Department of Children & Family Services
Building a Stronger Louisiana

Child Welfare –

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(F)
www.dcfs.la.gov

Jeff Landry, Governor
Rebecca Harris, Secretary

Date:

Name:
Street Address:
City, State Zip Code:

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear :

The Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) received a report on **(insert report date)** alleging you were a perpetrator of child abuse, child sexual abuse and/or child neglect of **(insert names of children who were victims for the allegations)**.

We are required by Louisiana Law to conduct an investigation to determine whether or not there is a reason to believe that a child has been harmed as a result of abuse or neglect. The investigation will involve interviews with you, the child, the child's parents, other persons who may have information about the child's care or condition, and a visit to your or the child's home. It may also involve interviews with the people who live with you or the child, and a physical examination of the child. The Louisiana Children's Code, Article 612, requires the Department to tape record all interviews with the child or the child's parents conducted in the course of the investigation, if requested by the parent.

What happens to the information obtained in this investigation?

1. If the investigation results are determined to be a substantiated finding of child abuse, child sexual abuse, or child neglect, the law requires DCFS to report this case to your local District Attorney's Office for them to determine whether to open a Child in Need of Care case per Children's Code Article 615.

2. Louisiana law requires unsubstantiated case information be kept for seven years. It will be destroyed at that time unless there are subsequent inconclusive or unsubstantiated reports received during that period involving you as an alleged perpetrator. In that case, information from all such reports will be maintained until the youngest child becomes eighteen years old, or seven years, whichever is longer. If information from this investigation is used as a part of a later substantiated investigation, this case shall become part of the substantiated case, and shall cease to be a separate case. Case record destruction is automatic and requires no action on your part.

3. Information obtained by DCFS is confidential and cannot be released unless authorized by law or by court order. The information may be used in this state or other states for purposes which include but are not limited to:

    - Evidence in child custody, civil, or criminal court actions concerning a child.
    - Determining if you can be licensed as a foster or adoptive parent, or provide care for a foster child.

- Determining if you can be employed with certain agencies, entities, or any professions, provided for in law that work closely with children.
- Background information in the event there are child welfare or law enforcement reports.
- If you live in a home with someone who is licensed or attempting to provide foster care.
- If you are requesting to become a Court Appointed Special Advocate.

What happens once the investigation is closed?

If the agency determines that the allegations are substantiated, you have the right to appeal this finding, through the Division of Administrative Law. DCFS will send you a notification of the agency's decision, once the case is closed. This notification will provide you information concerning the agency's finding, and your appeal rights. Your case information will be added to a State Repository and your name may be added to the State Central Registry (SCR). The State Repository includes information on all reports and investigations of child abuse/neglect. The SCR is a listing of individuals who are found to be a perpetrator in certain substantiated investigations. It will be your responsibility to provide DCFS with any changes to your mailing address so that you receive notification of your appeal rights.

Where can I find additional information about child abuse laws and DCFS policies?

More information is available on the DCFS website, including outcome definitions, maintenance of records, and rights to appeal at https://www.dcfs.louisiana.gov/. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Name of employee
Phone number
Email address

Name of supervisor
Phone number
Email address