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Making and Screening Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect: Summary of State Laws

All 50 States, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have laws and policies that specify procedures for making and responding to reports of suspected child abuse or neglect. Mandated reporters are required by States to make an immediate report when they suspect or know of abusive or neglectful situations.¹ In all jurisdictions, the initial report may be made orally to either the child protective services (CPS) agency or a law enforcement agency. In 20 States, American Samoa, Guam, and Puerto Rico, a mandated

¹ See Child Welfare Information Gateway's Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect: www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm

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www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/repproc.cfm

To find statute information for a particular State, go to

www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/state/index.cfm

To find information on all the States and territories, order a copy of the full-length PDF by calling 800.394.3366 or 703.385.7565, or download it at

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reporter is required to submit a written report after he or she has made an oral report.² In eight States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, a written report is required only when requested by the department or agency that received the initial report.³

Content of Reports

Most States specify in statute the types of information that should be included in a report of suspected abuse or neglect. The reporter will be asked to provide as much information about the child's situation as he or she can, including the names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other persons responsible for the child's care, the child's age, conditions in the child's home environment, the nature and extent of the child's injuries, and information about other children in the same environment.

Special Reporting Procedures

Some States also specify reporting procedures for special situations, such as the suspicious death of a child and cases of substance-exposed infants.

Specific reporting procedures to be followed in the event of a suspicious child death have been enacted in approximately 31 States, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico.⁴ Typically, the statutes instruct a mandatory reporter to report a suspicious child death to a medical examiner or coroner. For States that do not have specific reporting procedures for suspicious child deaths, standard child abuse reporting procedures apply.

The Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requires States to have policies and procedures to address the

² Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Washington.

³ Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Ohio, and West Virginia.

⁴ The word approximately is used to stress the fact that States frequently amend their laws. This information is current through January 2009. The 31 States that provide procedures for reporting suspicious child deaths are Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

needs of substance-exposed infants.⁵ Approximately 18 States and the District of Columbia have specific reporting procedures for cases of suspected substance-exposed infants.⁶ In general, these statutes make drug exposure or a positive drug test alone the basis for reporting child abuse or neglect. Standard reporting procedures apply in those States that statutorily define infant drug exposure as child abuse and neglect but have no specific reporting procedures for substance-exposed infants.⁷

Screening Reports

The laws and policies in all jurisdictions specify procedures for the initial response required by the agencies receiving the reports. The ultimate purpose of the reporting system is to ensure the child's safety and well-being.⁸ In most States, the agency that receives a report of suspected child abuse or neglect will first screen the report to determine whether it meets the criteria for acceptance. For acceptance, the report must concern actions that meet the statutory definition of child abuse or neglect in that State.⁹ Typically, this will involve situations of harm or threatened harm to a child committed by a parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's care. Reports that do not meet the statutory criteria are screened out.

Reports that meet the criteria are screened in and accepted for investigation, usually by the State CPS agency. All States require CPS to initiate an investigation in a timely manner, generally within 72 hours. In addition, most States require investigations to be initiated immediately, in as little as 2 hours and no longer than 24 hours, when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is in imminent danger.

The approaches used to screen reports vary from State to State, but nearly all States utilize a type of safety assessment to determine which reports require immediate responses.

⁵ 42 U.S.C. 5106a(b)(2)(A)(ii).

⁶ Arizona, California, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, Oklahoma, Utah, Virginia, and Washington.

⁷ See Child Welfare Information Gateway's Parental Drug Use as Child Abuse: www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/drugexposed.cfm

⁸ For an overview of the process, see Child Welfare Information Gateway's How the Child Welfare System Works: www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/cpswork.cfm

⁹ See Child Welfare Information Gateway's Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect: www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/define.cfm

Approximately 30 States and the District of Columbia categorize reports based on the level of risk of harm to the child and assign different response times.¹⁰ Eleven States use differential response systems in which more serious cases are assigned to be investigated, and less serious cases are assigned to receive family assessments.¹¹

Investigations may be conducted by the child protective agency (CPS), a law enforcement agency, or cooperatively by both agencies; family assessments are conducted by CPS. In approximately 15 States and the Virgin Islands, cases that involve physical or sexual abuse or possible criminal conduct may be investigated by a law enforcement agency.¹² In nine States, reports are referred to law enforcement agencies when the alleged perpetrator is a person other than the parent or other caregiver.¹³ Most States also require cross-reporting among professional entities. Typically, reports are shared among social services agencies, law enforcement agencies, and prosecutors' offices.¹⁴

This publication is a product of the State Statutes Series prepared by Child Welfare Information Gateway. While every attempt has been made to be as complete as possible, additional information on these topics may be in other sections of a State's code as well as agency regulations, case law, and informal practices and procedures.

¹⁰ Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, and Utah.

¹¹ Arizona, Delaware, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nevada, Oklahoma, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, and Wyoming.

¹² Alaska, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, North Dakota, Texas, Washington, and Wyoming.

¹³ Alaska, Connecticut, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, New Mexico, and Texas.

¹⁴ See Child Welfare Information Gateway's Cross-Reporting Among Responders to Child Abuse and Neglect: www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/xreporting.cfm

Alabama**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ala. Code § 26-14-3**

All mandated reporters are required to immediately make an oral report when they know or suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse or neglect. The oral report shall be followed by a written report.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ala. Code § 26-14-5**

The report shall contain, if known:

- The name and location of the child
- The names and addresses of the child's parents or caregivers
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries
- Any evidence of previous injuries
- Any other information that might establish the cause of the child's injuries
- The identity of the person alleged to be responsible for the child's injuries

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

The issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ala. Code §§ 26-14-6.1; 26-14-7; Ala. Admin. Code Ch. 660, §§ 5-34.03; 5-34.04; 5-34.05; 5-34.10

The duty and responsibility for the investigation of reports of suspected child abuse or neglect shall be as follows:

- Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect involving disciplinary or corporal punishment committed in a public or private school or kindergarten shall be investigated by law enforcement agencies.
- Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect committed in a State-operated child residential facility shall be investigated by law enforcement agencies.
- All other reports of suspected child abuse and neglect shall be investigated by the Department of Human Resources.

The department shall make a thorough investigation promptly upon either the oral or written report. The primary purpose of such an investigation shall be the protection of the child. The investigation, to the extent that is reasonably possible, shall include:

- The nature, extent and cause of the child abuse or neglect
- The identity of the responsible person
- The names and conditions of other children in the home
- An evaluation of the parents or person responsible for the care of the child
- The home environment and the relationship of the child or children to the parents or other persons responsible for their care
- All other data deemed pertinent

The county Department of Human Resources shall make a complete written report of the investigation, together with its recommendations.

In regulation:

Reports of child abuse or neglect are received by a duly constituted authority that may include a chief of police, sheriff, the department, or any person, organization, or agency authorized and designated by the department to receive such reports. Once a report has been received, it must be investigated, and the investigation is known by DHR as the child abuse/neglect initial assessment.

The following criteria must be considered at intake when determining which reports will be investigated first:

- The allegations in the report
- The seriousness of the incident(s)
- The child's vulnerability (i.e., capacity for self-protection) and the potential risk of serious harm to the child

DHR's response time is the timeframe within which in-person initial contact shall be made with the children who are allegedly abused or neglected (i.e., at risk of serious harm) and all other children in the home.

- Child welfare staff shall respond immediately, i.e., as soon as possible after a report is received, but no later than 12 hours from receipt of the intake information, when the intake information indicates serious harm will likely occur within 24 hours.
- For situations in which an immediate response is not required, child welfare staff shall respond as quickly as the intake information warrants but no later than 5 calendar days.
- Child welfare staff must make contact with all other children who live in the home of the reported child as soon as the intake information warrants, but not later than 15 calendar days.

All reports must be cleared through the central registry to determine whether there have been previous reports involving the children, their family members, and all persons allegedly responsible for abuse or neglect.

At the conclusion of the assessment, a decision regarding a family's need for ongoing protective services shall be made. This decision may be to discontinue DHR services as no protective services are needed, to provide ongoing casework services, to initiate court action, or to make a referral to another agency for services. The decision is to be made with the parents' or primary caregiver's participation to the extent feasible. In any event, the parents or primary caregivers are entitled to an explanation of the action taken and the reasons for the action.

Alaska

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Alaska Stat. §§ 47.17.020; 47.17.023

Mandated reporters shall immediately report to the Department of Health and Social Services when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has suffered harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

A person providing, either privately or commercially, film, photo, or visual or printed matter processing, production, or finishing services or computer installation, repair, or other services, or Internet or cellular telephone services who, in the process of providing those services, observes a film, photo, picture, computer file, image, or other matter and has reasonable cause to suspect that it visually depicts a child engaged in sexual conduct described in § 11.41.455(a) shall immediately report the observation to the nearest law enforcement agency and provide the law enforcement agency with all information known about the nature and origin of the film, photo, picture, computer file, image, or other matter.

Content of Reports

Citation: Alaska Stat. § 47.17.025

The department's written report shall include:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents
- The age and sex of the child
- The nature and extent of harm to the child from abuse
- The name, age, and address of the person believed to be responsible for the harm to the child
- Information that may be helpful in establishing the identity of the person responsible for the abuse

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Alaska Stat. §§ 47.17.020; 47.17.025; 47.17.030

The department shall immediately notify the nearest law enforcement agency if the department concludes that the harm was caused by a person who is not responsible for the child's welfare, or involves possible criminal conduct or abuse or neglect that results in the need for medical treatment of the child.

A law enforcement agency shall immediately notify the department of the receipt of a report of harm to a child from abuse. Upon receipt from any source of a report of harm to a child from abuse, the department shall notify the Department of Law and investigate the report and, within 72 hours of the receipt of the report, shall provide a written report of its investigation of the harm to a child from abuse to the Department of Law for review.

The department may, upon receipt of the report, refer the matter to the appropriate health or social services agency if the child resides within the boundaries of a local government. For cases not referred to an agency of a local government, the department shall, for each report received, investigate and take action, in accordance with law, that may be necessary to prevent further harm to the child or to ensure the proper care and protection of the child.

A local government health or social services agency receiving a report of harm shall, for each report received, investigate and take action, in accordance with law, that may be necessary to prevent further harm to the child or to ensure the proper care and protection of the child. In addition, the agency receiving a report of harm shall forward a copy of its report of the investigation, including information the department requires by regulation, to the department.

American Samoa**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Code § 45.2002(a), (c)**

Mandated reporters who have reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the child protection services (CPS) agency.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Code § 45.2010**

The mandated reporter shall submit a written report that contains the following:

- The name, address, age, sex, religion, and race of the child
- The name and address of the person responsible for the child
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of previous abuse or neglect
- The names and addresses of the person or persons responsible for the abuse or neglect
- Family composition
- The name, address, and occupation of the person making the report
- Any action taken by the reporting source
- Any other information that might be helpful

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Ann. Code § 45.2003**

A mandated reporter who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect shall report immediately to the Department of Public Safety.

The department shall investigate and report its findings to the attorney general and CPS.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Ann. Code §§ 45.2010; 45.2011**

A report of known or suspected child abuse or neglect is immediately made to the Department of Public Safety by a written report prepared by a mandated reporter, if so requested by the receiving CPS agency. The receiving agency will forward a copy of its own report to the central registry on forms supplied by the registry. If at any time a report of suspected child abuse or neglect is made to the CPS agency, the Department of Public Safety must be notified. If a report of suspected child abuse or neglect is made to the department, the agency must be notified. Copies of the report of known or suspected child abuse or neglect are immediately transmitted by the receiving agency to the attorney general's office and to the department.

The CPS agency shall make a thorough investigation promptly upon receiving either the oral or the written report. The primary purpose of the investigation is the protection of the child. The investigation shall include the nature, extent, and cause of the child abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect; the identity of the person responsible; the names and conditions of other children in the home; an evaluation of the parents or persons responsible for the care of the child; and all other pertinent data.

If, before the evaluation is complete, the opinion of the investigators is that immediate removal is necessary to protect children from further abuse or neglect, the court, on petition by the investigators and with good cause shown, shall issue an order for temporary removal and custody.

Arizona**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Rev. Stat. § 13-3620**

Any mandated reporter who reasonably believes that a minor is the victim of abuse or neglect shall report immediately to a peace officer or child protective services in the Department of Economic Security. The report may be made by telephone or in person and must be followed by a written report within 72 hours.

Content of Reports**Citation: Rev. Stat. § 13-3620**

The reports shall contain:

- The names and addresses of the minor and the minor's parents or the person having custody
- The minor's age
- The nature and extent of any injuries or neglect, including any evidence of previous injuries or neglect
- Any other information that might be helpful

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants**Citation: Rev. Stat. § 13-3620**

A health-care professional who, after a routine newborn physical assessment, believes that a newborn infant may be affected by the presence of alcohol or drugs shall immediately make a report to child protective services (CPS).

Screening Reports**Citation: Rev. Stat. § 13-3620(H); Admin. Code §§ R6-5-5502; 5504; 5505; 5506; 5507**

When reports are received by a peace officer, the officer shall immediately notify CPS. When CPS receives a report, it shall immediately notify a peace officer in the appropriate jurisdiction.

In regulation: When the hotline receives a call, staff shall determine the type of alleged maltreatment, whether to classify the call as a report for investigation, and check the central registry for prior reports on the same persons.

If a call is screened in as a report, the hotline staff shall gather additional information using standardized questions, determine whether there are aggravating or mitigating factors, and assign each report a priority code. Staff shall enter the report into the central registry and immediately transmit the report to a local office.

Priority codes and initial response times are:

- Priority 1 High Risk:
 - Standard Response: 2 hours
 - Mitigated Response: 24 hours
- Priority 2 Moderate Risk:
 - Standard Response: 48 hours
 - Aggravated Response: 24 hours
 - Mitigated Response: 72 hours
- Priority 3 Low Risk:
 - Standard Response: 72 hours
 - Aggravated Response: 48 hours
 - Mitigated Response: 72 hours excluding weekends and Arizona State holidays
- Priority 4 Potential Risk:
 - Standard Response: 7 days
 - Aggravated Response: 72 hours excluding weekends and State holidays

To comply with the priority response time, entities other than CPS, such as law enforcement or emergency personnel, may initially respond to a report.

Upon receipt of a report, a CPS unit supervisor shall assign the case for a field investigation, alternative investigation, or alternative response, such as referral to Family Builders.

An alternative investigation consists of contact with a mandatory reporter who is currently involved with the family. The information will determine if the child and other children residing in the home are current victims of maltreatment or at risk of imminent harm. If results indicate that an alleged victim is at risk of harm, the case shall be immediately assigned for field investigation.

Arkansas**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Code § 12-12-507**

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect a child has been maltreated shall report immediately to the child abuse hotline by telephone call, facsimile transmission, or online report.

Facsimile transmission and online reporting may be used in nonemergency situations by an identified reporter who provides the following contact information:

- Name and phone number
- In the case of online reporting, the email address of the identified reporter

A mandated reporter who wishes to remain anonymous shall make the report through the child abuse hotline toll-free telephone system.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Code § 12-12-507**

For an investigation to commence, the report must contain sufficient information to identify and locate the child or the family.

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Ann. Code § 12-12-507(a)**

Any person with reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of maltreatment may immediately notify the child abuse hotline.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Ann. Code §§ 12-12-507; 12-12-509**

The child abuse hotline shall accept a report when the allegations, if true, would constitute child maltreatment as defined by law, and sufficient identifying information is provided to identify and locate the child or the family. The hotline shall accept a report of physical abuse if any specified intentional or knowing acts are alleged to occur, but the report shall not be determined to be true unless the child suffered an injury as the result of the act.

The hotline shall accept a report of neglect only if the reporter is a nurse, physician, or other medical personnel, and the reporter has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to neglect as defined by law.

The Department of Health and Human Services shall cause an investigation to be made upon receiving initial notification of suspected child maltreatment. All investigations shall begin within 72 hours, unless the report alleges severe maltreatment, then the investigation shall begin within 24 hours.

At the initial time of contact with the alleged offender, the investigator shall advise the alleged offender of the allegations made against the alleged offender in a manner that is consistent with the laws protecting the rights of the person who made the report.

California

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Penal Code § 11166

A mandated reporter who knows or reasonably suspects that a child has been a victim of abuse or neglect shall make an initial report immediately by telephone and prepare and send, fax, or electronically transmit a follow-up written report within 36 hours.

Any commercial film and photographic print processor who has knowledge of or observes any film, photograph, videotape, negative, or slide depicting a child under age 16 engaged in an act of sexual conduct shall report the instance of suspected child abuse to the law enforcement agency immediately, or as soon as practicably possible, by telephone and shall prepare and send, fax, or electronically submit a written report of it with a copy of the film, photograph, videotape, negative, or slide attached within 36 hours.

Content of Reports

Citation: Penal Code § 11167

Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect shall include:

- The name, business address, and telephone number of the mandated reporter
- The capacity that makes the person a mandated reporter
- The information that gave rise to the reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect and the source or sources of that information

If a report is made, the following information, if known, shall also be included in the report:

- The child's name, address, present location, and, if applicable, school, grade, and class
- The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the child's parents or guardians
- The name, address, telephone number, and other relevant personal information about the person or persons who might have abused or neglected the child

The mandated reporter shall make a report even if some of this information is not known or is uncertain to him or her.

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Penal Code §§ 11166; 11166.1

The agency shall be notified and a report prepared and sent, faxed, or electronically submitted even if the child has died, regardless of whether or not the possible abuse was a contributing factor to the death, and even if suspected child abuse was discovered during an autopsy.

The agency shall notify within 24 hours the licensing office that has jurisdiction over a facility when a child has died while living at or enrolled in that facility.

Substance-Exposed Infants

Citation: Penal Code §§ 11165.13; 11166

A positive toxicology screen at the time of the delivery of an infant is not in and of itself a sufficient basis for reporting child abuse or neglect. However, any indication of maternal substance abuse shall lead to an assessment of the needs of the mother and child pursuant to § 123605 of the Health and Safety Code. If other factors are present that indicate risk to a child, then a report shall be made.

A report based on risk to a child that relates solely to the inability of the parent to provide the child with regular care due to the parent's substance abuse shall be made only to a county welfare or probation department, and not to a law enforcement agency.

Screening Reports

Citation: Penal Code § 11167; Welf. & Inst. Code § 16504; DSS Manual Ch. 31, §§ 100, 105, 110, 115

At the time of the initial contact with the individual who is subject to the investigation, the agency shall advise the individual of the complaints or allegations against him or her, in a manner that is consistent with laws protecting the identity of the reporter.

Any child reported to the county welfare department as endangered by abuse, neglect, or exploitation shall be eligible for initial intake and evaluation of risk services. Each county welfare department shall maintain and operate a 24-hour response system. An immediate in-person response shall be made by a county welfare department social worker in emergency situations. An in-person response is not required when the county welfare department, based upon an evaluation of risk, determines that an in-person response is not appropriate. An evaluation of risk includes collateral contacts, a review of previous referrals, and other relevant information.

In regulation: The social worker shall immediately initiate and complete the Emergency Response Protocol process to determine whether an in-person investigation is required. The social worker is not required to complete the protocol if he or she has already determined that an in-person investigation is required, such as in cases of obvious immediate danger or law enforcement referrals. The protocol requires gathering the following information:

- Identifying information about the abused child, each adult in the household, the alleged perpetrator, and each minor child in the family
- A description of the alleged incident, including risk factors
- Child and caregiver characteristics
- Family factors, including relationships and any history of abuse or neglect

The decision whether or not an in-person investigation is needed shall include the following:

- The social worker has been able to locate the child and/or the family.
- There exists an open case and the problem is being adequately addressed.
- The allegation meets the legal definition of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- The caregiver of the child is the alleged perpetrator or was negligent in allowing, or unable to prevent, access to the child.

If the social worker determines that an in-person investigation is necessary, he or she shall initiate the investigation immediately or within 10 calendar days, as appropriate. An immediate investigation is required when:

- There is evidence that the child is in imminent danger of physical pain, injury, disability, severe emotional harm, or death.
- The law enforcement agency making the referral states that the child is at immediate risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- The social worker determines that the child referred by the law enforcement agency is at immediate risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Colorado

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Rev. Stat. §§ 19-3-304; 19-3-307

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect shall report immediately to the Department of Human Services or a law enforcement agency. The reporter shall promptly follow up with a written report.

A film processor shall report any suspicion of sexual abuse to a law enforcement agency, immediately by telephone, and shall prepare and send a written report of it with a copy of the film, photograph, videotape, negative, or slide attached within 36 hours of receiving the information concerning the incident.

Content of Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 19-3-307

The department's report, when possible, shall include the following information:

- The name, address, age, sex, and race of the child
- The name and address of the person alleged responsible for the suspected abuse
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of previous cases of abuse or neglect of the child or the child's siblings
- Family composition
- The source of the report, including the name, address, and occupation of the person making the report
- Any action taken by the reporting source
- Any other information that might be helpful

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 19-3-305

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect shall report that fact immediately to a local law enforcement agency and the appropriate medical examiner.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. §§ 19-3-307; 19-3-308

The county department shall submit a report of confirmed child abuse or neglect within 60 days of receipt of the report to the State department in a manner prescribed by the State department. A copy of the report of known or suspected child abuse or neglect shall be transmitted immediately by the county department to the district attorney's office and to the local law enforcement agency.

The county department shall respond immediately upon receipt of any report of a known or suspected incident of intrafamilial abuse or neglect to assess the abuse involved and the appropriate response to the report. The assessment shall be in accordance with rules adopted by the State board of social services (see Code of Colorado Rules, 12 CCR 2509-4) to determine the risk of harm to such child and the appropriate response to such risks.

Appropriate responses shall include, but are not limited to, screening reports that do not require further investigation, providing appropriate intervention services, pursuing reports that require further investigation, and conducting immediate investigations.

Connecticut**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Gen. Stat. §§ 17a-101a; 17a-101b; 17a-101c**

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected shall make an oral report, by telephone or in person, not later than 12 hours after the reporter has cause to suspect. The report shall be made to the Commissioner of Children and Families or a law enforcement agency.

Within 48 hours of making an oral report, a mandated reporter shall submit a written report to the Commissioner of Children and Families. When a mandated reporter is a member of the staff of a public or private institution or facility that provides care for such child, or a public or private school, he or she shall also submit a copy of the written report to the person in charge of such institution, school, or facility. In the case of a report concerning a school employee, a copy of the written report shall also be sent by the person in charge of such institution, school, or facility to the Commissioner of Education. In the case of an employee of a facility or institution that provides care for a child that is licensed by the State, a copy of the written report shall also be sent by the mandated reporter to the executive head of the State licensing agency.

Content of Reports**Citation: Gen. Stat. § 17a-101d**

All oral and written reports shall contain, if known:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other persons responsible for the child's care
- The age and gender of the child
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries, maltreatment, or neglect
- The approximate date and time of the child's injuries, maltreatment, or neglect
- Any information about previous injuries or maltreatment to the child or the child's siblings
- The circumstances in which the maltreatment came to be known to the reporter
- The name of the person suspected to be responsible for the maltreatment
- Whatever action, if any, was taken to assist the child

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Gen. Stat. § 17a-101b**

If the Commissioner of Children and Families receives a report that a child has died, the commissioner shall, within 12 hours of receipt of the report, notify the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Gen. Stat. § 17a-101g

Upon receiving a report of child abuse or neglect in which the alleged perpetrator is a person who is responsible for the child's health, welfare, or care, given access to the child, or entrusted with the care of the child, the commissioner shall cause the report to be classified and evaluated immediately. If the report contains sufficient information to warrant an investigation, best efforts shall be made to commence an investigation of a report concerning an imminent risk of physical harm to a child or other emergency within 2 hours of receipt of the report, and to commence an investigation of all other reports within 72 hours.

If the report is a report of child abuse or neglect in which the alleged perpetrator is not a person specified above, the commissioner shall refer the report to the appropriate local law enforcement authority. If the commissioner determines that abuse or neglect has occurred, the commissioner shall also determine whether there is an identifiable person responsible for the abuse or neglect, and that person poses a risk to the health, safety, or well-being of children and should be recommended by the commissioner for placement on the child abuse and neglect registry. If the commissioner makes such a determination, the commissioner shall issue notice of a recommended finding to the person suspected to be responsible for such abuse or neglect.

If the child abuse or neglect resulted in or involves the death of a child, the risk of serious physical injury or emotional harm of a child, serious physical harm of a child, the arrest of a person due to abuse or neglect of a child, or sexual abuse of a child, entry of the finding may be made on the child abuse or neglect registry.

If the commissioner has probable cause to believe that the child or any other child in the household is in imminent risk of physical harm from the child's surroundings and that immediate removal from such surroundings is necessary to ensure the child's safety, the commissioner shall authorize any employee of the department or any law enforcement officer to remove the child and any other child similarly situated from such surroundings without the consent of the child's parent or guardian.

Delaware

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Code Tit. 16, § 904

Any report required by the reporting laws shall be made to the Division of Child Protective Services in the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families. An immediate oral report shall be made by telephone or otherwise.

Content of Reports

Citation: Ann. Code Tit. 16, §§ 904; 906

Contents of any written report shall be in accordance with rules and regulations of the division.

When a written report is made, the division will contact the reporter within 48 hours to ensure that full information has been received and to obtain additional information, medical records, or both.

The investigation shall gather pertinent information, including, but not limited to:

- The nature, extent, and cause of the abuse or neglect
- The identity of the alleged perpetrator
- The names and condition of other children and adults in the home
- The home environment
- The relationship of the subject child to the parents or other persons responsible for the child's care
- Any indication of incidents of physical violence against any other household or family member

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Code Tit. 16, §§ 905; 906; Code of Regs. CDR 9-300-303

The division will maintain a 24-hour toll-free telephone line for accepting reports. Although reports may be made anonymously, the division shall, in all cases, after obtaining relevant information regarding alleged abuse or neglect, request the name and address of any person making a report. When a written report is made by a mandatory reporter, the division shall contact the reporter within 48 hours of the receipt of the report in order to ensure that full information has been received and to obtain any additional information or medical records, or both, that may be pertinent.

Upon receipt of a report, the division shall check the internal information system to determine whether previous reports have been made regarding actual or suspected abuse or neglect of the subject child, any siblings, family members, or the alleged perpetrator.

The division may investigate any report, but shall conduct an investigation involving all reports that involve the commission or attempt to commit a crime against a child by a person responsible for the care, custody, and control of the child. The division will contact the law enforcement agency and provide the agency with a detailed description of the report. The agency will assist the division with the investigation and promptly conduct its own criminal investigation.

In a family assessment and services approach, the division shall assess the service needs of the family from information gathered from the family and other sources and shall identify and provide services for families where it is determined that the child is at risk of abuse or neglect. The division shall:

- Commence an immediate investigation if at any time during the family assessment it determines that an investigation is required or is otherwise appropriate
- Conduct a family assessment on reports initially referred for an investigation, if it is determined that a complete investigation is not required

In regulation: The case finding may indicate that it is substantiated or unsubstantiated. A person who has been substantiated for abuse or neglect must be entered on the Child Protection Registry at one of four designated Child Protection Levels related to the risk of future harm to children:

- Child Protection Level I: Low risk
- Child Protection Level II: Moderate risk
- Child Protection Level III: High risk
- Child Protection Level IV: Highest risk

If the division determines from its investigation not to substantiate the person for abuse or neglect, the person may not be entered on the Child Protection Registry for that reported incident.

District of Columbia**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Code §§ 4-1321.02; 4-1321.03**

A mandated reporter who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect of a child shall immediately report to the police department or the Child and Family Services Agency.

Each person required to make a report of a known or suspected neglected child shall:

- Immediately make an oral report of the case to the Child and Family Services Agency or the police department
- Make a written report of the case if requested by the agency or police or if the abuse involves drug-related activity

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Code § 4-1321.03**

The report shall include, but need not be limited to, the following information if it is known to the person making the report:

- The name, age, sex, and address of the child, the child's siblings, other children in the home, and the parents or other persons responsible for the child's care
- The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect and any previous abuse or neglect
- Any other information that might be helpful
- If the source of the report is a mandated reporter, the identity and occupation of the source, how to contact the source, and any action taken by the source concerning the child

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants**Citation: Ann. Code § 4-1321.02(d)**

A licensed health professional, law enforcement officer, or humane officer shall report immediately in writing to the Child and Family Services Agency when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is abused as a result of inadequate care, control, or subsistence in the home environment due to exposure to drug-related activity.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Code §§ 4-1301.04; 4-1303.03b

The agency shall conduct a thorough investigation of a report of suspected child abuse or neglect to protect the health and safety of the child. The investigation shall commence immediately upon receiving a report indicating that the child's safety or health is in immediate danger; or as soon as possible, and at least within 24 hours, for any report not involving immediate danger to the child.

The initial phase of the investigation shall be completed within 24 hours and include notification and coordination with the police department when there is indication of a crime, including sexual or serious physical abuse, and also include:

- Seeing the child and all other children in the household outside of the presence of the caregivers
- Conducting an interview with the child's caregivers
- Speaking with the source of the report
- Assessing the safety and risk of harm to the child from abuse or neglect in the place where the child lives
- Deciding on the safety of the child and of other children in the household or in the care or custody of the person or persons alleged to be abusing or neglecting the child

The agency shall establish a single reporting line to receive reports of suspected child abuse and neglect. The reporting line shall be maintained by the agency with the assistance and support of the Metropolitan Police Department and shall be staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Upon receiving reports on the single reporting line, the agency shall:

- Review and screen the reports to collect relevant information from the source of the report
- Transmit the reports to the entity with responsibility under the laws of the District of Columbia, or the appropriate governmental entity in another jurisdiction, for investigation or provision of services

Florida

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Stat. § 39.201; Admin. Code 65C-29.002

Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, or that a child is in need of supervision and care and has no parent, legal custodian, or responsible adult relative immediately known and available to provide supervision and care shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the Department of Children and Family Services in the manner prescribed below.

Each report shall be made immediately to the department's central abuse hotline. Reports may be made on the single statewide toll-free telephone number or via fax or web-based report.

The names of reporters shall be entered into the record of the report but shall be held confidential and exempt as provided in § 39.202.

In regulation: Professionally mandated reporters are required to provide their names to the abuse hotline when making a report of alleged child maltreatment. A report shall be accepted if it meets statutory criteria for acceptance even if the reporters wish to remain anonymous. Nonprofessionally mandated reporters are not required to provide their names for the acceptance of a report.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. §§ 39.201; 39.301**

The department shall voice-record all incoming or outgoing calls that are received or placed by the central abuse hotline that relate to suspected or known child abuse, neglect, or abandonment. The department shall maintain an electronic copy of each fax and web-based report. The recording or electronic copy of each fax and web-based report shall become a part of the record of the report.

The child protective investigation shall gather the following information:

- The composition of the family or household, including the name, address, date of birth, Social Security number, sex, and race of each child named in the report; any siblings or other children in the same household or in the care of the same adults; the parents, legal custodians, or caregivers; and any other adults in the same household
- Indications that any child in the family or household has been abused, abandoned, or neglected; the nature and extent of present or prior injuries, abuse, or neglect, and any evidence thereof
- The person or persons apparently responsible for the abuse, abandonment, or neglect, including the name, address, date of birth, Social Security number, sex, and race of each such person

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Ann. Stat. § 39.201**

Any person required to report or investigate cases of suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child died as a result of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect shall report his or her suspicion to the appropriate medical examiner. The medical examiner shall accept the report for investigation and shall report his or her findings, in writing, to the local law enforcement agency, the appropriate State attorney, and the department. Autopsy reports maintained by the medical examiner are not subject to the confidentiality requirements provided for in § 39.202.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Stat. §§ 39.201; 39.301; Admin. Code 65C-29.002; 65C-29.003

The Department of Children and Family Services shall be capable of receiving and investigating, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, reports of known or suspected child abuse. If it appears that the immediate safety or well-being of a child is endangered, that the family may flee, or the child will be unavailable for purposes of conducting a child protective investigation, or that the facts otherwise so warrant, the department shall commence an investigation immediately, regardless of the time of day or night. In all other cases, a child protective investigation shall be commenced within 24 hours.

If the report is of an instance of known or suspected child abuse by someone other than a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, the report or call shall be immediately electronically transferred to the appropriate county sheriff's office by the central abuse hotline.

Upon receiving a report, the central abuse hotline shall determine if the report requires an immediate onsite protective investigation. For reports requiring an immediate onsite protective investigation, the central abuse hotline shall immediately notify the department.

The department shall immediately forward allegations of criminal conduct to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Upon receiving a written report of an allegation of criminal conduct from the department, the law enforcement agency shall review the information in the report to determine whether a criminal investigation is warranted. If the law enforcement agency accepts the case for criminal investigation, it shall coordinate its investigative activities with the department, when feasible.

The person responsible for the investigation shall determine whether the report is complete. If the investigator finds that the report is incomplete, he or she shall return it without delay to the person or agency originating the report to request additional information in order to complete the report. If the report is complete, but the interests of the child and the public will be best served by providing the child care or other treatment voluntarily accepted by the child and the parents or legal custodians, the protective investigator may refer the parent or legal custodian and child for such care or other treatment. If it is determined that the child is in need of the protection and supervision of the court, the department shall file a petition for dependency.

In regulation: Upon commencement of the investigation, the child protective investigator shall inform all subjects of the report as well as the parent, guardian, legal custodian or other person responsible for the child's welfare, including an adult household member of the following:

- That a report has been received alleging child abuse, neglect or abandonment
- The names of the investigators and identifying credentials
- The purpose of the investigation
- The right to review the investigative records, with the exception of reporter information
- The right to have an attorney present during any interviews
- General information about outcomes and services related to the department's or sheriff's office response and investigation that would assist the family to better understand what they may expect from the investigation
- The commitment of the department or sheriff's office to the safety of the child and the involvement of the family to the fullest extent possible in decisions regarding service planning and provision
- The right of the parent or legal custodian to be involved to the fullest extent possible in determining the nature of the allegation and the nature of any identified problem

Georgia**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Code §§ 19-7-5; 16-12-100**

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused shall report or cause reports of that abuse to be made as provided in this section. An oral report shall be made immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused, by telephone or otherwise and followed by a report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Resources, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.

A person who, in the course of processing or producing visual or printed matter either privately or commercially, has reasonable cause to believe that the visual or printed matter submitted for processing or producing depicts a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct shall immediately report such incident, or cause a report to be made, to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation or the law enforcement agency for the county in which such matter is submitted.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Code § 19-7-5**

The report shall contain, if possible:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or caregivers
- The child's age, if known
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of previous injuries
- Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries and the identity of the perpetrator

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Code § 19-7-5; DHR Proc. Man. §§ 2103.4; 2103.14; 2103.16; 2103.18

If a report of child abuse is made to the child welfare agency or independently discovered by the agency, and the agency has reasonable cause to believe the report is true or the report contains any allegation or evidence of child abuse, then the agency shall immediately notify the appropriate police authority or the district attorney.

In regulation: County departments have responsibility to screen every report received and to assure that timely and appropriate response is initiated. All reports are screened for suitability for CPS investigation, including a thorough history check, and to determine, for a report that meets the criteria for CPS, the response time, according to the following:

- The report is severe and the investigation will begin immediately or within 24 hours. All investigations of abuse or neglect to foster children are included in this category.
- The report is of a less severe nature, and the investigation will begin within 5 days.
- The report does not meet CPS requirements, and no investigation will occur.
- The report does not meet current CPS requirements; however, there have been two or more previous reports on this family, and the report will be assigned for investigation.

Situations that always require an immediate to 24-hour response include:

- The child requires immediate medical attention.
- A child under age 13 alleges maltreatment and expresses fear of returning home.
- A child has a disability or lack of capacity, and the perpetrator will have access to the child within the next 5 days.
- The parent demonstrates physical, emotional, or intellectual instability.
- The nonperpetrating parent is not responding appropriately or protecting the child.
- The child is in severe danger of immediate harm.
- A report from medical personnel indicates that a mother has given birth to an infant, and either the mother or the infant has tested positive for illegal drugs and/or alcohol.
- The child has severe or multiple bruises or welts.
- A child, who is age 8 or younger, who is limited by a disability or lack of capacity, or who is otherwise unable to care for himself or herself, has been left alone.
- The report alleges current sexual abuse involving a child who remains accessible to the alleged perpetrator.
- There is a pattern of ongoing abuse and/or neglect.
- A report contains a self-referral from a parent who states that he or she is unable to cope, feels that he or she will hurt or kill the child, or desires a child's immediate removal and placement away from home.
- A report alleges cruel, callous, or bizarre punishment by the parent.
- A report alleges that the parent of a child is behaving in a bizarre or delusional manner.
- The child presents with an observable emotional or mental health condition that is attributable to his or her emotional maltreatment by the parent.

Any report of conditions or suspicions that indicate allegations of possible child maltreatment will be assigned for investigation. Many reports that can be considered for screening out involve:

- Incidents of child maltreatment that are 6 months old or older
- Reports that are of a criminal nature by a person other than a parent, and negligence on the part of the parent for allowing a child to be exposed to the situation is ruled out
- A report of statutory rape when there is evidence that the parent has protected the child
- Three previous reports of the same allegation made by the same reporter and investigations of these reports revealed no evidence of maltreatment
- An unborn child
- Juvenile delinquency, including truancy, that does not contain a separate allegation of maltreatment
- Other situations where the only indicated concerns contain absolutely no report of any abuse or neglect, e.g., some poverty, educational, or custody issues

Guam**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Code Tit. 19, § 13203(a)**

Mandated reporters shall report cases of suspected abuse to child protective services (CPS) or the police immediately by telephone and follow up in writing within 48 hours. Oral reports shall be made to CPS or to the police department.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Code Tit. 19, § 13203(c)**

Reports of child abuse or neglect should contain the following information:

- The name of the person making the report
- The name, age, and sex of the child
- The present location of the child
- The nature and extent of injury
- Any other information, including information that led that person to suspect child abuse, that may be requested by the child protective agency receiving the report

Mandated reporters shall be required to reveal their names.

Other information relevant to the incident of child abuse may also be given to an investigator from a child protective agency who is investigating the known or suspected case of child abuse, including:

- The name of the person or persons responsible for causing the suspected abuse or neglect
- Family composition
- The actions taken by the reporting source, including the taking of photographs and x-rays, removal or keeping of the child, or notification of the medical examiner
- Any other information that the child protective agency may, by regulation, require

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Ann. Code Tit. 19, § 13205**

Any mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of abuse shall report that fact to the medical examiner.

The medical examiner shall report any findings to the police department, attorney general's office, and CPS.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Code Tit. 19, §§ 13209; 13209.1

CPS shall:

- Receive all reports of suspected child abuse or neglect, both oral and written, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day
- Upon receipt of a report, commence within a reasonable time, but no later than 72 hours, an appropriate investigation
- Determine within 60 days whether the report is “indicated,” “substantiated,” or “unsubstantiated”
- If necessary, take a child into protective custody to protect him or her from further abuse
- Based on the investigation and evaluation, provide for the protection of the child in his or her home whenever possible or provide those services necessary for adequate care of the child when placed in protective custody or temporary foster custody

CPS shall develop written procedures for screening each referral for abuse or neglect of a child to assess whether abuse of another family or household member is also occurring. The assessment must include, but is not limited to:

- A check of the criminal record of the parents and the alleged abusive or neglectful person and the alleged perpetrator of family violence, if not a parent of the child
- An inquiry concerning the existence of orders for protection issued to either parent

Hawaii

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 350-1.1

A mandated reporter who has reason to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred shall immediately report the matter orally to the Department of Human Services or the police department. The initial oral report shall be followed as soon as possible by a report in writing to the department.

Content of Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 350-1.1

All written reports shall contain, if known:

- The name and address of the child and the child’s parents or other persons responsible for the child’s care
- The child’s age
- The nature and extent of the child’s injuries
- Any other information that the reporter believes might be helpful or relevant to the investigation

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 587-89(a)

The Department of Human Services shall implement and operate a statewide program relating to child abuse and neglect that incorporates policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, appropriate referrals to child protective service systems and other appropriate services to address the needs of infants born and identified as being affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, including a requirement that health-care providers involved in the delivery or care of an affected infant notify child protective services (CPS) of the condition in the infant.

Screening Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. §§ 350-2; 587-21; Code of Rules §§ 17-920.1-11; 17-920.1-12; 17-920.1-16

Upon receiving a report concerning child abuse or neglect, the department shall proceed pursuant to chapter 587 and the department's rules. Upon receiving a report that a child is subject to imminent harm, has been harmed, or is subject to threatened harm, the department shall cause such investigation to be made as it deems to be appropriate.

In regulation: The department shall accept reports of alleged abuse, neglect, harm, or threatened harm of children and shall immediately assess the validity of the report to provide appropriate services to the child and family in accordance with the department's guidelines.

The department shall verify or validate the report or complaint in the following manner:

- Evaluate the report or complaint to ensure that it is based on fact
- Take action as soon as possible in order to provide immediate protection to the child
- Discuss the report or complaint directly with the parents, guardians, or custodians, preferably through a home visit by:
 - Interpreting the department's services and legal authority to protect children
 - Discussing specific reasons for the department's entry in the particular situation
 - Evaluating whether the complaint is justified
- See the child as early as possible to evaluate the extent to which the child is threatened with harm

Every report or complaint, whether confirmed or unsubstantiated, shall be registered with the State central registry on child abuse and neglect within 60 calendar days from the date of the referral. The department shall, within 60 days, make a clear decision regarding whether abuse, neglect, or exploitation did or will occur. This decision shall be shared with and explained to the family either in writing or orally. If the department confirms abuse, neglect, or exploitation, it shall make a clear decision whether the child is at risk of future abuse, neglect, or exploitation in the child's own home.

The department shall make a clear decision whether abuse, neglect, or exploitation did or will occur. This decision shall be:

- Made within 60 days of the date of complaint
- Clearly recorded in the department's records
- Shared with and explained to the family either in writing or orally
- Shared with the complainant without violating the child's or family's right to confidentiality

A written description of the department's findings shall be given to the family at their request. If the family members cannot be contacted, this fact shall be noted in the department's records.

If the department confirms abuse, neglect, or exploitation, the department shall make a clear decision whether the child is at risk of future abuse, neglect, or exploitation in the child's own home.

Idaho

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Idaho Code § 16-1605

A mandated reporter who has reason to believe that a child has been abused, neglected, or abandoned shall report within 24 hours to a law enforcement agency or the Department of Health and Welfare.

Content of Reports**Citation: Idaho Code § 16-1605**

The report shall contain a description of the conditions and circumstances that led to making the report.

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Admin. Code §§ 16.06.01.552; 554; 556; 557; 559; 560**

In regulation: Each region of the Department of Health and Welfare shall maintain a system for receiving and responding to reports or complaints on a 24-hour-per-day, 7-day-per-week basis throughout the entire region. The region shall advertise the system to the public throughout the region and ensure the accurate recording of as many facts as possible at the time of the report.

The department shall assign all reports of possible abuse, neglect, or abandonment for risk assessment unless there is information that discredits the report beyond a reasonable doubt. The level of response required will be based on the following criteria:

- Priority I: The department must respond immediately if a child is in immediate danger involving a life-threatening or emergency situation. Law enforcement shall be notified and requested to respond or accompany the family services worker.
- Priority II: A child is not in immediate danger, but there are clear allegations of physical or sexual abuse or medical neglect. Law enforcement shall be notified within 24 hours, and the child seen by the family services worker within 48 hours.
- Priority III: A child may be in a vulnerable situation because of service needs that, if left unmet, may result in harm, or a child is without parental care. A family services worker shall respond within 3 days, and the child must be seen within 5 days.

Possible abuse, abandonment, or neglect of a child who is known or suspected to be Indian shall be reported to appropriate Tribal authorities immediately. If the reported incident occurs off a reservation, the department shall perform the investigation. The department shall also investigate incidents reported on a reservation if requested to do so by appropriate authorities of the Tribe. A record of any response shall be maintained in the case record and written documentation shall be provided to the appropriate Tribal authorities.

Reports involving a military family shall be reported to the appropriate military family advocacy representative. Abuse, neglect, or abandonment of a child on a military reservation falls under Federal jurisdiction.

A risk assessment shall be conducted utilizing statewide risk assessment and multidisciplinary team protocols. When there are findings of moderate or higher risk, a comprehensive risk assessment must be completed within 30 days of the initial contact.

Within 5 days of completion of the risk assessment, the department shall determine whether the report is substantiated or unsubstantiated. A report is unsubstantiated when there is insufficient evidence or facts indicate that the report is erroneous.

Illinois**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Cons. Stat. Ch. 325, § 5/4; 5/7**

All reports of suspected child abuse or neglect shall be made immediately by telephone to the central register, on the single, statewide, toll-free telephone number; in person; or by telephone through the nearest Department of Children and Family Services office.

All reports by mandated reporters shall be confirmed in writing to the appropriate child protective service unit, which may be on forms supplied by the department, within 48 hours of any initial report.

Written confirmation reports from persons not required to report may be made to the appropriate child protective service unit.

Content of Reports**Citation: Cons. Stat. Ch. 325, §§ 5/7; 5/9**

The initial oral report shall include, if known:

- The name and address of the child and his or her parents or other persons having custody
- The child's age
- The nature of the child's condition including any evidence of previous injuries or disabilities
- Any other information that the person filing the report believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the abuse or neglect and the identity of the person believed to have caused the abuse or neglect

Initial written reports from the reporting source shall contain the following information to the extent known at the time the report is made:

- The names and addresses of the child and his or her parents or other persons responsible for his or her welfare
- The name and address of the school that the child attends or last attended, if the report is written during the summer when school is not in session
- The name of the school district in which the school is located, if applicable
- The child's age, sex, and race
- The nature and extent of the child's abuse or neglect, including any evidence of prior injuries, abuse, or neglect of the child or his or her siblings
- The names of the persons apparently responsible for the abuse or neglect
- Family composition, including names, ages, sexes, and races of other children in the home
- The name of the person making the report, his or her occupation, and where he or she can be reached
- The actions taken by the reporting source, including the taking of photographs and x-rays, placing the child in temporary protective custody, or notifying the medical examiner or coroner
- Any other information the person making the report believes might be helpful

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Cons. Stat. Ch. 325, § 5/4.1

A mandated reporter or any other person who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect shall report to the appropriate medical examiner.

The medical examiner or coroner shall investigate the report and communicate any apparent gross findings orally, immediately upon completion of the gross autopsy, but in all cases within 72 hours, and within 21 days in writing, to the local law enforcement agency, the appropriate State's attorney, the department, and, if the institution making the report is a hospital, the hospital.

Substance-Exposed Infants

Citation: Cons. Stat. Ch. 325, § 5/7.3b

All mandated reporters may refer to the department any pregnant person who is addicted as defined in the Alcoholism and Other Drug Abuse and Dependency Act.

Screening Reports

Citation: Cons. Stat. Ch. 325, §§ 5/7.3; 5/7.4; 7.12 Admin. Code Tit. 89, §§ 300.100; 300.110

The department shall be the sole agency responsible for receiving and investigating reports of child abuse or neglect, except where investigations by other agencies may be required with respect to reports alleging the death, serious injury, or sexual abuse to a child. The department shall be capable of receiving reports of suspected child abuse or neglect 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If it appears that the immediate safety or well-being of a child is endangered, that the family may flee, or the child disappear, child protection services (CPS) shall commence an investigation immediately, regardless of the time of day or night. In all other cases, an investigation shall begin within 24 hours.

After seeing to the safety of the child or children, the department shall notify the subjects of the report in writing of the existence of the report and their rights in regard to amendment or expunction.

The CPS unit shall determine, within 60 days, whether the report is "indicated" or "unfounded" and report it forthwith to the central register. When it is not possible to initiate or complete an investigation within 60 days, the report may be deemed "undetermined" provided every effort has been made to undertake a complete investigation. The department may extend the period in which such determinations must be made in individual cases for additional periods of up to 30 days each for good cause shown.

In regulation: When a report of child abuse or neglect is received, the department shall make an initial investigation to validate whether there is reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect exists. When investigative staff make a determination that there is reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect exists, a formal investigation shall be made.

Upon completion of a formal investigation of abuse or neglect, investigative staff shall make a final determination as to whether a child was abused or neglected. Allegations may be determined to be indicated, undetermined, or unfounded.

- When credible evidence of abuse or neglect has been obtained pertinent to an allegation, the allegation is indicated.
- When credible evidence of abuse or neglect has not been obtained, the allegation is unfounded.
- When investigative staff have been unable, for good cause, to gather sufficient facts to support a decision within 60 days of the date the report was received, the allegation shall be considered undetermined.

Indiana

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Code §§ 31-33-5-1 to 31-33-5-4

A mandated reporter who has reason to believe that a child is a victim of abuse or neglect shall immediately make an oral report to the Department of Child Services or a local law enforcement agency.

Content of Reports

Citation: Ann. Code § 31-33-7-4

The department shall make a written report of a child who may be a victim of child abuse or neglect no later than 48 hours after receipt of the oral report.

Written reports must be made on forms supplied by the administrator. The written reports must include, if known, the following information:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents, guardian, custodian, or other person responsible for the child's care
- The child's age and sex
- The nature and apparent extent of the child's injuries, abuse, or neglect, including any evidence of prior injuries of the child or abuse or neglect of the child or the child's siblings
- The name of the person allegedly responsible for causing the injury, abuse, or neglect
- The source of the report
- The name of the person making the report and where the person can be reached
- The actions taken by the reporting source, including the following:
 - Taking of photographs and x-rays
 - Removing or keeping of the child
 - Notifying the coroner
- The written documentation required by § 31-34-2-3 if a child was taken into custody without a court order
- Any other information that the director requires by rule or the person making the report believes might be helpful

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Ann. Code §§ 31-33-7-5; 31-33-7-6

A copy of the written report of the local child protection service shall immediately be made available to the coroner for the coroner's consideration in a case involving death. Upon receiving a written report, the coroner shall accept the report for investigation and report the findings to:

- The appropriate law enforcement agency
- The prosecuting attorney
- The department
- The hospital, if the institution making the report is a hospital

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Ann. Code §§ 31-33-7-1; 31-33-8-1; 31-33-8-7(a); 31-33-8-12(a)**

The department shall arrange for receipt, on a 24-hour, 7-day per week basis, of all reports of suspected child abuse or neglect.

The department shall initiate an immediate and appropriately thorough child protection investigation of every report of known or suspected child abuse or neglect the department receives.

- If the report alleges a child may be a victim of child abuse, the investigation shall be initiated immediately, but not later than 24 hours after receipt of the report.
- If reports of child neglect are received, the investigation shall be initiated within a reasonably prompt time, but not later than 5 days, with the primary consideration being the well-being of the child who is the subject of the report.
- If the immediate safety or well-being of a child appears to be endangered or the facts otherwise warrant, the investigation shall be initiated regardless of the time of day.
- If the department has reason to believe that the child is in imminent danger of serious bodily harm, the department shall initiate an immediate, onsite investigation within 1 hour.

The department's investigation, to the extent that is reasonably possible, must include the following:

- The nature, extent, and cause of the known or suspected child abuse or neglect
- The identity of the person allegedly responsible for the child abuse or neglect
- The names and conditions of other children in the home
- An evaluation of the parent, guardian, custodian, or person responsible for the care of the child
- An evaluation of the home environment and the relationship of the child to the parent, guardian, custodian, or other persons responsible for the child's care
- All other data considered pertinent

Upon completion of an investigation, the department shall classify reports as substantiated, indicated, or unsubstantiated.

Iowa**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Stat. § 232.70**

Each report made by a mandated reporter shall be made both orally and in writing. Each report made by a permissive reporter may be oral, written, or both.

The oral report shall be made by telephone or otherwise to the Department of Human Services. If the person making the report has reason to believe that immediate protection for the child is advisable, that person shall also make an oral report to an appropriate law enforcement agency.

The written report shall be made to the Department of Human Services within 48 hours after the oral report.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. § 232.70**

The oral and written reports shall contain as much of the following information as the reporter is able to furnish:

- The names and home addresses of the child and the child's parent(s) or other persons responsible for the child's care
- The child's present whereabouts if not the same as the parents' home address
- The child's age
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of prior injury
- The name, age, and condition of other children in the same home
- Any other information which the person making the report believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury to the child, the identity of the person or persons responsible for the injury, or in providing assistance to the child
- The name and address of the person making the report

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants**Citation: Ann. Stat. § 232.77(2)**

If a health practitioner discovers in a child physical or behavioral symptoms of the effects of exposure to cocaine, heroin, amphetamine, methamphetamine, or other illegal drugs, or combinations or derivatives thereof, that were not prescribed by a health practitioner, or if the health practitioner has determined through examination of the natural mother of the child that the child was exposed in utero, the health practitioner may perform or cause to be performed a medically relevant test, as defined in § 232.73, on the child. The practitioner shall report any positive results of such a test on the child to the department. The department shall begin an assessment pursuant to § 232.71B upon receipt of such a report. A positive test result obtained prior to the birth of a child shall not be used for the criminal prosecution of a parent for acts and omissions resulting in intrauterine exposure of the child to an illegal drug.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Stat. §§ 232.70; 232.71B; Admin. Code § 441-175.22

Upon receipt of a report the department shall do all of the following:

- Immediately, upon receipt of an oral report, make a determination as to whether the report constitutes an allegation of child abuse as defined in § 232.68
- Notify the appropriate county attorney of the receipt of the report

If the department determines a report alleges child abuse, it shall begin an appropriate assessment within 24 hours of receiving the report. The primary purpose of the assessment shall be the protection of the child named in the report. The secondary purpose of the assessment shall be to engage the child's family in services to enhance family strengths and to address needs. The assessment shall include the following:

- Identification of the nature, extent, and cause of the injuries, if any, to the child named in the report
- Identification of the person or persons responsible for the alleged child abuse
- A description of the name, age, and condition of other children in the same home as the child named in the report
- An evaluation of the home environment
- An interview of the person alleged to have committed the child abuse, if the person's identity and location are known

The department, upon completion of the assessment, shall make a written report of the assessment. The written assessment shall:

- Incorporate the information required above
- Be completed within 20 business days of the receipt of the report
- Include a description of the child's condition, identification of the injury or risk to which the child was exposed, the circumstances that led to the injury or risk to the child, and the identity of any person alleged to be responsible for the injury or risk to the child
- Identify the strengths and needs of the child, and of the child's parent, home, and family
- Identify services available from the department and informal and formal services and other support available in the community to address the strengths and needs identified in the assessment

In regulation: Reports of child abuse shall be received by the department, central abuse registry, or child abuse hotline. Any report that alleges child abuse shall be accepted for assessment. Reports that do not meet the legal definition of child abuse shall become rejected intakes.

If a report does not meet the legal definition of child abuse, but a criminal act harming a child is alleged, the department shall immediately refer the matter to the appropriate law enforcement agency. If a report alleges child sexual abuse that involves a person who was not a caregiver, the department shall refer the report to law enforcement orally as soon as practicable, and follow up in writing within 72 hours of receiving the report.

Kansas

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Stat. § 38-2223

When any mandated reporter has reason to suspect that a child has been harmed as a result of physical, mental, or emotional abuse or neglect or sexual abuse, the person shall report the matter promptly as provided below. The report may be made orally and shall be followed by a written report if requested.

Reports shall be made to the secretary of Social and Rehabilitation Services, except as follows:

- When the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services is not open for business, reports shall be made to the appropriate law enforcement agency. On the next day that the department is open for business, the law enforcement agency shall report to the department any report received and any investigation initiated pursuant to § 38-2226. The reports may be made orally or, on request of the secretary, in writing.
- Reports of child abuse or neglect occurring in an institution operated by the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services or the Department of Juvenile Justice shall be made to the attorney general.
- Reports of child abuse or neglect committed by persons employed by the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, or the children of employees, shall be made to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Content of Reports

Citation: Ann. Stat. § 38-2223

Every report shall contain, if known:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other persons responsible for the child's care
- The location of the child if other than the child's residence
- The child's gender, race, and age
- The reasons the reporter suspects the child may be a child in need of care
- The nature and extent of the harm to the child, including any evidence of previous harm
- Any other information that the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the harm and the identity of the persons responsible for the harm

When reporting a suspicion that a child may be in need of care, the reporter shall disclose protected health information freely and cooperate fully with the secretary and law enforcement throughout the investigation and any subsequent legal process.

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Ann. Stat. §§ 38-2223; 22a-242

A mandated reporter who has information relating to the death of a child shall immediately notify the coroner, as provided by § 22a-242.

When a child dies, a law enforcement officer, health-care provider, or any other person having knowledge of the death shall immediately notify the coroner of the known facts concerning the time, place, manner, and circumstances of the death.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Stat. §§ 38-2226; 38-2230; Pol. Man. §§ 1310; 1320; 1521

The department and law enforcement officers shall have the duty to receive and investigate reports of child abuse or neglect to determine whether the report is valid and whether action is required to protect the child from further abuse or neglect.

If the department and officers determine that no action is necessary to protect the child but that a criminal prosecution should be considered, the case shall be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Whenever any person furnishes information to the secretary that a child appears to be a child in need of care, the department shall make a preliminary inquiry to determine whether the interests of the child require further action. Whenever practicable, the inquiry shall include a preliminary investigation of the circumstances that were the subject of the information, including the home and environmental situation and the previous history of the child. If reasonable grounds exist to support the allegations of abuse or neglect, immediate steps shall be taken to protect the health and welfare of the abused or neglected child as well as that of any other child under the same care who may be harmed by abuse or neglect. After the inquiry, if the secretary determines it is not otherwise possible to provide the services necessary to protect the interests of the child, the secretary shall recommend to the county or district attorney that a petition be filed.

In regulation: The report shall be screened to determine if it meets statutory and regulatory definitions. If the report does not fall within the definitions, the report may be screened out. Reports may also be screened out when:

- The child has not been harmed or is not likely to be harmed.
- It concerns "lifestyle" issues that do not directly harm a child or place a child at risk of harm.
- Credible information indicates concern is minimal or remote; the incident was reported as accidental or as a single, minor incident.
- It concerns abuse or neglect that occurred in the past.
- It fails to provide the information necessary to locate the child.
- It is known to be fictitious and/or malicious.
- The incident has been or is being assessed by the department and/or law enforcement.

A preliminary inquiry may be made to gain additional information to determine whether the concern is currently being addressed by the family and community, or whether the interests of the child require further action. Requests for additional information must be made within 3 working days. This option must not be used when it appears likely that a child may be harmed within the preliminary inquiry period.

If efforts to yield sufficient information require a face-to-face interview with a child or caregiver, the case must be assigned for assessments of safety and risk of future maltreatment. If, following an initial interview with an alleged victim, there is clearly no evidence to support the allegations of abuse or neglect, the report may be screened out based on the information provided.

When a report alleging child abuse or neglect is assigned for assessment, the supervisor shall determine the appropriate response time consistent with the facts reported, and according to the following criteria:

- Same Day: When there is reason to believe that a child has been seriously injured or is in immediate serious danger
- 72 Hours: All other reports

Kentucky

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 620.030

Any person who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child is abused or neglected shall immediately make an oral or written report, by telephone or otherwise, to a local law enforcement agency, the Department of Kentucky State Police, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services or its designated representative, the Commonwealth attorney, or the county attorney.

A mandated reporter shall file a written report within 48 hours of the original report, if requested.

Content of Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 620.030

The written report shall contain

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other persons exercising control or supervision over the child
- The child's age
- The nature and extent of the child's alleged dependency, neglect, or abuse, including any previous charges of dependency, neglect, or abuse to the child or any siblings
- The name and address of the person allegedly responsible for the abuse or neglect
- Any other information that the reporter believes may be helpful

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 214.160(2)-(6)

Any physician attending a pregnant woman may perform a screening for alcohol or substance dependency or abuse, including a comprehensive history of such behavior. Any physician may administer a toxicology test to a mother under the physician's care within 8 hours after she has delivered a baby to determine whether there is evidence that she has ingested alcohol or a controlled substance or if she has obstetrical complications that are a medical indication of possible use of any such substance for a nonmedical purpose.

Any physician attending a mother may administer to each newborn infant born to that mother a toxicology test to determine whether there is evidence of prenatal exposure to alcohol or a controlled substance, if the attending person has reason to believe, based on a medical assessment of either patient, that the mother used any such substance for a nonmedical purpose during the pregnancy.

The circumstances surrounding any positive toxicology finding shall be evaluated by the attending person to determine if abuse or neglect of the infant, as defined under § 600.020(1), has occurred and whether investigation by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services is necessary.

No prenatal screening for alcohol or other substance abuse or positive toxicology finding shall be used as prosecutorial evidence. No person shall conduct or cause to be conducted any toxicological test pursuant to this section on any pregnant woman without first informing her of the purpose of the test.

Screening Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 620.040; Admin. Reg. Tit. 922, § 1:330

Based upon the allegation in the report, the cabinet shall immediately make an initial determination as to the risk of harm and immediate safety of the child. Based upon the level of risk determined, the cabinet shall investigate the allegation or accept the report for an assessment of family needs and, if appropriate, may provide or make referral to any community-based services necessary to reduce risk to the child and to provide family support. A report of sexual abuse shall be considered high risk and shall not be referred to any other community agency.

The cabinet shall, within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays, make a written report to the Commonwealth's or county attorney and the local enforcement agency or the State Police concerning the action that has been taken on the investigation.

If the report alleges abuse or neglect by someone other than a parent, guardian, or person exercising custodial control or supervision, the cabinet shall immediately notify the Commonwealth or county attorney and the local law enforcement agency or the State police.

In regulation: Cabinet staff shall attempt to elicit from the reporter as much information as possible about the child's circumstances. If a report does not meet the criteria for investigation or family-in-need-of-services assessment, the cabinet shall not accept the report for investigation or assessment but shall refer the caller to a community resource that may meet family needs and keep a record of the report.

Based upon an accepted report of child abuse, neglect, or dependency, the cabinet shall make an initial determination as to the immediate safety and risk of harm to a child. The following timeframes apply:

- If the report indicates imminent danger, the investigation shall be initiated within 1 hour.
- If the report indicates nonimminent danger of physical abuse, efforts shall be made to have face-to-face contact with the child and family within 24 hours.
- If the report indicates nonimminent danger, not involving physical abuse, efforts shall be made to have face-to-face contact with the child and family within 48 hours.
- An investigation or an assessment shall be initiated within 48 hours within a report of dependency if a child is not in imminent danger.

Louisiana

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ch. C. art. 610

Reports of abuse where the abuser is believed to be a caregiver shall be made immediately to the local child protection unit.

Reports of abuse where the abuser is believed to be someone other than a caregiver shall be made immediately to a law enforcement agency. Dual reporting to both the local child protection unit of the Department of Social Services and the local or State law enforcement agency is permitted.

Mandated reporters must file a written report within 5 days of the initial oral report.

Any commercial film processor who has knowledge of any film, photograph, videotape, negative, or slide depicting a child under age 17 in an activity that constitutes child pornography shall report immediately to the local law enforcement agency. The reporter shall provide a copy of the film, photograph, videotape, negative, or slide to the agency receiving the report.

Content of Reports

Citation: Ch. C. art. 610

The report shall contain the following information, if known:

- The name, address, age, sex, and race of the child
- The nature, extent, and cause of the child's injuries or endangered condition, including any previous known or suspected abuse of the child or the child's siblings
- The names and addresses of the child's parents or other caregivers
- The names and ages of all other members of the child's household
- The name and address of the reporter
- An account of how the child came to reporter's attention
- Any explanation of the cause of the child's injury or condition offered by the child, the caregiver, or any other person
- The number of times the reporter has filed a report on the child or the child's siblings
- The person or persons who are thought to have caused or contributed to the child's condition, if known, and any person named by the child
- Any other information the reporter believes might be important or relevant

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Ch. C. art. 610(A), (E)

Reports of abuse or neglect that were a contributing factor in a child's death, where the abuser is believed to be a caregiver, shall be made to the local child protection unit.

A local child protection unit shall report all cases of child death that involve a suspicion of abuse or neglect to the local or State law enforcement agency, the office of the district attorney, and the coroner.

Substance-Exposed Infants

Citation: Ch. C. art. 610(G)

If a physician has cause to believe that a mother of an infant unlawfully used during pregnancy a controlled dangerous substance, the physician shall order a toxicology test upon the infant, without the consent of the infant's parents or guardian, to determine whether there is evidence of prenatal neglect. If the test results are positive, the physician shall report the results as soon as possible. If the test results are negative, all identifying information shall be obliterated if the record is retained, unless the parent approves the inclusion of identifying information. Positive test results shall not be admissible in a criminal prosecution.

The version below, as amended by Acts 2007, No. 396, § 1, shall not become effective unless and until sufficient funds are appropriated by the legislature for such purposes.

If a physician has cause to believe that a newborn was exposed in utero to an unlawfully used controlled dangerous substance, the physician shall order a toxicology test upon the newborn, without the consent of the newborn's parents or guardian, to determine whether there is evidence of prenatal neglect. If the test results are positive, the physician shall issue a report, as soon as possible, in accordance with this Article. If the test results are negative, all identifying information shall be obliterated if the record is retained, unless the parent approves the inclusion of identifying information. Positive test results shall not be admissible in a criminal prosecution.

If there are symptoms of withdrawal in the newborn or other observable and harmful effects in his or her physical appearance or functioning that a physician has cause to believe are due to the chronic or severe use of alcohol by the mother during pregnancy, the physician shall issue a report in accordance with this Article.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ch. C. art. 610; 612; 615

All reports received by a law enforcement agency that involve a caregiver shall be referred to a local child protection unit.

All reports received by the child protection unit that involve someone other than a caregiver shall be referred to a local law enforcement agency. Reports involving a felony-grade crime against a child shall be promptly communicated to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Upon receiving a report of abuse or neglect of a child, the local child protection unit of the department shall promptly assign a level of risk to the child based on the information provided by the reporter.

Reports of high and intermediate levels of risk shall be investigated promptly. This investigation shall include a preliminary investigation as to the nature, extent, and cause of the abuse or neglect and the identity of the person actually responsible for the child's condition.

In lieu of an investigation, reports of low levels of risk may be assessed promptly through interviews with the family to identify needs and available match to community resources. If, during this assessment, it is determined that a child is at immediate substantial risk of harm, the local child protection unit shall promptly conduct or participate in an intensive investigation.

After investigation, the local child protection unit shall make one of the following determinations:

- The child appears to be a child in need of care and immediate removal is necessary for his or her protection from further abuse or neglect.
- The report appears to be justified in that there is evidence of child abuse or neglect, and:
 - A protective order would eliminate the need for removal of the child in order to protect him or her from further abuse, in which case it may apply for a temporary restraining order or protective order.
 - All pertinent information shall be reported to the district attorney as soon as possible, but in no case more than 30 days after the determination is made.
- The report is inconclusive in that the evidence tends to support a finding of abuse or neglect, but there is not enough information to confirm a justified report.
- The report does not appear justified as the evidence does not support a finding of child abuse or neglect.
- The investigation indicates the report appears to be false and that the reporter knowingly made a false report in which case all pertinent information shall be forwarded to the district attorney for a determination of whether the evidence supports a finding of a false public report.

In addition to investigation or assessment of reports, or both, the local child protection family services unit may offer available information, referrals, or services to the family when there appears to be some need for medical, mental health, social, basic support, supervision, or other services.

Maine

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Stat. Tit. 22, §§ 4011-A; 4012

A mandated reporter shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Department of Human Services when he or she knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or is likely to be abused or neglected.

When, while acting in a professional capacity, a mandated reporter knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected by a person not responsible for the child, he or she immediately shall report or cause a report to be made to the appropriate district attorney's office.

Any person may make a report if that person knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or is likely to be abused or neglected.

An oral report shall be followed by a written report within 48 hours, if requested by the department.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. Tit. 22, § 4012**

The reports shall include the following information, if known:

- The name and address of the child and the persons responsible for the child's care or custody
- The child's age and sex
- The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect, including a description of any injuries and the explanation given for them
- A description of sexual abuse or exploitation, if applicable
- Family composition
- Any evidence of prior abuse of the child or any siblings
- The source of report
- Any action taken by the reporter, including a description of photographs or x-rays taken
- Any other information that the reporter believes may be helpful

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Ann. Stat. Tit. 22, §§ 4011-A; 4022(12)**

A mandated reporter shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the department when the he or she knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a suspicious child death has occurred.

When, while acting in a professional capacity, a mandated reporter has reasonable cause to suspect that a suspicious child death has been caused by a person not responsible for the child, he or she immediately shall report or cause a report to be made to the appropriate district attorney's office.

Any person may make a report if that person knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that there has been a suspicious child death.

"Suspicious child death" means the death of a child under circumstances in which there is reasonable cause to suspect that abuse or neglect was a cause of or factor contributing to the child's death.

Substance-Exposed Infants**Citation: Ann. Stat. Tit. 22, § 4011-B; 4004-B**

If a health-care provider involved in the delivery or care of an infant knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that the infant has been affected by illegal substance abuse or is suffering from withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, whether or not the prenatal exposure was to legal or illegal drugs, the provider shall notify the department. The report must be made in the same manner as reports of abuse or neglect.

The department shall act to protect newborn infants identified as being affected by illegal substance abuse or suffering from withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, whether or not the prenatal exposure was to legal or illegal drugs, regardless of whether or not the infant is abused or neglected. The department shall:

- Receive reports of infants who may be affected by illegal substance abuse or suffering from prenatal drug exposure
- Promptly investigate all reports to determine whether each infant reported is affected by an illegal substance
- Determine whether or not each infant reported is affected by illegal substance abuse or suffers from withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure
- Determine whether or not the infant is abused or neglected and, if so, determine the degree of harm or threatened harm in each case
- For each infant whom the department determines to be affected by illegal substance abuse or to be suffering from withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, develop, with the assistance of any health care provider involved in the mother's or the child's medical or mental health care, a plan for the safe care of the infant and, in appropriate cases, refer the child or mother or both to a social service agency or voluntary substance abuse prevention service

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Stat. Tit. 22, § 4004; CFS Pol. Man. §§ IV.C; IV.D-1

The department shall act to protect abused and neglected children, and children in circumstances that present a substantial risk of abuse and neglect, to prevent further abuse and neglect, to enhance the welfare of these children and their families, and to preserve family life wherever possible. The department shall:

- Receive reports of abuse and neglect and suspicious child deaths
- Promptly investigate all abuse and neglect cases and suspicious child deaths coming to its attention
- If, after investigation, the department does not file a petition under § 4032 but does open a case to provide services to the family to alleviate child abuse and neglect in the home, assign a caseworker, who shall:
 - Provide information about rehabilitation and other services that may be available to assist the family
 - Develop with the family a written child and family plan
- File a petition under § 4032 if, after investigation, the department determines that a child is in immediate risk of serious harm or in jeopardy
- In the case of a suspicious child death, determine:
 - Whether abuse or neglect was a cause or factor contributing to the child's death
 - The degree of threatened harm to any other child for whom the person responsible for the deceased child may be responsible in the future

In regulation: All calls that relate to suspected child abuse and/or neglect will be immediately routed to the Child Protective Intake Unit. The Intake Unit will determine if the report is appropriate. The intake worker will gather facts from the reporter regarding:

- The identity and location of the parents, children, and relative resources
- The nature of suspected abuse or neglect and the impact on the child
- The reporter's actions taken thus far, if any
- Other persons who may have direct knowledge, and how to contact them

If the information is not sufficient to determine whether the report is appropriate or inappropriate, the worker may, with supervisor approval, contact at least one professional person, if available, whom the worker believes will have direct knowledge of the child's current condition. The intake worker will also review previous child welfare history regarding the family and the alleged abuser(s).

The worker will analyze the information to determine if the report indicates that there is immediate risk of serious harm. If it appears that the child is in immediate risk of serious harm, the worker will contact the intake supervisor immediately and the intake supervisor will review the report immediately and notify the appropriate district office supervisor.

Reports may be classified as follows:

- "Substantiated" means that, by a preponderance of the evidence, a parent or caregiver has caused and/or is likely to cause high severity child abuse and neglect. This person is considered a danger to children.
- "Indicated" means that, by a preponderance of the evidence, a parent or caregiver has caused and/or is likely to cause low/moderate severity child abuse. Signs of risk may also be present.
- "Unsubstantiated" means that, by a preponderance of the evidence, a parent or caregiver did not abuse or neglect a child. However, signs of risk may be present.

Maryland

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Fam. Law § 5-704

A mandated reporter shall make an oral report, by telephone or direct communication, as soon as possible:

- To the local Department of Social Services or appropriate law enforcement agency if the person has reason to believe that the child has been subjected to abuse
- To the local department if the person has reason to believe that the child has been subjected to neglect

The mandated reporter shall make a written report to the local department no later than 48 hours after the contact, examination, attention, or treatment that caused the individual to believe that the child had been subjected to abuse or neglect and shall submit a copy to the local State's attorney if the individual has reason to believe that the child has been subjected to abuse.

Content of Reports

Citation: Fam. Law § 5-704

Insofar as is reasonably possible, an individual who makes a report under this section shall include in the report the following information:

- The name, age, and home address of the child
- The name and home address of the child's parent(s) or other person responsible for the child's care
- The whereabouts of the child
- The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect of the child, including any evidence or information available to the reporter concerning possible previous instances of abuse or neglect
- Any other information that might be helpful to determine the cause of the suspected abuse or neglect and the identity of any individual responsible for the abuse or neglect

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Fam. Law §§ 5-701; 5-706; 5-706.1

Within 24 hours after receiving a report of suspected physical or sexual abuse of a child, and within 5 days after receiving a report of suspected neglect or suspected mental injury of a child, the local department or the appropriate law enforcement agency shall:

- See the child
- Attempt to have an on-site interview with the child's caregiver
- Decide on the safety of the child, wherever the child is, and of other children in the household
- Decide on the safety of other children in the care or custody of the alleged abuser

To the extent possible, an investigation shall be completed within 10 days after receipt of the first notice of the suspected abuse or neglect by the local department or law enforcement agencies. An investigation that is not completed within 30 days shall be completed within 60 days of receipt of the first notice of the suspected abuse or neglect.

Reports may be classified as follows:

- "Indicated" means a finding that there is credible evidence, which has not been satisfactorily refuted, that abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse did occur.
- "Unsubstantiated" means a finding that there is an insufficient amount of evidence to support a finding of indicated or ruled out.
- "Ruled out" means a finding that abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse did not occur.

Massachusetts**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Laws Ch. 119, § 51A(a)**

A mandated reporter shall immediately communicate orally with the Department of Children and Families when, in his or her professional capacity, he or she has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from:

- Abuse that causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare, including sexual abuse
- Neglect, including malnutrition

Within 48 hours, a written report shall be filed with the department detailing the suspected abuse or neglect.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Laws Ch. 119, § 51A(d)**

A report filed under this section shall contain:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other person responsible for the child's care, if known
- The child's age and sex
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment, or neglect, including any evidence of prior injuries, abuse, maltreatment, or neglect
- The circumstances under which the person required to report first became aware of the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment, or neglect
- Whatever action, if any, was taken to treat, shelter, or otherwise assist the child
- The name of the person or persons making the report
- Any other information that the person reporting believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries
- The identity of the person or persons responsible for the neglect or injuries
- Other information required by the department

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Ann. Laws Ch. 119, § 51A(e)**

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has died as a result of any of the conditions listed above shall report the death to the district attorney for the county in which the death occurred and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

Substance-Exposed Infants**Citation: Ann. Laws Ch. 119, § 51A(a)**

A mandated reporter shall immediately communicate orally with the Department of Children and Families when, in his or her professional capacity, he or she has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from physical dependence upon an addictive drug at birth.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Laws Ch. 119, § 51B; Code of Regs. Tit. 110, §§ 4.21; 4.27; 4.31; 4.32

Upon receipt of a report, the department shall investigate the suspected child abuse or neglect, provide a written evaluation of the household of the child, including the parents and home environment, and make a written determination relative to the safety of and risk posed to the child and whether the suspected child abuse or neglect is substantiated.

Upon completion of the investigation and evaluation, the department shall make a written determination relative to:

- The safety of the child, the risk of physical or emotional injury to that child, and the safety of and risk to any other children in the household
- Whether the suspected child abuse or neglect is substantiated

If the department has reasonable cause to believe a child's health or safety is in immediate danger from abuse or neglect, the department shall take a child into immediate temporary custody if it has reasonable cause to believe that the removal is necessary to protect the child from abuse or neglect. The investigation and evaluation shall commence within 2 hours of initial contact and an interim report with an initial determination regarding the child's safety and custody shall be completed as soon as possible but not more than 24 hours after initial contact. The final report required under this section shall be complete within 5 business days of initial contact. If a child is taken into immediate temporary custody, the department shall make a written report stating the reasons for such removal and shall file a care and protection petition under section 24 on the next court day.

If the department does not have reasonable cause to believe that a child's health or safety is in immediate danger from abuse or neglect, the investigation and evaluation shall commence within 2 business days of initial contact and a determination shall be made within 15 business days, unless a waiver has been approved by the area director or requested by law enforcement.

In regulation: Upon receipt of a report, the department shall immediately screen such report to distinguish the need for an emergency or nonemergency response.

At the time of the first contact with parents or caregivers, the investigator shall deliver to the individual a statement of rights that shall include written notice that report has been made, the nature and possible effects of the investigation, and that information given could and might be used in subsequent court hearings. Such notice shall be in a form prescribed by the department.

The investigation of all emergency reports shall commence within 2 hours of initial contact and shall be completed within 24 hours after the emergency designation of the report by the department. The investigation of all nonemergency reports shall commence within 2 working days of initial contact and shall be completed within 10 calendar days following the receipt of the report.

After completion of its investigation, the department shall make a determination as to whether the allegations in the report received are "supported" or "unsupported." To support a report means that the department has reasonable cause to believe that an incident (reported or discovered during the investigation) of abuse or neglect by a caregiver did occur.

Michigan

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Comp. Laws § 722.623(1)

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect shall make immediately, by telephone or otherwise, an oral report, or cause an oral report to be made, of the suspected child abuse or neglect to the Family Independence Agency (department). Within 72 hours after making the oral report, the reporting person shall file a written report.

Content of Reports

Citation: Comp. Laws § 722.623(2)

The written report shall contain:

- The name of the child and a description of the abuse or neglect
- If possible, the names and addresses of the child's parents, guardian, or persons with whom the child resides, and the child's age
- Other information available to the reporting person that might establish the cause of the abuse or neglect, and the manner in which the abuse or neglect occurred

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Comp. Laws § 722.628b

If a central registry case involves a child's death, the department shall refer the case to the prosecuting attorney for the county in which the child is located.

Substance-Exposed Infants

Citation: Comp. Laws § 722.623a

A mandated reporter who knows, or from the child's symptoms has reasonable cause to suspect, that a newborn infant has any amount of alcohol, a controlled substance, or a metabolite of a controlled substance in his or her body, shall report to the department in the same manner as other reports.

Screening Reports

Citation: Comp. Laws § 722.623; 722.628; 722.628d

Within 24 hours after receiving a report, the department shall refer the report to the prosecuting attorney and the local law enforcement agency if the report indicates that the suspected abuse or neglect was a criminal act, was committed by an individual who is not a person responsible for the child's health or welfare, or involves allowing a child to be exposed to methamphetamine production, or shall commence an investigation of the child suspected of being abused or neglected or exposed to or who has had contact with methamphetamine production.

At the time that an investigator contacts an individual about whom a report has been made, the investigator shall advise that individual of the investigator's name, whom the investigator represents, and the specific complaints or allegations made against the individual.

In the course of its investigation, the department shall determine if the child is abused or neglected. In conducting its investigation, the department shall seek the assistance of and cooperate with law enforcement officials within 24 hours after becoming aware that one or more of the following conditions exist:

- Abuse or neglect is the suspected cause of a child's death.
- The child is the victim of suspected sexual abuse or sexual exploitation.
- Abuse or neglect resulting in severe physical injury to the child requires medical treatment or hospitalization.
- Law enforcement intervention is necessary for the protection of the child, a department employee, or another person involved in the investigation.
- The alleged perpetrator of the child's injury is not a person responsible for the child's health or welfare.
- The child has been exposed to or had contact with methamphetamine production.

Allegations of child abuse may be classified as follows:

- Category V: Services not needed. There is no evidence of child abuse or neglect
- Category IV: Community services recommended. There is not a preponderance of evidence of child abuse or neglect, but there is an indication of future risk of harm to the child.
- Category III: Community services needed. There is a preponderance of evidence of child abuse or neglect, and an indication of low or moderate risk of future harm to the child.
- Category II: Child protective services required. There is evidence of child abuse or neglect, and an indication of high or intensive risk of future harm to the child. The department shall open a protective services case, provide services, and list the perpetrator on the central registry.
- Category I: Court petition required. There is evidence of child abuse or neglect, the child is not safe, and a petition for removal is needed.

Minnesota**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Stat. § 626.556, Subd. 3, 7**

A person who knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused, or a child has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding 3 years, shall immediately report the information to the local welfare agency, agency responsible for assessing or investigating the report, police department, or the county sheriff.

An oral report shall be made immediately by telephone or otherwise. An oral report made by a mandated reporter shall be followed within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays, by a report in writing to the appropriate police department, the county sheriff, the agency responsible for assessing or investigating the report, or the local welfare agency, unless the appropriate agency has informed the reporter that the oral information does not constitute a report.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. § 626.556, Subd. 7**

Any report shall be of sufficient content to identify:

- The child
- Any person believed to be responsible for the abuse or neglect, if known
- The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect
- The name and address of the reporter

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Ann. Stat. § 626.556, Subd. 9**

When a mandated reporter knows or has reason to believe that a child has died as a result of neglect, physical abuse, or sexual abuse, the reporter shall immediately report that information to the appropriate medical examiner or coroner instead of the local welfare agency, police department, or county sheriff.

Medical examiners or coroners shall notify the local welfare agency, police department, or county sheriff in instances in which they believe that the child has died as a result of neglect, physical abuse, or sexual abuse. The medical examiner or coroner shall complete an investigation as soon as feasible and report the findings to the police department or county sheriff and the local welfare agency.

Substance-Exposed Infants**Citation: Ann. Stat. §§ 626.5561; 626.5562; 626.5563**

A mandated reporter shall immediately report to the local welfare agency when there is reason to believe that a pregnant woman has used a controlled substance for a nonmedical purpose, including, but not limited to, tetrahydrocannabinol, or has consumed alcoholic beverages during the pregnancy in any way that is habitual or excessive. An oral report shall be made immediately by telephone or otherwise. An oral report made by a mandated reporter shall be followed within 72 hours by a written report. Any report shall be of sufficient content to identify the pregnant woman, the nature and extent of the use, if known, and the name and address of the reporter.

A physician shall administer a toxicology test to a mother within 8 hours after delivery to determine whether there is evidence that she has ingested a controlled substance, if the woman has obstetrical complications that are an indication of possible use of a controlled substance for a nonmedical purpose. A physician shall administer to each newborn infant born under the physician's care a toxicology test to determine whether there is evidence of prenatal exposure to a controlled substance, if the physician has reason to believe based on a medical assessment of the mother or the infant that the mother used a controlled substance for a nonmedical purpose during the pregnancy. If the results of either test are positive, the physician shall report the results as neglect under § 626.556.

If a mandated reporter knows or has reason to believe that a woman is pregnant and has knowingly abused alcohol after she knows of the pregnancy, the person may:

- Arrange for a chemical use assessment conducted according to rules adopted by the commissioner of human services, and confirm that the recommendations indicated by the assessment are followed
- Immediately report to the local welfare agency or maternal child substance abuse project

Screening Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. § 626.556, Subd. 7, 10, 10e**

The local welfare agency shall determine if the report is accepted for an assessment or investigation as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours after the report is received.

Upon receipt of a report, the local welfare agency shall determine whether to conduct a family assessment or an investigation. The agency shall conduct:

- An investigation on reports involving substantial child endangerment
- A family assessment for reports that do not allege substantial child abuse

If the report alleges maltreatment by a parent or other family member, the agency shall immediately conduct the assessment or investigation. If the report alleges a violation of a criminal statute involving sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, or endangerment, a law enforcement agency and welfare agency shall coordinate the planning and execution of their respective investigation and assessment efforts to avoid a duplication of fact-finding efforts and multiple interviews.

If the information collected early in an assessment shows no basis for a full assessment or investigation, the local welfare agency or the agency responsible for assessing or investigating the report may make a determination of no maltreatment, and close the case. Upon receipt of a report, the local welfare agency shall conduct a face-to-face contact with the child reported to be maltreated and with the child's primary caregiver sufficient to complete a safety assessment and ensure the immediate safety of the child. The face-to-face contact with the child and primary caregiver shall occur immediately if substantial child endangerment is alleged and within 5 calendar days for all other reports.

The local welfare agency shall conclude the family assessment or the investigation within 45 days of the receipt of a report. After conducting a family assessment, the local welfare agency shall:

- Determine whether services are needed to address the safety of the child and other family members and the risk of subsequent maltreatment
- Make two determinations: first, whether maltreatment has occurred; and second, whether child protective services are needed

Mississippi**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Code § 43-21-353**

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or neglected shall immediately make an oral report to the Department of Human Services, to be followed as soon as possible by a written report.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Code § 43-21-353**

Any report to the department shall contain:

- The names and addresses of the child, the child's parents, or other persons responsible for the child's care
- The child's age
- The nature and extent of injuries, including any evidence of prior injuries
- Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury and the identity of the perpetrator

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Code §§ 43-21-353; 43-21-357; Code of Rules, 11-111-001, Sec. B

When the department receives a report, it shall immediately make a referral to the Youth Court intake unit. The intake unit shall promptly comply with § 43-21-357.

At the initial time of contact with the person about whom a report has been made or the person responsible for the health or welfare of a child about whom a report has been made, the department shall inform the person of the specific complaints or allegations made against him or her. The identity of the person who made the report shall not be disclosed.

Upon receiving a report that a child has been abused in such a manner as to cause serious bodily harm or abuse that would be a felony under State or Federal law, the department shall immediately notify the law enforcement agency in whose jurisdiction the abuse occurred and shall notify the appropriate prosecutor within 48 hours. The law enforcement agency and the department shall investigate the reported abuse immediately and shall file a preliminary report with the appropriate prosecutor's office within 24 hours and shall make additional reports as new or additional information or evidence becomes available.

If the Youth Court intake unit receives a neglect or abuse report, the intake unit shall immediately forward the complaint to the Department of Human Services to promptly make an investigation or report concerning the child and any other children in the same environment and promptly present the findings to the Youth Court intake unit. If it appears from the preliminary inquiry that the child or other children in the same environment are within the jurisdiction of the court, the intake unit shall recommend to the Youth Court:

- That the Youth Court take no action
- That the Department of Human Services monitor the child, family, and other children in the same environment
- That a petition be filed

In regulation: The CPS intake unit of the department receives and evaluates reports of suspected child abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Any report received for investigation by the department should be thoroughly screened to determine if the following criteria are met:

- The individual being reported as abused or neglected must be younger than age 18.
- The individual must fall under the statutory jurisdiction of the Youth Court.
- The allegations must be subject to investigation in accordance with statutory definitions of abused/neglected child and department policies and procedures.
- An element of risk or endangerment must be present or indicated.

All investigations of abuse that should be considered a felony crime under State or Federal law shall be initiated immediately. Investigation of all other reports must be initiated within 24 hours of receipt of report. The level of risk to the child is determined from the evidence gathered during the investigation, an analysis of its reliability and importance, and an evaluation of how the various risk factors interrelate. The interaction between the child, family, and environment requires careful analysis in order to assess accurately risk of harm to the child. Case dispositions are:

- **Evidence of Abuse/Neglect:** An investigation concludes that there is evidence that a child has been abused and/or neglected. In all cases where there is evidence of abuse/neglect, a service case shall be opened to provide services and to lower risk.
- **No Evidence:** An investigation determines that the allegations cannot be supported, there is no concrete evidence (physical, medical, psychological, or other), or there is insufficient information available to conclude the abuse or neglect of a child did occur.

All cases with a high level of risk should remain open. Cases are opened to provide prevention services, protection services, or placement services.

Missouri**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Stat. § 210.115**

When a mandated reporter has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or may be subjected to abuse or neglect, that person shall immediately cause an oral report to be made to the Children's Division of the Department of Social Services.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. § 210.130**

Reports shall contain the following information:

- The names and addresses of the child, the child's parents, or other persons responsible for the child's care
- The child's age, sex, and race
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries, abuse, or neglect, including any evidence of previous injuries, abuse, or neglect to the child or the child's siblings
- The name, age, and address of the person responsible for the child's injuries, if known
- Family composition
- The source of the report
- The name, address, occupation, and contact information of the reporter
- Actions taken by the reporter
- Any other information that might be helpful

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Ann. Stat. § 210.115**

Any mandated reporter who has probable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect shall report that fact to the medical examiner or coroner.

Substance-Exposed Infants**Citation: Ann. Stat. § 191.737**

Any physician or health-care provider may refer to the Department of Health and Senior Services families in which children may have been exposed to a controlled substance or alcohol, as evidenced by:

- Medical documentation of signs and symptoms consistent with controlled substances or alcohol exposure at birth
- Results of a confirmed toxicology test performed on the mother or the child at the child's birth
- A written assessment made by a physician, health-care provider, or the Division of Family Services that documents the child as being at risk of abuse or neglect

Nothing in this section shall preclude a physician or other mandated reporter from reporting abuse or neglect of a child as required by the provisions of § 210.115.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Stat. § 210.145; Code of Regs. Tit. 13, § 35-20.010

The division shall utilize structured decision-making protocols for classification purposes of all child abuse and neglect reports. The protocols developed by the division shall give priority to ensuring the well-being and safety of the child. All child abuse and neglect reports shall be initiated within 24 hours and shall be classified based upon the reported risk and injury to the child.

The local office shall contact the appropriate law enforcement agency immediately upon receipt of a report that division personnel determine merits an investigation and provide such agency with a detailed description of the report received. In such cases the local division office shall request the assistance of the local law enforcement agency in all aspects of the investigation.

In regulation: All reports received by the hotline shall be screened within 24 hours of receipt and shall be classified based upon the reported safety risk and injury to the child. In all cases, the division must have face-to-face contact with all children in the alleged victim's household within 72 hours.

If the call is screened in, it will be accepted as a CA/N report and sent to the county office. If the call is screened out, the call will be documented and entered into the database, but no further action will be taken, unless the division decides to refer it for appropriate community service. After response assignment, the report is sent to the local division office for review. The local division office has the option to change the response assignment, given additional information or prior history with the family. Each investigation will be classified as a 3-hour, 24-hour, or 72-hour call, based upon information received by the hotline.

Montana

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Code § 41-3-201

When a mandated reporter knows or has reasonable cause to suspect, as a result of information they receive in their professional or official capacity, that a child is abused or neglected, he or she shall promptly make a report to the Department of Public Health and Human Services.

Content of Reports

Citation: Ann. Code § 41-3-201

The report must contain:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other persons responsible for the child's care
- To the extent known, the nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of prior injuries
- Any other information that the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries or showing the willful neglect and the identity of the person or persons responsible for the injury or neglect
- The facts that led the reporter to believe that the child suffered injury or willful neglect

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Ann. Code § 41-3-206

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect shall report that suspicion to the appropriate medical examiner or law enforcement officer.

Substance-Exposed Infants

Citation: Ann. Code § 41-3-201(3)

A physician or other health-care professional involved in the delivery or care of an infant shall report to the department any infant known to the professional to be affected by a dangerous drug, as defined in § 50-32-101.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Code § 41-3-202; Admin. Rules R. 37.47.302; 37.47.303

Upon receipt of a report that a child is or has been abused or neglected, the department shall promptly assess the information contained in the report and make a determination regarding the level of response required and the timeframe within which action must be initiated. If the department determines that an investigation is required, a social worker, the county attorney, or a peace officer shall promptly conduct a thorough investigation into the circumstances surrounding the allegations of abuse or neglect of the child.

An initial investigation of alleged abuse or neglect may be conducted when an anonymous report is received. However, the investigation must within 48 hours result in the development of independent, corroborative, and attributable information in order for the investigation to continue. Without the development of independent, corroborative, and attributable information, a child may not be removed from the home.

In regulation: All reports of child abuse or neglect must be made through the child abuse hotline. When the child abuse hotline receives an incoming communication, the intake specialist will use standardized questions to screen the communication and determine:

- The type of child abuse or neglect alleged
- The level of response required
- How the report will be classified

When the incoming communication received by the hotline contains an allegation of child abuse or neglect requiring investigation, the intake specialist shall transmit the report to a local office for a response pursuant to § 41-3-202.

When an incoming communication received by the hotline results in a report alleging child abuse or neglect that indicates a child may be in immediate danger of serious harm, thus requiring an immediate response, the intake specialist will promptly contact the appropriate social worker in the field designated to receive those reports and verbally inform the field social worker of:

- The nature of the concerns
- Where the child or children of concern can be located
- Any other information necessary to facilitate protection of the child or children

Nebraska

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 28-711

When a mandated reporter has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, he or she shall report to the proper law enforcement agency or the Department of Health and Human Services on the toll-free number.

The report may be made orally by telephone with the caller giving his or her name and address, and shall be followed by a written report.

Content of Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 28-711

The report shall contain:

- The address and age of the child
- The address of the person having custody of the child
- The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect or the conditions or circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect
- Any evidence of previous abuse or neglect
- Any other information that in the opinion of the reporter may be helpful in establishing the cause of the child abuse or neglect and the identity of the perpetrator or perpetrators

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. §§ 28-711; 28-713; 28-720; HHS Man. §§ 3-006.02; 4-008.01

The department shall establish a statewide toll-free number to be used by any person any hour of the day or night, any day of the week, to make reports of child abuse or neglect.

It is the duty of the law enforcement agency to investigate the report, to take immediate steps to protect the child, and to institute legal proceedings if appropriate. The law enforcement agency may request assistance from the department during the investigation and shall, by the next working day, notify either the hotline or the department of receipt of the report, including whether or not an investigation is being undertaken by the law enforcement agency. A copy of all reports, whether or not an investigation is being undertaken, shall be provided to the department.

The department shall, by the next working day after receiving a report, make a written report or a summary on forms provided by the department to the proper law enforcement agency and enter the report in the tracking system of child protection cases.

All cases entered into the central register shall be classified as one of the following:

- Court substantiated: if a court of competent jurisdiction has entered a judgment of guilty against the subject of the report of child abuse or neglect upon a criminal complaint, indictment, or information, or there has been an adjudication of jurisdiction of a juvenile court over the child that relates to the report of child abuse or neglect
- Court pending: if a criminal complaint, indictment, or information or a juvenile petition that relates to the subject of the report of abuse or neglect has been filed and is pending in a court of competent jurisdiction
- Inconclusive: if the evidence indicates, by a preponderance of the evidence, that child abuse or neglect probably did not occur

In regulation: Allegations that meet the definition of child abuse and neglect will be assigned for assessment.

When law enforcement has investigated a report and has reported its findings to the department, the department will enter the findings in the central registry. The department will not begin another assessment unless the law enforcement investigation indicates the child is at continued risk or the information on the family is incomplete.

Cases classified as follows will not be entered into the registry:

- Unable to locate: when the subjects of the report cannot be found
- Unfounded: all cases that cannot be otherwise classified

Nevada

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Rev. Stat. §§ 432B.220(1)-(2); 432B.230

A mandated reporter who, in his or her professional or occupational capacity, knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected shall:

- Report the abuse or neglect of the child to an agency that provides child welfare services or to a law enforcement agency
- Make such a report as soon as reasonably practicable but no later than 24 hours after the person knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the child has been abused or neglected

If a mandated reporter knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the abuse or neglect of the child involves an act or omission of a person directly responsible or serving as a volunteer for or an employee of a public or private home, institution or facility where the child is receiving child care outside of his or her home for a portion of the day, the person shall make the report to a law enforcement agency.

If a mandated reporter knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the abuse or neglect of the child involves an act or omission of an agency that provides child welfare services or a law enforcement agency, the person shall make the report to an agency other than the one alleged to have committed the act or omission.

A person may make a report by telephone or, in light of all the surrounding facts and circumstances that are known or that reasonably should be known to the person at the time, by any other means of oral, written, or electronic communication that a reasonable person would believe, under those facts and circumstances, is a reliable and swift means of communicating information to the person who receives the report. If the report is made orally, the person who receives the report must reduce it to writing as soon as reasonably practicable.

Content of Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 432B.230

The report must contain the following information, if obtainable:

- The name, address, age, and sex of the child
- The name and address of the child's parents or other person responsible for the child's care
- The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect of the child, the effect of prenatal illegal substance abuse on the newborn infant, or the nature of the withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure
- Any evidence of previously known or suspected abuse or neglect of the child or the child's siblings, effects of prenatal illegal substance abuse, or evidence of withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure of the newborn infant
- The name, address, and relationship, if known, of the person who is alleged to have abused or neglected the child
- Any other information known to the person making the report that the agency that provides child welfare services considers necessary

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 432B.220(6)

If a mandated reporter knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect, the person shall, as soon as reasonably practicable, report this belief to an agency that provides child welfare services or a law enforcement agency. If the report is made to a law enforcement agency, the law enforcement agency shall notify an agency that provides child welfare services and the appropriate medical examiner or coroner of the report. If such a report is made to an agency that provides child welfare services, the agency shall notify the appropriate medical examiner or coroner of the report.

The medical examiner or coroner shall investigate the report and submit his or her written findings to the appropriate child welfare agency, the appropriate district attorney, and a law enforcement agency. The written findings must include, if obtainable, the information required by § 432B.230(2).

Substance-Exposed Infants

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 432B.220(3)

Any mandated reporter who delivers or provides medical services to a newborn infant and knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the newborn infant has been affected by prenatal substance abuse or has withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure shall, as soon as reasonably practicable but no later than 24 hours after the person knows, notify an agency that provides child welfare services of the condition of the infant and refer each person who is responsible for the welfare of the infant for appropriate counseling, training, or other services.

Screening Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 432B.260; Admin. Code § 432B.170

Upon the receipt of a report concerning the possible abuse or neglect of a child, a child welfare agency or a law enforcement agency shall promptly notify the appropriate licensing authority, if any. A law enforcement agency shall promptly notify a child welfare agency of any report it receives. Upon receipt of a report concerning the possible abuse or neglect of a child, a child welfare agency or a law enforcement agency shall immediately initiate an investigation if the report indicates that:

- The child is age 5 or younger.
- There is a high risk of serious harm to the child.
- The child has suffered a fatality.
- The child is living in a household in which another child has died, or the child is seriously injured or has visible signs of physical abuse.

In other cases, a child welfare agency shall conduct an evaluation no later than 3 days after the report or notification was received to determine whether an investigation is warranted. For the purposes of this subsection, an investigation is not warranted if:

- The child is not in imminent danger of harm.
- The child is not vulnerable as the result of any untreated injury, illness, or other physical, mental, or emotional condition that threatens his or her immediate health or safety.
- The alleged abuse or neglect could be eliminated if the child and his or her family receive or participate in social or health services offered in the community, or both.
- The agency determines that the alleged abuse or neglect was the result of the reasonable exercise of discipline by a parent or guardian.

If the agency determines that an investigation is warranted, the agency shall initiate the investigation no later than 3 days after the evaluation is completed.

In regulation: After the investigation of a report of the abuse or neglect of a child, an agency that provides child welfare services shall determine its case findings based on whether there is reasonable cause to believe a child is abused or neglected or threatened with abuse or neglect, and whether there is credible evidence of alleged abuse or neglect of the child. The agency shall make one of the following findings:

- The allegation of abuse or neglect is substantiated.
- The allegation of abuse or neglect is unsubstantiated.

New Hampshire**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Rev. Stat. § 169-C:30**

A mandated reporter shall immediately make an oral report to the Department of Health and Human Services by telephone or otherwise, followed within 48 hours by a written report, if so requested by the department.

Content of Reports**Citation: Rev. Stat. § 169-C:30**

The report shall contain, if known:

- The name and address of the child and the person responsible for the child's welfare
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of prior injury
- The identity of the person suspected of being responsible for the abuse or neglect
- Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the neglect or abuse or that may be required by the department

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. §§ 169-C:34; 169-C:38-a

If it appears that the immediate safety or well-being of a child is endangered, the family may flee or the child disappear, or the facts otherwise so warrant, the department shall commence an investigation immediately after receipt of a report. In all other cases, a child protective investigation shall be commenced within 72 hours of receipt of the report.

For each report it receives, the department shall promptly perform a child protective investigation to determine:

- The composition of the family or household, including:
 - The name, address, age, sex, and race of each child named in the report
 - Any siblings or other children in the same household or in the care of the same adults
 - The parents or other persons responsible for the welfare of the children
 - Any other adults in the same household
- Whether there is probable cause to believe that any child in the family or household is abused or neglected, including a determination of:
 - Harm or threatened harm to each child
 - The nature and extent of present or prior injuries, abuse, or neglect, and any evidence thereof
 - The person or persons apparently responsible for the abuse or neglect
- The immediate and long-term risk to each child if the child remains in the existing home environment
- The protective treatment and ameliorative services that appear necessary to help prevent further child abuse or neglect and to improve the home environment and the parents' ability to adequately care for the children

At the first contact in person, any person investigating a report of abuse or neglect on behalf of the department shall verbally inform the parents of a child suspected of being a victim of abuse or neglect of the specific nature of the charges and that they are under no obligation to allow a social worker or State employee on their premises or surrender their children to interviews unless that social worker or State employee is in possession of a court order to that effect. Upon receiving such information, the parent shall sign a written acknowledgement indicating that the information required under this paragraph was provided by the person conducting the investigation. The parent and department shall each retain a copy of the acknowledgment.

The Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice shall jointly develop a standardized protocol for the interviewing of victims and the investigation and assessment of cases of child abuse and neglect. The protocol shall seek to minimize the impact on the victim. The protocol shall also be designed to protect the rights of all parties affected, and specifically address the need to establish safe and appropriate places for interviewing children.

New Jersey

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Stat. § 9:6-8.10

Any person who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect shall report the same to the Division of Youth and Family Services by telephone or otherwise.

Content of Reports

Citation: Ann. Stat. § 9:6-8.10

The report, where possible, shall contain:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parent, guardian, or other person having custody
- If known, the child's age
- The nature and possible extent of injuries, including any evidence of prior injury
- Any other information that might be helpful with respect to the child abuse and the identity of the perpetrator

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Stat. § 9:6-8.11; Admin. Code Tit. 10, §§ 129-2.1; 129-2.3; 129-5.2; 129-5.3

Upon receipt of a report, the division shall immediately take such action as shall be necessary to insure the safety of the child and to that end may request and shall receive appropriate assistance from local and State law enforcement officials. The division shall initiate an investigation within 24 hours of receipt of the report, unless a delay is authorized based upon the request of a law enforcement official. The division shall also, within 72 hours, forward a report of such matter to the child abuse registry.

In regulation: The central registry shall deem a call to be a report if it contains at least one allegation that, if true, would constitute abuse or neglect, as defined by law. Child protective services (CPS) shall investigate each new report, regardless of whether or not the alleged child victim and his or her family are known to the department. CPS shall investigate each report alleging abuse or neglect on a military installation, to the extent permitted by the base commander.

CPS shall start the investigation of a report within either 2 hours or 24 hours of the central registry determining the timeframe. Each report that meets one or more of the following criteria shall be investigated within 2 hours of receipt:

- Law enforcement personnel request an immediate response.
- An immediate response will prevent the loss of evidence.
- A child has died due to abuse or neglect and a sibling remains under the care of a parent or guardian.
- A child is a boarder baby left in a hospital or born drug-exposed.
- A child under age 6 is alone at the time of the report.
- A child requires medical attention at the time of the report.
- A child is being seriously physically abused at the time of the report.

The child protective investigator shall, upon initial contact, inform each person specifically alleged to be a perpetrator of abuse or neglect that he or she has been named the alleged perpetrator of abuse or neglect, unless the police, prosecutor, or deputy attorney general advises the child protective investigator to delay providing the information, or when providing such information will jeopardize the investigation.

The child protective investigator shall evaluate the available information and, for each allegation, determine whether abuse or neglect has occurred, and shall make a finding of either substantiated or unfounded. The child protective investigator shall make every reasonable effort to identify the perpetrator for each allegation of abuse or neglect.

New Mexico

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Stat. § 32A-4-3(A)

A mandated reporter who knows or has reasonable suspicion that a child is abused or neglected shall report the matter immediately to:

- A local law enforcement agency
- The Children, Youth and Families Department
- The Tribal law enforcement or social services agency for an Indian child residing in Indian country

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. § 32A-4-3(B)**

The written report shall contain:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents, guardian, or custodian
- The child's age
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of previous injuries
- Any other information that the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries and the identity of the person responsible for the injuries

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. §§ 32A-4-3; 32A-4-4; Admin. Code Tit. 8, §§ 10.2.14; 10.3.10; 10.3.11; 10.3.12; 10.3.17**

A law enforcement agency receiving the report shall immediately transmit the facts of the report by telephone to the department and a written report within 48 hours. The department shall immediately transmit the facts of the report by telephone to a local law enforcement agency and a written report within 48 hours.

The recipient of a report shall take immediate steps to ensure prompt investigation of the report, and take steps to protect the health or welfare of the alleged child victim, as well as any other child under the same care who may be in danger of abuse or neglect. A local law enforcement officer trained in the investigation of child abuse and neglect is responsible for investigating reports of alleged child abuse or neglect at schools, daycare facilities or child care facilities. Reports alleging neglect or abuse shall be referred to the department.

In regulation: The department will refer all screened out reports to other agencies as resources exist or as required by law. When the alleged perpetrator is not a caregiver or household member, the allegation will be forwarded within 48 hours for investigation to law enforcement. When the report received involves an Indian child on a reservation or pueblo, the department will immediately transmit the information to Tribal law enforcement or Tribal social services.

Emergency and priority 1 reports are assigned for investigation immediately upon receipt of the report. Reports received under safe haven and on children in foster care or preadoptive homes are emergency reports. Priority 2 reports are assigned for investigation no later than 24 hours from receipt of the report. Investigations are conducted within the following timeframes:

- Emergency reports are initiated within 3 hours of receipt.
- Priority 1 reports are initiated within 24 hours of receipt.
- Priority 2 reports are initiated within 5 calendar days of receipt.

The department shall, at the initial time of contact with the subjects of the investigation, advise them of the allegations made and their basic rights. The investigation shall be completed within a reasonable period of time from the date the report was made. The investigation decision includes a determination of substantiated or unsubstantiated on each of the allegations in the report.

New York**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Soc. Serv. Law §§ 413(1); 415**

Mandated reporters shall immediately make an oral or electronic report to the statewide central register when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected by a person responsible for that child's care. Oral reports shall be followed by written reports within 48 hours.

Content of Reports**Citation: Soc. Serv. Law § 415**

Written reports shall be made in a manner prescribed and on forms supplied by the commissioner of the Office of Children and Family Services and shall include the following information:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other person responsible for the child's care
- The child's age, sex, and race
- The nature and extent of any injury, abuse, or maltreatment, including any evidence of prior injuries, abuse, or maltreatment to the child or the child's siblings
- The name of the person or persons alleged to be responsible for causing the injury, abuse, or maltreatment, if known
- Family composition
- The source of the report
- The name and contact information of the person making the report
- Actions taken by the reporting source
- Any other information that the reporter believes may be helpful or required by regulation

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Soc. Serv. Law § 418**

Any mandated reporter, including workers of the local child protective service agency or an official of the State agency responsible for investigation of a report of abuse or maltreatment of a child in residential care, who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of abuse or maltreatment shall report that fact to the appropriate medical examiner or coroner.

The medical examiner or coroner shall accept the report for investigation and shall issue a preliminary written report of his or her findings within 60 days of the date of death, absent extraordinary circumstances, and his or her final written report promptly to the police, the appropriate district attorney, the local child protective service, the Office of Children and Family Services, and, if the institution making the report is a hospital, the hospital. The Office of Children and Family Services shall promptly provide a copy of the preliminary and final reports to the statewide central register of child abuse and maltreatment.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Soc. Serv. Law § 424

Each child protective service shall:

- Receive on a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week basis all reports of suspected child abuse or maltreatment
- Transmit a copy of each written report to the State central register
- No later than 7 days after receipt of the initial report send a preliminary written report of the initial investigation, including evaluation and actions taken or contemplated, to the central register
- Upon receipt of a report, commence, within 24 hours, an appropriate investigation that shall include:
 - An evaluation of the environment of the child named in the report and any other children in the same home
 - A determination of the risk to such children if they continue to remain in the existing home environment
 - A determination of the nature, extent, and cause of any condition enumerated in the report
 - The names, ages, and conditions of other children in the home
 - After seeing to the safety of the child or children, notify the subjects of the report and other persons named in the report in writing of the existence of the report and their respective rights
- Determine, within 60 days, whether the report is "indicated" or "unfounded"
- Take a child into protective custody to protect him or her from further abuse or maltreatment when appropriate and in accordance with the provisions of the family court act

North Carolina

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Gen. Stat. § 7B-301

A mandated reporter who has cause to suspect that a child is abused, neglected, or dependent shall report the case to the Department of Social Services in the county where the child resides. The report may be made orally, by telephone, or in writing.

Content of Reports

Citation: Gen. Stat. § 7B-301

The report shall contain information as is known to the reporter, including:

- The name and address of the child and the child's parent(s), guardian, or caregiver
- The age of the child
- The names and ages of other children in the home
- The present whereabouts of the child, if not at the home address
- The nature and extent of any injury or condition resulting from abuse or neglect
- Any other information that the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the need for protective services or court intervention

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Gen. Stat. §§ 7B-301; 7B-302

A mandated reporter who has cause to believe that a child has died as a result of maltreatment shall report the case to the department.

The department shall immediately ascertain if other children are in the home and in need of protective services or immediate removal from the home.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Gen. Stat. §§ 7B-301; 7B-302; Admin. Code Tit. 10A, § 70A.0106

Upon receipt of any report of sexual abuse of the child in a child care facility, the director shall notify the State Bureau of Investigation within 24 hours or on the next workday.

When a report is received, the department shall promptly assess the extent of the abuse or neglect, and the risk of harm to the child, in order to determine whether protective services should be provided or a complaint filed. When the report alleges abuse, the assessment must begin within 24 hours. When the report alleges neglect or dependency, the assessment must begin within 72 hours. When the report alleges abandonment, the department must immediately begin an assessment, take appropriate steps to assume temporary custody of the child, and take appropriate steps to secure an order for nonsecure custody of the child.

In regulation: When a report is received, the county director shall check the county agency's records and the State central registry to ascertain if any previous reports have been made concerning the alleged victim child or children.

The county director shall implement a structured decision-making process that includes assessments of the immediate safety and future risk of harm to the child or children, and the family's strengths and needs. In addition, there shall be documentation of an assessment of all of the information obtained during the investigation, any safety response plan, and the case decision.

North Dakota**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility**

Citation: Cent. Code § 50-25.1-04

All mandated reporters shall immediately report cases of known or suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Services. Oral reports must be followed by written reports within 48 hours if requested by the department.

Content of Reports

Citation: Cent. Code § 50-25.1-04

A requested written report must include information specifically sought by the department if the reporter possesses or has reasonable access to the information.

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Cent. Code § 50-25.1-05; Admin. Code § 75-03-19-03

The department immediately shall initiate an assessment of any report of child abuse or neglect received. If the report alleges a violation of a criminal statute involving sexual or physical abuse, the department and an appropriate law enforcement agency shall coordinate the planning and execution of their investigation efforts to avoid a duplication of fact-finding efforts and multiple interviews. The department or the law enforcement agency may refer the case to a children's advocacy center for a forensic interview, forensic medical examination, and other services.

In regulation: All nonemergency child abuse or neglect assessments must be initiated no later than 72 hours after receipt of a report by the assessing agency unless the department prescribes a different time in a particular case. In cases involving a serious threat or danger to the life or health of a child, the assessment and any appropriate protective measures must commence immediately upon receipt of the report. An assessment is initiated by a search of records for information relating to the report, contact with a subject of the report, or with a collateral contact.

Northern Mariana Islands

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Commonwealth Code Tit. 6, § 5313(a)

Any mandated reporter who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect a child is or was abused or neglected shall report promptly to the Department of Public Safety. This notification shall be made within 24 hours.

Content of Reports

Citation: Commonwealth Code Tit. 6, § 5313(a)

The report shall contain a statement of the time, date, circumstances, and information that gave rise to the reporter's belief that abuse or neglect occurred or will occur.

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Commonwealth Code Tit. 6, § 5313(c)

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of abuse shall report that fact to the medical examiner.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Commonwealth Code Tit. 6, § 5313(c); 5322

The Department of Public Safety shall promptly, within 24 hours, notify the Office of the Attorney General and Division of Youth Services of all reported cases.

If a child is taken into custody, the division shall immediately commence a child protective investigation to determine if it is necessary to make the child a ward of the court. The division shall make a recommendation to the Attorney General's Office within 24 hours of the initiation of protective custody regarding whether it is necessary to make the child a ward of the court.

Ohio

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 2151.421

A mandated reporter who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has suffered or faces a threat of suffering abuse or neglect shall immediately make a report to the county public children services agency (PCSA) or a peace officer in the county in which the child resides or the abuse or neglect occurred.

The report shall be made either by telephone or in person and shall be followed by a written report, if requested by the receiving agency or officer.

Content of Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 2151.421

The written report shall contain:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or persons having custody
- The child's age
- The nature and extent of any injuries, abuse, or neglect, including any evidence of prior injuries, abuse, or neglect
- Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury, abuse, or neglect that is known or reasonably suspected or believed to have occurred or of the threat of injury, abuse, or neglect that is known or reasonably suspected or believed to exist

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 2151.421(H)(4)

If a report has been made, and if for any reason the child dies before reaching age 18, the PCSA or peace officer to which the report was made or referred shall, upon request of the Child Fatality Review Board, submit a summary of the report to the Child Fatality Review Board.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 2151.421(F)(1); Admin. Code § 5101:2-34-32

The PCSA shall investigate, within 24 hours, each report of child abuse or child neglect or threat of abuse or neglect that is known or reasonably suspected or believed to have occurred. The investigation shall be made in cooperation with the law enforcement agency. The PCSA shall, at the time of initial contact with the person subject to the investigation, inform the person of the specific complaints or allegations made against the person.

In regulation: Upon receipt of a report, the PCSA shall determine the immediacy of need for agency response based on information from the referent or reporter and child protective services records for the family, and collateral sources.

The PCSA shall consider the report an emergency when there is an imminent threat to the child's safety or there is insufficient information to determine whether or not the child is safe at the time of the report. For emergency reports, the PCSA shall attempt a face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim within 1 hour of the receipt of the report. For all other reports, contact must be made within 24 hours with a principal or collateral source to ensure that the child is safe, and attempt face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim within 3 calendar days.

Oklahoma

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Stat. Tit. 10, §§ 7103; 7104

A mandated reporter who has reason to believe that a child is a victim of abuse or neglect shall report the matter promptly to the Department of Human Services. Such reports may be made by telephone, in writing, in person, or by any other method prescribed by the department.

A health professional attending to a victim of what appears to be criminally injurious conduct, including physical or sexual abuse, shall report the matter promptly to the nearest law enforcement agency.

Content of Reports

Citation: Ann. Stat. Tit. 10, § 7103

The written report shall contain:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or persons responsible for the child
- The child's age
- The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect, including any evidence of previous injuries
- Whether the child has tested positive for alcohol or a controlled dangerous substance
- Any other information that the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries and the identity of the person or persons responsible for the abuse if such information is known to the person making the report

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

Citation: Ann. Stat. Tit. 10, § 7103

Every health care professional attending the birth of a child who tests positive for alcohol or a controlled dangerous substance shall report the matter promptly to the Department of Human Services.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Stat. Tit. 10, §§ 7106; 7108; Admin. Code Tit. 340, 75-3-7; 75-3-7.1

A county office of the department shall promptly respond to a report by initiating an investigation or an assessment of the family in accordance with guidelines established by the department. The department may assign priorities to reports of alleged child abuse or neglect based on the severity and immediacy of the alleged harm to the child. The primary purpose of the investigation or assessment shall be the protection of the child.

At the initial time of contact with a parent or other person who is the subject of an investigation, the child protective services (CPS) worker shall advise such person of the specific complaint or allegation made against the person.

In regulation: All reports are screened to determine whether allegations meet the definition of child abuse or neglect and are within the scope of a CPS investigation or assessment. If the allegations are not appropriate for CPS, the reporter may be given an explanation why an investigation or assessment will not be conducted and, if appropriate, where a referral may be made to assist the family.

Intervention is limited to current situations as the CPS focus is on identifying and protecting children who are presently at risk or will be at risk if safety measures are not put in place.

When a report is received that is not appropriate for CPS and services are needed, the child welfare worker may make a referral within the department, to outside resources, or both, for emergency food, shelter, medical services, or counseling. In situations that indicate the child and family are in need of services, referrals to community agencies or contract providers may be offered to the family.

Priority guidelines have been established to assist staff in determining how quickly an initial response must be made to a report.

- Priority I: A Priority I report indicates that the child is in imminent danger of serious physical injury and must be responded to immediately, but no later than 24 hours after receipt of the report.
- Priority II: Priority II reports indicate that there is no imminent danger of severe injury, but without intervention and safety measures it is likely that the child will not be safe. Priority II investigations or assessments are initiated from within 2 to 15 calendar days from the date that the report was accepted for investigation or assessment.

Oregon

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Rev. Stat. § 419B.015

A person making a report shall make an oral report, by telephone or otherwise, to:

- The local office of the Department of Human Services or a designee of the department
- A law enforcement agency in the county where the person is located

Content of Reports**Citation: Rev. Stat. § 419B.015**

The report shall contain, if known:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other persons responsible for the child
- The child's age
- The nature and extent of the abuse, including any evidence of previous abuse
- The explanation given for the abuse
- Any other information that the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the abuse and the identity of the perpetrator

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Rev. Stat. § 419B.017; Admin. Rules §§ 413-015-0205; 413-015-0210; 413-015-1000**

The department shall adopt rules establishing the time within which the notification required above must be made.

At a minimum, these rules shall:

- Establish which reports of child abuse require notification within 24 hours after receipt
- Provide that all other reports require notification within 10 days after receipt
- Establish criteria that enable the department or law enforcement agency to quickly and easily identify reports that require notification within 24 hours

In regulation: On the same day a report is received by the department, screeners must use the guided assessment screening template to collect critical information in order to effectively evaluate the presence of safety threats.

A child protective services (CPS) assessment is required if the screener determines that the information received constitutes a report of child abuse with a familial protection issue. If an assessment is required, the screener must determine the response timeframe:

- Within 24 hours if there is an immediate threat to safety
- Within 5 days if the threat to safety is not immediate

Following the completion of the CPS assessment, the worker must determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that child abuse occurred. The possible determinations are:

- "Founded": There is reasonable cause to believe that abuse occurred.
- "Unfounded": No evidence of child abuse was identified or disclosed.
- "Unable to determine": There was insufficient data to conclude whether there was reasonable cause to believe that abuse occurred.

Pennsylvania**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Cons. Stat. Tit. 23 §§ 6311; 6313**

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child shall make a report to the Department of Public Welfare.

An oral report shall be made immediately, to be followed by a written report within 48 hours.

Written reports shall be made to the appropriate county agency in a manner and on forms the department prescribes by regulation.

Content of Reports**Citation: Cons. Stat. Tit. 23 § 6313**

The written reports shall include the following information if available:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other persons responsible for the care of the child, if known
- Where the suspected abuse occurred
- The age and sex of subjects of the report
- The nature and extent of the suspected abuse, including any evidence of prior abuse to the child or siblings of the child
- The name and relationship of the person responsible for causing the suspected abuse, if known, and any evidence of prior abuse by that person
- Family composition
- The source of the report
- The name and contact information of the person making the report
- Any actions taken by the source
- Any other information that the department may require by regulation

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Cons. Stat. Tit. 23 § 6317**

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect shall report that suspicion to the appropriate coroner. The coroner shall accept the report for investigation and shall report his finding to the police, the district attorney, the appropriate county agency and, if the report is made by a hospital, the hospital.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Cons. Stat. Tit. 23 §§ 6334; 6368**

If the complaint received does not suggest suspected child abuse, but does suggest a need for social services or other services or investigation, the department shall transmit the information to the county agency or other public agency for appropriate action. The information shall not be considered a child abuse report unless the agency to which the information was referred has reasonable cause to suspect after investigation that abuse occurred. If the agency has reasonable cause to suspect that abuse occurred, the agency shall notify the department, and the initial complaint shall be considered to have been a child abuse report.

Upon receipt of each report of suspected child abuse, the county agency shall immediately commence an appropriate investigation and see the child immediately if emergency protective custody is required or if it cannot be determined from the report whether emergency protective custody is needed. Otherwise, the county agency shall commence an appropriate investigation and see the child within 24 hours of receipt of the report. The investigation shall include a determination of the risk of harm to the child or children if they are to remain in the existing home environment, as well as a determination of the nature, extent, and cause of any condition enumerated in the report and any action necessary to provide for the safety of the child or children.

The investigation by the county agency to determine whether the report is "founded," "indicated," or "unfounded," and whether to accept the family for service, shall be completed within 60 days in all cases.

Puerto Rico

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Laws Tit. 8, § 446

Any person who has knowledge of or suspects that a child may be a victim abuse or neglect, or is at risk of becoming a victim, must report to the hotline of the Department of the Family, the police, or the local office of the department.

Every processor of film or photographs who has knowledge of or observes any motion picture, photograph, videotape, negatives, or slides that depict a minor involved in a sexual activity must make a report.

Mandated reporters must complete a form furnished by the department within 48 hours after the oral report. The written report shall be sent to the central register.

Content of Reports

Citation: Ann. Laws Tit. 8, § 446

Reports shall contain, but not be limited to, all information that confirms the abuse.

Every motion picture, photograph, videotape, negative, or slide that shows a minor involved in a sexual activity shall be delivered to the nearest police station.

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Ann. Laws Tit. 8, § 446

Mandated reporters who have knowledge of or suspect that a minor has died as a result of abuse or neglect shall report that fact to the police or the hotline of the department.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Laws Tit. 8, § 444a

The department shall be responsible for investigating and attending to situations of abuse, institutional abuse, neglect, and/or institutional neglect. Likewise, it shall be responsible for instituting programs for the prevention, identification, investigation, and provision of the necessary services, pursuant to the public policy established in this chapter and the needs of minors and their families in any situation of abuse, institutional abuse, neglect, and/or institutional neglect.

The department shall investigate, order, or refer for investigation referrals of abuse, institutional abuse, neglect, and/or institutional neglect, making use, for this purpose, of all procedures, services, and means required to guarantee the most expeditious and effective attention to such investigations.

Rhode Island

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Gen. Laws §§ 40-11-3; 40-11-6

Any person who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been abused, neglected, or sexually abused by another child shall report the information within 24 hours to the Department of Children, Youth and Families.

A physician or registered nurse practitioner who has cause to suspect that a child is abused or determines that a child under age 12 is suffering from any sexually transmitted disease shall report his or her suspicions to the department. An immediate oral report shall be made by telephone or otherwise, to both the department and law enforcement agency, and shall be followed by a report, in writing, to the department and law enforcement agency explaining the extent and nature of the abuse or neglect the child is alleged to have suffered.

Content of Reports**Citation: Gen. Laws § 40-11-6**

A written report shall follow the oral report. The written report will explain the extent and nature of the abuse or neglect the child is alleged to have suffered.

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Gen. Laws § 40-11-3.1**

Any mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has died as a result of child abuse or neglect shall immediately report that information to the department, which shall cause the report to be investigated immediately. Upon receipt of the report, the department shall immediately refer the information to the local law enforcement agency or the State police as well as to the office of the medical examiner.

The office of the medical examiner shall investigate the report and communicate its preliminary findings, orally within 72 hours, and in writing within 7 working days, to the appropriate law enforcement agency, to the department, and if the person who made the report is an employee or a member of the staff of a hospital, to the hospital.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Gen. Laws § 40-11-7; Admin. Rules 500.0010; 500.0015; 500.0070; 500.0085**

The Department of Children, Youth and Families shall investigate each report to determine the circumstances surrounding the alleged abuse or neglect and its cause. The investigation shall include personal contact with the child named in the report and any other children in the same household.

In regulation: The department has established criteria for accepting or rejecting a child abuse/neglect report for investigation. The circumstances reported, if true, must constitute child abuse or neglect as defined by statute. There must be reasonable cause to believe that abuse/neglect circumstances exist.

Intake workers initially set the response priority for each referral of child abuse or neglect. Response priorities delineate the time limit for the intake workers to process the child protective services (CPS) report and for the initiation of an investigation. Response priorities are categorized into three types:

- **Emergency Response:** The CPS report must be processed within 10 minutes after the call is completed. A child protection investigator (CPI) must respond to the report within 10 minutes of assignment.
- **Immediate Response:** The CPS report must be processed within 1 hour after the call is completed. A CPI must respond to the report within the shift in which the call was received.
- **Routine Response:** The CPS report must be processed within 1 hour after the call is completed. A CPI must respond to the report within 24 hours of assignment. Routine Response criteria are used for all other reports in which there is minimal risk of harm to the child.

Assessment of risk is the process by which a CPI determines the current safety of a child and the prospects of future harm through child abuse or neglect. This assessment process is the focal point of each investigation and is the basis of most investigative decisions. It is an ongoing process that should occur each time a new piece of evidence/information is obtained. Failure to make a thorough and up-to-date assessment could later jeopardize the safety of the child.

A notification will be made to a person who is alleged to have perpetrated abuse and/or neglect upon a child, to inform that person whether the department's CPS investigation will be "indicated" or "unfounded," and to identify the allegations that have been "indicated" or "unfounded."

South Carolina**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Code § 63-7-310**

A mandated reporter shall report to the Department of Social Services or a law enforcement agency when the reporter has reason to believe that a child may have been abused or neglected.

The report is made to a law enforcement agency when abuse is committed by someone other than a person responsible for the child's welfare.

Reports may be made orally by telephone or otherwise to the county Department of Social Services or to a law enforcement agency in the county where the child resides or is found.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Code § 63-7-310**

Reports must include the identity of the reporter, which is kept confidential.

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Ann. Code § 63-7-310**

A mandated reporter who has reason to believe that a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect shall report the information to the appropriate medical examiner or coroner.

The medical examiner or coroner shall accept the report for investigation and shall report his or her findings to the appropriate law enforcement agency, circuit solicitor's office, the county Department of Social Services, and if the institution making a report is a hospital, to the hospital.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Code §§ 63-7-340; 63-7-350; 63-7-910; 63-7-920; 63-7-930

When a report is referred to the department for an investigation, the department must determine whether previous reports have been made regarding the same child or the same subject of the report.

If the department does not conduct an investigation, the department must make a record of the report and classify the record as a Category IV unfounded report. The department and law enforcement are authorized to use information from the report for purposes of assessing risk and safety if additional contacts are made concerning the child, the family, or the subject of the report.

The department may maintain a toll-free number available to persons throughout the State for the reporting of known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

Within 24 hours of the receipt of a report of suspected child abuse or neglect, the department must begin an appropriate and thorough investigation to determine whether a report of suspected child abuse or neglect is "indicated" or "unfounded." The finding must be made no later than 45 days from the receipt of the report.

The department must furnish to parents or guardians on a standardized form the following information as soon as reasonably possible after commencing the investigation:

- The allegations being investigated
- Whether the person's name has been recorded by the department as a suspected perpetrator of abuse or neglect
- How information provided by the parent or guardian may be used
- The possible outcomes of the investigation

Reports of child abuse and neglect must be classified in the department's data system and records in one of three categories: suspected, unfounded, or indicated. All initial reports must be considered suspected. Reports must be maintained in the category of suspected for no more than 60 days after the report was received. By the end of the 60-day time period, suspected reports must be classified as either unfounded or indicated based on the investigation.

Indicated findings must be based upon a finding of the facts available to the department that there is a preponderance of evidence that the child is an abused or neglected child. All reports that are not indicated at the conclusion of the investigation and all records of information for which an investigation was not conducted must be classified as unfounded. Unfounded reports must be further classified as Category I, Category II, Category III, or Category IV:

- Category I unfounded reports are those in which abuse and neglect were ruled out following the investigation. A report falls in this category if evidence of abuse or neglect as defined in this chapter was not found regardless of whether the family had other problems or was in need of services.
- Category II unfounded reports are those in which the investigation did not produce a preponderance of evidence that the child is an abused or neglected child.
- Category III unfounded reports are those in which an investigation could not be completed because the department was unable to locate the child or family or for some other compelling reason.
- Category IV unfounded reports are records of information received pursuant to § 63-7-350 but were not investigated by the department.

South Dakota

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Laws § 26-8A-8

Reports required from mandated reporters shall be made immediately orally by telephone or otherwise to the State's attorney, the Department of Social Services, or a law enforcement officer.

Content of Reports

Citation: Ann. Laws § 26-8A-10

The report to the department shall include:

- The child's name, address, date, and place of birth
- The name and address of the child's parents, guardian, custodian, or responsible persons
- The date of the report
- Suspected or proven instances of abuse

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Ann. Laws § 26-8A-4

Any person who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect shall report that information to the medical examiner or coroner. Upon receipt of the report, the medical examiner or coroner shall cause an investigation to be made and submit written findings to the State's attorney and the Department of Social Services.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Laws §§ 26-8A-8; 26-8A-9; Admin. Code § 67:14:30:06

The State's attorney or law enforcement officers, upon receiving a report, shall immediately notify the Department of Social Services.

Upon receipt of a report, the department or law enforcement officers shall investigate. Investigating personnel may personally interview a child out of the presence of the child's parents, guardian, or custodian without advance notice or consent. If the investigation and report indicate that child abuse or neglect has occurred, the State's attorney shall take appropriate action immediately.

In regulation: The department shall provide for 24-hour receipt of reports of child abuse or neglect through agreements with law enforcement agencies, hospitals, courts, or other community-based human service agencies. The department shall provide immediate or prompt investigation of situations in which a child is alleged to be in need of protective service by reason of a report to the department by a State's attorney, or by any person who shall or may make a report under the reporting laws.

If a report received by the department implicates involvement of a foster parent or person employed by the department, the department shall request an investigation by the State's attorney. The department shall offer protective service to the family and may make referral to the court of competent jurisdiction upon confirmation of need for child protection service.

Tennessee**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Code §§ 37-1-403; 37-1-605**

Any person who has knowledge of or is called upon to render aid to any child who is suffering from or has sustained any wound, injury, disability, or physical or mental condition shall report such harm immediately if the harm is of such a nature as to reasonably indicate that it has been caused by brutality, abuse, or neglect, or that, on the basis of available information, reasonably appears to have been caused by brutality, abuse, or neglect.

Any person with knowledge of the type of harm described above shall report it, by telephone or otherwise, to:

- The judge having juvenile jurisdiction over the child
- The Department of Children's Services, either by contacting a local representative of the department or by utilizing the department's centralized intake procedure
- The sheriff of the county where the child resides
- The chief law enforcement official of the municipality where the child resides

Every physician who makes a diagnosis of any sexually transmitted disease in a child who is age 13 or younger shall report the case immediately, in writing, to the Department of Health. If sexual abuse is suspected, the Department of Health will report the case to the Department of Children's Services.

Any person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been sexually abused shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the department. Each report of known or suspected child sexual abuse shall be made immediately to the local office of the department responsible for the investigation of reports, the judge having juvenile jurisdiction, or to the office of the sheriff or the chief law enforcement official of the municipality where the child resides.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Code § 37-1-403**

To the extent known by the reporter, the report shall include:

- The name, address, and age of the child
- The name and address of the person responsible for the care of the child
- The facts requiring the report
- Any other pertinent information

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Ann. Code §§ 37-1-403; 37-1-605**

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of child abuse or neglect or sexual abuse shall report such suspicion to the medical examiner. The medical examiner shall accept the report for investigation and shall report the medical examiner's findings, in writing, to the local law enforcement agency, the appropriate district attorney general, and the department.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Ann. Code §§ 37-1-406; 37-1-606**

The department shall be capable of receiving and investigating reports of child abuse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The county office shall make a thorough investigation promptly after receiving a report of harm. All representatives of the child protective services agency shall, at the initial time of contact with the subject of a child abuse and neglect investigation, advise the individual of the complaints or allegations made against him or her. If it appears that the immediate safety or well-being of a child is endangered, that the family may flee or the child will be unavailable, or the facts otherwise warrant, the department shall commence an investigation immediately, regardless of the time of day or night.

In cases involving child sexual abuse, the investigation shall be conducted by a child protective investigation team. In the event an immediate investigation has been initiated, the department shall notify the child protection team as soon as possible, and the team shall proceed with the investigation. Other cases of child abuse may be investigated by the team at the discretion of each individual team.

No later than 60 days after receiving the initial report, the department or team shall determine whether the reported abuse was indicated or unfounded, and report its findings to the department's abuse registry.

Texas**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Fam. Code §§ 261.101; 261.103**

Any person who has cause to believe that a child has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect shall immediately make a report.

A professional who has cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected or may be abused or neglected shall make a report no later than 48 hours after the professional first suspects that the child has been or may be abused or neglected.

The report shall be made to a law enforcement agency, the department, the agency that operates or licenses the facility where the abuse or neglect occurred, or to the agency designated by the court to be responsible for the protection of children.

The report must be made to the department if the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect involves a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child.

Content of Reports**Citation: Fam. Code § 261.104**

The person making a report shall identify, if known:

- The name and address of the child
- The name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child
- Any other pertinent information concerning the alleged abuse or neglect

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Fam. Code § 261.105**

The department or designated agency shall immediately notify the law enforcement agency of any report it receives that concerns the death of a child from abuse or neglect.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Fam. Code §§ 261.105; 301; 3015; Admin. Code Tit. 40, §§ 700.505; 511

If the department determines that the abuse or neglect does not involve a person responsible for the child's care, it shall refer the report to a law enforcement agency for further investigation. The department shall make a prompt and thorough investigation of a report of child abuse or neglect allegedly committed by a person responsible for a child's care.

The department shall assign priorities and prescribe investigative procedures for investigations based on the severity and immediacy of the alleged harm to the child. The department is required to:

- Immediately respond to a report that involves circumstances in which the death of the child or substantial bodily harm to the child would result unless the department immediately intervenes
- Respond within 24 hours to a report that is assigned the highest priority
- Respond within 72 hours to a report that is assigned the second highest priority

An investigation of a report that alleges that a child has been or may be the victim of a criminal offense, that poses an immediate risk of physical or sexual abuse that could result in the death of or serious harm to the child, shall be conducted jointly by the department and a peace officer.

The department shall establish a flexible response system to allow the department to make the most effective use of resources by investigating serious cases of abuse and neglect and by screening out less serious cases of abuse and neglect if the department determines that the child's safety can be assured without further investigation. The department may administratively close the less serious cases without providing services or by making a referral to another entity for assistance.

A case is considered to be a less serious case of abuse or neglect if the circumstances of the case do not indicate an immediate risk of abuse or neglect that could result in the death of or serious harm to the child.

In regulation: Child Protective Services (CPS) assigns priorities for reports of abuse and neglect based on the assessment of the immediacy of the risk and the severity of the possible harm to the child.

- Priority I reports concern children who appear to face an immediate risk of abuse or neglect that could result in death or serious harm.
- Priority II reports are all other reports of abuse or neglect that are not assigned a Priority I.

CPS must:

- Respond immediately to a report of abuse or neglect that is assigned as a Priority I and involves circumstances in which the death of the child or substantial bodily harm to the child will imminently result unless the department immediately intervenes
- Respond within 24 hours a report of abuse or neglect that is assigned a Priority I, other than a report described above
- Respond within 72 hours to a report of abuse or neglect that is assigned a Priority II by initiating an investigation or by forwarding the report to specialized screening staff

The finding made in the investigation about each individual allegation of abuse/neglect that was identified at intake or during the investigation is assigned one of the following allegation dispositions:

- Reason-to-believe: Based on a preponderance of evidence, staff conclude that abuse or neglect has occurred.
- Ruled-out: Staff determine, based on available information, that it is reasonable to conclude that the abuse or neglect has not occurred.
- Moved: Before staff could draw a conclusion, the persons involved in the allegation moved and could not be located.
- Unable-to-determine: Staff conclude that none of the dispositions specified above is appropriate.
- Administrative closure: Information received after a case was assigned for investigation reveals that continued intervention is unwarranted.

Utah

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Code §§ 62A-4a-403; 62A-4a-408

When a mandated reporter has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or who observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, he or she shall immediately notify a peace officer, a law enforcement agency, or the Division of Child and Family Services.

Content of Reports

Citation: Ann. Code § 62A-4a-403

The report shall include the reporter's observations of the conditions or circumstances of the child that led to the suspicion that the child was being abused or neglected.

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Ann. Code § 62A-4a-405

Any person who has reason to believe that a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect shall report that fact to:

- The local law enforcement agency, who shall report to the county attorney or district attorney
- The appropriate medical examiner

The medical examiner shall investigate and report his or her findings to the police, the appropriate county attorney or district attorney, the Attorney General's Office, the division, and if the institution making the report is a hospital, to that hospital.

Substance-Exposed Infants

Citation: Ann. Code § 62A-4a-404

Any person who attends the birth or cares for a child and determines that the child, at the time of birth, has fetal alcohol syndrome or fetal drug dependency shall report that determination to the division as soon as possible.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Code §§ 62A-4a-101; 62A-4a-409; Admin. Code R512-200-3

The division shall make a thorough preremoval investigation upon receiving either an oral or written report of alleged abuse, neglect, fetal alcohol syndrome, or fetal drug dependency, when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a situation of abuse, neglect, fetal alcohol syndrome, or fetal drug dependency exists. The primary purpose of the investigation shall be protection of the child.

The division shall make a written report of its investigation that shall include a determination regarding whether the alleged abuse or neglect is supported, unsupported, or without merit.

- “Supported”: a finding by the division based on the evidence available at the completion of an investigation that there is a reasonable basis to conclude that abuse, neglect, or dependency occurred
- “Unsupported”: a finding at the completion of an investigation that there is insufficient evidence to conclude that abuse, neglect, or dependency occurred
- “Without merit”: a finding at the completion of an investigation by the division, or a judicial finding, that the alleged abuse, neglect, or dependency did not occur, or that the alleged perpetrator was not responsible for the abuse, neglect, or dependency

In regulation: The division will maintain a system for receiving referrals or reports about child abuse, neglect, or dependency. The system shall supply workers with a complete previous division history for each child, including siblings, foster care episodes, all reports of abuse, neglect, or dependency, treatment plans, and casework deadlines.

The division shall establish priority timeframes as follows:

- A Priority 1 response shall be assigned when the child referred is in need of immediate protection.
- A Priority 2 response shall be assigned when physical evidence is at risk of being lost or the child is at risk of further abuse, neglect, or dependency, but the child does not have immediate protection and safety needs, as determined by the Intake checklist. Intake will begin to collect information as soon as possible after the completion of the initial contact from the reporter and notify the child protection services (CPS) worker. The CPS worker then has 24 hours to initiate efforts to make face-to-face contact with the alleged victim.
- A Priority 3 response shall be assigned when potential for further harm to the child and the loss of physical evidence is low. The CPS worker will make face-to-face contact with the alleged victim within a reasonable period of time.
- A Priority 4 response shall be assigned when one or more of the following apply and there are no safety or protection issues identified:
 - A juvenile court or district court orders an investigation where there are no specific allegations of abuse, neglect, or dependency.
 - There is an alleged out-of-home perpetrator (an alleged perpetrator who does not reside with or have access to the child) and there is no danger that critical evidence will be lost.
 - An agency outside the State of Utah requests a courtesy investigation, and the circumstances in the case do not meet the definition of a priority 1, 2, or 3.

Vermont

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Stat. Tit. 33, §§ 4913; 4914

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected shall report within 24 hours.

A report shall be made orally or in writing to the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. Tit. 33, § 4914**

The report shall contain:

- The name and address of the reporter
- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other persons responsible for the child, if known
- The age of the child
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of previous abuse and neglect of the child or the child's siblings
- Any other information that the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries or the reasons for the neglect

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. Tit. 33, §§ 4912; 4915**

Upon receipt of a report of abuse or neglect, the department shall promptly determine whether the report constitutes an allegation of child abuse or neglect. If the report is accepted as a valid allegation of abuse or neglect, the department shall determine whether to conduct an assessment or an investigation. The department shall begin either an assessment or an investigation within 72 hours after the receipt of a report, provided that it has sufficient information to proceed.

The decision to conduct an assessment shall include consideration of the following factors:

- The nature of the conduct and the extent of the child's injury, if any
- The accused person's prior history of child abuse or neglect, or lack thereof
- The accused person's willingness or lack thereof to accept responsibility for the conduct and cooperate in remediation

The department shall conduct an investigation when an accepted report involves allegations indicating substantial child endangerment. For purposes of this section, "substantial child endangerment" includes conduct by an adult involving or resulting in sexual abuse, and conduct by a person responsible for a child's welfare involving or resulting in abandonment, child fatality, malicious punishment, or abuse or neglect that causes serious physical injury. The department may conduct an investigation of any report.

"Substantiated report" means that the commissioner has determined after investigation that a report is based upon accurate and reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the child has been abused or neglected.

Virgin Islands**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Code Tit. 5, §§ 2533; 2534**

When a mandated reporter has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect, he or she shall immediately make a report by telephone or otherwise to the the U.S. Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD) or the Department of Social Welfare (department).

At the request of the department, an oral report shall be followed by a written report within 48 hours.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Code Tit. 5, § 2534(b)**

To the extent possible, the reports shall include the following information:

- The names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other persons responsible for the child's care
- The child's age and sex
- The nature and extent of the injuries, sexual abuse, or neglect to the child or to other children in the same home
- The name and address of the person responsible for the injuries, sexual abuse, or neglect
- Family composition
- The source of the report, including the name, occupation, and contact information of the person making the report
- Any action taken by the reporter, including the taking of x-rays or color photographs
- Any other information that the reporter believes might be helpful

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths**

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Ann. Code Tit. 5, § 2536**

The department shall receive all reports of alleged child abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect; provide or arrange for emergency temporary care and protection of victims of alleged abuse; and within 24 hours of notification of an alleged case, commence a thorough investigation of the report.

The department shall, within 90 days of receipt of the initial report, prepare a progress report, including a determination that the report is founded or unfounded, a plan for rehabilitative or ameliorative treatment, services offered and accepted or refused, and the present status of the case. Within 7 days of termination of a case, a report indicating the final disposition shall be prepared.

The VIPD shall, on its own initiative where appropriate or at the request of the department, investigate reports of alleged child abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect, and shall convey the results of such investigation to the department and, where a petition or complaint has been filed, to the Superior Court. If the report of child abuse or neglect involves the acts or omissions of the department, the VIPD shall investigate such report and shall convey the results of such report to the Department of Law, which shall take appropriate action.

Virginia**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Code § 63.2-1509**

A mandated reporter who has reason to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child shall report the matter immediately to the local department of the county or city wherein the child resides or wherein the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred or to the toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline of the Department of Social Services.

If an employee of the local department is suspected of abusing or neglecting a child, the report shall be made to the court of the county or city where the abuse or neglect was discovered. Upon receipt of such a report by the court, the judge shall assign the report to a local department that is not the employer of the suspected employee for investigation or family assessment.

The initial report may be an oral report but such report shall be reduced to writing by the child abuse coordinator of the local department on a form prescribed by the State Board of Social Services.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Code § 63.2-1509**

A mandated reporter shall disclose all information that is the basis for his or her suspicion of abuse or neglect of the child and, upon request, shall make available to the child protective services coordinator and the local department that is the agency of jurisdiction any information, records, or reports that document the basis for the report.

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Ann. Code § 63.2-1503(D)-(E)**

The local department shall upon receipt of a complaint, report immediately to the attorney for the Commonwealth and the local law enforcement agency and make available to them the records of the local department when abuse or neglect is suspected in any case involving the death of a child.

When abuse or neglect is suspected in any case involving the death of a child, the local department shall report the case immediately to the regional medical examiner and the local law enforcement agency.

Substance-Exposed Infants**Citation: Ann. Code § 63.2-1503(D)**

The local department shall upon receipt of a complaint, report immediately to the attorney for the Commonwealth and the local law enforcement agency and make available to them the records of the local department when abuse or neglect is suspected in any case involving any felony or Class 1 misdemeanor drug offense involving a child.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Code §§ 63.2-1504; 1505; 1506; 1516.01; Admin. Code Tit. 22, § 40-705-10

The department shall implement a child protective services differential response system that will allow local departments to respond to valid reports of child abuse or neglect by conducting either an investigation or a family assessment.

An investigation will determine:

- The immediate safety needs of the child
- Risk of future harm to the child
- Whether abuse or neglect has occurred
- If abuse or neglect has occurred, who abused or neglected the child
- A finding of either founded or unfounded based on the facts collected during the investigation

If the local department responds to the report or complaint by conducting an investigation, the local department shall make immediate investigation and determine within 45 days if a report of abuse or neglect is founded or unfounded. It will transmit a report to such effect to the Department of Social Services and to the person who is the subject of the investigation.

A family assessment will determine:

- The immediate safety needs of the child
- The protective and rehabilitative services needs of the child and family
- Risk of future harm to the child
- Alternative plans for the child's safety if protective and rehabilitative services are indicated and the family is unable or unwilling to participate

If the local department responds to the report or complaint by conducting an investigation, the local department shall make immediate investigation and determine within 45 days if a report of abuse or neglect is founded or unfounded. It will transmit a report to such effect to the Department of Social Services and to the person who is the subject of the investigation.

An immediate investigation will be commenced if, at any time during the completion of the family assessment, the local department determines that an investigation is required. The following valid reports of child abuse or neglect shall be investigated:

- Sexual abuse
- Child fatality
- Abuse or neglect resulting in serious injury
- A child taken into the custody by the local department
- Cases involving a caregiver at a child care center, school, hospital, or any institution

The local department shall, at the initial time of contact with the person subject to an investigation, advise such person of the complaints or allegations made against the person, in a manner that is consistent with laws protecting the rights of the person making the report or complaint.

In regulation: "Founded" means that a review of the facts shows by a preponderance of evidence that child abuse and/or neglect has occurred. "Unfounded" means that a review of the facts does not show by a preponderance of evidence that child abuse or neglect occurred.

Valid complaints or reports shall be screened for high priority based on the following:

- The immediate danger to the child
- The severity of the type of abuse or neglect alleged
- The age of the child
- The circumstances surrounding the alleged abuse or neglect
- The physical and mental condition of the child
- Reports made by mandated reporters

Washington

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Rev. Code § 26.44.030; 26.44.040

When any mandated reporter has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect, he or she shall make a report to the law enforcement agency or to the Department of Social and Health Services.

An oral report shall be made at the first opportunity but no longer than 48 hours after there is reasonable cause. The oral report must be followed by a report in writing.

When any person, in his or her official supervisory capacity with a nonprofit or for-profit organization, has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect caused by a person over whom he or she regularly exercises supervisory authority, he or she shall report such incident, or cause a report to be made, to the proper law enforcement agency, if the person alleged to have caused the abuse or neglect is employed by, contracted by, or volunteers with the organization and coaches, trains, educates, or counsels a child or children or regularly has unsupervised access to a child or children as part of the employment, contract, or voluntary service. No one shall be required to report when he or she obtains the information solely as a result of a privileged communication.

An immediate oral report must be made by telephone or otherwise to the proper law enforcement agency or the Department of Social and Health Services and, upon request, must be followed by a report in writing.

Content of Reports

Citation: Rev. Code §§ 26.44.030; 26.44.040

The reports must contain the following information, if known:

- The name, address, and age of the child
- The name and address of the child's parents, stepparents, guardians, or other persons having custody of the child
- The nature and extent of alleged injuries, neglect, or sexual abuse
- Any evidence of previous injuries, including their nature and extent
- Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the child's death, injury, or injuries, and the identity of the alleged perpetrator or perpetrators

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Rev. Code § 26.44.030(4), (5)

If the report involves a child who has died:

- The department shall notify the proper law enforcement agency.
- The law enforcement agency shall report the incident in writing to the proper county prosecutor or city attorney and notify the department.

Substance-Exposed Infants

Citation: Rev. Code §§ 26.44.170; 26.44.200

When an investigation is made that includes an in-person contact with the person alleged to have committed abuse, there shall be a determination of whether it is probable that the use of alcohol or controlled substances is a contributing factor.

If, in the course of investigating an allegation relating to the manufacture of methamphetamine or possession of ephedrine or any of its salts or isomers or salts of isomers, pseudoephedrine or any of its salts or isomers or salts of isomers, pressurized ammonia gas, or pressurized ammonia gas solution with intent to manufacture methamphetamine, a law enforcement agency discovers that a child is present at the site, the agency shall contact the department immediately.

Screening Reports

Citation: Rev. Code §§ 26.44.030; 26.44.050

The department, upon receiving a report of alleged abuse or neglect involving a child who has died, physical injury inflicted upon a child by other than accidental means, or alleged sexual abuse, shall report the incident to the law enforcement agency. In emergency cases, where the child's welfare is endangered, the department shall notify the law enforcement agency within 24 hours. In all other cases, the department shall notify the law enforcement agency within 72 hours.

Upon receiving a report of alleged abuse or neglect, the department shall make reasonable efforts to learn the name, address, and telephone number of each person making a report. The department shall provide assurances of appropriate confidentiality of the identification of persons reporting under this section. If the department is unable to learn the information required under this subsection, the department shall only investigate cases in which:

- The department believes there is a serious threat of substantial harm to the child.
- The report indicates conduct involving a criminal offense that has, or is about to occur, in which the child is the victim.
- The department has a prior founded report of abuse or neglect with regard to a member of the household that is within 3 years of receipt of the referral.

For reports of alleged abuse or neglect that are accepted for investigation by the department, the investigation shall be conducted within timeframes established by the department in rule. In no case shall the investigation extend longer than 90 days from the date the report is received, unless a law enforcement agency or prosecuting attorney has determined that a longer investigation period is necessary. At the completion of the investigation, the department shall make a finding that the report of child abuse or neglect is founded or unfounded.

The department shall use a risk assessment process when investigating alleged child abuse and neglect referrals. The department shall present the risk factors at all hearings in which the placement of a dependent child is an issue. Substance abuse must be a risk factor. The department shall offer enhanced community-based services to persons who are determined not to require further State intervention.

West Virginia

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Code §§ 49-6A-2; 49-6A-5

When a mandated reporter has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or neglected, he or she shall report to the Department of Health and Human Resources immediately, and not more than 48 hours after suspecting abuse or neglect.

If the reporter believes the child has suffered serious physical or sexual abuse, a report shall be made to the State Police or any law enforcement agency.

Reports of child abuse and neglect shall be made immediately by telephone to the child protective service agency and shall be followed by a written report within 48 hours if so requested by the receiving agency.

Content of Reports

Citation: Ann. Code § 49-6A-2

The report shall contain the reporter's observations of the conditions or circumstances that led to the suspicion that a child was an abused or neglected child.

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Ann. Code § 49-6A-3

Any mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of child abuse or neglect shall report that fact to the appropriate medical examiner or coroner.

Upon the receipt of such a report, the medical examiner or coroner shall cause an investigation to be made and report the findings to the police, the appropriate prosecuting attorney, the local child protective service agency and, if the institution making a report is a hospital, to the hospital.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports

Citation: Ann. Code § 49-6A-9

Each local child protective service office shall:

- Receive all reports of children known or suspected to be abused or neglected on a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week basis
- Provide or arrange for emergency children's services to be available at all times
- Upon notification of suspected child abuse or neglect, commence a thorough investigation of the report and the child's environment
- Respond immediately to all allegations of imminent danger to the physical well-being of the child or of serious physical abuse
- Within 72 hours, conduct a face-to-face interview with the child or children, and develop a protection plan that may involve law enforcement officers or the court

The local child protective service office shall be responsible for providing, directing, or coordinating the appropriate and timely delivery of services to any child suspected or known to be abused or neglected, including services to the child's family and those responsible for the child's care.

Wisconsin

Reporting Procedures

Individual Responsibility

Citation: Ann. Stat. § 48.981(3)

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected shall immediately inform, by telephone or personally, the county department or, in a county having a population of 500,000 or more, the Department of Children and Families, a licensed child welfare agency under contract with the department, the sheriff, or city, village, or town police department.

Content of Reports

Citation: Ann. Stat. § 48.981(3)

The report must include the facts and circumstances contributing to a suspicion of child abuse or neglect or of unborn child abuse or to a belief that abuse or neglect will occur.

Special Reporting Procedures

Suspicious Deaths

Citation: Ann. Stat. § 48.981(5)

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect shall report that fact to the appropriate medical examiner or coroner. The medical examiner or coroner shall accept the report for investigation and shall report the findings to the appropriate district attorney, the department, and if the institution making the report initially is a hospital, to the hospital.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. § 48.981(3)**

The sheriff or police department may refer to the department a report in which a person who is not a caregiver is suspected of abuse or of threatened abuse of a child. The department shall, within 12 hours, refer to the sheriff or police department all cases of suspected or threatened abuse reported to it.

If the report is of suspected or threatened abuse, the sheriff or police department and the department shall coordinate the planning and execution of the investigation of the report.

If the sheriff or police department determines that criminal action is necessary, the sheriff or police department shall refer the case to the district attorney for criminal prosecution. Within 24 hours after receiving a report, the agency shall evaluate the report to determine whether there is reason to suspect that a caregiver has abused or neglected the child, has threatened the child with abuse or neglect, or failed to prevent the suspected or threatened abuse or neglect. If the agency makes such a determination, or cannot determine who abused or neglected the child, within 24 hours after receiving the report, the agency shall initiate a diligent investigation to determine if the child is in need of protection or services.

If the investigation is of suspected or threatened child abuse or neglect by a caregiver who continues to have access to the child, or of a report that does not disclose who is suspected of the child abuse or neglect, the investigation shall also include observation of or an interview with the child, or both, and, if possible, an interview with the child's parents, guardian, or legal custodian. The department shall determine, within 60 days after receipt of a report, whether abuse or neglect has occurred or is likely to occur. The determination shall be based on a preponderance of evidence.

Immediately after receiving a report, the county department shall evaluate the report to determine whether there is reason to suspect that a caregiver has abused or neglected the child, has threatened the child with abuse or neglect, or has facilitated or failed to take action to prevent the suspected or threatened abuse or neglect. If the agency determines that a caregiver is suspected of abuse or neglect or of threatened abuse or neglect of the child, or that a caregiver is suspected of facilitating or failing to take action to prevent the suspected or threatened abuse or neglect of the child, or cannot determine who abused or neglected the child, it will, within 24 hours after receiving the report, initiate a diligent investigation to determine if the child is in need of protection or services. If the agency determines that a person who is not a caregiver is suspected of abuse or of threatened abuse, the agency may initiate a diligent investigation to determine if the child is in need of protection or services.

The county department shall determine, within 60 days after receipt of a report, whether abuse or neglect has occurred or is likely to occur. The determination shall be based on a preponderance of evidence produced by the investigation. In making a determination that emotional damage has occurred, the county department shall give due regard to the culture of the subjects.

Wyoming**Reporting Procedures****Individual Responsibility****Citation: Ann. Stat. § 14-3-205**

Any person who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected shall immediately report it to the child protective agency or local law enforcement agency.

Content of Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. § 14-3-206**

The report shall provide to law enforcement or the local child protective agency the following, to the extent available:

- The name, age, and address of the child
- The name and address of any person responsible for the child's care
- The nature and extent of the child's condition
- The basis of the reporter's knowledge
- The names and conditions of any other children relevant to the report
- Any evidence of previous injuries to the child
- Photographs, videos, and x-rays with the identification of the person who created the evidence and the date the evidence was created
- Any other relevant information

Special Reporting Procedures**Suspicious Deaths****Citation: Ann. Stat. § 14-3-207**

Any person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has died as a result of abuse or neglect shall report to the appropriate coroner. The coroner shall investigate the report and submit his or her findings in writing to the law enforcement agency, the appropriate district attorney, and the local child protective agency.

Substance-Exposed Infants

This issue is not addressed in the statutes reviewed.

Screening Reports**Citation: Ann. Stat. § 14-3-206; Wyo. Rules § 049-240-002**

The State agency shall receive reports of child abuse or neglect 24 hours, 7 days a week.

In regulation: Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect shall be made to any field office of the Department of Family Services or to any law enforcement center at any time. All reports are screened to determine whether the allegations meet the statutory definitions of child abuse/neglect and are within the scope of Child Protective Services. The verification process will begin within 24 hours. The department shall check records, including the central registry, to obtain pertinent information, including past department involvement.

A safety assessment will be initiated within 24 hours and completed within 7 calendar days for all accepted reports to determine if the case is appropriate for investigation or assessment. Accepted reports where criminal charges appear unlikely, children do not appear to be in imminent danger, or removal from the home appears unlikely may be assigned for assessment. The case will be referred for investigation if the safety assessment indicates a child is in imminent danger.

The investigative process begins when a report is accepted. All investigations may be teamed with law enforcement. The appropriate law enforcement agency will be contacted for assistance and consideration of criminal investigation in the following types of cases:

- A child may have died as a result of abuse or neglect.
- Imminent danger, sexual abuse, or major injury to the child is suspected.
- The situation necessitates the removal of the child from the home.

A safety assessment shall be completed for each child and a safety plan initiated when appropriate. A risk assessment also shall be completed for each child.

Upon completion of an investigation of abuse or neglect, the department shall make a final determination in a written report as to whether a child was abused or neglected. This determination shall be based upon whether the information and evidence gathered during the investigation constitutes credible evidence of child abuse or neglect.

Allegations must be determined to be substantiated or unsubstantiated:

- When credible evidence of abuse or neglect has been determined, the allegation is substantiated.
- In the absence of credible evidence, the allegations and the investigation shall be unsubstantiated and the investigation closed. Services may be offered.