

# DIVISION OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE

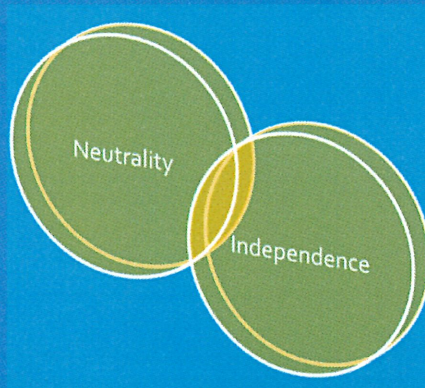
November 16, 2022

Joint Committee On Child Welfare System Oversight



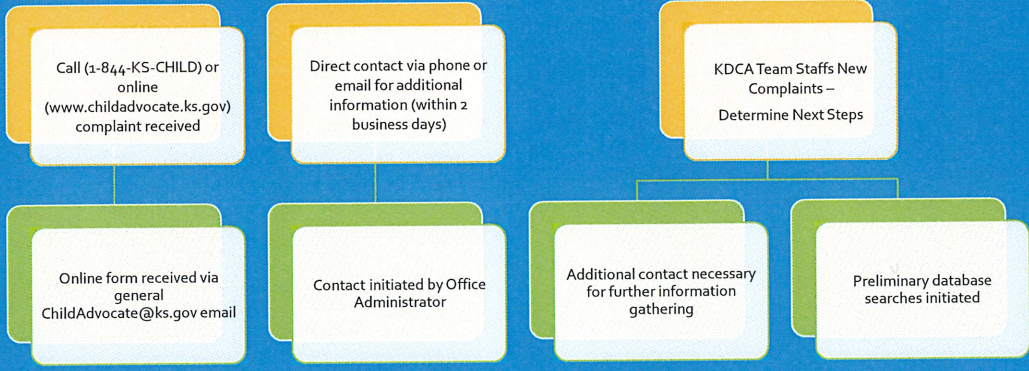
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## KDCA CASE SPECIFIC COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION PROCESS



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# INITIAL COMPLAINT RECEIVED



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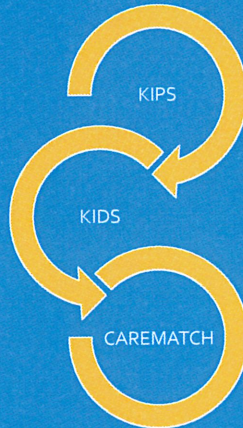
# IF DETERMINED TO BE OUTSIDE KDCA SCOPE, PROVIDES RESOURCES AND ASSISTANCE WHENEVER POSSIBLE



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# DCF PRELIMINARY DATABASE SEARCHES...

Each database with its own login/access requirements.



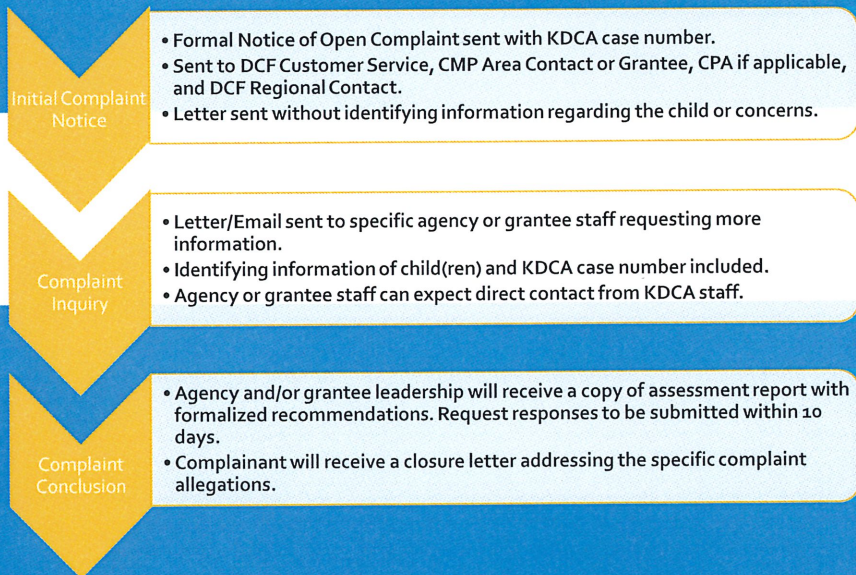
Other DCF databases...

- FACTS
- Request information regarding Customer Care Tickets or other



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KDCA officially opens case and Investigator assigned...



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# COMPLAINT INQUIRY AND INVESTIGATION

\*If Emergent Issue identified (i.e. including but not limited to... Notice of Move received, physical safety risk identified, upcoming court date, or BIS scheduled) then direct contact initiated.

- > Investigator reaches out directly to complainant for information.
- > Investigator reaches out via phone or email to identified agency team members (i.e. DCF staff, CMP case manager, GAL, or other) and interviews initiated. Communication may be ongoing with multiple contacts.

## Records Received and Reviewed

- > Investigator begins to review agency records received. (Records may be for multiple children and span over several years time.)
- > Investigator identifies additional records necessary (medical, therapeutic, placement/licensure information, or other) or request for updated records.
- > Additional contacts and interviews initiated.

## Draft Report Findings and Recommendations

- > Research policy and procedure, law, research on best practices.
- > Draft Report with complaint concerns either "supported" or "unsupported" and recommendations.
- > Report sent to Agencies for opportunity to review and respond. Final summary report findings, recommendations, and agency responses sent to Complainant. Case closed or remains open for monitoring.

- Formal request for records sent to CMP, CPA, or other.
  - KVC – Sharepoint link.
  - SFM – Sharepoint link.
  - COC – Assigned access via database.
  - TFI – Assigned access via database.
  - DCCCA – Assigned access via database.
- Letter/Email sent to specific agency or grantee staff requesting more information.
- Agency or grantee staff can expect direct contact from KDCA staff.



## Case Activity/Investigation Process Examples

- Complaint received via online complaint form.
  - *Examples or snapshot of some of the types of concerns received...*
    - *Frequent placement changes, not maintaining recommended developmental community-based services.*
    - *Complaint identified children not placed with an appropriate relative.*
    - *Concerns that DCF unsubstantiated allegations of sexual abuse to child by parent despite child's disclosures.*
    - *Concerns of child in out-of-home foster placement while siblings remained in the home with parents.*
- Office Administrator contacts complainant for more information.
- KDCA Team staffed complaint.
  - Determined within scope. Case assigned to Investigator.
- Records Request.
  - CMP records are requested and can take average 2 weeks to receive or granted access to file through CMP database.
  - During this time, Investigator reviews the DCF history in KIPS and KIDS and placement history in CareMatch.
- Contact Complainant.
  - Investigator makes direct contact with Complainant to make introductions and provide direct contact information. Investigation process outlined and explains possible outcomes.
  - Complainant might identify additional concerns (*i.e. regarding visits between the child and removal caregiver, reporting visits cancelled by CMP on numerous occasions due to transportation*).
- Contact Removal Caregiver if not the Complainant.
  - Inquire of case plan progress, visitation plan, and DCF service history.
- Contact Service Providers (*i.e. Receive detailed timeline for services from time of referral to initiation*).
- Interviews with multiple DCF staff i.e. Assistant Regional Director, CMP team and might include Director of Permanency, treatment team (therapists, service providers), GAL, County/District Attorney, and placement provider.

- Learn of new DCF Investigation following abuse/neglect report received by CPS.
  - DCF investigation initiated. *(i.e. Child in long-term placement. Visits with removal caregiver occurring regularly. KDCA investigation paused to allow DCF investigation to continue without interference OR KDCA communicated with DCF investigator and supervisor multiple times on how DCF is ensuring safety and their ongoing work/support for the family. KDCA encouraged communication between CMP and DCF to ensure all options and resources were explored/offered).*
- Review CMP Records. (\*Records might include multiple siblings and span for over several years time.)
- CMP Interviews. \*Information received or discussed based on type of concern might include...
  - *Investigator interviews CMP staff regarding concerns identified by Complainant.*
  - *Excessive number of placement disruptions and what contributed to this number.*
  - *Due to frequency of moves, community services difficult to establish. What efforts were made?*
  - *Transportation issue for parent-child visits – CMP committed to providing parent with as much notice as possible and permitting parent to provide transportation for visits whenever CMP unable to.*
- Team Staffing – might determine additional information needed for example - CMP transportation policies.
  - CMP Transportation Dept. Interview
- Draft Report - includes a finding regarding each complaint and recommendations for future training and/or policy changes, including research and support for best practices.
  - Report included recommendation for DCF and CMP policy to be amended. This recommendation was adopted by both DCF and CMP.
  - Report included recommendation that DCF review the findings in a particular event to see if the disclosures meet the definition of abuse. DCF agreed to review finding.

Attend BIS – Observe process, but effectively  
KDCA presence supported accountability.

*"We could of never saved [child]  
without each of you standing in  
the gap!" ...Thank you received from  
a Complainant.*

## KDCA ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

*"Thank you for showing  
care for this youth and  
what happens in this  
case...thank you for  
being so diligent." ...Thank  
you received from a CMP case  
worker.*

Youth not successfully reaching  
GAL & Case Team directly & not  
informed to attend Court  
hearing – Make contact with  
GAL & Case Team, connecting  
Youth & ensuring Youth's voice  
is heard

Provide resource  
information & link to  
Foster Parent Court  
Report Form



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## DIVISION OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE

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Visit Our Website at: [childadvocate.ks.gov](http://childadvocate.ks.gov)

Social Media: FB: *Kansas Division of the Child Advocate*

Twitter: *@childadvocateKS*



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