



## **DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY**

### **2018 JOINT INVESTIGATION REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

**Prepared by the Office of Child Welfare Investigations**

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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 Arizona Child Abuse 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. Tracking characteristics are 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).<sup>1</sup> If during the course of an investigation, the Case Specialist determines a subsequent tracking characteristic applies, it may then be added to the case.

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<sup>1</sup> "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.

DCS Joint Investigation Reporting Requirements  
2018

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 Law Enforcement personnel.

During fiscal year 2018, the DCS Centralized Intake Hotline received a total of approximately 44,002 reports. Compared to 47,977 in fiscal year 2017, this is an 8.29 percent decrease.

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	29
COCHISE	133
COCONINO	129
GILA	50
GRAHAM	45
GREENLEE	0
LA PAZ	14
MARICOPA	4,639
MOHAVE	230
NAVAJO	114
PIMA	1,346
PINAL	450
SANTA CRUZ	25
YAVAPAI	236
YUMA	172
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,612</b>

In fiscal year 2017, there were 7,914 reports that contained a CC characteristic statewide. In fiscal year 2018, 7,612 reports contained a CC characteristic, which is a 3.8 percent decrease from the prior year. The Department continues to work to improve the recognition of criminal conduct allegations. In fiscal year 2018, OCWI embedded an analyst at the Arizona Child Abuse Hotline to provide training and quality assurance relating to allegations of criminal conduct.

Joint Investigations

The second data element reported is the number of reports jointly investigated according to the protocols (Table 2). As stated previously, 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	28
COCHISE	129
COCONINO	103
GILA	48
GRAHAM	41
GREENLEE	0
LA PAZ	13
MARICOPA	4,579
MOHAVE	194
NAVAJO	105
PIMA	1,329
PINAL	415
SANTA CRUZ	21
YAVAPAI	205
YUMA	170
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,380</b>

Table 3 below shows 99.8 percent of investigations conducted by OCWI were jointly investigated according to the protocols (Table 3). This is a decrease of 0.2 percent from last year's 100 percent. Table 3 also shows that 92.51 percent of investigations conducted by DCS investigators were jointly investigated. This is an increase of almost 8.03 percent from FY 2017 when 84.48 percent were jointly investigated. OCWI will continue to provide joint investigation trainings to all DCS staff. OCWI is also taking steps to increase its involvement in all criminal conduct reports across the State in the new fiscal year.

**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	2,976	223	2,753	92.51%
OCWI INVESTIGATIONS	4,636	9	4,627	99.80%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,612</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>7,380</b>	<b>96.95%</b>

There are several reasons a joint investigation between DCS/OCWI and law enforcement may not occur (Table 4). The remaining 117 criminal conduct cases are pending documentation. 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 to the DCS Hotline by the Victims Witness Advocate Office to report abuse or neglect of a child after police interviews and the investigation have already occurred.
- **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 that the investigation may be completed without law enforcement present. In these situations, DCS follows up with an additional report to law enforcement during the investigation if further information indicates criminal activity.
- **Law Enforcement Unavailable:** When the DCS case manager contacts law enforcement prior to the initial contact, there are times when law enforcement is unable to provide an officer or detective during the course of the investigation due to other incidents. 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**

<b>REASON THAT THE JOINT INVESTIGATION WAS NOT CONDUCTED</b>						
<b>County</b>	<b>Child Not Available</b>	<b>DCS Not Available</b>	<b>Law Enforcement Disagrees</b>	<b>Law Enforcement Unavailable</b>	<b>No Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Total</b>
APACHE	0	0	0	0	1	1
COCHISE	0	0	0	0	0	0
COCONINO	0	0	13	6	0	19
GILA	0	0	1	0	0	1
GRAHAM	0	0	1	0	0	1
GREENLEE	0	0	0	0	0	0
LA PAZ	0	0	0	1	0	1
MARICOPA	6	1	18	7	0	32
MOHAVE	0	0	17	1	0	18
NAVAJO	0	0	5	0	0	5
PIMA	2	0	2	4	0	8
PINAL	0	1	15	1	0	17
SANTA CRUZ	0	0	0	1	0	01
YAVAPAI	2	1	3	5	0	11
YUMA	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>115</b>

Continued partnerships between law enforcement and DCS/OCWI provide opportunities for identifying and addressing systemic issues between the agencies. OCWI recently brought on a Senior Law Enforcement Advisor to help strengthen relationships with our Law Enforcement partners as well as DCS investigations into criminal conduct allegations.

In 2018, the Department created a Victim Services Unit to serve as a liaison between DCS and the various prosecuting offices to ensure victims of crime are afforded the constitutionally protected rights they are entitled to while they are in DCS custody. OCWI works closely with this unit by communicating when adults have been arrested on criminal conduct investigations to ensure that our children’s victims’ rights and representation are implemented swiftly.

There continues to be regular collaboration and communication with the agencies involved in the investigation of criminal conduct. This includes DCS, OCWI, law enforcement, prosecution, medical personnel, 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 co-location opportunities with law enforcement. Additionally, partnerships are being established in counties that do not have regular multidisciplinary team meetings or case reviews.