

Plan of Safe Care for Families



What is a POSC and how does it affect me?

The most important thing we can do to help children thrive is to support families before they reach a crisis. A recent federal law now requires health care providers involved in delivery and care of infants to notify child welfare when an infant is identified by a medical provider as being affected by:

- substance abuse
- withdrawal symptoms or
- fetal alcohol spectrum disorders

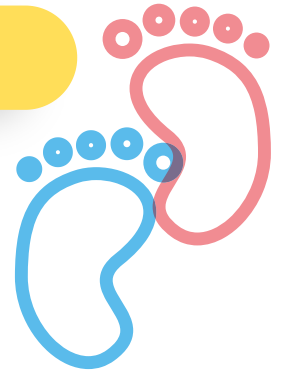
This law also requires that a Plan of Safe Care (POSC) is developed for pregnant and postpartum people who have a history of substance use and their infants. The POSC is intended to meet the needs of these infants and families .



What does being 'affected by' mean?

Infants who are assessed by a health care provider and are identified as meeting one or more of the following:

- Infants who have been exposed to an active substance use disorder during the pregnancy or at time of birth.
- Affected by Withdrawal Symptoms: The infant displays symptoms that are consistent with substance or alcohol withdrawal.
- Affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) or Infants with known prenatal alcohol exposure that the health care providers are concerned about



What does "notifying child welfare" mean?

The notification to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is required by federal law and does not necessarily mean that the health care providers believe that any child harm has occurred.



What happens after DCFS is notified?

When DCFS is notified, DCFS will make a referral to a local community provider to carry out the Plan of Safe Care or POSC. A care manager will contact you to discuss and plan for how to best support your infant's health and development and family's needs. In addition, DCFS staff will work through their intake process to determine if circumstances support further involvement to benefit the infant's safety.



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What is included in the POSC?

The purpose of the Plan of Safe Care is to strengthen the family unit, help mothers have a healthy pregnancy, and keep child(ren) safely at home. It is also:

- Acts as a personalized guide that captures the strengths, needs, and successes of the family
- A tool to assist with linking families to supportive resources/programs
- A tool to help with care coordination



What if a family / parent / pregnant person does not wish to participate in a POSC?

You do not HAVE to utilize the POSC, it is completely voluntary to support you and your baby's needs.

The tool helps to keep everything together in one place so that it is easier for you to talk to all providers about your background and progress.



How / where can I access the POSC?

The POSC is owned by and developed by the family. The POSC can be developed anytime. Ideally, it should be developed during pregnancy. If a plan has not been started during pregnancy, it should be developed after delivery but before leaving the hospital. Providers can work with pregnant people & new parents to develop and share the POSC.



Which providers can help?

- These providers include:
 - Hospital social workers/case managers
 - OB/GYNs and primary care doctors
 - Substance use disorder treatment providers or recovery coaches
 - Mental health providers
 - Pediatricians
 - Faith leaders or counselors
 - Staff from home visiting programs

