

	<b>GEORGIA DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES CHILD WELFARE POLICY MANUAL</b>			
	<b>Chapter:</b>	(3) Intake	<b>Effective Date:</b>	December 2021
	<b>Policy Title:</b>	Special Circumstance Intakes Involving Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment)		
	<b>Policy Number:</b>	3.15	<b>Previous Policy #:</b>	3.11, 4.1, 4.3

## CODES/REFERENCES

O.C.G.A. § 15-11-2 Definitions  
O.C.G.A. § 15-11-380 Purpose of Article  
O.C.G.A. § 15-11-381 Definitions

## REQUIREMENTS

The Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) shall:

1. Receive intake reports from juvenile or superior court requesting DFCS to complete an action or task when the information is assessed to not include allegations of child abuse.
2. Gather from the reporter the circumstances surrounding the juvenile or superior court request.
3. Screen-in Intake Assessments that meet the criteria for a Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).
4. Screen-out Intake Assessments when the information gathered does not meet the criteria for a Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).

**NOTE:** Intake Assessments that do not meet the criteria for a Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged) shall be processed and assessed in accordance with policies [3.1 Intake: Receiving Intake Reports](#) and [3.2 Intake: Making an Intake Decision](#).

5. Notify the County Department of any assigned Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).

## PROCEDURES

The Centralized Intake Specialist will:

1. Gather and document information from the reporter regarding the Juvenile or Superior Court request:
  - a. The name, address, date of birth, demographics, and current location of all children in the court order.
  - b. The name, address, date of birth, demographics, and current location, all parents and legal guardians, regardless of where the child(ren) reside.
  - c. If the child and/or parents have or is believed to have, American Indian heritage (see policy [1.6 Administration: Indian Child Welfare Act \(ICWA\) and Transfer of Responsibility for Placement and Care to a Tribal Agency](#)).
  - d. Specific action or task requested for DFCS by the court.
  - e. A description of the circumstances that resulted in the request or court order.
  - f. The individual's name who filed the complaint and their relation to the child.

- g. Any court hearings held, including dates, types of hearings and their outcomes.
  - h. Efforts made by the parent, guardian, or legal custodian to address the issues including any participation in services.
  - i. Services provided to the family including their response and outcomes.
  - j. Inform the reporter of the next steps in the intake process.
2. Conduct safety screenings in accordance with policy [19.9 Case Management: Safety Screenings](#).
  3. Thoroughly evaluate all information gathered:
    - a. Determine if the Intake Assessment meets the criteria for Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).
    - b. Analyze DFCS history in accordance with policy [19.10 Case Management: Analyzing DFCS History](#).
    - c. Assess for indicators of child maltreatment and safety issues.
  4. Input the Intake Assessment in Georgia SHINES:
    - a. Classify the intake report as a Special Circumstance Juvenile Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).
    - b. Upload the court order into External Documentation.
    - c. Document the justification to support the case assignment recommendation.
  5. Recommend the Intake Assessment is:
    - a. Screened-in when the information gathered meets the criteria for a Special Circumstances Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).
    - b. Screened-out when the information gathered does not meet the criteria for a Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).

**NOTE:** Intake Assessments that do not meet the criteria for a Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged) must be processed and assessed in accordance with policies [3.1 Intake: Receiving Intake Reports](#) and [3.2 Intake: Making an Intake Decision](#).
  6. Participate in a supervisory staffing to discuss the intake disposition. Be prepared to discuss how the information gathered meets or does not meet the criteria for a Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).
  7. Notify the County Department's CPS Intake Communication Center (CICC) Point of Contact (POC) of any assigned Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).
 

**NOTE:** When there is already an open case, also notify the current Social Services Case Manager (SSCM) and Social Services Supervisor (SSS) of the intake report.
  8. Submit the Intake Assessment to the Centralized Intake Specialist Supervisor for approval.

The Centralized Intake Specialist Supervisor (CISS) will:

1. Thoroughly evaluate information gathered and review the Intake Assessment in Georgia SHINES.
  - a. Determine if the circumstances meet the criteria for Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).
  - b. Verify the Intake Assessment is classified as a Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).
  - c. Confirm a copy of the court order is uploaded to External Documentation.
  - d. Document a justification to support the case assignment decision.

2. Staff the Intake Assessment with the Centralized Intake Specialist in accordance with policy [19.6 Case Management: Supervisor Staffing](#).
3. Screen-in the Intake Assessment when the information gathered meets the criteria for Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).
  - a. Stage progress the Intake Assessment to Special Circumstance.
  - b. Assign the Special Circumstance to the County Department's CICC POC.
4. Screen-out the Intake Assessment when the information gathered does not meet the criteria for Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged).

**NOTE:** Intake Assessments that do not meet the criteria for a Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment Alleged) must be processed and assessed in accordance with policies [3.1 Intake: Receiving Intake Reports](#) and [3.2 Intake: Making an Intake Decision](#).

## **PRACTICE GUIDANCE**

Intake reports involving Juvenile or Superior Court with no maltreatment generally include a request by the court for DFCS to conduct a home evaluation, assess family functioning, conduct interviews, etc. These requests could be a result of DFCS filing a petition with the court or a private dependency case. The court request should not automatically be processed as a Special Circumstance. Regardless of the intent of the reporter, the information contained in the request must not include maltreatment and must be assessed for maltreatment and safety concerns. When there is information that indicates allegations of maltreatment, the case cannot be processed as a Special Circumstance and must be processed in accordance with policy [3.1 Intake: Receiving Intake Reports](#).

### **Examples of Intakes Reports That Should be Assigned as Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment):**

- Court requests DFCS conduct a home study on a potential caregiver other than a parent or legal custodian (guardianship, private dependency, temporary custody).
- Court requests for DFCS to complete an assessment of a parent to regain custody following guardianship or temporary custody being granted to a third party. The family does not have an open case with DFCS.
- Court requests DFCS assess a parent's ability to meet the needs of a child with delinquency issues who will be released from a Youth Detention Center (YDC) on a given date.

### **Examples of Intake Reports That Should Not be Assigned as Special Circumstance Juvenile or Superior Court (No Maltreatment):**

- The court is requesting a DFCS investigation when the offending parent does not have current access to the child, however the report indicates a history of domestic violence in the home (unknown if child was present at the time of the incident) and the child is afraid of both parents. The intake assessment should be assessed for maltreatment allegations.
- The court requests for DFCS to assess the parent's ability to meet the needs of a child following the youth's detainment in YDC. The parent refuses to allow the child back in the home.

<b>FORMS AND TOOLS</b>
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N/A