

YOUR RIGHTS WHEN ACS KNOCKS

1. You do not have to speak to ACS, let them into your home, or allow them to speak to your children **if they do not have a court order.**
2. You do not have to answer any of ACS' questions, and you are allowed to talk to a lawyer or legal advocate before answering questions. **Contact your local family defense office at the number on this card for free legal services.**
3. You have the right to an **interpreter.**
4. You have the right to know the **nature of the allegations** being made against you. If you choose to speak to ACS, only answer questions relating to the allegations.
5. You do not have to reveal private information, like your **medical history**, your **intimate relationships**, or your **immigration status**. You do not have to sign documents like HIPAAs or consent forms—you should especially not sign blank HIPAAs or consent forms. You can tell ACS that you need to review the document with your lawyer before signing.
6. You have the right to access **preventative services**, and you can choose to participate only in the services you think will be helpful for your family. Preventative services are run by ACS, so anything you share with them can be used against you later.

IMPORTANT

Refusing to speak to ACS or allow them into your home will not stop the investigation. ACS may try to get information in other ways, like by talking to your children at school, to their teachers or doctors, or filing in family court. ACS may also interpret your refusal to speak with them as being "uncooperative" or hiding something. However, you have the right to speak to a lawyer or legal advocate before answering ACS' questions and you should contact your local family defense office right away. Remember, if you choose to speak with ACS, anything you say can be used against you later. Be cautious about how you behave and what information you share with ACS.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL FAMILY DEFENSE OFFICE FOR FREE LEGAL SERVICES

Bronx

The Bronx Defenders

Phone: 347-778-1266

Address: 360 East 161st St., Bronx

Website: bronxdefenders.org

Brooklyn

Brooklyn Defender Services

Phone: 646-974-9343

Toll-Free Phone: 888-898-0700

Email: earlydefense@bds.org

Website: bds.org

Harlem

Neighborhood Defender Service

Phone: 212-876-5500

Address: 317 Lenox Ave., New York

Website: neighborhooddefender.org

Queens & Manhattan

Center for Family Representation

Manhattan Phone: 646-809-4308

Queens Phone: 347-286-4365

Email: investigationhelp@cfrny.org

Website: cfrny.org

For more information on your rights, visit: <https://yourfamilyyourrights.org/>