



Victoria Soeder
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Your ref: CAF 19-212
Our ref: Gov/CAF 19-212

Cafcass National Office
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17 December 2019

Dear Ms Soeder,

Re: Freedom of Information request

Thank you for your email of 14 December 2019. You made the following requests for information:

1. Please supply the date(s) CAFCASS changed the principles underlying private law 2018-2019.

The 'Underlying principles of a Cafcass private law assessment' document is part of the [Child Impact Assessment Framework](#) (CIAF) and was developed by Cafcass as part of the Framework. The 'Underlying principles of a Cafcass private law assessment' outlines the key points to be considered in our assessment in private law cases.

Following your feedback on the wording of the section 'Adult Behaviour', the document was updated on 10 December 2019. The document now states:

**Avoiding
categorisation of
adult behaviour**

The application of a label such as 'domestic abuse' or 'alienation' is not the goal of the assessment. The goal of the assessment is to understand the impact on the child, and an understanding of the experiences of the adults concerned and of the 'types of behaviour identified' can shine a light on the experience of children.

The document was updated to clarify the need for Cafcass practitioners to avoid categorising adult behaviour and the intention of the original wording was not to imply that medical conditions were 'behaviours'. Whilst the wording in the document was amended, the principle, which is the need to avoid categorising adult behaviour as the goal of our assessment is to understand the impact on the child, remains the same.

Sally Cheshire CBE Interim Chair
Jacky Tiotto Chief Executive





2. Please provide the date CAFCASS amended or removed the principle: Adult behaviour to Avoiding categorisation of adult behaviour and published it on their website, furthermore the date Cafcass staff were informed of changes to the principle.

The document was updated on 10 December 2019. Whilst the wording in the document was amended, the principle, which is the need to avoid categorising adult behaviour as the goal of our assessment is to understand the impact on the child, remains the same. There was no staff communication on the changed wording as whilst the wording has changed the principle remains the same.

3. Please provide CAFCASS principles underlying private law from October 2018- the date CAFCASS removed/amended them and by contrast please provide the amended principles underlying private law.

Please find attached a copy of the current version of the Underlying principles of a Cafcass private law assessment', which was updated on 10 December 2019. Please also find attached a copy of the Underlying principles of a Cafcass private law assessment' from October 2018.

We hope that you feel your question has been answered effectively. If you are unhappy with the decisions made in relation to your request, you may ask for an internal review to be undertaken. If you are dissatisfied with the way the internal review is handled or with the final decision made at that review about the information released, you are free to contact the Information Commissioner's Office (<https://ico.org.uk/>):

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Wycliffe House, Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire
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01625 524 510

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Yours sincerely,

Governance Team

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Jacky Tiotto Chief Executive





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