

## For direct help

**Child Support Enforcement**  
800/447-4278

**Day Care Information**  
877/746-0829

**Medical Card**  
800/228-6533

**Payments**  
Central Payments Unit  
800/525-0499

**Post Adoption & Guardianship Information  
and Referral Service**  
855/548-5505

**To report suspected child abuse or  
neglect, contact the SCR Hotline:**  
800/25-ABUSE  
(800/252-2873)  
TTY: 800/358-5117

**Advocacy Office Hours**  
Monday-Friday  
8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Phone**  
217/524-2029 or  
800/232-3798

**Fax**  
217/557-7278  
**E-mail address**  
[dcfs.advocacy@illinois.gov](mailto:dcfs.advocacy@illinois.gov)

**DCFS website**  
[www.DCFS.illinois.gov](http://www.DCFS.illinois.gov)



*"The processes that the  
uses were established to serve the  
of the children and families of Illinois  
to do this, or if all appropriate reso  
applied to the problem, then we're  
our obligation to children a*

# The Advocacy Office for Children and Families

Illinois Department of  
**DCFS**

## What is the Advocacy Office?

The Advocacy Office for Children and Families responds to complaints, concerns, inquiries and suggestions about the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). The staff provides referrals to appropriate DCFS staff and suggestions to executive staff for improvements and changes to the department.

## Who can call the Advocacy Office?



Anyone can contact the Advocacy Office. Frequent callers include foster parents, biological parents, adoptive parents, service providers, children and adolescents, and DCFS staff.

## How can the Advocacy Office help me?

The Advocacy Office offers many services. Following are a few of the issues handled by Advocacy Office staff.

## Toll Free Help Line

**Phone:**  
800/232-3798

The Help Line is available during normal business hours. The help line staff will answer your questions regarding child welfare issues, problems and concerns.



*The advocate's primary responsibility is to listen and convey to the caller that he or she has the right to be heard.*

## What should I expect when I call the Advocacy Office?

Complaints or concerns made by the caller are handled by the advocates. Advocates will take the time to listen to concerns of the caller. By working with the advocate and caller will be able to determine the specific issues. Once has been accomplished, steps can be taken toward a resolution.

The advocates are customer-friendly that they address issues in a timely and maintain an impartial viewpoint. The advocates are unable to answer a question, they will suggest a resource is better able to assist you.

## Youth Hotline

**Phone: 800/232-3798**

Also available during normal business hours, the Youth Hotline is available to handle complaints, concerns, inquiries and suggestions made by youth served by the department.

## Policy Waivers

The DCFS director can grant waivers to policy requirements. Caseworkers and others may contact the Advocacy Office for Children and Families to seek waivers to policy. A common request is to expand the capacity of a foster home to care for more children than department policy allows. The Advocacy Office will review requests and make recommendations to the Director's Office.

## What steps should I take before I call the Advocacy Office?



Problems arise due to difference in opinion or misunderstandings. By taking the time to talk and listen, many issues can be resolved. Contacting the Advocacy Office