

PROTOCOL FOR CHILD ABUSE PROTECTIVE REPORTS CONTAINING  
ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

This protocol shall serve as a guide by which the Department of Social Services and the Sharon Springs Central School District will conduct interviews of children on the Sharon Springs Central School District Campus, who are the subject of child abuse reports made to the New York State Central Registry.

1. When a child protective report containing allegations of abuse of one or more children, is received by the Schoharie County Department of Social Services, the Department through the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, or their designee shall review all relevant information contained in said child's protective report, any prior investigative history, as well as additional information provided by the source of the child protective report, to determine the need to interview the child or children who are the subjects of the report on the school district campus. Based upon the review of the aforementioned information the Commissioner and/or Deputy Commissioner, or their designee, will make a determination as to whether or not the immediate health and safety of the child or children warrants an interview on the school campus by a Child Protective Caseworker from the Department of Social Services, and an Investigator from the Schoharie County Sheriff's Department, Cobleskill Police Department, or New York State Police.
2. Once such a determination has been made by the Department of Social Services, it shall be the responsibility of the Department to communicate such information to the building principal at the Sharon Springs Central School. Sharon Springs Central School shall be provided with the following information:
  - a. The name(s) of the child or children involved;
  - b. The allegations contained in the report; as well as
  - c. The Child Protective Casework and Law Enforcement Investigator who will be conducting the investigation.

The parties will establish a time and location for the interviews to be conducted. In accordance with Social Services Law Section 424, the interview will be held within twenty-four hours of receipt of the child protective report. The Sharon Springs Central School may have a representative in attendance for any interview conducted upon their premises. Designation of such a representative by the school district shall be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account relationships the child or children may have to school district personnel.

3. When the Child Protective Caseworker and Law Enforcement Investigator arrive at the school district building they shall immediately report to the building principal, or designee. Both the Child Protective Caseworker and the Law Enforcement Investigator shall provide identification information (ID Card, Badge) to school district personnel and state the reason for the visit. The school shall be responsible for providing an appropriate space to conduct a confidential interview, as well as securing the attendance of the child or children who are the subjects of the abuse report. The school district through its representative attending the interview shall have the right to terminate such interview for good cause.
4. If at the conclusion of the interview the Department has determined that the child or children in question are in imminent danger as defined in the Family Court Act (FCA), the district shall be provided with a written copy of the emergency removal notice as outlined in FCA Section 1024. If the Department elects to make an application to Family Court for an order of emergency placement pursuant to FCA 1022, the Department will provide copies of all pleadings and orders which evidence an emergency transfer of care and custody from a parent or parents to the Commission of Social Services.
5. Within twenty-four hours after the completion of the initial interview the Department of Social Services shall be responsible to follow up with the Sharon Springs Central School District. The purpose of the follow up contact will be to apprise school officials of investigative action taken in the case which bears directly on the child or children, any change in residence if necessary, alteration in transportation, Orders of Protection, and the like.