

San Diego Police Department

CHILD ABUSE

UNIT

OPERATIONS MANUAL

**Portions of this document are deemed by the San Diego Police
Department to be records of security procedures and are exempt from
disclosure under the California Public Records Act (CPRA), Government
Code Section 7922.00**

December 2023

INTRODUCTION TO THE CHILD ABUSE UNIT

Mission

The mission of the Child Abuse Unit is to conduct fair, impartial, and professional investigations of all physical abuse, neglect, and molestations involving children, which occur within the City of San Diego.

Goals

The goal of the Child Abuse Unit is to resolve these investigations working with service area police detectives, prosecutors, medical professionals, community organizations, social service professionals, and other law enforcement agencies in a problem-solving partnership focusing on the criminal prosecution of offenders and the reduction of child abuse, neglect, and molestation incidents.

The Child Abuse Unit's objectives are:

- To provide specialized response to all reports of child molestation, abuse, and neglect within the Child Abuse Unit's responsibility and to collect evidence for appropriate criminal and civil court action.
- To provide victims with protection, support, and access to appropriate social services in resolving family issues without unnecessary institutional placement or court involvement.
- To remove victims of abuse from homes where it is necessary for the protection of the victims.
- To educate and coordinate efforts with personnel from various disciplines, i.e., schools, hospitals, social service agencies, which work with child abuse cases.

San Diego County Child Victim-Witness Protocol

No single agency or entity can protect children alone. In San Diego County, the agencies and organizations responsible for the community protection of children work collaboratively so that all children receive the most effective and appropriate protection possible. The San Diego County Child Victim-Witness Protocol provides guidance to these entities through a collaborative multidisciplinary team (MDT) response, also known as the Child Protection Team (CPT). CPT includes law enforcement, child welfare, prosecution, mental health, medical, victim advocacy centers (CACs) and other community providers. The San Diego Police Department is a member of the San Diego County CPT. The CPT and its agencies support interagency collaboration, cooperation, and communication.

Child Abuse Unit investigators should make investigative decisions based on legal requirements, Department policies and procedures, and case-specific needs, while also considering the goals contained the current Child Victim-Witness Protocol.

UNIT PERSONNEL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Section Lieutenant

The Section Lieutenant is responsible for the overall operations of the Child Abuse Unit, which includes the detective sergeants, police detectives, volunteers, and clerical personnel. The Section Lieutenant will also:

- A. Provide direct supervision to sergeants assigned to the Child Abuse Unit.
- B. Ensure unit goals and objectives are being met by developing and maintaining partnerships with social services, law enforcement, and other members of the child abuse prevention community.
- C. Review selected reports submitted to, and returned from, prosecuting agencies.

- D. Ensure investigations and related reports are complete and conform to Department rules, policies, procedures, and standards.
- E. Obtain information and reports regarding major child abuse incidents or callouts prior to the Chief's daily briefing at 0830 hours.
- F. Conduct inspections as per the "Report of Inspections."
- G. Review statistics and prepare management reports.
- H. Maintain liaison with the District and City Attorney's Offices, other law enforcement agencies, and advocacy groups.
- I. Review and update Department and Unit Policies and Procedures as necessary.
- J. Prepare news releases and coordinate media conferences.
- K. Monitor budget and overtime expenditures.

Child Abuse Unit Sergeants

Detective sergeants are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Child Abuse Unit.

- A. Supervise daily work.
 - 1. Monitor NetRMS Child Abuse and Emergency Referrals folders for cases to be reviewed and/or assigned to detectives or volunteers assigned to the Unit.
 - 2. Review and approve cases submitted by police detectives.
 - 3. Conduct biweekly lineups for the Child Abuse Unit.
 - 4. Schedule detectives for on-call duty.
 - 5. Evaluate and approve afterhours SART requests, patrol requests and inquiries, and detective callouts.
 - 6. Maintain communication with the CWS Legal Procedures Liaison / County Counsel to receive sensitive CWS referrals when law enforcement personnel are involved.
 - 7. Route media inquiries through the chain of command and assist the lieutenant with press interviews and releases.

8. Supervise unit search warrants and arrest warrants.
9. Complete personnel evaluations.
10. Complete weekly reports
11. Conduct personnel and equipment inspections.
12. Review divisional personnel files annually.

B. Coordinate Biweekly Unit Meetings

C. Develop partnerships and maintain liaison with:

1. Crime Lab
2. Sex Crimes Unit
3. Domestic Violence Unit
4. Crime Analysis Unit
5. District Attorney and City Attorney's Offices
6. Child Welfare Services (County Department of Health and Human Services)
7. San Diego County Medical Examiner's Office
8. San Diego County Council
9. Area Commands
10. San Diego City Schools Police
11. District Attorney Victim/Witness Services
12. Rady Children's Hospital Chadwick Center
 - a. Child Protection Team (Chadwick Center)
 - b. Child Protection Team Management Meeting (Chadwick Center)
13. Promises2Kids (Child Abuse Prevention Foundation)
14. State Community Care Licensing
15. Other local, state, and regional professional organizations concerning child abuse and neglect crimes.

D. Other supervisory responsibilities

1. Maintain On-Call Roster and Schedule

2. Field afterhours calls from patrol regarding topic related questions and procedures
3. Respond to callouts when necessary
4. Investigative Information Sharing Conference Call & Meeting
5. Investigative Coordinating Group

Child Abuse Police Detectives

- A. Develop and support community partnerships to reduce the risk of child abuse, neglect, and molestation cases.
- B. Develop and support partnerships between the Department and various community organizations to enhance investigations of abuse, neglect, and molestation, such as:
 1. Rady Children's Hospital Chadwick Center
 2. Health and Human Services, Child Welfare Services
 3. San Diego County Sexual Assault Response Team
 4. Parole High Risk Sex Offender Meetings
 5. District Attorney and City Attorney's Offices
- C. Establish and maintain liaison with Area Commands and specialized units, such as Homicide, Domestic Violence, Sex Crimes, Gangs, etc.
- D. Attend patrol lineups to exchange information and provide training at least once every shift change.
- E. Respond to callouts when assigned.

- F. Receive case assignments and conduct thorough investigations in accordance with the Investigative Procedures and Inspections Manual.
- G. Conduct victim interviews as per the San Diego County Child Victim-Witness Protocol. Children under the age of 14 should *generally* be interviewed and digitally recorded by a Forensic Interview Specialist at the Chadwick Center for Children and Families. Severely developmentally delayed adults may also be taken to the Chadwick Center for a forensic interview or a sexual assault examination if it will provide a better service to the victim and/or enhance the criminal investigation. The case agent (assigned detective) shall notify the DA's Office of all scheduled forensic interviews. The DA's Office will have the right of refusal to attend, or not.
- H. Work with the District Attorney's Victim/Witness Services to assist victims in preparing for court appearances.
- I. Develop and maintain partnerships with community advocates to provide support for sexual assault victims during the investigative process. Provide referrals when appropriate.
- J. Complete follow-up investigations and/or cancellations on case assignments as per the Investigative Procedure Manual.
- K. On series crimes, prepare series case information, evidence analysis, charts, maps, and stakeout information. Work with Crime Analysis Unit as appropriate.
- L. Keep supervisors informed of all significant developments, case status, etc.
- M. Police detectives must maintain their case log and keep files up to date in NetRMS so supervisors can obtain needed information.

- N. Evidence shall be impounded in the property room and shall not be kept in desks or lockers. Any weapons recovered as evidence shall not be left in an unsecured place.
- O. All forensic interview disks, provided by Chadwick, shall be impounded as evidence.
- P. Attend POST/Menu training to enhance child abuse and professional expertise.
- Q. Attend the Unit's biweekly meetings
- R. Present cases to District Attorney and/or City Attorney's Office.
- S. General Office Regulations
 - 1. The Child Abuse Unit is operational five days a week. The general office hours are from 0700-1700 hours, Monday through Friday.
 - 2. Afterhours requests by duty detectives for lab personnel should be authorized by a Child Abuse Unit supervisor.
 - 3. Detectives who make field arrests and transport prisoners in their vehicles will do so according to Department Procedure. Prisoners will be handcuffed while in transport and while in the Child Abuse Unit's office. Prisoners are to be continuously monitored if handcuffs are removed for any reasons.
 - 4. Currently, the Child Abuse Unit does not have a detective assigned to telephone duty. Incoming inquiries are handled by clerical personnel. If questions cannot be answered by clerical personnel, the calls will then be forwarded to any available detective or sergeant in the office.
- T. Field Routines

1. Police detectives must carry their assigned cellphones during working hours. Voicemail messages should be checked at least twice a day.
2. Personnel shall notify their supervisor and law enforcement from other jurisdictions before conducting an investigation or making an arrest within another jurisdiction. Applicable agencies may desire to have one or more of their police detectives accompany SDPD Child Abuse detective(s).
3. Police detectives shall leave their business cards with all persons contacted on an investigation. Carry an adequate supply. Write the appropriate case number on the card before leaving it on a citizen's door.

U. Use of City Owned Take Home Vehicles

1. Employees who are on an "on-call" or "callback" status, or if there is a reasonable possibility the employee will be subject to an afterhours callout, are entitled to a take home vehicle (see Department Procedure 1.16 for details).
2. The Child Abuse Unit is authorized to schedule one (1) detective sergeant and three (3) police detectives to afterhours callout duty.

Clerical Personnel

- A. Answer incoming telephone calls.
- B. Enter new cases into database.
- C. Retrieve subpoenas from computer. Log incoming subpoenas in Subpoena Log and forward to the detectives' supervisors.
- D. Sort and distribute incoming mail.

- E. Search SHERLOC database, CRMS, and NetRMS for prior reports before giving all new reports to sergeants for review.
- F. Type dictated reports and other assignments as needed.
- G. Order supplies.
- H. Prepare payroll sheets and maintain a payroll log.
- I. Maintain monthly overtime statistics.
- J. Maintain monthly caseload statistics in computer.
- K. Maintain Master Copy of Operations Manual on the “G” drive.

Volunteers

- A. Investigative Inquiries (commonly referred to as SMAT’s) which do not require contact with victims/witnesses/suspects can be assigned to a volunteer to conduct the follow up.
- B. The assigned volunteer will call CWS assignment desk to determine who the assigned Protective Services Worker (PSW) is and document that information onto the investigative inquiry form.
- C. The volunteer will then call the assigned PSW to get case update and determine if the alleged victim made any disclosure of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect. If no disclosures of physical or sexual abuse, or neglect, the volunteer will document that information onto the Investigative Inquiry and return it to the sergeants’ desk for final the disposition.

- D. In all physical abuse allegations, find out from the assigned PSW if there are any visible injuries. If there are, find out if the assigned PSW took any photos during his/her visit with the victim. Request the PSW to email them to the volunteer. Once the volunteer has obtained the photos, print them out and attach them to the investigative inquiry form and place it on the sergeants' desk.
- E. In sexual abuse allegations, if the victim minor disclosed sexual abuse to the PSW, the volunteer will document that information on the investigative inquiry form and return it to the sergeants' desk for case assignment.

Light Duty Personnel / Interns

(When a light duty officer or intern is available for assignment to the Child Abuse Unit)

- A. Prepare reports on cases that can be taken over the telephone; i.e., suspected child abuse reports.
- B. Cross-report suspected child abuse reports to CWS.
- C. Conduct computer research for detectives to enhance cases and develop investigative leads.
- D. Conduct criminal history research on appropriate field interviews submitted to the Unit.
- E. Conduct follow-up telephone calls on incomplete officer's reports and Emergency Response Referrals from CWS submitted to the Child Abuse Unit. After obtaining the information, complete Investigative Inquiry form and return to a supervisor.

Child Abuse Unit Facility Dog Program

I. Purpose

The San Diego Police Department Child Abuse Unit's Facility Dog Program incorporates an Assistance Dog International (ADI) certified canine provided by Next Step Service

Dogs (NSSD). The canines provided by NSSD are highly trained canines that specialize in providing unmatched, emotional support for children (toddlers to 17 years of age) who are victims and witnesses to crimes. The canine can be provided during the investigatory and prosecutorial processes. NSSD's canines have been bred for optimal temperament for working with children and adults in professional facilities and public settings where stress levels are high. NSSD's canines have been trained for approximately two years in various areas to facilitate optimal performance.

II. Definitions

Facility Dog: A canine provided by Next Step Service Dogs (NSSD) or similarly accredited agency through Assistance Dogs International (ADI) and has been specifically trained to participate in the Facility Dog Program.

Facility Dog Vest:

The Department will provide two vests to any Facility Dog to be worn while on duty and in training. The vest identifies the canine as a Facility Dog performing official duties or training.

Facility Dog Handler (Facilitator):

An individual who is employed by the City of San Diego and is assigned as a detective in the San Diego Police Department Child Abuse Unit. The Primary Handler is trained and certified by NSSD or a similar agency. The Handler will maintain the training and certification standards as determined by NSSD or the ADI approved similar agency for the entirety of the canine's participation in the Facility Dog Program. The Handler will designate a Secondary Handler that will shadow on trainings and will be available for use of the canine when the Primary Handler is temporarily unavailable. The Primary Handler or Secondary Handler will remain present and maintain a visual of the canine at all times whenever the canine is working. The Facility Dog will reside with its Primary Handler at their home while off duty.

III. Training

NSSD provides all training for the canine and facilitator for the working life of the canine. Handlers (Facilitators) will be required to attend educations and training classes for placement. Each team will be tested and required to pass the NSSD Facility Dog test before placement. Teams will be required maintain regular training, three, six, nine, and twelve-month re-testing, and an annual retest thereafter.

Approximately 60 days from the start of the training, the canine can be placed in the home with the handler. Typically, there are two (2) 1 ½ hour trainings per week with the canine and handler which take place at NSSD's training locations in San Diego County. During the training it is typical for the canine to have an overnight stay with the handler at their home before placement.

For full details on NSSD's training, refer to their Facility Dog Policy Handbook and Facility Dog Program Manual.

All handlers (facilitators) are mandated to complete the veterinary course through the Canine Unit.

IV. Deployment and use of a Child Comfort Canine Team

A. Daily Duties

1. Overall responsibility for the assigned Facility Dog in accordance with Department Policy and Procedures.
2. The facility canine will accompany the handler as they go about their daily duties in the workplace.
3. It is expected that if the handler has prior knowledge where the presence of a canine would aggravate a situation, the handler will make prior arrangements to leave their canine safely secured while tending to daily business.
4. Care for, and maintenance of, their assigned facility dog in their home at city expense. Properly maintain their assigned facility dog, and assigned vehicle.

5. Provide for medical care/treatment of their assigned facility dog, at city expense.
6. Transport their facility dog to the veterinarian or dentist in emergencies, and/or with prior supervisory approval for routine health care.

B. Authorized Uses

1. Daily duties in the workplace
2. Forensic Interviews at the Chadwick Center for Children and Families
3. Pre-trial meetings at the District Attorney's Office
4. Courtroom testimony
5. Victim medical exams
6. At scenes for children in crises or during search warrants where children are present.
7. Any use deemed appropriate by the Chief of Police or their designee.

V. Inspections

A. Each handler (facilitator) will be subject to a regular inspection process conducted by the Child Abuse Unit supervisors. Inspections will be conducted in accordance with the Department's Inspection Guide.

B. Additional facility dog related inspections will be conducted on a bi-annual basis at the time of the handler's performance evaluation and six months later. The areas inspected will include home environment, issued canine equipment, vehicle storage, and canine medical status. The inspection will be completed on the canine home inspection form.

C. The handler must pass all required inspections. If discrepancies are noted, the handler must correct the discrepancies as soon as practical. If a correction is required after a home inspection, updated photo(s) of the corrected discrepancy will be obtained and saved in the G drive. The correction will also be noted on the home

inspection form. Failure to correct discrepancies could result in disciplinary action.

VI. Ownership of Facility Dog

A. All facility dogs accepted for training and use by the San Diego Police Child Abuse Unit are the sole property of the San Diego Police Department and shall be issued an ID number upon completion of probationary period as established by Next Step Service Dogs (NSSD) or similarly accredited agency through Assistance Dogs International (ADI). The recipient Handler has the right to officially adopt their canine once the canine has reached the age of retirement.

B. Department owned dogs are not available for breeding purposes. The dogs are to be considered city property, issued by the department.

C. Proper care and maintenance of the facility dog is the responsibility of the handler. The officers/sergeants assume this responsibility when they are assigned to the Child Abuse Unit.

D. Yearly Physical Examinations

1. At the beginning of the year the handler will be required to have his/her assigned facility dog's annual physical conducted.
2. Physicals and veterinary appointments should be scheduled during on-duty time. The contract veterinarian to be utilized by all facility dog handlers is:
Main Street Small Animal Hospital
2773 Main Street San Diego, CA 92113
Phone: (619) 232-7401
3. For non-life-threatening veterinary appointments, handlers are required to consult with the Canine Unit Veterinary Coordinator.
4. In the event of a life-threatening emergency requiring immediate care of the dog, the handler shall take the dog to a veterinary facility. The handler will contact his /her supervisor, the on-duty Canine Unit Sergeant, and the Canine Unit Veterinary Coordinator as soon as practical.

In the case of emergency treatment, the following 24-hour clinic should normally be utilized:

Emergency Animal Clinic of San Diego
2317 Hotel Circle South San Diego, CA 92108
Phone: (619) 299-2400

VII. Off-Duty Restriction

A. While a handler is out of town, or not able to care for the daily needs of his/her facility dog; the facility dog will be cared for by another San Diego Police Department Child Abuse Unit secondary handler, or a San Diego Police Department employee with whom the facility dog has bonded (i.e. fellow Child Abuse Unit member) or an immediate family member with whom the facility dog has bonded (i.e. spouse). If the handler must leave immediately (i.e. emergency situation) and is unable to take the facility dog to be cared for; the secondary handler, or member of the Child Abuse Unit shall be contacted to drive to the handler's residence, pick up the canine, and provide for the care of the facility dog.

B. As a general rule, facility dogs should not be left unattended for an extended period of time. When not under the immediate control of the respective handler, the facility dog is to be secured in an approved crate, or inside a properly secured vehicle.

VIII. Accidental Dog Bites

A. For reporting purposes, a "dog bite" shall be defined as 'any gripping of a person's body or clothing by the dog's mouth, irrespective of injury or damage'. Any injury or damage to a person's body or clothing caused by contact with the dog's teeth such as rakes, abrasions, or tearing of clothing, will also be reported.

B. In the event of a dog bite, on or off duty, the handler will immediately advise their supervisor, a Canine Unit sergeant, and the Child Abuse Unit Lieutenant.

C. Arrangements will be made by the handler to transport the injured person to the closest medical facility.

If the person desires, he/she may seek private transportation. If the person chooses private transportation, the handler will provide to the person, the following information prior to departure:

- 1) Handler's name and ID number.
- 2) PSD's name.
- 3) Time and location of occurrence.
- 4) Name of immediate supervisor.
- 5) Canine Unit office phone number (**Deleted – records of security**).

D. If the person refuses treatment or transportation for medical attention, a statement to this effect must be included in the review, including the reason for refusal, if it can be obtained.

E. The facility dog handler will prepare an Arjis-9 with complete details of the circumstances surrounding the apprehension. The report will contain the following:

1. Injured person's name
2. Injured person's date of birth
3. Injured person's address and telephone number
4. Extent of injuries
5. Hospital and/or physician's name
6. List of all witnesses, including officers

IX. Compensation

All handlers assigned and caring for a Facility Dog, are entitled to receive Canine Maintenance Compensation at the rate of 3.5 hours per week. This compensation is for

the maintenance of the issued dog, car, and home kennel.

NetRMS Reporting Procedures

All child abuse incidents will be documented on a crime report form. All child abuse reports require a case number and an incident number. The completed word-doc investigator's report will be cut and paste and submitted electronically into NetRMS. The completed word-doc investigator's report will also be added into NetRMS as an attachment.

If law enforcement receives the child abuse report first, they **MUST** cross-report to the Child Abuse Hotline at **(Deleted – records of security)** (per mandated reporting requirements in Penal Code sections 11164 through 11174.3). Such a report must be made immediately or as soon as practically possible.

Child Abuse detectives will fill out crime case top-sheets whenever they're assigned to investigate a molestation, physical abuse, or neglect allegation generated by CWS referrals or any other form, other than crime reports already generated by patrol. This step must be taken at the start of the investigation as soon as all pertinent information for the crime top sheet is obtained.

Child abuse investigations will be documented in the following format:

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT
INVESTIGATOR'S REPORT**

DATE: Month, day, year
TIME: 2400 Hours
LOCATION: 1234 Broadway San Diego, CA 92101
SUBJECT: SDPD Cases # 20123456
TYPE of CRIME(S): **288(a) PC** – Lewd and Lascivious Acts with a Minor Under 14

SUSPECT: **LAST, First Middle**
DOB:
CDL#: (If applicable)
SSN: (If applicable)
CII#: (If applicable)
Home address:
Phone Number: (123) 456-7890
(Relationship to Victim)

VICTIM: **LAST, First Middle**
DOB: 01/01/2000 (age when incident first occurred)
Home address
Phone Number: 858-736-1823
(Relationship to Suspect)

WITNESS: **LAST, First Middle**
DOB:
Home address
Phone Number: (123) 456-7890
(Relationship to Victim or Suspect)

WITNESS: **LAST, First Middle**
DOB:
Home address
Phone Number: (123) 456-7890
(Relationship to Victim or Suspect)

WITNESS: **LAST, First, Detective, ID# 1234**
San Diego Police Department – Child Abuse Unit
1401 Broadway San Diego, CA 92101
Phone Number: (619) 531-2260
(Case Agent)

SYNOPSIS:

This section should give the reader an overview of what the case is about.

BACKGROUND:

This section should give the reader the background of the involved family dynamic and any previous related cases involving the same victim and/or suspect.

INVESTIGATION:

Your investigation should be typed as you go, and it must be in a chronological order.

STATEMENTS:

All statements should be indented, especially if you're writing statements in first person. Verbatim statements are not necessary unless they're direct quotes from the persons interviewed. All statements will be transcribed by the court if they're needed.

INJURIES:

List all injuries the victim sustained.

EVIDENCE:

List all evidence related and relevant to the case.

CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATION: (Below are just some examples of how you can close your cases.)

Example #1: Based on the investigation, this case is being sent to the Juvenile Division of the DA's Office for the following charge(s):

One count of **288(a) PC** – Lewd & Lascivious Acts with a Child Under 14

Example #2: Based on the investigation, I could not substantiate physical abuse. Therefore, this case will be closed as a DEPARTMENT CLOSURE.

Example #3: Based on the investigation, I could not substantiate or unsubstantiate physical abuse. Therefore, this case will be SUSPENDED at this time.

Example #4: This case is being SUSPENDED at this time pending lab results, toxicology results, etc.

Example #5: Based on the investigation, this case will be closed as UNFOUNDED.

OTHER UNIT & AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Child Abuse Unit works closely with other professionals within the City and County of San Diego. Cooperation and communication are essential to ensure successful criminal prosecution of cases and the protection of victims. The initial investigation is generally coordinated with the County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency and CWS. If protection of a child is an issue, the child will be placed into Polinsky Children's Center. Forensic interview specialists at the Chadwick Center for Children and Families shall conduct interviews of victim and/or witness children. Evidentiary medical examinations performed by physicians specializing in child abuse also located at the Chadwick Center for Children and Families.

At the close of the investigation, detectives also coordinate with the District Attorney or City Attorney's Office in terms of the issuance of a criminal complaint. Police detectives attempt to obtain the issuance with minimal additional trauma to the victim. Cases involving juvenile suspects will be forwarded to the Juvenile Division of the District Attorney's Office for prosecution. When appropriate, follow-up reports will be forwarded to the Juvenile Division of the District Attorney's Office to aid in dependency hearings.

The following is a listing of the primary responsibilities of these and other related agencies:

SDPD Sex Crimes Unit

The Sex Crimes Unit investigates all felony sex crimes with adult suspects when the victim is 14 years or older at the time of incident or at the time the incident is reported to law enforcement. If the victim and suspect are both minors, then the Area Command will investigate the case.

SDPD Area Station Juvenile Services Teams

Detectives assigned to Divisional JST assist in the investigation of neglect and misdemeanor abuse cases involving juvenile suspects who are NOT family members.

Detectives and officers assigned to JST should receive training in child abuse investigations. They are responsible for training school administrators and teachers in the recognition and reporting of child abuse. They may make preliminary investigations into child abuse cases reported by teachers. They should participate in school and police child abuse prevention programs.

San Diego City Schools Police

The primary function of School Police is the enforcement of laws at any San Diego Unified School District facility. This includes the Maintenance Department, Education Centers, and others.

Per MOU, School Police handles all crimes within their jurisdiction except murder, rape, and child abuse. School Police concurrently investigates allegations of child abuse against any employees within the public schools of the San Diego Unified School District. Their objective is generally administrative to determine if any job action should be taken against the offender, and/or should the allegations be founded (i.e. administrative leave, termination, etc.).

At the SDPD Child Abuse detectives' request, School Police may assist in the criminal investigation. For example, these officers could help in interviewing potential victims and witnesses. However, the primary responsibility for conducting the criminal investigation remains with SDPD.

Other Police Agencies

During the course of an investigation, the discovery may be made that the crime(s) occurred outside the jurisdiction of the City of San Diego. Jurisdiction for child abuse cases is determined by the following:

- A. If the abuse was **not** ongoing and occurred in multiple jurisdictions, the agency in the area where the crime first occurred will retain jurisdiction.
- B. If the abuse is ongoing and occurred within multiple jurisdictions, the agency in the area where the crime is currently occurring will retain jurisdiction.
- C. If the crime first occurred outside the City and continued for a prolonged period of time within the jurisdiction, our agency may handle the case at the discretion of the Child Abuse Unit supervisor and jurisdictional agency.
 - 1. If an investigator has conducted the greater portion of the investigation and then discovers the crime(s) occurred out of jurisdiction, the police detective may:
 - a. Complete the investigation **after** notifying the jurisdictional agency, obtaining permission to continue the case, and obtaining a case number from that agency.
 - b. Complete report of investigation to date and refer to the appropriate jurisdictional agency.

Any child abuse cases that occurred on a federal installation will be referred to the appropriate investigative agency. This includes cases previously investigated as concurrent jurisdiction.

Child and Family Well Being

Child and Family Well Being, formerly known as Child Welfare Services (CWS), and formerly known (and commonly referred to) as Child Protective Services (CPS), is the focal point for most child abuse reports in San Diego County.

Responsibilities in child abuse cases are basically divided between the police department and CWS.

While the police are responsible for the criminal investigation of the case, CWS is responsible for the protection and placement of the victim child. Both agencies conduct investigations and prepare reports. Although the investigations and reports involve different aspects of the case, they often overlap, and each develops information useful to the other. Child Abuse personnel should work cooperatively with CWS personnel in an attempt to reach an appropriate disposition for each case, whether or not prosecution occurs. See "Police and Protective Services Worker Coordination of Cases" section for further details.

Polinsky Children's Center

Polinsky Children's Center is the County operated central receiving facility for the housing or diversion of children in protective custody. Transportation of the child to Polinsky Children's Center can be provided by the PSW, police detective, or uniformed officer. Polinsky then places some children into emergency shelter care, foster homes, or contracted private group homes. An affidavit authorizing emergency placement must be initiated and signed by a sworn peace officer.

Chadwick Center for Children and Families

Currently, the Chadwick Center provides facilities and staff for the purpose of interviewing and gathering medical evidence for child abuse cases. The facility is primarily used for sexual

molestation victims; however, forensic medical examinations and interviews for physically abused children can also be requested when appropriate.

The following services are available at the police detective's request:

- A. Medical examination with photographs, if necessary. The examination may yield evidence corroborating the abuse. Physicians trained in child abuse perform the examinations and are certified expert witnesses in court.
- B. Evidentiary/forensic interview by a forensically trained Forensic Interview Specialists in a play-therapy setting.
- C. Digital video (DVD) of the forensic interview.
- D. Counseling referrals for the victim and family. This may prove important later in the criminal case to aid in the victim's ability to withstand the emotional trauma of the court process.

Both the PSW and physician provide detailed reports, which are obtained for inclusion in the completed criminal case.

Police & Protective Services Worker Coordination

It is imperative that police investigations of child abuse cases begin as soon as possible. PSWs jointly assigned to these cases are primarily tasked with assessing the protective issues and need only a preponderance of evidence to file a petition to place a child into protective custody. Both practitioners should work together on these cases to lessen the number of times a child will have to be interviewed. It is conceivable that police detectives may learn of the case before a PSW can be assigned, or vice versa. Attempts to establish communication between the police department and CWS should be undertaken as soon as possible to coordinate the efforts between

both agencies. This is by no means a deviation from standard police procedure. It is merely a guideline based on the accepted practices as established in the San Diego County Child Victim-Witness Protocol (updated January of 2023).

The Child Abuse Unit may receive an allegation of abuse during the early morning hours. It is possible that a PSW will not be assigned to the case until the next day. If no protection issue exists, CWS may not assign a PSW. This should not prevent the police detective from proceeding with the case and interviewing victim(s), witness(es), or suspect(s) as necessary.

The following procedures for joint coordination of the child abuse police detective and PSW is recommended. However, there are cases when it will not apply.

- A. A phone call to CWS should be made to ascertain who the assigned PSW may be or advise them of the case name and the assigned police detective. The police detective can determine who the caseworker is by calling the Department of Social Services Records Division. During the course of the investigation, the police detective should make every attempt to contact the assigned PSW and inform him/her as to the progress of the investigation and when or how a joint coordination of effort could be made.
- B. The victim should be examined at Rady Children's Hospital Chadwick Center as soon as possible, if evidence may be obtained, especially in molestation cases. If the caseworker was not available for the initial interview with the victim, this is an excellent opportunity to have the PSW meet at the hospital to witness the play-therapy and obtain medical evidence from the doctors.
- C. Witnesses should be interviewed as soon as all the victims' statements and any medical evidence have been obtained. The PSW could be present for this interview if work schedules permit, and at the police detective's discretion. The caseworker shall be informed that he/she will be included on the witness list when

the criminal complaint is filed. Complete information on the PSW should be obtained for this purpose.

- D. It would assist the PSW in ascertaining the facts of a case to be present during the interview of the suspect. There are instances where the suspect's location is not known. When, and if the suspect is located, it may be impractical to have the PSW present. If possible, notify him/her once the suspect is contacted and/or placed in custody. This could make a definite difference as to the placement and protection issue involving the victim. Again, should the caseworker be present for the suspect interview, obtain his/her information and include him/her on the completed witness list.

This procedure is recommended in order to lessen the trauma to the victim by conducting fewer interviews. Sensitivity to the feelings of the victim and family should be given great consideration, keeping in mind that the police investigation requires the highest level of proof. This investigation should take priority over investigations requiring only a preponderance of evidence. Police detectives should expeditiously investigate cases with this in mind, also being mindful of coordination with the assigned PSW.

Child Protection Team (CPT)

The Child Abuse Unit of the San Diego Police Department is part of a Countywide Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) and, as such, is responsible to attend the Child Protection Team (CPT) meeting hosted by the Chadwick Center of Rady Children's Hospital.

Detective sergeants receive regular notification of the meeting and agenda. They review and highlight SDPD cases, then distribute the agenda to unit personnel. Detectives are strongly encouraged to attend meetings in which they have a case on the agenda.

Investigative Responsibility

The Child Abuse Unit currently has citywide responsibility for follow-up investigations involving felony and misdemeanor neglect and physical abuse cases, when the victim is under 18 years old and the crime occurs between:

- A. Inter-family members, or any adult, who is in a position of guardianship or trust.
- B. Babysitter (including relatives or friends)
- C. Childcare providers
- D. Institutions (schools, preschools, juvenile hall)
- E. Teachers or school employees

The Child Abuse Unit will investigate all molestation cases involving victims under 14 years of age at the time of disclosure to law enforcement personnel.

Normal Duty Hours

Monday through Friday: 0700-1700 hours

On-Call Duty

Authorized On-Call / Standby Positions

On-call is required of all full duty and acting Child Abuse detectives. Child Abuse Unit is authorized the following on-call/standby positions:

One (1) Detective Sergeant & three (3) Detectives

Each standby position is authorized one take-home vehicle for the period of time they are on call. No other vehicles are approved for take-home use.

The on-call detectives will work their normal duty day/week and will be available for callouts during their days off and afterhours. The duty detectives will carry a Department-issued cellphone at all times. It is the detectives' responsibilities to keep their phone information current on the callback roster. The duty sergeant will provide the Watch Commander's Office with a Child Abuse Callback Form at the beginning of their scheduled duty week. The duty lasts seven (7) consecutive days, beginning on Tuesday, at 0700 hours, and ending on the following Tuesday at 0700 hours.

(Refer to SDPD Procedure 1.16)

Notification & Callback Criteria

During normal duty hours, patrol officers should contact the Child Abuse Unit at **(Deleted – records of security)** on ALL felony crimes and suspects in custody that meet the criteria listed under investigative responsibility.

In cases during afterhours, the Child Abuse duty sergeant should be called on all felony crimes where suspect(s) are in custody and prior to booking, and on any unusual or involved cases.

The Child Abuse duty sergeant should be notified on all child deaths, including accidents, which are not a result of automobile accidents or medically documented natural deaths. At the discretion of the Homicide Lieutenant, the duty detective is to be notified on child homicides.

ANYTIME, during regular business hours, or otherwise, when field supervisors or officers need assistance/investigative advice, they are encouraged to contact the Child Abuse Unit or the Duty Sergeant via the Watch Commander. Cellphone numbers and the callback schedule are updated each week in the Watch Commander's manual.

Generally, Child Abuse detectives will respond to the following circumstances:

- Death cases: Age 17 years and younger, including infant deaths. *Exceptions: traffic fatalities, homicides, suicides, or terminal illnesses.*
- Sexual Assault cases: Age 13 years and younger at the time of reporting. *The Sex Crimes Unit handles sexual assault cases with victims aged 14 years and older.*
- Abuse cases: Physical abuse resulting in serious injury (requiring immediate medical attention and/or hospitalization: Suspicious burns, bite marks, fractures, or bruising on infants). *Does not include cases of minor vs. minor or sibling violence.*
- In-Custody Sexual Assault or Abuse Cases: Cases in which an arrest results for sexual assault or physical abuse.

The Child Abuse Unit does not respond to:

- Child stealing cases (refer to DA Child Abduction Unit @ **(Deleted – records of security)**)
- Child custody disputes (usually civil; refer back to the courts)
- Kidnapping without sexual assault (handled by area command or the Robbery Unit)
- Missing or runaway juveniles (handled by area command JST)
- Domestic violence involving physical abuse or pregnant females (handled by DV Unit)

Sexual Assault Incidents

While on call, the duty sergeant and/or detective will evaluate the need for afterhours sexual assault examinations at the Chadwick Center. Child Abuse or Sex Crimes personnel authorize sexual assault examinations. Exam authorization should be obtained from the duty detective or sergeant prior to transporting the victim to the Chadwick Center. In making the determination to authorize an examination, the duty police detective will:

- **Determine if the examination will reveal critical evidence** - Research has shown that physical evidence is recent and collectible during the first 72 hours after a sexual assault occurs. If physical evidence would be lost due to the expiration of the 72-hour time limit, physical examinations should be conducted immediately upon discovery of the sexual assault.
- **Determine if the examination can be postponed until normal working hours** - If the next working day falls within the 72-hour time period, the examination should be postponed until the following day. If the molestation incident occurred more than 72 hours prior to field officer contact, no physical examinations should be conducted unless there are mitigating circumstances and the examination is approved by a Child Abuse Unit Supervisor.

In addition to making this determination, the duty detective will advise requesting field units of appropriate action to take in protecting the victims. In any case where protection of the child from the perpetrator is an issue, the child should be placed in Polinsky Children's Center per section 305 W&I. If the suspect has no access to the child and the child is protected, a Polinsky placement is not necessary. If CWS has not been notified of the incident, the detective will ensure prompt notification is made according to the established Victim-Witness Protocol.

Physical Abuse

The duty detective/duty sergeant will evaluate patrol requests for assistance in cases involving suspected physical abuse. When appropriate, the duty detective will respond. If CWS has not

been notified of the incident, the detective will ensure prompt notification is made according to the established Victim-Witness Protocol.

If those suspected child abuse cases result in death, the Homicide Unit has primary jurisdiction and will be notified immediately. Occasionally, the Homicide Unit may request the assistance of a Child Abuse detective to provide expertise or assistance with a search of child abuse records for past history.

Crime Case Cancellation Procedure for NetRMS

Investigator will complete a Case Cancellation in NetRMS by going into “Edit Case Details” and choose the appropriate Case Status at the conclusion of the investigation. All documents must be submitted and/or attached prior to changing the Case Status.

Arrests

An offense can be cleared by arrest when at least one person meets ALL of the following requirements. The offender must be:

- A. Arrested,
- B. Charged with the commission of the offense, AND
- C. Turned over to the court for prosecution.

The one exception is an offense can be cleared by arrest without a physical arrest when the offender is a person under 18 years of age and is cited to appear in juvenile court or before other juvenile authorities.

Exceptional

An offense can be cleared exceptional if ALL of the following apply:

- A. The identity of the offender has been definitively established;
- B. There is enough information to support an arrest, charge and turning over to the court for prosecution;
- C. The exact location of the offender is known; AND
- D. There is some reason outside law enforcement control that precludes arresting, charging, and prosecuting the offender.

Examples of Exceptional clearance include the offender is dead, the offender is already in jail, extradition is denied, the victim refuses to cooperate, the prosecuting agency chooses not to issue charges, etc.).

Remember: you must have 1, 2, 3, AND 4 above to cancel as Exceptional.

Unfounded

- A. The crime did not occur.

Child Abuse Central Index Process

The Attorney General administers the Child Abuse Central Index (CACI), which was created by the Legislature in 1965 as a tool for state and local agencies to help protect the health and safety of California's children. The CACI reflects reports of investigations completed by child protection agencies.

CACI Disposition Definitions

SUBSTANTIATED REPORT – A report that is determined by the investigator who conducted the investigation to constitute child abuse, molestation, or neglect based upon evidence that makes it more likely than not that child abuse or neglect, as defined, occurred (*Refer to PC 11165.12(b)*).

INCONCLUSIVE REPORT – A report that is determined by the investigator who conducted the investigation not to be unfounded, but the findings are inconclusive and there is insufficient evidence to determine whether child abuse, molestation, or neglect has occurred (*Refer to PC 1165.12(c)*).

UNFOUNDED REPORT – A report that is determined by the investigator, who conducted the investigation, that the alleged crime did not occur (*Refer to PC 11165.12*).

Database Search Procedure (SHERLOC)

All reports of child abuse that are received by the Child Abuse Unit need to be researched through the Child Abuse Unit database (SHERLOC) and NetMRS prior to being evaluated for assignment to a detective or being filed as an “Unassigned” or “Suspended” case.

The purpose of “searching” the reports is to determine if the victim, siblings of the victim, or the victim’s family has had any prior contact with the Child Abuse Unit or with CWS. Searching reports will also help to determine if the new case is related to a current open investigation, or a repeated disclosure of an old case.

In general, the process of “searching” the reports requires all the names of the people involved in the case be run through the databases. The names checked should include, but not be limited to: the victim, victim’s siblings, victim’s parents, and suspects.

Reports need to be searched:

- A. Child Welfare Services / Immediate Response Referrals
- B. Officer’s reports (ARJIS-9) / Crime Case Investigations / Arrest Reports, etc
- C. Mandatory reporting forms received from doctors, teachers, etc.

Information required to be searched: (if available)

- A. Name of victim (and DOB’s when necessary)
- B. Names of siblings (and DOB’s when necessary)

- C. Names of mother, father, or legal guardian (and DOB's when necessary)

- D. Name of suspect (and DOB when necessary)

After the search process is complete, the appropriate SHERLOC files will be pulled (if applicable) and added to the new report. Those reports will be forwarded to the sergeants to be evaluated for assignment.