



Arizona Department of Child Safety

Douglas A. Ducey
Governor

Gregory McKay
Director

August 15, 2016

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". The signature is stylized with large loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gregory McKay
Director

Enclosure

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



DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY

2016 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.

During fiscal year 2016, the DCS Centralized Intake Hotline received approximately 49,923 reports. This is a 3.53 percent decrease over fiscal year 2015.

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	36
COCHISE	167
COCONINO	124
GILA	76
GRAHAM	59
GREENLEE	0
LA PAZ	16
MARICOPA	5,033
MOHAVE	239
NAVAJO	135
PIMA	1,600
PINAL	546
SANTA CRUZ	42
YAVAPAI	241
YUMA	189
Total	8,503

In fiscal year 2015, statewide there were 8,092 reports that contained a CC characteristic. In fiscal year 2016, there were 8,503 reports with a CC characteristic, which is a 5.1 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	25
COCHISE	130
COCONINO	73
GILA	38
GRAHAM	38
GREENLEE	0
LA PAZ	8
MARICOPA	3,591
MOHAVE	139
NAVAJO	79
PIMA	1,130
PINAL	315
SANTA CRUZ	32
YAVAPAI	156
YUMA	149
Total	5,903

The table below illustrates that 99.1 percent of investigations conducted by OCWI were jointly investigated according to the protocols. This is an increase of 4.6 percent from last year's 94.5 percent. 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	5,792	1,026	3,216	55.5%
OCWI INVESTIGATIONS	2,711	24	2,687	99.1%
Total	8,503	1,050	5,903	69.4%

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	1	0	7	1	0	9
COCHISE	2	2	15	6	0	25
COCONINO	2	1	17	11	1	32
GILA	1	0	3	1	0	5
GRAHAM	0	0	11	2	0	13
GREENLEE	0	0	0	0	0	0
LA PAZ	0	0	1	1	0	2
MARICOPA	41	27	384	55	1	508
MOHAVE	1	2	33	8	0	44
NAVAJO	0	1	19	6	0	26
PIMA	11	31	150	48	0	240
PINAL	7	2	62	10	0	81
SANTA CRUZ	0	0	2	0	0	2
YAVAPAI	0	1	27	15	0	43
YUMA	3	3	8	6	0	20
Total	69	70	739	170	2	1,050

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.