

## Pregnancy and Medication-Assisted Treatment Information and Support for Pregnant Women in Recovery

Developed jointly by the Department of Children and Families (DCF)  
and Department of Public Health (DPH) Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS).

DCF and DPH are working together to support **pregnant women in recovery**, who, as part of their addiction treatment, receive methadone or buprenorphine (the active ingredient in both Suboxone and Subutex), known as Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT).

### What happens if a mother or her newborn has a positive drug screen?

When your baby is born, you and your baby may be tested to see if there are drugs in your system. Most often, hospitals will send a report to DCF when they find drugs in you or your baby's system, even when the only drug found is methadone or buprenorphine that was prescribed for you by your medication-assisted treatment program or doctor. This report is called a "51A." Most 51A reports of positive drug screens at delivery are followed up by DCF, with further questions to learn about the care and safety of the baby and also to provide resources that help families meet their baby's needs.

### What happens if methadone or buprenorphine is found in your drug screen?

After a 51A report is made, DCF will:

- verify that medications present in your drug screen at delivery are those prescribed for you as part of your treatment;
- call your treatment provider to get information about your progress in treatment;
- make sure there are no other concerns about your baby's safety and well-being including asking about your plan for the longer term care and stability for the baby.

What you can do before you deliver:

- talk with your doctor or counselor about signing a Release of Information that will allow the DCF to speak with your treatment provider;
- talk to your provider about the information that the DCF will ask about your treatment; and
- make sure the hospital has the name of the treatment provider that is prescribing your medication; and
- make post delivery plans for the care of your baby and yourself!

After reviewing all available information, DCF may not take further action on this report if there are no other concerns about you or the safety of your baby. However, if you have not signed a Release of Information form for your treatment provider to talk to the DCF or if DCF has other concerns, a DCF social worker will contact you and may come to your home to learn more about your family.

### What happens when DCF responds to a 51A report?

For further information about how DCF responds to reports, please go to the ***A Family's Guide to Protective Services for Children*** at [www.mass.gov/dcf](http://www.mass.gov/dcf).