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# 2022 Connecticut General Statutes

## Title 17a - Social and Human Services and Resources

### Chapter 319a - Child Welfare

#### Section 17a-103d. - Initial contact with parent or guardian. Written notice re parent or guardian rights. List of legal services.

**Universal Citation:** CT Gen Stat § 17a-103d. (2022)

(a) Upon receiving a complaint of abuse or neglect of a child, the Department of Children and Families shall, at the time of any initial face-to-face contact with the child's parent or guardian on or after October 1, 2021, provide the parent or guardian with (1) written notice, in plain language, that: (A) The parent or guardian is not required to permit the representative of the department to enter the residence of the parent or guardian; (B) the parent or guardian is not required to speak with the representative of the department at that time; (C) the parent or guardian is entitled to seek the representation of an attorney and to have an attorney present when the parent or guardian is questioned by a representative of the department, including at any meeting conducted to determine whether the parent or guardian's child should be removed from the home; (D) any statement made by the parent, guardian or other family member may be used against the parent or guardian in an administrative or court proceeding; (E) the representative of the department is not an attorney and cannot provide legal advice to the parent or guardian;

(F) the parent or guardian is not required to sign any document presented by the representative of the department, including, but not limited to, a release of claims or a service agreement, and is entitled to have an attorney review such document before agreeing to sign the document; and (G) a failure of the parent or guardian to communicate with a representative of the department may have serious consequences, which may include the department's filing of a petition for the removal of the child from the home of the parent or guardian, and therefore it is in the parent's or guardian's best interest to either speak with the representative of the department or immediately seek the advice of a qualified attorney; and (2) a list of providers of free and low-cost legal services through which the parent or guardian may obtain legal advice.

(b) The department shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that the notice and list provided to a parent or guardian pursuant to this section are written in a manner that will be understood by the parent or guardian, which reasonable efforts shall include, but not be limited to, ensuring that the notice and list are written in a language understood by the parent or guardian.

(c) The representative of the department shall request the parent or guardian to sign and date the notice described in subsection (a) of this section as evidence of having received the notice and list. If the parent or guardian refuses to sign and date the notice upon such request, the representative of the department shall specifically indicate on the notice that the parent or guardian was requested to sign and date the notice and refused to do so and the representative of the department shall sign the notice as witness to the parent's or guardian's refusal to sign the notice. The department shall provide the parent or guardian with a copy of the signed notice at the time of the department's initial face-to-face contact with the parent or guardian.

(P.A. 11-112, S. 1; P.A. 21-46, S. 23.)

History: P.A. 21-46 amended Subsec. (a) by substituting "October 1, 2021" for "October 1, 2011", designating existing provision re written notice as Subdiv. (1), redesignated existing Subdivs. (1) to (7) as Subdivs. (1)(A) to (1)(G), adding provision specifying that parent or guardian may seek and have attorney present at meeting conducted to determine whether child should be removed from home in Subdiv. (1)(C), and adding Subdiv. (2) requiring provision of list of providers of free and low-cost legal services, amended Subsecs. (b) and (c) by adding references to list required by Subdiv. (2) and making conforming changes, effective July 1, 2021.

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