

If you are pregnant, or your partner or former partner is pregnant, the Department of Communities (sometimes called Child Protection) will want to meet with you if they have worries about your baby being safe after birth.



Child Protection will meet with you and any family members or friends you have to support you. They will also meet with the social worker at the hospital who is helping the mother with her pregnancy.

## What happens at the meetings?



Usually, you will have three meetings with Child Protection before your baby is born. These are called 'pre-birth signs of safety meetings'.



At the meetings, everyone will be working together to try and come up with a plan to make sure things will be safe enough so your baby will go home with a parent or both parents.

Before the last meeting, you will find out if Child Protection agree with the plan for your baby to go home and live with you.

## Who decides if the plan is good enough to keep my baby safe?

The District Director of Child Protection has the final say about whether your baby can go home with you. The District Director might say the plan must change to make it safe enough for your baby to go home. If the plan needs to change, Child Protection will talk to you about this.

If the District Director says the plan does not make it safe enough for you to take your baby home, the law says Child Protection can take your baby from your care.



If your baby can not be safe enough with their parents, Child Protection will start a court case about your baby in the Children's Court. Child Protection can put your baby with a family member, like a grandparent, if it is safe enough or baby could be put with a foster carer.

## Do I need a lawyer?

### It is good for you to:

- talk to a lawyer before your baby is born.
- also have a lawyer when Child Protection is making a decision about whether your baby can go home with you.

You can get a lawyer for free to go with you to the pre-birth meetings.

Call the Legal Aid WA Children's Court duty lawyer service on 9218 0160, the Infoline on 1300 650 579 or Legal Yarn (First Nations callers) on 1800 319 803 to find out how to get a lawyer.

