

This leaflet was given to you by:

Name:.....

Agency:.....

.....

Phone number:.....

If this person is not available, please ask to speak to the following manager.

Name:.....

Agency:.....

.....

Phone number:.....

Useful addresses

Social Work

Academy Lane, Arbroath, DD11 1EJ
Phone: 01241 878585

208-210 High Street, Montrose, DD10 8PH
Phone: 01674 672702

Ravenswood, New Road, Forfar, DD8 2AF
Phone: 01307 462405

Outwith office hours

(after 5pm Monday to Friday and at weekends) Phone: 01382 432270

Tayside Police

Eastern Division Headquarters
Forfar Police Office
West High Street, Forfar
Phone: 0300 111 2222

Authority Reporter

Merrin House
50 East Abbey Street
Arbroath, DD11 1EN
Phone: 01241 873194

Citizens Advice Bureau

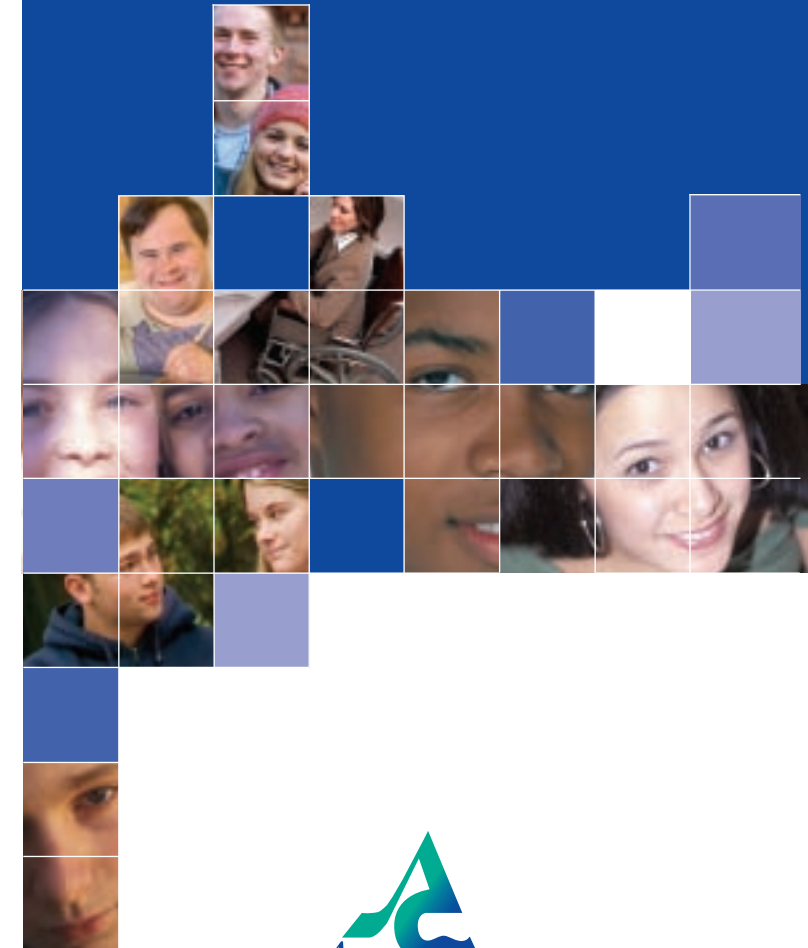
11-15 Millgate
Arbroath, DD11 1NN
Phone: 01241 870661



You can get this leaflet in large print, in Braille or on audio tape by phoning us on 01307 474151. We can provide this information in other languages if you need it.

Call ACCESS Angus 08452 777 778 - your direct line for council services.

What is a child assessment order?



What is a child assessment order?

We (Angus Council Social Work and Health) are concerned that your child may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

‘Significant harm’ is a term used in law. It means harm that is serious, not minor or short-lived. The harm can be physical, developmental or emotional.

We believe we need to assess your child’s situation to find out if your child is suffering significant harm. We also believe that we cannot carry out a proper assessment unless we have the authority of a child assessment order granted by a sheriff.

We have applied to a sheriff for a child assessment order and the sheriff has granted the application.

What does the order say?

The child assessment order lists a number of instructions that the sheriff thinks are necessary. It also lists:

- the date the assessment will begin;
- the date the assessment must finish (the assessment must be completed within seven days);
- a requirement that you take your child to the assessment or let us take your child to the assessment;
- where the assessment will be carried out (for example, a doctor’s surgery, a hospital or a counselling centre); and

- who will carry out the assessment. It may not only be our staff who carry out the assessment. Other people such as doctors, health visitors, psychologists and teachers will help when needed.

Depending on the type of assessment needed, your child may have to live away from home for the period of the assessment. If this is the case, the sheriff will authorise us to:

- take your child to the place where the assessment will be carried out; and
- keep your child there for the period of the assessment.

The sheriff will also decide whether you should be allowed to see your child during the period of the assessment.

What happens now?

We will give you a copy of the order. Following this we, you and your child (if they are able to understand) and anyone else involved in this stage of the assessment will decide together how the assessment will be carried out.

You may find it difficult to agree with what is being planned. This is not surprising. Nobody will think any less of you for feeling like this. What is important is that you and everyone else involved put the best interests of your child first and co-operate by working together to get the assessment carried out.

What should I do?

Everyone involved in carrying out the assessment must follow the sheriff’s instructions. This includes you and your child. If you don’t follow the sheriff’s instructions, the sheriff could punish you.

What happens after the assessment is finished?

The child assessment order is necessary because we are concerned that your child is being treated in such a way that he or she is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. The assessment aims to find out whether or not this is true.

At the end of the assessment several things could happen.

- The people involved in the assessment believe your child is not being treated in such a way that he or she is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. As a result, we no longer need to be involved with you or your child and contact will end after we have discussed the assessment with you.
- The people involved in the assessment believe there are some things about the health, development or safety of your child that mean we should offer you or your child support. We do not think that your child needs compulsory measures of supervision so we will not refer your child to the reporter to the children’s hearing. The reporter is an official of the Scottish

Children’s Reporter Administration who decides whether or not a child should be referred to a legal tribunal to decide if legal steps are needed to help a child. These tribunals are called children’s hearings. However, we will offer you support, which you do not have to accept.

- The people involved in the assessment believe there are significant concerns about the health, development or safety of your child. We think that your child may need compulsory measures of supervision. We will refer your child to the reporter to the children’s hearing. This means we will give the reporter the information gathered during the assessment.

The reporter will look at this information and decide whether a children’s hearing should be arranged to discuss it. This can take a few weeks. In the meantime, we will offer to work with you and your child. You do not have to accept our help.

Important information

If you have any questions about the child assessment order that the social worker has not been able to answer to your satisfaction, or if you would like independent advice, please contact a solicitor immediately.

This leaflet is for guidance only. You should not assume that it is a full guide to the law. For legal advice, please consult a solicitor.