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August 5, 2019

Elizabeth Ortiz, Executive Director
Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys' Advisory Council
1951 W. Camelback Rd., Suite 202
Phoenix, Arizona 85015

Re: The Maricopa County Attorney's Office Annual Activity Report on the Multidisciplinary Protocol for the Investigation of Child Abuse, Fiscal Year 2019 Report

Dear Elizabeth:

The Maricopa County Attorney's Office hereby provides the *Maricopa County Attorney's Office Annual Activity Report on the Multidisciplinary Protocol for the Investigation of Child Abuse Fiscal Year 2019 Report* as required by Arizona Revised Statute § 8-817.

This version of the report, in addition to the Multidisciplinary Protocol, is also available at the Maricopa County Attorney's Office website, <http://www.maricopacountyattorney.org/>.

Sincerely,


Bill Montgomery
Maricopa County Attorney

enclosure



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The Maricopa County Attorney's Office Annual Activity Report on the Multidisciplinary Protocol for the Investigation of Child Abuse



August 2019

SUMMARY

Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S.) §8-817 requires each County Attorney to independently prepare and submit an Annual Report of Activity under the "Multidisciplinary Protocol for the Investigation of Child Abuse." The legislation directs that the report be independently prepared and submitted to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate and the Secretary of State without any input from or communication with other reporting entities.

Prosecution Activity – Maricopa County Attorney's Office (MCAO) July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

- The following table represents MCAO activity on the number of cases presented for review under these A.R.S. codes, the number of persons charged and final dispositions.¹

Maricopa County Attorney's Office	NUMBER OF CASES PRESENTED FOR REVIEW	NUMBER OF PERSONS CHARGED	DISPOSITIONS
Totals	3,057	1,798	2,816

¹ Includes Arizona Revised Statutes 13-1102, 1103, 1104, 1105, 1303, 1304, 1404, 1405, 1406, 1410, 1417, 3212, 3552, 3553, 3554, 3601, 3623.

- **Number of Cases presented for review** reflects law enforcement reports (referrals) received by the MCAO, which totals 3,057 cases during fiscal year 2018-19.
- The Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) is a referring law enforcement agency in our case management system, but in nearly every instance a traditional law enforcement agency is listed as the referring agency.
- **Persons charged** does not equal the number of cases presented for review because defendants may be charged in multiple cases and each statistical category presented is independent of each other.
- **Dispositions** include cases completed by Deputy County Attorneys that resulted in pleas (65.0%), furthered to law enforcement for more information (10.5%), referred to other agencies for prosecution (10.5%), conviction (3.2%), acquittal (0.8%) or dismissal (10.54%). A total of 3,682 cases reached final disposition. Cases disposed during this reporting period may have been submitted prior to this period. Dispositions may or may not represent the same cases reported in the “Number of Cases Presented for Review” section.
- **Reasons why charges were not pursued** include 1) no reasonable likelihood of conviction; 2) referred to another agency for prosecution; 3) the charges were used as an aid to prosecute another pending matter; or 4) unable to locate witness(es).
- **Note:** Each of the three statistical categories reflects a separate query into a unique part of our Case Management System. Therefore, each category is independent of each other and the same cases/persons are not necessarily included in each. This data is from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.

2018-19 MCAO Accomplishments

- The MCAO continues to partner with Arizona law enforcement and criminal justice professionals to improve the way they investigate and prosecute cases of domestic violence and child abuse. These training sessions address topics including best practices for investigating child sex abuse. Related to these specialized training events are the various joint operation apprehensions in 2018-19 that resulted in the arrest and conviction of several unregistered sexual offenders.
- The MCAO continues to regularly provide experts from our Speakers Bureau for presentations to schools and other agencies on the importance of “Mandatory Reporting.”
- In 2018, the MCAO announced that 95% of the approximately 4,500 rape kits in Maricopa County had been submitted for testing and 90% of those have been tested to completion; thus, virtually eliminating the backlog. The MCAO was previously awarded four different grants totaling \$5.7 million, from the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance through its Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) Grant Program and the New York County District Attorney’s Office. The grants were used to continue the Office’s initiatives to test previously untested sexual assault evidence kits. With this support, the MCAO is seeking justice on behalf of victims of sexual assault, including children.

- The Child Abuse Diversion program continues within the MCAO and this year the program underwent some revisions. MCAO contracted with a new community-based provider who utilizes the evidence-based curriculum, “Common Sense Parenting.” Participants attend a group-based, two-hour class, once a week for six weeks. The program teaches parents the use of positive communication with their child, how to reduce stress in crisis situations and how to improve family relationships. The program is available as a charging alternative (pre-file) and participants who successfully complete the program can avoid criminal charges. This program offers prosecutors another option to help seek justice for child victims.
- The annual “Don’t Leave Me Behind” Vehicular Heatstroke Awareness Campaign was re-launched this Spring and Summer and continues the MCAO education initiative to the community about the dangers of leaving kids and pets in hot cars. Deaths associated with hot cars are completely preventable and the MCAO strives to achieve its goal of zero incidents of children left in hot cars each campaign year.
- The MCAO Victim Services Division continues to take the lead in addressing the unique needs of child exploitation, human trafficking victims and victims who have a limited support system. Using grant funding, MCAO continues to support a victim advocate who specializes in cases dealing specifically with the sexual abuse, production and distribution of images depicting child pornography, child enticement, sex trafficking and victims of non-supportive guardians. The specially trained advocate networks with local agencies to develop resources specific to the needs of this population and they use their training in the areas of trauma, trauma bonding, grief, loss, reactive attachment, sexual exploitation, human trafficking and domestic violence to assist vulnerable child victims.
- The MCAO K9 Victim Support Program welcomed a new dog this year. These K9s are trained to work with victims of crime; specifically, young victims in particular who are often traumatized by heinous crimes and intimidated by the criminal justice system. The MCAO K9s provide calming, comforting support for these victims throughout the criminal justice process. Their special training allows them to perform this important function in a variety of behavioral situations and remain focused.

The current version of the “Multidisciplinary Protocol for the Investigation of Child Abuse” is always available at the Maricopa County Attorney’s Office website (<http://www.maricopacountyattorney.org/>), in addition to the 2018-19 version of the Annual Report of Activity from the MCAO.

An extensive five-year revision of the “Multidisciplinary Protocol for the Investigation of Child Abuse” was completed in early 2016. Significant legislative changes since 2016 necessitate another five-year revision in 2020.

Sincerely,



Bill Montgomery
Maricopa County Attorney