

A Family Court judge has placed your child in the temporary custody of the Department for Children and Families (DCF) because of concerns about his or her safety and well-being.

The judge will soon be making other decisions about your child's future, including whether he or she can safely return home to the custodial parent — at this time. If that is not possible, the judge may consider granting temporary custody to you.

To request temporary custody, you must:

1. Act quickly.

Let the court know right away that you want temporary custody.

2. Attend the court hearing.

You must be present at court to be granted temporary custody.

3. Settle any issue about parentage.

If there is any question that you are the child's parent, you must resolve this issue before moving forward. Do it right away!

4. Cooperate with DCF.

Our Family Services Division will assess your ability to safely care for your child and then provide this information to the court.

We will look at:

- ▶ Your relationship with your child
- ▶ Your relationship with the custodial parent
- ▶ Your ability to work towards reuniting the child with the custodial parent *if that's the plan*
- ▶ How safe your child will be in your home

If You Don't Live In Vermont

Even though DCF can't evaluate your suitability as a placement option, the judge may still grant you temporary custody of your child; however, you will have to attend the court hearing in Vermont.

The judge may ask DCF to request a formal study of your home from an agency in your state. *This takes at least 60 days.*

5. Complete the attached form.

Section C of the attached form gives DCF permission to conduct background checks on all members of your household age 16 and older.

This includes checking the:

- ▶ Vermont Child Protection Registry to see whether anyone has been substantiated for abusing or neglecting a child
- ▶ Vermont Crime Information Center to see if anyone has a criminal record (in any state)

Please return your completed form to the Family Services worker as soon as possible.

Your Rights

- ▶ You have the right to attend all hearings; however, they will be held even if you don't attend.
- ▶ You have the right to an attorney. If you cannot afford one, you may be eligible for a public defender. Ask the family court clerk for an *Application for Public Defender Services*.

If you don't request or get temporary custody:

- ▶ Use the attached form to provide information about relatives or friends who may be willing and able to care for your child.
- ▶ Let the worker know if you have concerns about anyone who is being considered as a temporary caregiver for your child.
- ▶ The judge will consider relatives and friends willing to assume temporary custody of your child. If no one is available or deemed appropriate, your child will remain in DCF custody.
- ▶ The judge will likely issue an order for family contact, which may include contact with you. The judge will consider any existing orders and will only change an order if it's in your child's best interest.

STAY INVOLVED!

Your continued input is important. Please let the Family Services worker know if your address or phone number changes.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Court Information

The next court hearing is:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Family Court: _____

Docket #: _____

Family Services Information

District Office: _____

Office Phone: _____

Worker's Name: _____

Worker's Phone: _____

Lawyer Information

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Please let us know if you need an accommodation because of a disability or an interpreter because of limited English.



**Your Child is
in DCF Custody**
Information for
Non-Custodial Parents

 **VERMONT**
DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION

Form for Non-Custodial Parents: Information about a Child in Temporary DCF Custody

Child's Name: _____

Your Name: _____

Your Mailing Address: _____

Your Home Phone Number: _____

A. Existing Court Orders Regarding Your Child. Please provide a brief summary below.

Type of Order	Court and Date	What was Ordered
Example: parentage established	Example: Orange County Family Court (VT), 2002	Example: court found that I was the father of the child
Parentage		
Custody		
Child Support		
Visitation		
Other Order (e.g., abuse protection order)		

B. Others Who May Be Able to Temporarily Care For Your Child.

Please provide information about your relatives and friends who may be able to temporarily care for your child if you are unable to do so. Use an extra sheet of paper if necessary.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone: _____
Relationship to child: _____
How well known to child: _____
Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone: _____
Relationship to child: _____
How well known to child: _____

IMPORTANT: Be sure to complete the other side of this form.

C. Authorization to Conduct Background Checks.

If you want to be considered for temporary custody of your child, please provide information for all household members age 16 and older. Print clearly. Use an extra sheet of paper if necessary. By signing below, you are authorizing DCF to conduct background checks.

Information About You

Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial	Date of Birth	Place of Birth
Any Maiden & Previous Names	Social Security Number	Signature
Towns & States Where You Previously Lived or Worked		

Information About Other Household Members

Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial	Date of Birth	Place of Birth
Any Maiden & Previous Names	Social Security Number	Signature
Towns & States Where Previously Lived or Worked		

Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial	Date of Birth	Place of Birth
Any Maiden & Previous Names	Social Security Number	Signature
Towns & States Where Previously Lived or Worked		

Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial	Date of Birth	Place of Birth
Any Maiden & Previous Names	Social Security Number	Signature
Towns & States Where Previously Lived or Worked		

For DCF Use Only:

Type Of Check	Date Checked	Initials	Result
VCIC			
Child Protection Registry			
DCF Records			
Other			