



Cafcass Cymru

Case Review Procedure

Version 1 (August 2025)

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Case Review Explained

Internal case reviews may be conducted in two circumstances:

1. **Ongoing Proceedings:** Where we are actively involved in a case and a death or significant incident has occurred, or appears to have occurred, as a result of violence, abuse, neglect, or suicide. This applies to children who are the subject of an application or adults who are parties to the proceedings.
2. **Closed Cases:** Where we become aware of a death or significant incident linked to previous family court involvement.

If we are aware from the outset that a Single Unified Safeguarding Review will be taking place, we will follow their process. However, we will also conduct a rapid review and develop a timeline to determine whether a full internal case review is required.

The final investigation report may be shared with formal external review processes, such as:

- Single Unified Safeguarding Reviews (Wales)
- Serious Case Reviews (England)

Purpose and Process

The purpose of the review is to:

- Build a greater understanding of what happened
- Assess the impact of our involvement
- Identify learning opportunities
- Develop an improvement action plan

The decision to initiate a review will be made by the Chief Executive Officer or Deputy Chief Executive, either:

- Following notification of a death or significant incident, after proceedings have concluded, or
- In consultation with the Area Head of Operations where a death or significant incident has occurred during proceedings.

The Area Head of Operations will inform the practitioner and relevant Practice Manager, who will ensure appropriate support is offered. This may include:

- Referral to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

- Regular support meetings

Support needs will be discussed and agreed with the practitioner(s) involved.

Review Process

The review should be led by a Head of Operations (HoOs) who is independent of the case-managing operational area. The reviewer should gather information by:

- Reviewing the electronic case file
- Speaking with the practitioner, their Practice Manager, and Head of Operations
- Consider any relevant internal and external procedural and practice documentation
- Consider WG statutory guidance

The review report should include:

- Background history, including:
 - Details of the child(ren) involved
 - Applications before the court
- Incident summary leading to the review.
- Inquiries undertaken.
- Chronology of key information and Cafcass Cymru involvement, including:
 - Identified risks
 - Family and individual vulnerabilities
 - Liaison with other agencies/professionals
- Decision-making and line management support.
- Conclusions. These should focus on identifying any procedural and practice issues to inform our ongoing learning and development.

Transparency and Disputes

The review report should be shared with the practitioner, Practice Manager, and Head of Operations for review and agreement on accuracy and learning points. If there is disagreement:

1. Raise concerns with the report author for resolution.
2. If unresolved, escalate to the Deputy Chief Executive for review and decision.
3. If the dispute remains unresolved, the Welsh Government grievance procedures may be followed.

Outcome

Where learning is identified, review themes will be discussed at a Senior Leadership Team meeting. An action plan will be agreed and overseen by the Practice Development Team, who will monitor and review progress.