

Do you have questions about a social assessment report?

A separate representative may ask for a social assessment report to help them represent your child before the Childrens Court or the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

What is a social assessment report and how is it used?

A social assessment report includes information about your child's history, living situation, views and wishes. It also provides an independent opinion on the best way to protect your child's best interests.

The court will consider the report's recommendations when deciding whether a child protection order should be put in place for your child. The tribunal will consider the report's recommendations when making a decision.

Who writes the report?

An accredited social worker, psychologist or another professional person will write the social assessment report.

They are considered by the court or tribunal to be an independent expert in child protection.

Who will be interviewed?

Interviews may be held with:

- your child alone
- your child with you (their parent), the child safety officer for your child, the foster carer or another significant person
- you, your partner or ex-partner, and any current partners, separately or together
- the child safety officer for your child
- other relevant professionals such as teachers, counsellors or doctors.

Interviews may be held at our office, over the phone or at the offices of other professionals involved in the case. Please contact us if you have any concerns about the report writer or how they are collecting information about your child.

What information will the report writer use for the report?

The report writer will gather information about:

- your child's relationship with significant people such as you (their parents), brothers and sisters, extended family and friends
- your child's views and wishes, if they want to tell the report writer
- your child's personal history and emotional attachments
- your child's family history, including any significant issues which have impacted on them
- your child's needs
- what is currently happening in your child's life.

The report writer will also include information the Director of Child Protection Litigation (DCPL) and/or the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services have presented in the case about your child, and other information provided by the separate representative.



How will the report writer use the information they collect?

The report writer will use their notes and interview recordings to write the social assessment report. As they have limited time to collect information and prepare the report, they will decide what is the most important information to be included in the report. All information collected by the report writer is reportable to the court or tribunal. The court, tribunal or separate representative may also ask the report writer to give evidence at your child's hearing.

The report will contain recommendations about whether a child protection order should be made, and other matters.

Who will see the social assessment report?

A copy of your child's social assessment report will be given to:

- your child's separate representative, who will file it with the court or tribunal
- you or your lawyer, if you are included in the proceedings
- the DCPL
- Child Safety
- anyone else involved in the proceedings.

For confidentiality reasons, if you are not involved in the proceedings, you will not be given a copy of your child's social assessment report.

What if I disagree with the report's recommendations?

Get legal advice. If you disagree with the report's recommendations, please speak to a lawyer. They can let you know how you can raise these issues with the court or tribunal before decisions are made about your child.

What if I have concerns about my safety?

The report writer may ask you to take part in an interview with your children's other family and friends. If you have a lawyer, please tell them if you have a domestic violence order in place against someone who could attend these interviews or if you have any other safety concerns. Your lawyer will make arrangements to protect you and your family during this process. If you don't have a lawyer, please speak to your child's separate representative or the report writer.

Do you need extra help accessing our services?



We are committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders from all culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. To have this publication explained in your language, please phone the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50 to speak to an interpreter. Ask them to connect you to Legal Aid Queensland on 1800 998 980.

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment you can contact us using the National Relay Service. Visit www.relayservice.gov.au and ask for 1800 998 980. These are free services.

Your local Legal Aid Queensland office:

BRISBANE

44 Herschel St, 4000

BUNDABERG

3rd Floor, WIN Tower,
Cnr Quay & Barolin Sts, 4670

CABOOLTURE

Ground Floor, Kingsgate
42 King St, 4510

CAIRNS

Level 2, Cairns Square Complex,
42-52 Abbott St, 4870

INALA

Level 1, Inala Commonwealth
Offices, 20 Wirraway Pde, 4077

IPSWICH

Level 7, 117 Brisbane St, 4305

MACKAY

Ground Floor,
17 Brisbane St, 4740

MAROOCHYDORE

Ground Floor, M1 Building
1 Duporth Ave, 4558

MOUNT ISA

6 Miles St, 4825

ROCKHAMPTON

Ground Floor, 35 Fitzroy St, 4700

SOUTHPORT

Level 2, 7 Bay St, 4215

TOOWOOMBA

1st Floor, 154 Hume St, 4350

TOWNSVILLE

Level 4, Northern Securities
Building, 22 Walker St, 4810

WOODRIDGE

1st Floor, Woodridge Place,
Cnr Ewing Rd & Carmody St, 4114

For more information
about our services visit
legalaid.qld.gov.au

or phone **1300 65 11 88** or **1300 650 143**
(Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Information Line)

