



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES
1500 Jefferson Street, SE • P.O. Box 40975 • Olympia WA 98504-0975

POLICY MEMO

May 15, 2026

TO: Department of Children, Youth, and Families employees

FROM: Natalie Green, Assistant Secretary of Child Welfare Division
Ruben Reeves, Assistant Secretary of Licensing Division
Vickie Ybarra, Assistant Secretary of Partnerships, Prevention, and Services Division

SUBJECT: [1160. Commercially Sexually Exploited Children \(CSEC\)](#) policy
[2200. Intake Process and Response](#) policy
[4308. Dependency Petition Process](#) policy

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

REVIEW DATE: May 15, 2027

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide guidance to Child Welfare Division (CWD) and Licensing Division (LD) employees on the new requirements from Senate Bills (SB) [6006](#) and [5453](#), which:

- Expands the definition of “abuse or neglect” and “dependent child” in [RCW 26.44.020](#).
- Requires a validated assessment tool be used for reports of sex trafficking, severe forms of trafficking in persons, and sexual exploitation.
- Gives the department the authority to file petitions for ex parte temporary sexual assault protection orders on behalf of children or youth.

The policies, procedures, and FamLink are in the process of being updated. This memo is effective July 1, 2025. All other requirements within these policies remain in effect.

New Requirements

Policy

[Commercially Sexually Exploited Children \(CSEC\)](#) Policy

Caseworkers and LD workers must contact DCYF Intake immediately and make a report if there is suspicion or prior indication that children or youth have been victims of sex trafficking, severe forms of trafficking in persons, or sexual exploitation as defined in [WAC 110-30-0030](#) Abuse or Neglect of Children and Youth.

Caseworkers may file petitions for ex parte temporary sexual assault protection orders, which are issued without prior notice to respondents, on behalf of children or youth if needed, when:

- There is an allegation of commercial sexual exploitation by the referrer.
- They believe children or youth lack the ability or capacity to consent.

Human trafficking screening and missing from care employees or designees must complete the validated assessment tool when assigned.

[Intake Process and Response](#) Policy

Intake workers must follow the [Intake Training Manual](#) when screening in allegations of FGM, sex trafficking, and severe forms of trafficking for children and youth.

[Dependency Petition Process](#) Policy

When it has been determined court intervention is necessary to prevent harm to children's or youth's health, safety, or well-being, caseworkers must:

- File dependency petitions when children or youth are victims of sex trafficking or severe forms of trafficking in persons under the [Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, 22 U.S.C. Sec. 7101 et seq.](#) and parents or guardians meet one or more of the following criteria, they:
 - Were involved in the trafficking.
 - Facilitated the trafficking.
 - Should have known that their children or youth are being trafficked.
- Recommend out-of-home placement in dependency petitions when it's determined necessary to prevent imminent physical harm to them due to FGM, sex trafficking, or severe forms of trafficking.

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact:

- Cameron Norton, Missing and Exploited Youth Program Manager, Cameron.Norton@dcyf.wa.gov or (509) 991-0748
- Sandy McCool, Intake and Investigations Program Manager, Sandy.McCool@dcyf.wa.gov

or (425) 677-0145

- Melissa Sayer, LD Safety Administrator, Melissa.Sayer@dcyf.wa.gov or (360) 584-8666
- Brittany Lenihan, Foster Care Health Program Manager, Brittany.Lenihan@dcyf.wa.gov or (509) 578-9234

Cc: Brenda Villarreal

[DCYF Policy Team](#)