

# Notifications, investigations, and substantiations (NIS) file cluster

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# Notifications, investigations, and substantiations (NIS) file cluster

## Identifying and definitional attributes

<b>Metadata item type:</b>	Data Set Specification
<b>METEOR identifier:</b>	748919
<b>Registration status:</b>	<a href="#">Children and Families</a> , Standard 03/11/2021
<b>DSS type:</b>	Data Element Cluster
<b>Scope:</b>	The Notifications, investigations and substantiations (NIS) file cluster contains information about notifications, investigations and substantiations recorded for the clients in the Client file during the reference period. This includes notifications received during the reference period and investigations that were open during the reference period, regardless of the date of notification.

## Collection and usage attributes

**Guide for use:** A notification consists of reports made to an authorised department by persons or other bodies making allegations of child abuse or neglect, child maltreatment or harm to a child. Notifications should not include reports regarding wider concerns about children or families which are classified as child concern reports.

Notifications are relevant to persons who are aged less than 18 years, and to unborn children in jurisdictions where they are covered under the child protection legislation.

An investigation is the process whereby the Department responsible for child protection seeks to obtain more detailed information about a child who is the subject of a notification and makes an assessment about the harm or degree of harm to the child and their protective needs. An investigation includes the interviewing or sighting of the subject child where it is practicable to do so.

A finalised investigation is classified as 'substantiated' where there is reasonable cause to believe that the child has been, is being or is likely to be abused or neglected or otherwise harmed. Substantiation does not necessarily require sufficient evidence for a successful prosecution and does not imply that treatment or case management was, or is to be, provided.

Substantiations are classified into four categories: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. Where more than one type of abuse or neglect or harm has occurred, the primary type of abuse/neglect should be classified to the type most likely to be the most severe in the short term or most likely to place the child at risk in the short term, or if such an assessment is not possible, to the most obvious form of abuse or neglect.

**Collection methods:** A notification can only involve one child. Where it is claimed that two children have been, or are at risk of being abused, neglected or harmed, this is counted as two separate notifications, even if the children are from one family. Where there is more than one notification about the same 'event', this should be counted as only one notification and appear as a single line in the file for each child indicated. Where there is more than one notification for a child within the reference period but relating to different events (for instance, a different type of abuse or neglect or a different person believed responsible), these should be counted as separate notifications and appear as a new line in the file.

Each distinct notification recorded by the Department will be a new line in the file, delineated by the notification date.

## Source and reference attributes

**Submitting organisation:** Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

**Steward:** [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#)  
**Origin:** Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2018. Child protection national minimum data set, data collection manual 2017-18. Canberra: AIHW.

## Relational attributes

**Related metadata references:** Supersedes [Notifications, investigations, and substantiations \(NIS\) file cluster Children and Families](#), Superseded 03/11/2021

**Implementation in Data Set Specifications:** [Child protection NMDS 2020–21 Children and Families](#), Standard 03/11/2021  
**Implementation start date:** 01/07/2019  
**Implementation end date:** 30/06/2021

## Metadata items in this Data Set Specification

Seq No.	Metadata item	Obligation	Max occurs
1	<a href="#">Person—person identifier, child protection NX[X(11)]</a>  <i>DSS specific information:</i>  The identifier should match the child's identifier in the Child protection (CP) client file cluster.	Mandatory	1
2	<a href="#">Child protection notification—notification date, DDMMYYYY</a>  <i>DSS specific information:</i>  This collection requires a non-standard format for this data item: DD/MM/YYYY.	Mandatory	1
3	<a href="#">Person—Australian state/territory identifier, code N</a>  <i>DSS specific information:</i>  The state/territory of the child's usual place of residence at the time of the notification.  For children residing outside Australia record 99 'Not stated/inadequately described'.	Mandatory	1
4	<a href="#">Address—suburb/town/locality name, text X[X(45)]</a>  <i>DSS specific information:</i>  Any valid suburb, town or locality name of the child's usual place of residence at the time of notification. May be 'No fixed abode' or 'Not known'.  For children residing outside Australia record 'Overseas'.	Mandatory	1
5	<a href="#">Address—Australian postcode, code (Postcode datafile) NNNN</a>  <i>DSS specific information:</i>  The postcode of the child's usual place of residence at the time of notification.  For children residing outside Australia record 9999 'Not stated/inadequately described'	Mandatory	1

Seq No.	Metadata item	Obligation	Max occurs
6	<a href="#">Address—statistical area, level 2 (SA2) code (ASGS 2016) N(9)</a>	Mandatory	1
	<b>DSS specific information:</b>		
	The Statistical Area level 2 (SA2) of the child's usual place of residence at the time of the notification. Record 99 for 'Not stated/inadequately described'.		
7	<a href="#">Child protection notification—source of notification, code N[N]</a>	Mandatory	1
8	<a href="#">Child protection notification—course of action, code N</a>	Mandatory	1
9	<a href="#">Child protection notification—course of action decision date, DDMMYYYY</a>	Mandatory	1
	<b>DSS specific information:</b>		
	This collection requires a non-standard format for this data item: DD/MM/YYYY.		
10	<a href="#">Child protection notification—investigation commencement date, DDMMYYYY</a>	Mandatory	1
	<b>Conditional obligation:</b>		
	Conditional on the outcome of the notification assessment deeming investigation necessary.		
	<b>DSS specific information:</b>		
	This collection requires a non-standard format for this data item: DD/MM/YYYY.		
11	<a href="#">Child protection notification—investigation conclusion date, DDMMYYYY</a>	Mandatory	1
	<b>Conditional obligation:</b>		
	Conditional on the outcome of the notification assessment deeming investigation necessary.		
	<b>DSS specific information:</b>		
	This collection requires a non-standard format for this data item: DD/MM/YYYY.		
12	<a href="#">Child protection notification—investigation status, code N[N]</a>	Mandatory	1
	<b>DSS specific information:</b>		
	Conditional on the outcome of the notification assessment deeming investigation necessary.		
13	<a href="#">Child—household parental care type, code N[N]</a>	Mandatory	1
	<b>DSS specific information:</b>		
	Refers to the care type at the time of notification of child abuse or neglect.		
14	<a href="#">Child—primary type of abuse or neglect, code N[N]</a>	Mandatory	1

**Seq Metadata item  
No.**

**Obligation Max  
occurs**

15 [Child—other type of abuse or neglect, code N\[N\]](#)

Mandatory 4

***Conditional obligation:***

Only to be used when more than one type of abuse has been identified.

***DSS specific information:***

Four separate data items are used to collect the other types of abuse identified as part of the substantiation: physical abuse (cell number 15); sexual abuse (cell number 16); emotional abuse (cell number 17); and neglect (cell number 18).