

REQUESTING YOUR CPS RECORDS

Once you are 18 years old, you can request a copy of your CPS records from DFPS. There are **no costs** to request your records. You must be an adult to request your records. Below are steps to request your CPS records.

1. **Fill out the Request for Case Records (Form 4884)**

You can find the Request for Case Records (Form 4884) by clicking [here](#) or by going to:

https://www.dfps.texas.gov/policies/Case_Records/personally_involved.asp

Below are instructions on how to fill out the **electronic** Request for Case Records (Form 4884). The bolded numbers in the instructions below match up to where you need to fill out the information on the sample form.

These fields also align with the [PDF copy](#) of the form, which you may choose to print, complete, and mail to DFPS Records Management at:

Department of Family and Protective Services

Attn: RMG (Y-937)

P.O. Box 149030

Austin, Texas 78714-19030

- Create an account on the [DFPS STARRS Portal](#). Form 4884 on the DFPS Website linked above brings you directly to this login/create account page for STARRS:
<https://starrsext.nexternal.us/auth/login>
 - Use an email address that you will have long-term, reliable access to. Do not use an email account to which you do not remember the password. It will take a long time to receive your records back, sometimes over 6 months or up to a year.
- Once you have created your STARRS account, login and click the “Submit Request” button on the lefthand side of the screen.
- From the ‘Submit Request’ section, select Form F-505-4884 “Former Foster Youths Request for Personal Records”.
- On the form submission page, under **A** you will enter your personal and contact information. Include:
 - your full name (first, middle initial, last)
 - your social security number (if known)
 - your date of birth (MM/DD/YYYY)
 - your reliable email address
 - your physical home address (street address, city, state, zip code)
 - your phone number (with area code)
- Under **B** you will need to provide information about your CPS case. All fields are optional, so don’t worry if you don’t remember everything. However, the more information that you can provide, the better.
 - Names of your most recent Foster/Kinship Parent(s).

- The city your Foster/Kinship Parent(s) were in.
- If you were in an RTC (Residential Treatment Center), shelter, or hospital more recently during your time in foster care than you were in a traditional foster care placement, enter the name, year, and location of that placement in the next fields.
- Information about your biological parents
 - Biological father name
 - Biological mother name
 - Most recently known location of your biological parent/s.
- Additional identifying information
 - Previous names or aliases, especially if you were adopted
 - Names and dates of birth for your siblings
 - Anything else you think might be important to locating your records
- Under **C**, you must select the documents you want to receive. You may wish to request your entire case record. Receiving the full case record is preferable but it may take longer for the Records Department at DFPS to gather. If you have an immediate need for a copy of your birth certificate/ citizenship record, social security card, personal State Identification Card/ Driver's License, or your Medical Records, you may wish to select only that field in hopes that the request will be completed more quickly. Note that the documents provided by DFPS will only be photocopies of these documents, so they will not serve as original or certified copies needed as identification for many purposes.
- Under **D**, you will need to select how you would like to receive your records. The most reliable option to avoid records being lost is to elect to receive an encrypted attachment in PDF format to your email address. If this option does not work for you, you can choose for PDF files to be sent on a CD by USPS Mail to your address listed on the form, or for a paper copy to be sent by US mail to that address.
 - *Considerations for those choosing physical mailing by USPS:* If your living situation is temporary, make sure you put down an address that you trust can hold on to the records until you can pick them up. Also make sure you let the person who lives there know that you have put their address down for the records to be sent to. Be aware that some apartments will not allow mail to be sent if your name is not on the mailbox. Make sure the person who lives there has made sure it is okay to have your mail sent there.
 - **IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION UP TO DATE THROUGH THIS WHOLE PROCESS.** If your email address, phone number, or address changes, you can contact Records@dfps.texas.gov and notify them.
- Under **E** you will need to upload a copy of your photo identification.
 - You can take a picture of your ID and upload it in the field shown on the form. *If you are not able to provide photo identification, leave this section blank. RMG (Records Management Group) will contact you at the number or e-mail address you provided to continue processing your request.*
 - If you need help getting your identification documents, call the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project hotline at 1-877-313-3688 (toll-free) or email info@texasfosteryouth.org.

- Under **F**, you will type your name to sign the form, confirming that the information you provided is true and accurate to the best of your knowledge.

2. Receive and make note of confirmation/ STARRS number

You will receive an email confirmation of your request within a few minutes of your submission. This email will include your request reference number, which they call a “STARRS Reference Number.” That number will also be shown in the [STARRS portal](#) where you requested your records. The email confirms your request and gives you information about their process, the link to return to the STARRS portal and check on the status of your request, as well as contact information for the DFPS Records Management Department. **Do not delete this email.**

3. Request update

You should continuously log into your STARRS portal and check on the status of your request. If a significant amount of time has passed and your STARRS portal does not show progress on your request, you may wish to request an update from Records Management by sending an email to records@dfps.texas.gov. Be sure to give your STARRS reference number, name, and date of birth so Records Management can find your request. It can be helpful to include the dates of when you sent in your request and when you received the confirmation email from DFPS. Save the emails and make notes about who you talk to, what date you talk to them and what they tell you.

4. Review records

Once you request your records, DFPS will review and **redact** your records before they give them to you. Redact means that they will take out certain information from the records for legal reasons. Some reasons are that they list the name of the person who reported abuse, or the record is solely about another child.

It could take six months to a year for you to receive your records depending on how many records there are, how difficult it is to find the records, how many other requests there are, or other issues. You should check at least once a month and if there is an important reason you need them quickly let them know.

DFPS will not contact you before they send you your records. **Be sure to keep DPFS updated with your email address, phone number, and physical address (if you chose USPS mail)!** You can contact records@dfps.texas.gov or by calling (512) 929-6764 or toll free (877) 764-7230.

Once you receive your records, you will need to look over them to make sure you have everything. You should be aware that, if you requested that the records come on a CD, you will need a computer with a CD slot and Adobe (PDF viewer) to be able to look at them. The records usually are not in order so you will need to make sure you look through them carefully.

You should have various documents from your CPS case, records from the CPS computer system, and copies of documents from other people and agencies. CPS records should also include your Health Passport. This will include medical information from around 2008 until the time you were no longer covered by Medicaid for current and former foster youth. Your Health Passport is not a medical record, but it will give you information about the providers you saw, the services you received, and medicine prescribed. You can use this information to contact the medical provider to get your medical records. You should also make sure that all the records are there if you have been in care multiple times.

If it looks like any of the records are missing, you should contact Records Management at:

Email: records@dfps.texas.gov

Telephone: (512) 929-6764 or toll free (877) 764-7230

If they are unable to resolve the issue, you should ask to speak to a supervisor.

You can find information on the DFPS website about requesting records. Try the link https://www.dfps.texas.gov/policies/Case_Records/ or search the website for records requests. Also see [DFPS User Guide for Persons Requesting CPS Records](#).

If you need assistance requesting your CPS records, contact the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project hotline at 1-877-313-3688 (toll-free) or email info@texasfosteryouth.org. The Texas Foster Youth Justice Project may be able to request your records on your behalf.

Prepared by the Texas Foster Youth Justice Project
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