

	<b>INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY</b>	
	<b>Chapter 4: Assessment</b>	<b>Effective Date:</b> July 1, 2018
	<b>Section 36: Linking Child Abuse and/or Neglect (CA/N) Reports to Open Assessments</b>	<b>Version:</b> 3

**STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE [REVISED]**

**When appropriate**, the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) may electronically link a new [Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect \(SF 114\)](#), henceforth referred to as a 310, to an assessment that:

1. Has been open 14 days or less;

**[NEW] Note:** A new 310 shall not be linked to a closed assessment.

2. Involves the same perpetrator(s) **and** the same victim(s); and

**[NEW] Exception:** The new 310 may include new household member(s) (including a perpetrator or victim) that were not listed in the open assessment. These household members will need to be added to the open assessment.

3. Has similar allegation type(s) (i.e., Neglect, Abuse).

**[NEW] Note:** If a new 310 is received with the same allegation and no additional information than what is currently being assessed is reported, the new assessment generated from the 310 may be withdrawn for duplicate.

When a new 310 is linked to an existing assessment, the linked 310 may still have an initiation timeframe. A separate assessment may not be conducted, but appropriate steps must be taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the child. See [Practice Guidance](#).

DCS will not link a 310 to an existing assessment when it is necessary to conduct a separate, thorough assessment in order to ensure the safety and well-being of a child. In the event a 310 is linked to an existing assessment with different allegations, DCS will ensure all allegations are assessed, which may require opening a new assessment.

**[NEW] Note:** Once a new 310 is linked to an existing assessment it cannot be unlinked.

Code References

1. [IC 31-33-7-4: Written Reports](#)
2. [IC 31-33-8-1 Investigations by the department of child services; time of initiation; investigations of child care ministries](#)

## PROCEDURE [REVISED]

Upon receipt of a new 310 involving a family for which there is an open assessment, the Family Case Manager (FCM) Supervisor will:

1. Check the Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK) to see if the existing assessment has been open 14 days or less, if the new 310 involves the same alleged perpetrator(s) and same victim(s) with the same, similar or unrelated allegations;
2. Staff the new 310(s) with the FCM assigned the existing assessment to review the progress of the existing assessment, the information provided in the new 310 and the safety and well-being of the alleged child victim(s);
3. Make a final decision as to whether linking the new 310 with the existing assessment is in the best interest of the alleged child victim(s), and determine what appropriate action(s) must be taken; (see [Practice Guidance](#))
4. Complete the supervisory approval to screen in and assign the assessment. If linking is determined to be appropriate, complete the approval process to link the new 310 to the existing assessment;
5. Notify the Family Case Manager (FCM) of the linked 310, if approved to link, and confirm receipt of the linked report; and

**[NEW] Note:** If the 310 is not approved to link to an existing assessment, the 310 should be assigned, when possible, to the FCM completing the existing assessment.

6. Ensure the FCM takes all appropriate actions, including, but not limited to, contacting the family, conducting a new [Safety Assessment](#), [Risk Assessment](#), and when appropriate a [Family Support / Community Services / Safety Plan \(SF 53243\)](#).

Upon receipt of the linked report, the FCM will:

1. Review the response time and the allegation(s) in the linked report;
2. Ensure all allegations are assessed within the appropriate timeframe; (see separate policy, [4.38 Assessment Initiation](#))
3. Staff any concerns with the FCM Supervisor; and
4. Ensure all allegations are addressed in the [Assessment of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect SF113](#). See separate policy, [4.25 Completing the Assessment Report](#).

## PRACTICE GUIDANCE

### Linking a New CA/N Report

A new 310 may be linked when DCS is able to address the allegations via the existing assessment to ensure the safety and well-being of the child. When used appropriately, duplication of effort may be avoided through linking. However, linking should **never** occur at the expense of child safety and well-being. When in doubt, do not link.

Linking an assessment to an existing assessment may eliminate the ability to automatically generate each [Thirty \(30\) Day Report of Assessment \(SF 54854\)](#) in MaGIK. If more than one report is received by DCS from the agencies listed in policy [4.21 Report of Assessment or Investigation](#), it is the responsibility of the FCM to generate a [Thirty \(30\) Day Report of Assessment \(SF 54854\)](#) for each applicable report source and include the statutorily required information outlined in [4.21 30 Day Report of Assessment](#).

### Linking Criteria

When determining whether to link a new 310 to an existing assessment, first determine if all the following criteria has been met.

1. The existing assessment has been open 14 days or less;
2. The new 310 involves the same perpetrator(s) **and** the same victim(s) identifies in the existing assessment; and

**[NEW] Note:** The new 310 may include new household member(s) (perpetrator or victim) that were not listed in the open assessment. These household members will need to be added to the open assessment.

3. The new 310 has similar allegation(s) as the existing assessment.

If the 310 has the same allegations and a decision has been made to link the assessment, the FCM Supervisor and FCM should review all the information gathered during the existing assessment to determine if additional face to face contact, or other assessments are needed in order to ensure child safety and/or make an assessment finding. When it is determined that a face to face contact is not required, the FCM should contact the family to notify of receipt of a new 310.

If the 310 has similar allegations and a decision has been made to link the assessment because the existing assessment has not been initiated, the FCM Supervisor and FCM should review the initiation timeframes and determine the appropriate action to take to ensure the safety of the child.

If the 310 has similar allegations, but the existing assessment has been open more than 14 days, the FCM Supervisor should not link the new 310 to the existing assessment. The new 310 should be assigned, when possible, to the same FCM completing the existing assessment.

If the 310 has unrelated allegations, the FCM Supervisor should not link the new 310 to the existing assessment. The new 310 should be assigned, when possible, to the same FCM completing the existing assessment.

### Withdrawals

The DCS Local office may withdraw assessments after receipt from the DCS Hotline for the following reasons:

1. Withdrawal for Screen-out: The information provided in the 310 does not meet statutory requirements, or
2. Withdrawal for Duplicate: The 310 which generated the new assessment has the same allegation with no additional information than what has already been reported in an open assessment.

### **FORMS AND TOOLS**

1. [Preliminary Report of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect \(SF 114\)](#)- Available in MaGIK
2. **[NEW]** [Safety Assessment](#)- Available in MaGIK
3. **[NEW]** [Risk Assessment](#)- Available in MaGIK
4. **[NEW]** [Family Support/ Community Services/ Safety Plan \(SF 53243\)](#)- Available in MaGIK
5. [Assessment of Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect \(SF 113\)](#)

6. [\[NEW\] Thirty \(30\) Day Report of Assessment \(SF 54854\)](#)- Available in MaGIK

<b>RELATED INFORMATION</b>
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N/A

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