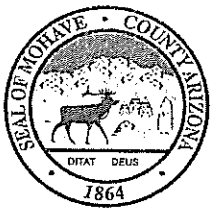
# MOHAVE COUNTY ATTORNEY

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## MOHAVE COUNTY ATTORNEY ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S REPORT ON THE INVESTIGATION OF CHILD ABUSE PURSUANT TO A.R.S. §8-817.B.8

Under A.R.S. §8-817.B.8 there is a requirement that every County develop, adopt, and implement protocols to guide the investigations of allegations involving criminal conduct with respect to children. Please find attached a copy of the protocol that Mohave County has developed over the years, with this final draft adopted in 2007.

In fiscal year 2012 Mohave County investigated 91 cases involving child abuse and approximately 98 cases involving child sexual abuse. Of these 91 cases involving child abuse, there were 84 cases that were investigated jointly pursuant to our investigation protocol that is found in the attached protocol. The cases that were not investigated jointly involved four aggravated DUI cases where a child was in the vehicle and other cases where the abuse was not committed in the child's home. Of the 98 cases involving child sexual abuse, 74 of them were investigated jointly, and the remaining involved child molestation or sexual abuse that did not occur in the home and was not perpetrated by individuals living with the child which would mandate CPS involvement. As stated in a previous report CPS is only involved in cases where the child's family, parents or guardians are the potential perpetrators and CPS does not generally get involved in cases that occur outside of the home.

However, there were a few cases where a joint investigation between law enforcement and CPS did not take place due to law enforcement not contacting CPS due to problems with the CPS hotline. Law enforcement has reported occasions where they get frustrated with being on the phone on the CPS hotline when they feel they should be investigating the case. Ultimately CPS gets contacted in these cases, but in a few cases they were not involved in the initial investigation. We are still working on resolving these issues by having fairly regular meetings involving the Mohave County Attorney's Office, CPS, and local law enforcement agencies. These are issues that need to be resolved by everyone working together and continuing to communicate as often as possible.

Of the 91 child abuse cases presented for review, 73 of them resulted in some criminal charge with 68 of those cases resulting in convictions for a criminal offense. Of

the 98 child sexual abuse cases presented to the County Attorney's Office for review, 87 of them resulted in at least one criminal charge being filed and 70 of those resulting in a criminal conviction for at least one criminal offense. Some of these cases, because of the complicated nature of the offense, have been delayed so that they are not resolved until the next fiscal year.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. Smith
Mohave County Attorney

Enc. (Mohave County Children's Justice Task Force Protocol)

MJS/brb

cc:

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