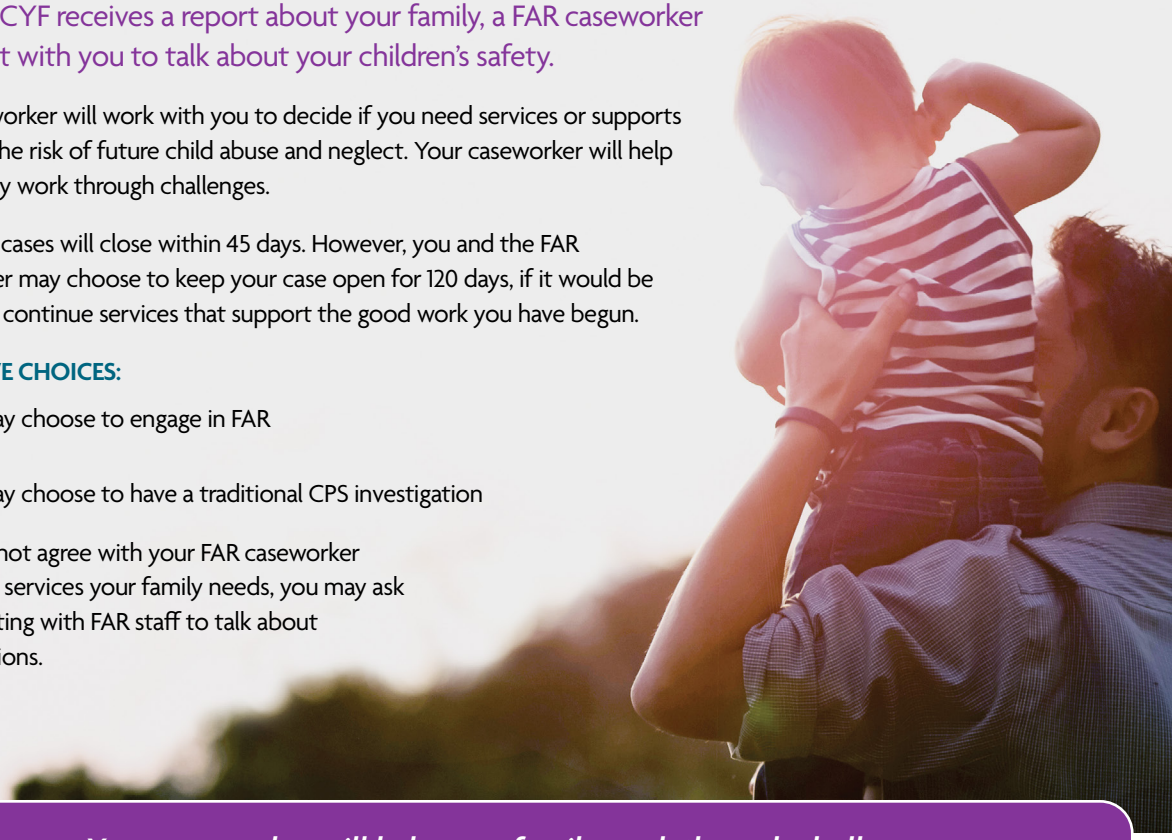
The caseworker will work with you to decide if you need services or supports to lower the risk of future child abuse and neglect. Your caseworker will help your family work through challenges.

Most FAR cases will close within 45 days. However, you and the FAR caseworker may choose to keep your case open for 120 days, if it would be helpful to continue services that support the good work you have begun.

YOU HAVE CHOICES:

- You may choose to engage in FAR
  -or-
- You may choose to have a traditional CPS investigation

If you do not agree with your FAR caseworker about the services your family needs, you may ask for a meeting with FAR staff to talk about other options.



Your caseworker will help your family work through challenges.

How can Family Assessment Response help me?

You know what you and your family need. Your FAR caseworker will work with you to:

- Identify how you can improve your child's safety at home.
- Meet the basic needs of your family.
- Increase skills to help you parent your children at all ages and stages.
- Develop a stronger connection to your community.
- Find community resources and mentors to address ongoing concerns such as housing, work, or other issues that are creating stress for you and your family.

Together we will work to build your confidence and skills to keep your children safe.

Why am I receiving a Family Assessment Response?

- The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) received a report with concerns about your child's safety.
- The report met the legal definition of child abuse and neglect in Washington state (RCW 26.44.020).
- The report did not say that your child was in immediate danger.
- DCYF wants to work with you to help keep your children safe.

Who do I contact if I have concerns about my case?

If you have a complaint or concern about how your case is being handled, call your FAR caseworker's supervisor.

If your concerns are still not resolved you can call the Area Administrator.

You may call the Office of Constituent Relations at 1-800-723-4831 for help at any time.

-or-

You may call the Office of the Family & Children's Ombuds* at 1-800-571-7321.

**This agency is separate from DCYF. It investigates concerns about DCYF.*

*If you would like copies of this document in an alternative format or language, please contact DCYF Constituent Relations (1-800-723-4831 | 360-902-8060, **ConstRelations@dcyf.wa.gov**).*

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