

Family Evidence Preparation Checklist

A short, practical checklist for organising what you already hold before you speak to anyone about it. Preparation on its own often changes how clearly a concern is heard.

1 What to gather

- Letters, emails and messages from the organisation involved.
- Meeting notes, minutes and any record of who attended.
- Assessments, plans, reports and reviews, including earlier versions if you have them.
- Decisions in writing, and the reason given for each decision.
- Your own contemporaneous notes of what was said and when.
- A list of anything you asked for and did not receive.

2 How to date and label it

- Put a date on every item, in the same format throughout, for example 2026-08-04.
- Where the date is unknown, write 'date unknown' rather than estimating silently.
- Number each item once and do not renumber later.
- Keep the original wording. Do not correct, summarise or retype documents.
- Note where an item came from and who gave it to you.

3 What NOT to send in first contact

- Do not send confidential evidence, case files or bundles with a first enquiry.
- Do not send identity documents, medical records or photographs of anyone.
- Do not send anything covered by a court order or reporting restriction.
- Do not send material belonging to another family or service user.
- Send a short written summary instead: what happened, and what you need to understand.

4 Then what happens

ORVIA will tell you honestly whether it appears suitable. If the matter proceeds, you will receive secure transfer instructions, a written scope, a fee and an expected timescale before any substantive work begins.

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999. ORVIA is independent and non-statutory and is not an emergency service.

This is guidance only and is not legal, clinical or regulatory advice.

ORVIA Oversight Ltd · Company 16123685 · ICO ZC152311 · hello@orvia.org.uk