



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:

IF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (“DSS”) IS INVESTIGATING YOU

If you are being checked out by the Special Investigations Unit or unit called FEDS you will likely be called to have a meeting with someone from the unit. A meeting will be scheduled if DSS thinks you have committed or are committing welfare or food stamp fraud. They will already have gathered evidence against you when they tell you of the meeting. It is also important to note that the “investigator” may be local or state law enforcement.

You have the right to:

- Remain silent during that meeting;
- Have a lawyer with you during the meeting;
- Speak with a lawyer before signing any documents or providing any evidence to the Special Investigations Unit.



Potential penalties of welfare fraud include:

- Arrest and/or prison time,
- Fines and/or restitution,
- A civil judgment,
- Loss of benefits,
- Garnishment of wages, and
- Deportation if you are an immigrant



This brief resource is intended to highlight some helpful general information. This resource is not intended to detail all rights an individual may have and is not legal advice. You can only obtain legal advice from a lawyer. If you need further assistance, you should contact your local legal aid or legal services organization.