

## SHOULD YOU COOPERATE WITH DCF (DSS)?

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Friday, 17 February 2012 00:00 - Last Updated Wednesday, 15 February 2012 09:18

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There is some controversy about whether prior to any involvement with the courts whether you should cooperate with DCF or formerly known as DSS. It depends always on the situation. Some attorneys would tell you never open the door for them, never cooperate with them at all, but you would have to understand that there are some risks that you would be taken by doing that; including maybe prematurely having the Department do a removal or filing a court action. Other times attorneys say to always cooperate with DCF, and again, you want to make sure that you protect yourself and your family and rights.

There questions about; should you sign releases or limited releases what you need to discuss or not discuss with the Department and generally it would be advisable to speak to an attorney or have an attorney present during the interviews or prior to the interviews if possible, so they can talk about it individually, rather than a blanket rule of always cooperating with DCF or always opposing what DCF states, it really comes down to the individual circumstances.

My general philosophy is to cooperate somewhat with the Department, but it again depends on the situation would be not to generally sign general releases. Some of the allegations you may not want to talk about, but it would generally be very important because it is a nightmarish experience anytime that the DCF are involved to make sure that your strategy makes sense for your specific situation, rather than following the blanket rule of never talking to DCF or always being completely cooperative with DCF.