

## 14.7 Multi-Disciplinary Team: Child Protection Investigation Team

**Application:** All Department of Children's Services (DCS) Child Protective Services (CPS) staff including the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) and Supervisors.

**Authority:** TCA: 37-1-401 et seq.; 37-1-601 et seq.; 37-5-105 (3); 37-5-106; 37-5-107; Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) as amended, see 42 USC 5101 et seq.; 42 USC 5116 et seq., and 45 CFR 1340.

**Standards: COA:** PA-CFS 3.02; PA-CFS 4-7

**Commissioner:**

**Date:**

Original Effective Date: 12/01/23  
Current Effective Date: 12/01/23

Supersedes: 14.6 10/29/21  
Last Review Date: 12/01/23

### Glossary:

- ◆ Child Protective Services Investigative Team (CPIT):
  - A legally mandated multi-disciplinary team that conducts an investigation of alleged sexual abuse or other severe child abuse.
- ◆ CPS Supervisor
  - All levels of direct CPS management from the Team Leader up to and including the Commissioner of the Department of Children's Services.

### Policy Statement:

The Child Protective Investigation Team (CPIT) serves as the statutorily mandated Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) in Tennessee. DCS uses the MDT approach during investigations of severe child abuse to ensure completion of a strategic and thorough investigation, as well as providing child victims with the needed supports to ensure their safety.

### Purpose:

To identify the composition of CPIT and establish the role and responsibilities of DCS in the CPIT process

### Procedures:

#### A. CPIT Composition

1. Each team shall be composed of :
  - a) One staff member from DCS CPS;
  - b) One representative from the Office of the District Attorney General;

- c)** One juvenile court officer or investigator from a court of competent jurisdiction;
  - d)** One law enforcement officer with countywide jurisdiction from the county where the child resides or where the alleged abuse occurred; and
  - e)** The Director of the Children's Advocacy Center, or designee.
- 2.** The team may also include:
  - a)** A representative from the medical field;
  - b)** A representative from the mental health field; or
  - c)** Other members as appropriate and identified by CPIT.

## **B. Convening CPIT and Developing Case Strategy**

- 1.** CPS immediately convenes the appropriate CPIT per local CPIT protocols when a report of child sexual or severe abuse has been received or identified through casework.
- 2.** The CPS Case Manager follows local protocols for submitting written documentation notifying the District Attorney of a case alleging sexual abuse or severe child abuse within three (3) days of convening CPIT.
- 3.** The CPIT determines investigative tasks and assigns responsibilities to team members when convening CPIT.
- 4.** The CPIT determines immediate safety risks to the Alleged Child Victims (ACV) or other children.

## **C. CPIT Strategy**

- 1.** During the CPIT meetings the team shall discuss and determine:
  - a)** The ACV family composition and demographics, including which person(s) is responsible for the ACV's welfare and if there are other children in the care of that person.
  - b)** Whether any other child(ren) is the victim of child abuse or neglect.
    - ♦ If any other child(ren) is the victim of child abuse or neglect, the child is added as a victim in TFACTS.
  - c)** The person(s) responsible for causing the abuse.
  - d)** Whether long-term risks to the ACV and/or other children are present.
  - e)** What services are necessary to safeguard the ACV and to preserve and stabilize family life.
- 2.** With approval of the CPS Supervisor, DCS investigative tasks may be delegated or delayed in the following situations:
  - a)** There are no identified safety concerns for the ACV or other children in the household and a law enforcement agency, District Attorney, or Medical

Examiner's office has requested that CPS delay and/or refrain from interviewing certain individuals to preserve or enhance a criminal investigation.

- b)** When CPIT is involved and decides the order in which certain investigative tasks are to be completed and which representative will perform the task based on the circumstances of the case.

#### **D. Classification**

##### Classification of CPIT Cases:

- 1.** The CPS Case Manager reviews the case with their supervisor and determines that all relevant information is included and documented in the case recordings in TFACTS.
- 2.** The CPS Case Manager is prepared to discuss the case with CPIT members when the case is on the CPIT schedule. To prepare for the meeting the investigator will:
  - a)** Discuss the case with their supervisor, or designee.
  - b)** Prepare documentation to share with CPIT members attending the meeting.
- 3.** The CPS Case Manager discusses the information gathered during the investigation and the recommended DCS classification(s) with all members of the CPIT and each member has the opportunity to agree or disagree with the DCS classification(s).
- 4.** The CPIT form, CS-0561, Child Protective Investigative Team Review, is completed to indicate the outcome of the review and whether each CPIT member agrees or disagrees with the recommended classification. Each team member is provided the opportunity to sign the CPIT form.
- 5.** Any CPIT member's concerns about classification are noted on the CPIT form.
- 6.** The CPS Case Manager documents the CPIT discussion and classification in case recordings in TFACTS.
- 7.** If CPIT members disagree with the classification decision made by the CPS worker, a review may be requested. The CPS Regional Director or designee reviews the case and makes a final classification decision. The request is made by the CPS supervisor to the CPS Regional Director or designee.
  - a)** CPIT members may submit additional information to the CPS Regional Director or designee for consideration.
  - b)** The CPS Regional Director or designee makes the final classification decision within ten (10) business days of receipt of the request.
  - c)** DCS notifies CPIT members of the classification decision.
  - d)** The Supervisor documents the outcome of the disagreement review in a case recording in SCWIS/CWIS.

##### **Forms:**

*CS-0561, Child Protective Investigative Team Review*

Collateral Documents:

*14.2, Screening, Response Priority and Assignment of Child Protective Services Cases*

*14.12, Family Permanency Planning for CPS Non-Custodial Cases*

*14.13, Non-Custodial Immediate Protection Agreements*

*14.14, Removal: Safety and Permanency Considerations*