

Chapter 5

ASSIGNING THE INVESTIGATION

5-1. Intake Assignment. To the extent possible, a supervisor should evaluate the circumstances of the report prior to intake assignment to ensure the investigator assigned has the requisite skills and experience needed to conduct a comprehensive investigation (e.g., specialized training in child trafficking or medical neglect, etc.).

5-2. Factors to Consider in Intake Assignment.

a. Upon receiving a report alleging medical neglect, the receiving unit or supervisor will assign the report to a child protective investigator who has specialized training in assessing medical neglect and working with medically complex children.

b. Upon receiving a report alleging human trafficking, the receiving unit or supervisor will assign the report to a child protective investigator who has specialized training in assessing children who may be victims of human trafficking.

c. To the extent possible, supervisors should help investigators gain competency and become more proficient in investigating complicated cases, by:

(1) Teaming an experienced investigator, agency approved mentor/trainer, or field supervisor with the less experienced investigator to work the more complex investigations together.

(2) Providing pre-commencement consultations to facilitate information collection and explore the need for teaming with subject matter experts; providing real time 'Initial' consultations (i.e., telephonic communication while the investigator is still on-site) to review the assessment of present danger; and by providing timely 'Follow-up' consultations to develop critical thinking skills around initial safety determinations and completion of the FFA-investigation.

(3) Providing more frequent and in-depth case consultations when less experienced investigators are assigned complex investigations during after-hour or weekend "on-call" operation.

d. Gender consideration is important when assigning an investigator, particularly in sexual abuse investigations. The supervisor should closely review the report prior to assignment for any indication a child is likely to respond more positively to a male or female investigator and, when possible, assign the intake accordingly. Post-commencement, the supervisor should also be willing to re-assign the investigation if the investigator thinks gender is an issue and is inadvertently creating trust issues and/or impeding disclosure of information by the child.

e. In areas in which reports are assigned by "rotation" (i.e., automatically assigned to investigators in a queue) the supervisor should consider re-assigning reports involving complex dynamics (e.g., substance misuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence, etc.) to the most experienced investigator available.

f. In areas where case assignment is completed by a screening unit, the supervisor should work closely with screening personnel to identify the types of reports the supervisor wants to be made personally aware of prior to case assignment.

g. Intentional case assignment should also be considered for the following highly complex circumstances:

(1) Intakes involving critical or life threatening injuries of a child and/or parent.

- (2) Child fatalities.
- (3) Intakes involving Department, sheriff or community-based care employees.
- (4) Intakes involving public officials, celebrities, and prominent foreign visitors.
- (5) Institutional abuse.
- (6) Participants have been subjects of a prior investigation (reference s. [39.301\(4\)](#), F.S.).