

7.202.533 The Colorado Safety Assessment Instrument

A. The following safety threshold criteria must be present to determine that a safety concern exists. Meeting these criteria indicates that the family's behavior, condition or situation threatens the safety of a child.

1. The threat to child safety is specific and observable.
2. Conditions reasonably could result in moderate to severe harm to a child.
3. This harm is likely to occur if not resolved.
4. A child is vulnerable to the threat of harm due to his/her age, developmental level, cognitive impairment, physical disability, illness, ability to communicate, ability to meet basic needs, or similar factors.
5. The caregiver(s) is unable to control conditions and behavior that threaten child safety.

B. County departments shall assess for child safety using the fifteen (15) standardized safety concerns. The fifteen standardized safety concerns are as follows:

1. Caregiver(s) in the home is out of control and/or violent.
2. Caregiver(s) describes or acts toward child in predominately negative terms and/or has unrealistic expectations likely to cause moderate to severe harm.
3. Caregiver(s) has caused harm to the child or has made a credible threat of harm.
4. Caregiver(s)' explanations of injuries present are unconvincing.
5. The caregiver(s) refuses access to the child or there is reason to believe that the family will flee.
6. Caregiver(s) is unwilling or unable to meet the child's immediate needs for food, clothing, and shelter.
7. Caregiver(s) is unwilling or unable to meet the child's significant medical or mental health care needs.
8. Caregiver(s) has not or is unable to provide sufficient supervision to protect child from potentially moderate to severe harm.
9. Child is fearful of caregiver(s), other family members, or other people living in, or having access to, the home.
10. Child's physical living conditions seriously endanger the child's immediate health and safety.

11. Caregiver(s)' alleged or observed substance use may seriously affect ability to supervise, protect or care for the child.

12. Child sexual abuse is suspected and circumstances suggest that child safety is of immediate concern.

13. Caregiver(s)' alleged or observed emotional instability, developmental delay or cognitive impairment seriously affects his/her ability to supervise, protect, or care for the child.

14. Domestic violence exists in the home and places the child in danger of physical and/or emotional harm.

15. Caregiver(s) has previously abused or neglected a child or is suspected of such, and the severity of the past maltreatment or caregiver's response to previous intervention suggests the child may be unsafe.

C. The list of safety concern definitions shall be referenced when assessing threats to child safety and prior to checking safety concerns in the Colorado Safety Assessment Instrument.

D. Safety Assessment Conclusion

1. If none of the fifteen (15) safety concerns are identified at the conclusion of the safety assessment process, then it is reasonable to conclude that the child is safe and no further safety intervention is required.

2. If assessment of the child and family determines that the child is safe and emergency out-of-home placement occurred prior to the completion of the safety assessment, efforts should be made to return responsibility for the child's safety back to the caregiver(s).

3. If assessment of the child and family determines that the child is unsafe, analysis and planning are necessary.

4. The caregiver protective capacity shall be assessed to determine whether a caregiver has the capacity and willingness to assure the child's protection and, if so, no further safety intervention is necessary. If the caregiver is unwilling or the protective capacity is insufficient to assure the child's protection, then further analysis and planning are necessary.

E. Safety Intervention Analysis

To determine whether an in-home safety plan can sufficiently manage the safety concerns, consider and document how the following are met:

1. The home environment is stable enough to support an in-home safety plan;

2. Caregivers are willing to accept and cooperate with the use of an in-home safety plan; and,
3. Resources are accessible and the level of effort required is available to sufficiently control safety concerns without it being necessary to rely on the person responsible for abuse/neglect to initiate protective actions.