



Douglas A. Ducey
Governor

Gregory McKay
Director

September 2, 2015

The Honorable Douglas A. Ducey
Governor of Arizona
1700 West Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Governor Ducey:

Arizona Revised Statute § 8-817 requires the Department of Child Safety (DCS) to prepare a report by August 15th of each year that contains the following information for joint investigations by DCS, local law enforcement and county attorneys, of allegations of abuse or neglect that contain criminal conduct allegations:

- The number of criminal conduct allegations investigated.
- The number of reports that were jointly investigated pursuant to the established protocols.
- The reasons why a joint investigation did not occur.

In accordance with this requirement, DCS is pleased to submit the enclosed report. If you have any questions, please contact me at (602) 255-2500.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory McKay".

Gregory McKay
Director

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Andy Biggs, President, Arizona State Senate
The Honorable David M. Gowan, Speaker, Arizona State House of Representatives
Maricopa County Attorney Bill Montgomery, Maricopa County Attorney's Office
Joan Clark, Director, Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records



DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY

2015 JOINT INVESTIGATION REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Prepared by the Office of Child Welfare Investigations

Pursuant to A.R.S § 8-817, the Department of Child Safety's Office of Child Welfare Investigations (OCWI) developed an annual report on joint investigations conducted during the fiscal year. This report provides data on criminal conduct cases that received a joint-investigation from DCS and the appropriate law enforcement agency, in addition to the reasons why a criminal conduct case did not receive a joint-investigation.

The Department of Child Safety (DCS) is required to develop, establish, and implement initial screening and safety assessment protocols in consultation with the Attorney General and statewide with county attorneys, chiefs of police, sheriffs, medical experts, victims' rights advocates, domestic violence victim advocates, and mandatory reporters. These inter-agency protocols are to guide the conduct of investigations of allegations involving criminal conduct. DCS has worked with the aforementioned agencies to comply with the requirements set forth in statute.

When a citizen calls the Centralized Intake Hotline with a concern of suspected abuse or neglect, the Intake Specialist will determine if the call meets the pre-established criteria for a report. Once the Intake Specialist has gathered all necessary information, they will generate a report for investigation and assign it to a field unit. The initial tracking characteristic is assigned by the Centralized Intake Hotline based on the information provided by the caller. A tracking characteristic is a circumstance that occurs in a report. It may occur independently of child abuse or neglect allegations or may carry a general description of a condition that exists in the family. Reports requiring a joint investigation with law enforcement have a tracking characteristic of Criminal Conduct (CC).¹ If during the course of an investigation, the Case Specialist determines a subsequent tracking characteristic applies, it may then be added to the case.

OCWI's primary goal is to protect children by jointly investigating criminal conduct allegations of child abuse or neglect within the State of Arizona. This is accomplished by conducting a joint investigation with both DCS Specialist and Law Enforcement personnel.

¹ "Criminal conduct allegation" means an allegation of conduct by a parent, guardian, or custodian of a child that, if true, would constitute any of the following:

- (a) A violation of section 13-3623 involving child abuse.
- (b) A felony offense that constitutes domestic violence as defined in section 13-3601.
- (c) A violation of section 13-1404 or 13-1406 involving a minor.
- (d) A violation of section 13-1405, 13-1410 or 13-1417.
- (e) Any other act of abuse that is classified as a felony.
- (f) An offense that constitutes domestic violence as defined in section 13-3601 and that involves a minor who is a victim of or was in imminent danger during the domestic violence.

In addition to joint investigations, in fiscal year 2015, the OCWI Analytics Unit assisted the DCS field units and Law Enforcement by searching and locating missing, abducted and endangered children. OCWI's analysts have extensive experience with a variety of databases such as DCS CHILDS, DES, open source databases, social media, and law enforcement databases. Through the use of these analytical techniques the ability to locate missing families and children improved. Throughout 2015, these analysts located numerous vulnerable children and their families who were either unable to be located by the DCS Specialists or who were hiding from or avoiding DCS and law enforcement intervention. Due to Department wide awareness of OCWI's analytics unit's capabilities and OCWI's investigator's tracking abilities, it is anticipated that fiscal year 2016 will result in continued success with regard to locating missing vulnerable children and preventing them from being re-victimized.

During fiscal year 2015, the DCS Centralized Intake Hotline received approximately 51,720 reports, an eight percent increase over fiscal year 2014.

Number of Reports Coded as Criminal Conduct Allegations

The first data element in the table that follows is the number of reports generated for field investigation that contained a CC allegation (Table 1). As required by Department protocols, any report that contains a CC characteristic must be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency and a joint investigation must occur.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF REPORTS CODED AS CRIMINAL CONDUCT (CC) ALLEGATIONS RECEIVED BY THE DEPARTMENT

County	Number of Reports
APACHE	26
COCHISE	123
COCONINO	146
GILA	60
GRAHAM	58
GREENLEE	3
LA PAZ	17
MARICOPA	4,797
MOHAVE	289
NAVAJO	144
PIMA	1,471
PINAL	522
SANTA CRUZ	42
YAVAPAI	232
YUMA	162
Total	8,092

In fiscal year 2014, statewide there were 6,824 reports that contained a CC characteristic. In fiscal year 2015, there were 8,092 reports with a CC characteristic, which is an 18.6 percent increase. As in previous reporting years, the majority of reports that contain the CC characteristic occur in Maricopa County. The next highest number of reports containing these characteristics occurs in Pima County.

Joint Investigations

The second data element reported is the number of cases that are jointly investigated according to the protocols (Table 2). As stated above, all reports that contain the CC allegation are intended to be jointly investigated by DCS and the appropriate law enforcement agency.

**TABLE 2: NUMBER OF CHILD SAFETY REPORTS CATEGORIZED
AS CC JOINTLY INVESTIGATED ACCORDING TO THE PROTOCOLS**

County	Number of Reports
APACHE	17
COCHISE	57
COCONINO	61
GILA	27
GRAHAM	23
GREENLEE	1
LA PAZ	9
MARICOPA	2821
MOHAVE	137
NAVAJO	86
PIMA	747
PINAL	259
SANTA CRUZ	16
YAVAPAI	128
YUMA	124
Total	4,513

The table below illustrates that 94.5% of investigations conducted by OCWI were jointly investigated according to the protocols. This is an increase of 3.7% from last year's 90.8%. OCWI will continue to work with the Department and law enforcement to identify barriers and strengthen relationships to improve on the number of reports requiring a joint investigation that are jointly investigated.

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF CC REPORTS JOINTLY INVESTIGATED BY OCWI ACCORDING TO THE PROTOCOLS.

Agency Conducting Investigation	Total of Number Criminal Conduct Reports	Number of Criminal Conduct Reports Not Jointly Investigated	Number of Reports With a Joint Investigation Conducted	Percentage of Reports with a Joint Investigation Conducted
DCS INVESTIGATIONS	6,885	1,101	3,373	49.0%
OCWI INVESTIGATIONS	1,207	59	1,140	94.4%
Total	8,092	1,160	4,513	55.8%

There are several reasons why a joint investigation between DCS/OCWI and law enforcement may not occur. The main reasons are:

- **Child Not Available:** At the time of the initial contact by DCS, OCWI, or law enforcement, the alleged child victim is not available to be interviewed. This occasionally happens, for example, if a report is received and the alleged child victim is located in another state at the time of the investigation.
- **DCS Not Available:** At the time of the initial contact by law enforcement, or during subsequent interviews with the alleged victim or perpetrators, the DCS case manager is unable to be present to participate in the investigation. An example is when a report is called in by the Victims Witness Advocate Office to report abuse or neglect of a child, where police interviews and the investigation have already occurred before DCS was notified.
- **Law Enforcement Disagrees:** When the DCS case manager receives a report requiring joint investigation, contact is made with the appropriate law enforcement agency to make a police report and request the joint investigation. Law enforcement officials sometimes decline to accept the information as meeting criminal conduct standards and inform the DCS case manager to conduct the investigation without law enforcement present. In these situations, DCS follows up with an additional report to law enforcement if during the investigation further information indicates criminal activity.
- **Law Enforcement Unavailable:** When the DCS case manager contacts law enforcement prior to the initial contact, there are times that due to other incidents, law enforcement is unable to provide an officer or detective during the course of the investigation. In these situations, DCS follows up with an additional report to law enforcement if the initial contact further indicates criminal activity.
- **No Jurisdiction:** If the alleged victim or perpetrator lives on either a federal military installation or Native American reservation, DCS does not have jurisdiction and the case is transferred to the appropriate agency.

TABLE 4: REASONS WHY A JOINT INVESTIGATION DID NOT OCCUR

REASON THAT THE JOINT INVESTIGATION WAS NOT CONDUCTED						
County	Child Not Available	DCS Not Available	Law Enforcement Disagrees	Law Enforcement Unavailable	No Jurisdiction	Total
APACHE	0	0	3	0	1	4
COCHISE	1	0	8	5	0	14
COCONINO	2	2	18	12	4	38
GILA	0	0	0	1	0	1
GRAHAM	1	0	9	0	0	10
GREENLEE	0	0	1	0	0	1
LA PAZ	0	0	1	1	0	2
MARICOPA	32	36	508	68	4	648
MOHAVE	3	5	59	16	0	83
NAVAJO	1	0	24	2	1	28
PIMA	8	12	144	83	0	247
PINAL	1	1	29	5	1	37
SANTA CRUZ	0	0	1	0	0	1
YAVAPAI	0	0	21	8	0	29
YUMA	3	1	10	3	0	17
Total	52	57	836	204	11	1,160

It is anticipated that the number of CC reports jointly investigated according to the protocols will continue to rise as OCWI hires to its authorized staffing levels to meet statewide demand. Continued partnerships between law enforcement, DCS, and OCWI provide opportunities for identifying and addressing systemic issues between the agencies.

There continues to be regular collaboration and communication with the agencies involved in the investigation of criminal conduct including DCS, OCWI, law enforcement, prosecution, medical, victim advocates, and Advocacy Centers to strengthen the successful outcome of the investigation and provide comprehensive services. This is accomplished through regular Multidisciplinary team meetings, case reviews, and collocation opportunities with law enforcement. Additionally, partnerships are being established in counties that do not have regular Multidisciplinary team meetings or case reviews.