Critical Incident Review Team
Final Report

A Critical Incident Review Team (CIRT) is convened by the Department Director when the Department becomes aware of a critical incident resulting in a child fatality that was reasonably believed to be the result of abuse and the child, child's sibling or another child living in the household with the child has had contact with the Department (ODHS). The reviews are called by the Department Director to quickly analyze ODHS actions in relation to the critical incident and to ensure the safety and well-being of all children within the custody of ODHS or during a child protective service assessment. The CIRT must complete a final report which serves to provide an overview of the critical incident relevant Department history and may include recommendations regarding actions that should be implemented to increase child safety. Reports must not contain any confidential information or records that may not be disclosed to members of the public. The CIRT report is created at a specific time as required by statute and does not account for events occurring after posting of the report. Versions of all final reports are posted on the ODHS website.

CIRT information

CIRT ID: ON1AIWU1TD

Date of critical incident: April 26, 2025

Date Department became aware of fatality: April 26, 2025

Date Department caused an investigation to be made: April 26, 2025

Date of CPS assessment disposition: June 18, 2025

Date CIRT assigned: April 30, 2025

Date Final Report submitted: Aug. 8, 2025

Date(s) of CIRT meeting(s): May 21, 2025; June 30, 2025

Number of participants: 17; 26

Members of the public? No; No

Critical incident description

Date of report: April 26, 2025

Assignment decision: Within 24 Hours

Allegation(s): Neglect by mother; Threat of harm by mother

Disposition(s): Founded; Founded

On April 26, 2025, the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) received a report alleging neglect to the child, who was an infant, by the mother. It was reported the infant was found deceased in the family home and there was a possible co-sleeping issue, which may have been a factor in the child's death. This report was assigned to CPS for assessment.

On April 26, 2025, the CPS caseworker spoke with law enforcement on the phone then made contact with law enforcement and the mother at the family home. Initially, the mother reported having been sober since early January, however, it came to be known that the mother used methamphetamine the night prior. The mother explained she allowed a friend to move into the home and this friend brought two individuals to help with the move. The mother left the infant child, along with her 7-year-old and 4-year-old children, home with this friend while the mother and the two individuals left. The mother reported that while she was away from the home, she and the two individuals used methamphetamine. The mother returned home and bottle-fed the infant child and fell asleep during the feeding. The infant child was found unresponsive next to the mother, who started CPR and called 911. The mother sent the 7-year-old and 4-year-old children to a trusted neighbor's home and eventually, the mother made a family plan for them to stay with trusted kith and relatives while she grieved. A backpack was found in the family home which contained substances and paraphernalia. This backpack was reported to belong to a man the mother was in and out of relationship with.

The mother was engaged in supportive services prior to and following the death of the infant child. The 4-year-old was referred for services after this incident, and the 7-year-old continued with services during this CPS assessment.

During the previous CPS assessment, services were implemented to support the mother in parenting skills and education. These services included one scheduled and one unscheduled home visit. These services were paused to allow the family time and space to grieve but ultimately were closed as the mother did not engage.

Contact with the 7-year-old and 4-year-old's respective fathers was attempted during this assessment by means of home visits to last known addresses and phone calls to last known phone numbers. The mother did not appear to be in regular communication with either of the fathers. During the previous assessment, the infant child's biological father was undetermined and there was no father listed on the birth certificate.

Law enforcement reports associated with this critical incident corroborate the information collected in this CPS assessment.

At the conclusion of this CPS assessment, the allegation of neglect to the infant child by the mother was determined to be founded as the mother engaged in unsafe sleep practices in close proximity to substance use. Allegations of threat of harm to the 7-year-old and 4-year-old were added to this assessment and determined to be founded due to the mother's substance use and substances found in the family home.

Relevant case history

Date of report: Jan. 4, 2017

Assignment decision: Closed at screening

Allegation(s): Threat of harm by mother

Disposition(s): Not applicable

On Jan. 4, 2017, ODHS received a report alleging threat of harm to an unborn child by the mother. It was reported the mother was approximately 12 weeks pregnant and was actively

using methamphetamine. The mother reported she had been using since she was 15 years old and has used multiple substances. Law enforcement had contact with the mother in December 2016 while responding to a call of domestic disturbance between her and her significant other who was arrested for assault. This significant other was one of two individuals named as the potential father of the unborn child and the mother had recently safety planned for herself due to domestic violence. The mother had not yet sought prenatal care, but had an appointment scheduled for later in the month. There was some additional concern reported that the mother was providing childcare for a relative. It was determined this report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening.

Date of report: July 23, 2017

Assignment decision: Closed at screening

Allegation(s): Neglect by mother

Disposition(s): Not applicable

On July 23, 2017, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to the sibling of the child (who was infant at this time) by the mother. It was reported the mother used methamphetamine early in her pregnancy with the sibling. Further information was provided to the Department on July 24, 2017, which indicated the mother provided a urine analysis (UA) on July 21, 2017, which was negative for all substances. It was also mentioned the sibling tested negative for substances at birth. The mother was reported to have received prenatal care, was engaged in services and had a mentor. The mother stated her clean and sober date was March 22, 2017. There would not be a legal father listed on the birth certificate. It was determined this report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and it was closed at screening.

Date of report: April 17, 2019

Assignment decision: Closed at screening

Allegation(s): Neglect by mother

Disposition(s): Not applicable

On April 17, 2019, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to the sibling of the child, who was 1 year old, by the mother. It was reported the mother was not available to pick up the 1-year-old from the bus stop after daycare and was unresponsive to calls from staff. School ended at 12:45 p.m. and the 1-year-old was not picked up until 2:50 p.m. The mother explained she slept through her alarm; she was described as being abnormally calm about the incident. It was determined this report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening.

Date of report: May 9, 2019

Assignment decision: Within 24 hours

Allegation(s): Neglect by mother; Threat of harm by mother's significant other

Disposition(s): Unfounded; Founded

On May 9, 2019, ODHS received a report alleging threat of harm to the sibling of the child, who was 1 year old, by the mother's significant other. An additional allegation of neglect to the 1-year-old by his mother was also included. It was reported law enforcement responded on May 6, 2019, to an incident in which the mother's significant other and another individual shot the mother in the stomach and shot two of her male friends. According to the reporting party, the mother was 10 weeks pregnant, and her significant other was believed to be the father. The significant other physically assaulted the mother by holding her by the neck up against the fridge and later slashed a tire on her car. The mother asked two male friends to help change her tire and later that day, the significant other returned home and shot the three individuals. The significant other was arrested related to aggravated murder charges. The 1-year-old was not home at this time and was staying with a maternal relative. Though the unborn baby was not harmed, the mother was considering terminating the pregnancy. She no longer wanted the significant other in her life and reported concern he will harm her if she didn't allow him to come over. There was additional concern the mother was using intravenous substances as well as prescription medication. This report was assigned to CPS for assessment.

On May 9, 2019, the assigned CPS caseworker attempted contact with the mother at her residence and with the 1-year-old at the maternal relative's residence, however contact with both was unsuccessful. Documentation is not clear regarding the extent or severity of the mother's injuries or if she was hospitalized.

On May 13, 2019, the assigned CPS caseworker attempted contact with the mother at the maternal relative's home, however contact was not successful.

On May 23, 2019, the assigned CPS caseworker spoke with law enforcement and confirmed the mother was residing with her relative. The CPS caseworker attempted contact at that relative's home again without success.

On June 5, 2019, the CPS caseworker received information from a screener who provided an accurate address for the mother and the 1-year-old. The individual providing this information requested to speak with the caseworker. This individual was contacted by the CPS caseworker on Nov. 8, 2019. This individual reported themselves as a good friend of the mother and was present the day of the shooting. They provided a narrative of the events that took place, which aligned with the information provided in the screening report. This individual also reported concerns that the mother was using methamphetamine.

Contact with the mother occurred at a relative's home on June 18, 2019. Documentation is not clear if the 1-year-old was present at this time, but it was confirmed the 1-year-old and the mother were residing with a relative.

The relative knew of the mother's historical use of substances but was not aware of any current use. The mother reported she was using methamphetamine intravenously a couple times a week and when she does this, she sends the 1-year-old to a relative's home. The mother reported she recently obtained services to support her mental health and sobriety. She opted not to discuss the incident involving her ex-significant other and disclosed she was no longer pregnant.

On Oct. 1, 2019, ODHS received a call alleging neglect by the mother to the 1-year-old for not responding or picking up the 1-year-old from school until 2 hours after school had ended. This report was documented as a closed at screening and is summarized below. The CPS caseworker reviewed this report.

On November 6 and 8 of 2019, the CPS caseworker left a message for the father of the 1-year-old.

On Nov. 8, 2019, the CPS caseworker spoke with a relative who reported the mother admitted to using substances. The relative did not report concerns for the mother's parenting,

but did report concern for her substance use. The relative reported there was a lot of family in the area, and they would family plan for the 1-year-old's safety, if needed.

At the conclusion of this CPS assessment, it was determined the allegation of neglect to the 1-year-old by the mother would be unfounded and the allegation of threat of harm to the 1-year-old by the mother's significant other would be founded. Though there appeared to be concern for the mother's sobriety, she was surrounded by trusted family and kin who helped keep the 1-year-old safe and checked in with the mother regularly. The mother's significant other demonstrated a pattern of controlling and dangerous behavior that placed the 1-year-old at risk of harm.

Date of report: Oct. 1, 2019

Assignment decision: Closed at screening

Allegation(s): Neglect by mother

Disposition(s): Not applicable

On Oct. 1, 2019, ODHS received a call alleging neglect to 2-year-old sibling by the mother. It was reported the 2-year-old was not picked up from the bus stop after daycare today at 12:15 p.m. The mother was called two times and was texted several times without success in contacting her. The bus returned the 2-year-old to the daycare where staff continued to call and text the mother with no response until 2:15 p.m. Within that time, the school contacted a relative, who picked up the 2-year-old. When the mother responded to the school's calls, she stated she slept through her alarm. This was the second time something like this happened with the first incident occurring end of spring/early summer 2019. It was determined this report would not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening.

Date of report: Dec. 3, 2019

Assignment decision: Within 24 Hours

Allegation(s): Neglect by the mother

Disposition(s): Unfounded

On Dec. 3, 2019, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to the 2-year-old sibling by the mother. It was reported a person known to the family drove by their residence and noted the 2-year-old was outside riding a bike without an adult present and without shoes or a jacket. Though the 2-year-old had remained near the residence, this person believed the 2-year-old might have ridden away on their bike had they not been there to redirect. This person walked the 2-year-old back to the residence and was greeted by a relative at the door. The mother was home and appeared surprised to find the 2-year-old was outside. She speculated that she failed to lock the front door earlier in the day when she went out to smoke a cigarette and instructed the 2-year-old not to go outside alone. The reporter shared concerns that the mother had not been home to receive the 2-year-old from the bus stop this same day and the 2-year-old had to be picked up by a relative. The mother also mentioned to the reporter that she detoxed from substances recently. It was determined this report would be assigned to CPS for assessment.

On Dec. 4, 2019, the assigned CPS caseworker reviewed case history and made phone contact with the reporting party. Contact with the 2-year-old and the mother also took place this day at their residence in a relative's home. The mother reported she ran a marathon the previous weekend and after sending the 2-year-old to school, she laid down to recuperate, fell asleep and did not wake in time to get the 2-year-old at the bus stop. She further reported that she asked her relative to watch the 2-year-old while she laid down. Usually there were safety locks on the doors but reportedly those had been removed due to the relative's mobility issues. The mother signed releases of information (ROI) for the services she was engaged in to support her sobriety. The mother disclosed use of substances at this time and stated she relied on friends and family to care for the 2-year-old when she used as she had never used while in close proximity or while caretaking.

On Dec. 4, 2019, the assigned CPS caseworker called a relative who reported often caring for the 2-year-old. She denied seeing any behaviors from the mother that would indicate substance use. She had confronted the mother regarding substance use in the past and stated that if she observes concerning behavior or felt the 2-year-old was unsafe, she will call ODHS. The relative reported the 2-year-old appeared well cared for and was generally clean and well fed.

On Dec. 12, 2019, the CPS caseworker spoke with a service provider who confirmed the mother had reached out seeking support and had an intake appointment for Dec. 16, 2019.

On Jan. 6, 2020, the CPS caseworker received a call from a relative who reported the mother called her the day prior saying she couldn't parent anymore and wanted to sign guardianship-type paperwork. When the 2-year-old was picked up from the home, the mother had left, and a friend had packed a bag for the 2-year-old. It was unknown where the mother went.

On Jan. 7, 2020, the relative contacted the CPS caseworker to report the mother changed her mind and wanted to pick up the 2-year-old from her care. Later this day, the relative reported their intent to obtain custody of the 2-year-old. The CPS caseworker attempted to call the mother, which was unsuccessful. The CPS caseworker then staffed with a supervisor.

On Jan. 7, 2020, the CPS caseworker called the 2-year-old's father. It was learned the mother called him the other day crying so he came from out of county to help her figure things out with the 2-year-old. The 2-year-old's father reported he had been clean and sober from methamphetamines for three years with the exception of two brief relapses, and he reported he currently used marijuana at night. He agreed to meet with the caseworker on January 8, 2020, and they scheduled a time to meet. The 2-year-old's father did not arrive for this scheduled meeting and the CPS caseworker called and left a voicemail for him on January 8 as well as January 9. The two were able to speak on Jan. 9, 2020, when he returned from out of county due to a family emergency involving his father. He reported he had never met the 2-year-old and had never been a parent to him; he did not see the point in meeting with the caseworker.

On Jan. 7, 2020, the CPS caseworker received a call from the mother who reported she and her father (whom she lived with) got into an argument over the weekend. She asked the relative to take the 2-year-old and when she returned today to pick them up, the relative didn't answer the door. The mother reported she was using methamphetamine every couple of days but was not using around the 2-year-old. The mother confirmed she was receiving supportive services for sobriety.

On Jan. 9, 2020, the CPS caseworker contacted relatives who confirmed they would not contact the mother unless it was related to the 2-year-old. The relative reported that the

mother was on a waitlist for intensive services, and this relative was willing to keep the 2-year-old until the mother entered the program.

On Jan. 9, 2020, the CPS caseworker called the service provider for the mother to confirm her involvement. Subsequently, the CPS caseworker made contact with the mother, the 2-year-old and the relative in the parking lot of a department store. The mother and her relative discussed the relative taking care of the child with a visitation plan in the meantime. The mother provided the names and phone numbers of potential safety service providers to the CPS caseworker. The mother also talked about her stress around the upcoming trial regarding the shooting and how this was triggering her desire to use substances.

On Jan. 10, 2020, the CPS caseworker received a call from a service provider, and they confirmed the mother was on a waitlist. The service provider reported having a good working relationship with the mother, noting that the mother was forthcoming and honest about her substance use, would provide a UA when asked, and was engaged in additional supportive services through their program.

From January 10 through Jan. 21, the CPS caseworker made and received several calls from the mother and the relative. On Jan. 17, 2020, contact with the 2-year-old was made while in the care of the relative and no concerns were noted.

At the conclusion of this CPS assessment, the allegation of neglect to the 2-year-old by the mother was determined to be unfounded. It was learned the 2-year-old likely got out of the house due to a relative having removed the safety locks from the doors of the home while the mother laid down to rest. During this assessment, the mother admitted to use of methamphetamine and denied ever using in the 2-year-old’s presence or while she was solely responsible for caretaking. At the conclusion of this assessment, the 2-year-old was living with a relative, with the consent of the mother, until she could establish herself in intensive services. The mother was otherwise engaged in services and appeared to make safe and appropriate plans for the 2-year-old.

Date of report: Aug. 6, 2020

Assignment decision: Within 72 Hours

Allegation(s): Neglect by mother

Disposition(s): No allegation of child abuse or neglect

On Aug. 6, 2020, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to the sibling of the child, who was 3 years old, by the mother. The reporting party listed concerns that the 3-year-old was not receiving routine diaper changes while in the mother's care. There was concern the 3-year-old was sitting in dirty diapers for long hours at a time, resulting in the disintegration of the diaper and a consistent rash on the 3-year-old's bottom seeming to cause a significant amount of pain during diaper changes. These concerns were addressed with the mother, but she was unresponsive to school staff outside of pick up or drop off. This report was assigned to CPS for assessment.

On Aug. 7, 2020, the assigned CPS caseworker left a voicemail for the reporting party as well as someone who worked with the family through the 3-year-old's preschool. The CPS caseworker called a community service provider and learned the mother was no longer involved with that service and the last time the service provider saw the mother, she seemed to be doing well.

This same day, the CPS caseworker spoke with a relative who helped provide supervision and care for the 3-year-old. The relative reported the mother was pregnant and was doing well maintaining her sobriety. The mother completed supportive services and would be moving into transitional housing. The relative did not have any concerns for the mother or her care of the 3-year-old, who was healthy and doing well. They tried to work on potty training, but the 3-year-old was not showing interest, thus the need for diapers. The relative believed the diaper incidents were due to the 3-year-old urinating more than the diaper could hold due to age, size and not yet being potty trained. Without being prompted, the relative shared that the other morning, the 3-year-old was with her and she forgot to complete a diaper change diaper before the mother arrived to pick up the 3-year-old. The mother then ran errands before dropping off the 3-year-old at school. It appeared the 3-year-old had wet through the diaper at that time. The relative said the school called the mother and was upset about the diaper situation.

This case was staffed with CPS supervisors, and it was determined the report would be closed as no allegation of child abuse.

Date of report: Sep. 16, 2020

Assignment decision: Within 24 Hours

Allegation(s): Neglect by mother

Disposition(s): Founded

On Sep. 16, 2020, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to the sibling of the child, who was 3 years old, by the mother. It was reported earlier this year the mother was engaged in supportive services and discontinued the 90-day program after 45 days. The 3-year-old child was residing with a relative for the period of time the mother was engaged in services. The family was working to transition the 3-year-old into the mother's care and incorporated therapy into this transition. The reporting party listed concerns that the day prior, the 3-year-old left the mother's home without her knowing. The 3-year-old walked a block and a half to a local market where some neighbors worked. It was unknown how long the 3-year-old was missing. The mother did not know how the 3-year-old got out as she had child safety locks and latches on the doors. The 3-year-old was without injury after being found. This report was assigned to CPS for assessment.

On Sep. 16, 2020, the assigned CPS caseworker reviewed prior case history and criminal history for the mother and father. The local ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act) Specialist was notified that contact with Cherokee Nation would need to occur and notification of the current CPS assessment. At the time of this report, there were wildfires occurring within the county of the family's residence resulting in hazardous air conditions and contact with the family was delayed.

On Sep. 17, 2020, the CPS caseworker spoke with a relative on the phone and learned the 3-year-old was in the care of the mother. This same day, the CPS caseworker and supervisor made contact with the 3-year-old and the mother at the mother's residence. The mother was renting a room, and the landlord would not allow a walk-through of the home. Regarding the incident, the mother reported she woke at 9:30 that morning and went back to bed after seeing the 3-year-old was still asleep. The mother speculated the 3-year-old got out soon after she went back to bed and further speculated the 3-year-old left the residence through the back door (a sliding glass door). She guessed the 3-year-old was gone for about an hour.

On Sep. 18, 2020, the CPS caseworker scheduled a time with the mother to complete enrollment forms for the 3-year-old and during this phone call, she disclosed the 3-year-old had gotten out of the house again. This same day, the CPS caseworker called and scheduled a time to meet with the relative who had provided care for the child. A call to the 3-year-old's father was placed as well, but he did not answer and there was no voicemail box set up. Contact was again attempted without success on Oct. 1, 2020.

On Sep. 21, 2020, the CPS caseworker called and left messages with the 3-year-old's service provider as well as service providers for the mother. When the service provider spoke with the CPS caseworker, it was learned the mother was using marijuana two days a week, last used methamphetamine two weeks prior, and used methamphetamine every couple of weeks. Despite this, the mother was reported to be consistent in attending the services designed to support her.

On Sep. 21, 2020, the CPS caseworker and supervisor made contact with the 3-year-old at the relative's home. She reported the mother recently put new locks on the doors within her home, but the 3-year-old was savvy at escaping. The relative believed the 3-year-old was getting frustrated going back and forth between her care and the mother's care. She also disclosed the mother was pregnant.

On Sep. 23, 2020, the CPS caseworker as well as the CTS (Coaching & Training Specialist) attempted contact with the mother at her home, however the landlord reported she was not there. Contact with the mother occurred on Sep. 25, 2020, at the ODHS office and she filled out Tribal enrollment paperwork for the 3-year-old. The mother reported she last used substances in April 2020. She described having completed services to support her sobriety followed by a relapse. She denied that she had used substances since learning about her pregnancy. Later this day, the mother sent a text to the CPS caseworker stating she lied about her most recent use and disclosed having used about two weeks prior.

On Sep. 29, 2020, the CPS caseworker received a call from the mother who reported the 3-year-old had escaped again. A roommate left the door open while the mother was using the restroom. When she went outside to find him, a neighbor and a police officer were with him. The mother and the CPS caseworker discussed having the 3-year-old stay with the relative until the mother could obtain more stable housing.

From the beginning of October through the October 22, the CPS caseworker made diligent efforts to engage the mother, which included forwarding housing and community resources, but she often did not respond. On October 22, phone contact was made, and a home visit was scheduled for the October 28. The CPS caseworker was able to view the home at this time and did not note any safety concerns.

At the conclusion of this CPS assessment, the allegation of neglect to the 3-year-old by the mother was determined to be founded as the mother was not providing adequate supervision of the 3-year-old. During the course of this assessment, the 3-year-old was able to escape the home on three separate occasions.

Date of report: Nov. 3, 2020

Assignment decision: Closed at screening

Allegation(s): Threat of Harm

Disposition(s): Not applicable

On Nov. 3, 2020, ODHS received a report outlining concerns that the mother was pregnant and was using methamphetamine approximately every two weeks with the most recent use being in Sep. 2020. Additionally, it was reported the mother was using marijuana two days a week. The mother's due date was Jan. 26, 2021. It was determined this report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening. At the time of this report, the previous CPS assessment was open, and this information was forwarded to the assigned CPS caseworker.

Date of report: Jan. 19, 2021

Assignment decision: Within 24 Hours

Allegation(s): Threat of harm by mother; Neglect by mother

Disposition(s): Unfounded; Founded

On Jan. 19, 2021, ODHS received a call alleging neglect and threat of harm by the mother to the child's siblings: one was just born and the other was 3 years old. It was reported the mother gave birth the day prior and disclosed regular use of marijuana and methamphetamines within the previous week. At the time of this call, the urine drug screen and umbilical cord drug screens for the infant were pending and it was unknown if the infant would suffer withdrawal symptoms. The mother was reported to be engaged in supportive services. The mother did not identify a father for the infant but reported the biological father would not be involved. This report was assigned to CPS for assessment.

On Jan. 19, 2021, the assigned CPS caseworker called and spoke with the reporting party and reviewed the case history. Contact with the infant and the mother occurred at the hospital and the mother disclosed a significant history of substance use. She reported being sober for most of her pregnancy and relapsing before giving birth. It was determined a safety plan would be developed prior to the infant and the mother being discharged.

On Jan. 20, 2021, the assigned CPS caseworker spoke with hospital staff; the infant's urine screens were positive for methamphetamine. The CPS caseworker spoke with a potential safety service provider and submitted a background check. Though documentation is not clear, it appears a second safety service provider was vetted and also included in the safety plan. Later this day, the CPS caseworker reviewed the initial safety plan with the safety service provider. It was agreed the infant and the mother would live with the safety service provider for the duration of the safety plan.

The safety plan included 24/7 supervision of the mother and the infant at home and in the community. Safety service providers would ensure safe sleep practices for the infant, ensure a substance-free home environment, ensure no unapproved guests or visitors come in and out of the home, notify ODHS of any safety concerns or concerns for parental substance use, and assume care for the infant if the mother presented as under the influence. This safety plan would apply to the 3-year-old if the mother assumed care of him.

On Jan. 21, 2021, the assigned CPS caseworker spoke with the relative, who was caring for the 3-year-old. Due to concerns for COVID-19, in-person contact did not occur.

On Jan. 21, 2021, the assigned CPS caseworker met with the infant and the mother at the hospital and reviewed the safety plan. The following day, the CPS caseworker called the mother to see how the first night home with the infant had gone.

On Feb. 3, 2021, the CPS caseworker met with the safety service providers and the mother individually at the residence. The safety service providers did not report current concerns, though they hoped the mother would engage in long-term services with the support of the agency. The mother was offered In-home Support and Reunification Services (ISRS) as well as sober living opportunities but declined several offers. She accepted a referral for services to help support her sobriety.

On Feb. 8, 2021, the CPS caseworker met with the mother, the infant and the two safety service providers in the home. There were no reports of concern at that time.

On Feb. 19, 2021, the CPS caseworker spoke with the mother, and the safety plan concluded as there were no indications of active substance use and no further concern regarding her ability to meet the infant's needs. An additional home visit was attempted by the CPS caseworker, but contact did not occur.

Documentation throughout the CPS assessment is unclear if there were attempts to identify and engage the infant's father. Further, documentation does not indicate the 3-year-old's father was contacted as part of this assessment.

At the conclusion of this CPS assessment, the allegation of threat of harm to the 3-year-old by the mother was determined to be unfounded as the mother made a plan for the 3-year-old to be cared for by a relative. The allegation of threat of harm to the infant by the mother was determined to have been opened in error, though dispositional justification documentation was not available. Finally, the allegation of neglect to the infant by the mother was determined to be founded due to the mother having relapsed while pregnant, which resulted in the infant testing positive for substances at birth.

Date of report: Dec. 28, 2021

Assignment decision: Within 24 Hours

Allegation(s): Neglect by mother; Threat of harm by mother's significant other

Disposition(s): Founded; Founded

On Dec. 28, 2021, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to the siblings of the child, who were 4 years old and 11 months old, by their mother as well as threat of harm to the children by the mother's significant other. The reporting party listed concerns for the mother's substance use while pregnant. The mother was reported to be on her way to the hospital for labor and delivery at the time of this call, she had not previously obtained prenatal care for this pregnancy. It was reported the mother was misusing and selling her father's prescription narcotic medication. Historically, the mother was known to use methamphetamine. The mother's father obtained a restraining order against the mother's significant other earlier in December for elder abuse. It was also reported the mother's significant other was mean to the 4-year-old, used substances, and had other children he was not actively caring for. This report was assigned to CPS for assessment.

ODHS received additional reports dated Dec. 29, 2021, Jan. 10, 2022, and Jan. 24, 2022. These reports were assigned to CPS, and all four reports were assessed and documented together. Individual screening report details are summarized below, and all casework activities are summarized under the Jan. 24, 2022, report.

At the conclusion of this CPS assessment, long-term safety plans were developed for the children. The allegations of neglect and threat of harm to the children were determined to be founded.

Date of report: Dec. 29, 2021

Assignment decision: Within 24 Hours

Allegation(s): Neglect by mother

Disposition(s): Founded

On Dec. 29, 2021, ODHS received a report alleging neglect to a sibling of the child, who was a newborn, by the mother. It was reported the day prior, the mother gave birth and reported substance use (including methamphetamine and marijuana) throughout the pregnancy and within 24 hours prior to delivering. As a result, the infant appeared lethargic with eating and was observed in the hospital for a few days. The mother and father were noted to take smoke breaks and upon returning to the hospital room, would fall asleep and were not

able to be woken. The mother reported she was the victim of an attempted murder with significant court involvement, and this was particularly stressful for her. At the time of this call, there was an open CPS assessment with similar concerns. This report was assigned to CPS and assessed together with the previous report. Two additional reports were assigned to CPS, and all four reports were assessed together. Casework activities are summarized under the Jan. 24, 2022 report.

At the conclusion of this CPS assessment, long-term safety plans were developed for the children. The allegation of neglect to infant by the mother was determined to be founded.

Date of report: Jan. 8, 2022

Assignment decision: Closed at screening

Allegation(s): Neglect by unknown perpetrator

Disposition(s): Not applicable

On Jan. 8, 2022, ODHS received a report that outlined concerns for neglect to the sibling of the child, who was 4 years old, by an unknown perpetrator. It was reported on Jan. 5, 2022, after safety service providers assumed care of the 4-year-old, they noticed a bruise on the 4-year-old's bottom. There was no information known or provided as to how the bruise occurred. It was determined this report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening. This information was forwarded to the assigned CPS caseworker and supervisor as there was an open CPS assessment at the time of this call.

Date of report: Jan. 10, 2022

Assignment decision: Within 24 Hours

Allegation(s): Physical Abuse by unknown perpetrator

Disposition(s): Unable to determine

On Jan. 10, 2022, ODHS received a report alleging physical abuse to the sibling of the child, who was a newborn, by an unknown perpetrator. It was reported the newborn child had

bruising on the left arm, about the size of two quarters next to each other. There was another fingerprint-sized bruise near the shoulder. These bruises were noticed on Jan. 5, 2022, the same day the 4-year-old was noted to have bruising. This report was assigned to CPS and assessed together with two previously assigned reports dated December 28 and December 29, 2021. On Jan. 24, 2022, ODHS received another report that was assigned to CPS and assessed together with three prior reports. All casework activities are summarized under the Jan. 24, 2022, report.

At the conclusion of this CPS assessment, long-term safety plans were developed for the children. The allegation of physical abuse to the newborn child by an unknown perpetrator was unable to be determined.

Date of report: Jan. 24, 2022

Assignment decision: Within 24 Hours

Allegation(s): Physical abuse by the mother

Disposition(s): Unfounded

On Jan. 24, 2022, ODHS received a report alleging physical abuse to the sibling of the child, who was 1 year old, by the mother. The 1-year-old and the 4-year-old were under the supervision of safety service providers and while the 1-year-old was crying after a bath, the 4-year-old ran into the room and was very worried. The 4-year-old disclosed when the 1-year-old was in the mother's care, she would hit the 1-year-old in the face. The 4-year-old disclosed another occasion when the mother threw the 1-year-old on the floor. This report was assigned to CPS and was assessed together with three previously assigned reports dated December 28, December 29, and January 10. All casework related activities for these assessments are summarized below.

On Dec. 28, 2021, the assigned CPS caseworker reviewed criminal background and child welfare history for this family, called the reporter to leave a message, and spoke with a hospital social worker and nurse where the mother was believed to have given birth.

Contact with the mother and the father of the newborn was made at the hospital on Dec. 29, 2021. While meeting with the parents, the mother reported daily use of methamphetamine

during her pregnancy with her last use occurring within the prior 48 hours of delivering the newborn. She stopped prenatal care at 20 weeks into her pregnancy. She cited the stress and trauma of being the victim of attempted murder and the ongoing criminal case associated as a trigger for her use; trial dates were approaching.

The mother reported having been connected to supportive services previously, but lost connection with her provider during her most recent use. The mother expressed concern about her ability to parent her children. She did not intend to move forward with this pregnancy and had identified potential adoptive parents for the newborn but ultimately backed out.

The father of the newborn disclosed his substance use began at age 14 and he had participated in several treatment services in the past. He reported his most recent use was within five days. Due to his threats to the mother's father, the father of the newborn was not allowed to stay in the home and was residing in a tent or in motel rooms. Both parents were provided referrals to services that would support sobriety.

On Dec. 29, 2021, the CPS caseworker met with the maternal grandparents as well as a long-time friend of the mother. The mother's father reported he did not want the mother in his home any longer and stated he would frequently see people coming and going from the home, using substances in the garage and in the shed in the backyard. The mother's friend expressed concern that the children would go into those areas often. The mother's father reported the mother would often sleep in past noon and would be unable to be woken up. This put him in a difficult situation because he used a wheelchair for mobility, and this presented challenges in being able to care for the children. The mother's father reported financial abuse from the parents and stated adult protective services was involved.

The mother's friend reported several concerning incidents, which were later confirmed by the mother. These incidents involved situations where the children were exposed to substance use paraphernalia. On one occasion, the 4-year-old was discovered with a marijuana vape pen belonging to the mother. Another occasion, the mother was unable to be woken by her friend by means of clapping, yelling and pushing her. She brought the 1-year-old (who was screaming) to the mother's bed and she still did not wake. While in bed with the mother, the 1-year-old discovered a small tin container full of small unknown circular blue pills, which were intercepted by the mother's friend.

A walkthrough of the home was completed; the mother's bedroom was observed with used needles from intravenous use, a knife and marijuana containers all within reach of small children. The remainder of the home, including the garage, was of similar nature with paraphernalia, including a methamphetamine pipe and razor blades, found within reach of the children.

On Dec. 30, 2021, the CPS caseworker spoke with the 4-year-old at the home who confirmed the mother slept in a lot, resulting in having to play alone. The 4-year-old reportedly disliked the father of the newborn. During the newborn's time in the hospital, staff reported concern that the parents were often not available to care for the newborn or had fallen asleep in the hospital and were unable to be woken.

A 10-day protective action plan was implemented prior to the newborn's discharge from the hospital, this plan required 24/7 supervision of the children by approved safety service providers.

On Jan. 4, 2022, the CPS caseworker was notified by a relative that the mother was practicing unsafe sleep with the newborn. After returning home after midnight one night, the mother was unresponsive when the 1-year-old started crying. The relative awoke and fixed a bottle. Upon checking on the mother, she was discovered sharing a sleep surface with the newborn.

On Jan. 4, 2022, the assigned CPS caseworker spoke with several collaterals, including family and friends of the parents, medical providers, and the safety service providers regarding a new screening report that had been assigned for a CPS assessment. The CPS caseworker also spoke with the mother and the father; however the CPS assessment documentation did not appear to reflect details of these conversations.

At the conclusion of the 10-day protective action plan, the safety service providers were unable to continue to support an in-home plan, and a long-term, out-of-home safety plan was developed for the children. After the 4-year-old's father was located and assessed, the 4-year-old returned to the care of the father.

Documentation regarding the physical abuse concerns are as follows: It appears the children were seen by the local designated medical professional (DMP). The mark on the 4-year-old was

determined to be a birth mark and the mark on the newborn was inconclusive. The 1-year-old did not have any injuries.

The allegation of physical abuse to the 1-year-old by the mother was determined to be unfounded.

Date of report: June 4, 2022

Assignment decision: Within 24 Hours

Allegation(s): Threat of harm by mother; Threat of harm by father

Disposition(s): Founded; Founded

On June 4, 2022, ODHS received a report alleging threat of harm to the sibling of the child, who was 4 years old, by the mother and father. It was reported the 4-year-old's father was smoking methamphetamine daily and using intravenously every few days. There was concern reported that the 4-year-old's father would use in the living room of the home while the 4-year-old was in a bedroom and there were needles left where the 4-year-old had access. The reporting party stated there were no other adults in the home and when the father comes down from a high, he becomes generally aggressive and dismissive of the 4-year-old. Though it was unclear when the most recent incident occurred or if the 4-year-old was exposed to violence, the reporter stated concerns that the 4-year-old's father perpetrated violence against an ex-significant other. Finally, it was reported the father of the 4-year-old expressed suicidal ideation and a request was placed with law enforcement for a welfare check. At the time of this report, the mother was involved in long-term safety planning for her other children due to concerns of substance use. This case was assigned to CPS for assessment.

On June 6, 2022, the CPS caseworker reviewed child welfare history, left a message with the reporting party, and staffed with the supervisors. In-person contact with the 4-year-old and his father was made at the father's home, and at this time, he did not appear under the influence and was preparing food for the 4-year-old. Upon being asked questions about his relationship with his ex-significant other, the 4-year-old's father became upset and asked to speak with the caseworker outside. He alluded that the cause of the report to ODHS was due to family conflict coming from his ex-significant other's family. He alleged his ex-significant other was charged

by a King Corso dog and hit in the stomach, which caused the placenta to tear, and labor started. Upon being asked further questions, the 4-year-old's father shut the door on the caseworker, who was unable to interview the 4-year-old.

On June 6, 2022, and throughout the CPS assessment, the CPS caseworker staffed with supervisors and other relevant professionals. It was learned the father of the 4-year-old was the primary supplier of methamphetamine to his ex-significant other. Screenshots and recordings of the father of the 4-year-old speaking with another individual revealed threats to burn down his ex-significant other's home.

Efforts to support and facilitate the 4-year-old's enrollment as a tribal member were noted throughout the CPS assessment.

On June 10, 2022, contact with the 4-year-old and the 4-year-old's father was attempted and unsuccessful.

June 16, 2022, the CPS caseworker learned the mother was having large success with sobriety and long-term safety plans were expected to end in the near future. This same day, the CPS caseworker interviewed the 4-year-old and the mother at the ODHS office and subsequently implemented a protective action plan. The 4-year-old was not able to provide a clear narrative with context, rather, they made several independent statements that were of concern. This included references to smoke coming out of a room after opening the door, the father not feeding the 4-year-old in the evenings, and stating the father didn't love the 4-year-old. The mother knew the 4-year-old's father was using and stated in near May 2022, he asked her to help him use intravenously, which she did. The 4-year-old was home when this happened. The mother also disclosed violence previously perpetrated to her by the 4-year-old's father. Efforts to notify the 4-year-old's father of the protective action plan were documented.

On June 20, 2022, the CPS caseworker called and spoke with the father of the 4-year-old, who denied substance use. He also declined to provide any of the 4-year-old's belongings. In-person contact with the 4-year-old's father was attempted again on June 21, 2022, without success.

On July 5, 2022, a meeting was scheduled with community providers and the 4-year-old's father, however, he was unavailable and requested all communication to go through his attorney.

On July 12 and 15, 2022, the CPS caseworker spoke with the ex-significant other of the 4-year-old's father who confirmed substance use by the 4-year-old's father as well as significant

domestic violence perpetrated by him over time, including punching, strangling, pulling hair and violence while driving. He was controlling of her finances and monopolized use of her car. The CPS caseworker also spoke with the mother, who disclosed a relapse over the weekend.

On July 13, 2022, the safety plan was updated to reflect a change in safety service providers as well as living arrangements for the mother and the 4-year-old. On July 18, 2022, the safety service providers were unable to continue to support the safety plan. The mother was asked about other supports, but ultimately, decided she was not ready to parent full time.

The allegations of threat of harm to the 4-year-old by the mother and father were both determined to be founded, and the 4-year-old was included in safety planning with the siblings.

Date of report: Aug. 14, 2024

Assignment decision: Closed at Screening

Allegation(s): Not Applicable

Disposition(s): Not Applicable

On Aug. 15, 2024, ODHS received a report with concerns for the siblings of the child, who were 3 years old and 7 years old, while in their mother’s care. Someone known to the reporter received a text from the mother who indicated she was putting the children to bed and invited that person to purchase substances. It was not known what substances the mother was believed to sell, but the reporter knew someone who purchased methamphetamine from her. There was no information provided to indicate the mother was actively using and there was no information regarding where the substances she was selling were stored in the home. It was determined this report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening.

Date of report: Dec. 13, 2024

Assignment decision: Closed at Screening

Allegation(s): Not Applicable

Disposition(s): Not Applicable

On Dec. 13, 2024, ODHS received a report that outlined concerns for the siblings of the child, who were 3 years old and 7 years old, while in the care of their mother. The reporter expressed concern that the 7-year-old was not being provided ADHD medication consistently. The 7-year-old alleged a family friend stole the newly prescribed medication. In its absence, the mother reportedly gave the 7-year-old medication from a previous prescription one day and a combination of medications another day (medications were unknown to the reporter). It was also reported the mother was pregnant and in recovery from substance use. It was determined this report did not meet criteria for a CPS assessment and was closed at screening.

Date of report: Feb. 22, 2025

Assignment decision: Within 72 Hours

Allegation(s): Threat of harm by mother

Disposition(s): Unfounded

On Feb. 22, 2025, ODHS received a report alleging threat of harm to the child, who was a newborn, by the mother. It was reported the child was born the day prior at full term and the mother reported use of methamphetamine during her pregnancy with her last use being Jan. 6, 2025. The mother's drug screen from Feb. 15, 2025, was positive for marijuana and her drug screen from Feb. 21, 2025, was negative for all substances. The mother received prenatal care during her pregnancy and re-engaged with supportive services in January 2025. The child's birth was physically traumatic to the mother, requiring several post-delivery surgeries. The mother was reported to be prepared for the child's arrival with all necessary baby equipment and supplies. She also reported having a good support system. The child's father was reported to be an incarcerated individual. It was noted a previously domestically violent partner visited the mother in the hospital though details of their relationship at the time were largely unknown. This report was assigned to CPS for assessment.

On Feb. 24, 2025, the CPS caseworker spoke with a hospital social worker, who confirmed the child and mother appeared to be bonding well. In-person contact with the child and mother occurred at the hospital and a phone call was made to a trusted neighbor of the mother. The mother reported when she discovered she was pregnant, she stopped using substances. She relapsed a couple of times while pregnant and re-engaged in supportive services.

This same day, a voice mail was left with a service provider for the mother. After staffing this case with a supervisor, a protective action plan was implemented. This included two visits a day by a family friend to ensure the mother was not under the influence.

On Feb. 25, 2025, an infant safety staffing took place. Though not clearly cited, documentation showed the child presented with symptoms of substance use withdrawal four days after birth and a plan of care was developed.

On Feb. 27, 2025, the CPS caseworker met with the mother as well as her 7-year-old and 4-year-old children in the home and discussed infant safe sleep practices (the mother also received safe sleep information from the hospital).

On March 3, 2025, the child's cord test results were determined positive for THC. Another call to the mother's service provider was made and a voice mail was left.

On March 4, 2025, the CPS caseworker met and interviewed the 7-year-old at school and on March 2, 2025, the 4-year-old was interviewed at preschool. Neither child made concerning disclosures, but did report mother's ex-significant other to be around the home.

On March 5, 2025, this case was staffed with a supervisor and an AAG.

Efforts to provide financial support and tangible needs to the family were noted throughout the CPS assessment and included energy and phone bill assistance, baby swing, diapers, diaper bag, formula, wipes, bottles, baby soap, clothing and other such items. On March 5, 2025, the caseworker spoke to a service provider and a referral for in-home supportive services was submitted. The referral was accepted and on March 21, 2025, it was learned services would include one scheduled visit per week and one unscheduled visit per week.

On March 25, 2025, the CPS caseworker visited the mother and children for a scheduled home visit and the safety plan was updated to include the in-home support services as a safety service provider. The mother requested paternity testing and named two men as the child's potential father.

On April 2, 2025, the mother reported her safety service provider was not checking in on her as outlined in the safety plan. On April 4, 2025, the safety service provider experienced a change of personal circumstances and would no longer be available in the same capacity, though still wanted to support the mother.

April 17, 2025, the safety plan was adjusted to reflect changes in safety service providers. The child had a doctor's appointment and was noted to have some constipation.

April 21, 2025, the CPS caseworker reviewed progress notes from the in-home services to support parenting skills and noted the mother had attended all meetings, was responding appropriately to coaching and education.

As of April 24, 2025, the safety plan ended, and the case was in the process of being closed with an unfounded disposition of neglect to the child. On April 26, 2025, a report was made to the Department reporting the child's death in a possible unsafe sleep situation.

Relevant case history under the half-sibling's father's case

Date of report: May 18, 2022

Assignment decision: Within 24 Hours

Allegation(s): Neglect by father

Disposition(s): No allegation of child abuse or neglect

On May 18, 2022, ODHS received a report alleging neglect of the child's sibling, who was 4 years old, by the 4-year-old's father. It was reported the mother, and her mom were overheard talking about concerns for the 4-year-old while in the care of the 4-year-old's father. In this conversation, the mother stated the 4-year-old's father was using substances and leaving needles around the 4-year-old. The mother stated the 4-year-old was not attending school and was not being fed. This report was assigned to CPS for assessment.

On May 19, 2022, the CPS caseworker spoke with the significant other of the 4-year-old's father. She stated that the father shopped for groceries regularly and she provided examples of all the food in the home. She denied any concerns for substance use by the 4-year-old's father. She reported never having seen him under the influence nor has she seen any paraphernalia in the home.

On May 19, 2022, the CPS caseworker spoke with the maternal grandmother who reported the 4-year-old's father would not allow her to visit with the 4-year-old. She reported the mother

suspects he was using substances, but she nor the mother could prove it. The maternal grandmother indicated when she was permitted to visit, she didn't have concerns for the 4-year-old. She also added she saw a picture of the mother and the 4-year-old over the weekend and the 4-year-old looked well.

On May 19, 2022, the CPS caseworker spoke with the 4-year-old's HeadStart case manager who reported the 4-year-old had not attended school since ODHS engaged the family in long-term safety planning. He tried to engage the 4-year-old's father but ultimately, the 4-year-old's enrollment was dropped.

The information collected was staffed with supervisors. It was determined this report was not an allegation of child abuse or neglect and was closed.

Concerns regarding actions taken or not taken

In reviewing this case, the CIRT acknowledged persistent and thoughtful efforts by caseworkers to engage the parent throughout the case history. The parent was perceived as forthcoming and cooperative regarding her substance use and was described as pleasant and receptive during interactions. However, the CIRT noted that this may have contributed to an over-reliance on the parent's self-reports of sobriety. As a result, there were assumptions regarding her effective management of recovery and an incomplete understanding of the full scope of her substance use history. This contributed to a misapplication of safety threshold criteria, particularly in assessing risk and evaluating recovery and relapse prevention.

The CIRT discussed challenges in determining how much specialized knowledge—such as understanding substance use disorders—should be expected of the workforce. While there was consensus on the need for increased training and tools in this area, the CIRT cautioned against expecting caseworkers to become subject matter experts. The CIRT emphasized the importance of identifying knowledge gaps and knowing when to consult or collaborate with internal or external experts, including contracted treatment providers and Recovery Support Team leads (RSTs).

A specific training/coaching need identified involved enhancing recovery-focused conversations with parents. This includes proactively addressing relapse prevention strategies, access to

sponsors, and involvement in peer support groups such as Narcotics Anonymous (NA) or Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). The CIRT explored opportunities to engage RSTs more creatively and collaboratively to better support parents with substance use disorders. Notably, differences in supervision and management practices of RSTs across districts were acknowledged, and the CIRT recommended the consideration of statewide consistency in oversight for this role.

Finally, the CIRT discussed the closed at screening report from August 2024, which included possible indicators the parent may have been using substances. While there was disagreement about whether the report met criteria for a Child Protective Services (CPS) assessment, the CIRT agreed that screening practices require balancing the quality and clarity of documentation and decision-making with the volume of reports received.

Recommendations for improvement

The Department acknowledges the urgent need to prioritize and equip casework staff with comprehensive training and tools on substance use disorder (SUD) and its implications for child safety. While efforts had been underway to implement SUD training modules through the National Center on Substance Use and Child Welfare, these trainings were discontinued due to changes in federal administration and budget priorities. The CIRT recommends continued exploration of national training curricula, specifically focused on the neuroscience of SUD and the principles of recovery. Potential partnerships may include collaboration with partners from ADCP (Alcohol & Drug Policy Commission) and other agencies in similar fields. The Child Fatality Prevention Team in collaboration of the Equity Training and Workforce development begin exploring SUD training curricula immediately.

The CIRT encourages the Department to expand substance use-related training within its emerging academy model for caseworkers. Suggested enhancements include:

- Educational modules addressing the intersection of parental substance use and child safety.
- Guidance on assessing and applying safety threshold criteria when parental substance use is a factor.

The CIRT requests the Substance Use Prevention Coordinator begin collecting and analyzing current supervisory and management practices of Recovery Support Team leads across districts. This review should inform the development of a standardized supervisory framework to promote consistency statewide.

ODHS is currently implementing system improvement recommendations regarding SUD from previous reviews, including the development of Substance Use Disorder (SUD) guidelines for staff. These guidelines will aim to address bias and equip the workforce with tools for early engagement and identification of substance use. In addition, a pilot utilizing the UNCOPE framework, screening tools for identifying dependence on alcohol and substance use, is underway in two districts and ODHS is in the process of gathering feedback on the training materials prior to a statewide roll out. ODHS anticipates that the full statewide implementation of the UNCOPE framework will be completed by the summer of 2026.

Lastly, to support more informed decision making during the screening process, the CIRT recommends the Screening Program explore current guidance on screening review of child welfare history to determine if adjustments need to be made gain a more comprehensive understanding of potential patterns or concerns. It is recommended this exploration begin no later than Q4 of 2025 with implementation of any identified changes beginning no later than Q2 of 2026.

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