

DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 07-57

OFFICE of the CHIEF OF POLICE
REPLACES: General Order 95-05
SOP 501.53.00

DATE: February 21, 2007

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE CASE INTERVIEWS

I. PURPOSE.

To establish guidelines in regard to the investigation and interview process of young children who have been sexually abused.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION.

The Children's Advocacy Center of St. Louis has been designated by the St. Louis County Prosecuting Attorney's Office as the primary interview facility for the victims of child sexual abuse cases. Social workers employed by the center will perform interviews of children three (3) to fourteen (14) years of age and when the sexual assault pre-dated the initial report by at least seventy-two (72) hours. Cases that do not fit these criteria will be handled in accordance to normal department protocols.

The Children's Advocacy Center also retains a physician on staff to perform such physical examinations and procedures as necessary. Cardinal Glennon Hospital will routinely provide this physician once a week.

III. PROCEDURES.

For those sexual abuse cases that qualify under the above guidelines, the investigative procedures to be followed are:

- A. The department or DFS receives an allegation of child sexual abuse. The responding officer(s) will conduct a brief initial interview with the victim(s) to determine if the case warrants further investigation. The investigating officers will collect evidence, take photographs, and conduct related interviews as the situation warrants.

In those instances where a complaint is not directly received by the department's Juvenile Officer, the on-duty supervisor will notify the Juvenile Officer of the incident and get him involved in the situation as soon as possible.

- B. The Children's Advocacy Center will contact the head of the prosecuting attorney's Sexual Assault Team who will assign a prosecutor to the case. The necessary investigative requirements will then be discussed with the prosecutor.
- C. The investigating officer will then contact the Children's Advocacy Center to arrange for an interview to be conducted with the victim(s) within twenty-four (24) hours of receiving the initial complaint. The investigating (Juvenile) officer will then notify the prosecutor assigned to the case of the scheduled interview time. Interviews must be scheduled within two weeks from the time the initial report is taken.
- D. The victim(s) and non-offending parent (if applicable) will be conveyed to the interview session at the Children's Advocacy Center.
- E. The Juvenile Officer, DFS worker, and prosecuting attorney all view the in-depth interview of the victim(s) at the Children's Advocacy Center and will communicate their questions to the interviewer via a monitoring device.
- F. Officers will convey the victim(s) and family members back to their residence.
- G. A hard copy of the interviews with the child(ren), parents, and any medical Evaluations, will be distributed to all participating agencies by the Children's Advocacy Center. Further investigation will then be conducted as necessary and arrests made as the evidence supports. The investigative report will then be completed.
- H. Warrant application will be made.

BY ORDER OF:

THOMAS J. BYRNE
Chief of Police

TJB:dld
CALEA Reference: 44.2.3