



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 14.14

Subject:	Shared or Delegated Child Protective Services Investigative Activities
Authority:	TCA 37-1-401 et seq; 37-1-601 et seq; 37-1-607; 37-5-105; 37-5-106; 37-5-107; Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)
Standards:	None
Application:	To All Department of Children's Services Case Worker's and Team Leaders Performing Child Protective Services Responsibilities and DCS Internal Affairs Division Employees
Policy Statement:	
With the knowledge and approval of the team leader, DCS shall allow other mandated agencies with whom we share investigations, to assume responsibility for investigative tasks for all or part of an investigation. DCS shall maintain responsibility for assuring the safety of children, meeting required time frames, classifying allegations, and documenting investigative tasks completed by the other agencies.	
Purpose:	
To outline procedures for shared or delegated CPS investigative activities.	
Procedures:	
A. Agencies that may assume investigative tasks	The following agencies or entities may conduct child protection investigative tasks if there is a written protocol describing the conditions and responsibilities to be carried out: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. District Attorney General 2. Law Enforcement 3. Medical Examiner's Office 4. Child Advocacy Center Forensic Interviewer 5. DCS Division of Internal Affairs
B. Circumstances in which tasks may be delegated or delayed	DCS investigative tasks may be delegated or delayed seven (7) calendar days in the following circumstances at the discretion of the Supervisor: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no identified safety concerns for the alleged victim or other children, and a law enforcement agency, District Attorney, or Medical Examiner's office has requested that CPS delay or refrain from interviewing certain individuals to preserve or enhance a criminal investigation.

	<p>2. In cases involving Child Protective Investigation Team (CPIT), the team decides the order in which certain investigative tasks are to be completed and which agency representative will perform them based on the circumstances in a given case.</p>
<p>C. Steps in delegating tasks</p>	<p>To delegate required investigative activities, the case worker must obtain:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approval from the team leader; 2. Agreement from the investigative party to perform specific investigative tasks within thirty (30) day timeframe; 3. Agreement from the investigative party to include the necessary questions related to child abuse and neglect during the interview or investigative contacts; and 4. Agreement from the party to provide to the case worker all documentation of the delegated interview or investigative contacts.
<p>D. Entire investigations delegated by CPS</p>	<p>When CPS receives a report alleging that a child has died as the result of abuse or neglect, the case worker, in consultation with the team leader, may delegate the entire investigation to another investigating agency if the following apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no other siblings or children in the home; 2. The other investigating agency is already involved in the investigation or is about to become involved; 3. The other agency agrees to cover the necessary child abuse and neglect-related question areas; and 4. The agency agrees to provide to the case worker with sufficient documentation of the investigative discoveries to allow the case worker to make a classification decision.
<p>E. CPS role in investigations where law enforcement takes precedence</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When DCS agrees to defer to law enforcement or another entity for investigative tasks, the case worker must first confer with the team leader regarding the investigative plan. 2. With the team leader's approval, the case worker and/or team leader must then meet with the investigating party to identify any CPS roles and responsibilities in the investigation, and to establish time frames for the completion of all investigative tasks. This agreement may be verbal or written. If it is verbal, the case worker will fully describe the agreement in the case narrative.

<p>F. Documentation of delegated tasks</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The case worker will enter the case on the appropriate screens in the <i>current child welfare information system</i>¹ and establish a CPS file, even if another agency conducts the entire investigation. 2. The case worker will obtain documentation of the delegated activities from the investigating party. The case worker will document the activities on the appropriate screens in the <i>current child welfare information system</i> from official reports.
<p>G. Failure to meet time frames</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If the investigating agency fails to complete delegated tasks within the thirty (30) day investigative time frame, the case worker will determine and document the factors involved in the delay, the activities remaining to be completed, and the expected date of completion. 2. If the investigating agency does not complete the investigation within seven (7) additional calendar days, the case worker will take this matter back to CPIT for resolution. 3. The case worker will document all attempts to obtain the information necessary to classify the case.

<p>Forms:</p>	<p>None</p>
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<p>Collateral documents:</p>	<p>None</p>
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¹ **NOTE:** TNKids is the current DCS child welfare information system and will be replaced by the new system “TFACTS” in the near future. When TFACTS is fully implemented, all references to TNKids or “*current child welfare information system*” will mean TFACTS.