

## Alaska Office of Children's Services Web Report Field Definitions

**Adoption** (discharge reason) - Transfer of the legal relation of parent to a person not related to the child by birth, with the same mutual rights and obligations that existed between the child and his or her birth parents.

**Allegation** - Child abuse statements and/or descriptions by a reporter that consist of one Alleged Perpetrator, one Alleged Victim, and one of the four types of Maltreatment.

**Alleged Perpetrator** - An Initial Assessment participant alleged of maltreating an Alleged Victim.

**Alleged Victim** - Child about whom a report regarding Maltreatment has been made.

**Case** - A household unit included in one or more Initial Assessments.

**Child Aged Out** (discharge reason) - Child between 18-21 exited OCS custody based on their age. Child may enter an independent living arrangement. .

**Closed without a Finding** - Disposition that does not conclude with a specific finding because the Initial Assessment could not be completed for such reasons as the family moved out of the jurisdiction or the family could not be located.

**Custody Released to Relative** (discharge reason) - Legal responsibility for care and maintenance of a child has been transferred to a relative of the child.

**Day** - For purposes of Foster Care a day is midnight to midnight. This report counts a child as Out of Home on the day of Removal but not on the day of Discharge. Therefore, children discharged on the first day of the reporting period will not be included in counts for the start of that reporting period.

**Death of Child** (discharge reason) - The child has died, not necessarily as a result of maltreatment.

**Discharge** - The point in time when a child is no longer in Out of Home Care.

**Foster Home** (placement setting) - An OCS approved home in which an adult head of the household provides 24-hour care on a continuing basis to one or more children who are apart from their principal Caregiver. The adult may be a Relative or Non-Relative. Non-relative Foster Homes must be licensed by OCS.

**Group Home** (placement setting) - A home that cares for more than three, but no more than eight, children unrelated to the Foster parent.

**Guardianship** - A person outside of the child's household fulfills some of the responsibilities of a legal

parent while the courts or birthparents may continue to hold other legal responsibilities for the child. Guardianship is subject to ongoing supervision by the court and ends by court order or when the child reaches the age of majority. Guardianship may be used as an alternative to Adoption in some kinship care situations in which a child's relative is assuming a parental role but prefers not to adopt. Guardians may be entitled to the same benefits as Foster or Adoptive parents.

**Guardianship** (discharge reason) - A legal arrangement where a person or institution is appointed as a guardian to make decisions for an incapacitated person - decisions about housing, medical care, legal issues, and services.

**ICWA**, as used in these reports – Provider has been documented as meeting requirements of the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), a law that seeks to keep American Indian children with American Indian families. This is extended to include non-Indian Native children. ORCA does not have functionality to maintain history for this status; therefore, status will update for all periods simultaneously.

**Initial Assessment (IA)** - An evaluation of child safety completed for each screened in PSR. The IA process consists of gathering sufficient information (via face-to-face interviews with the alleged victim, family members and collateral contacts) to determine if a child is safe or unsafe and determining the finding for each allegation (Substantiated or Not Substantiated). A determination is also made as to whether the children and/or other persons involved in the report of alleged maltreatment are in need of services. An IA may include multiple PSRs.

**Institution** (placement setting) - A child care facility operated by a public or private agency and providing 24-hour care and/or treatment for children who require separation from their own homes and group living experience. These facilities may include: child care institutions, residential treatment facilities, maternity homes, nursing homes, hospitals, etc.

**Maltreatment** - An act or omission that results in circumstances in which there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be a child in need of aid, as described in Alaska Statute 47.10.011; an injury and/or damage to a child's physical or mental well-being. Alaska divides maltreatment into four types: Mental Injury, Neglect, Physical, or Sexual. Please refer to next page for elaboration on each type.

**Mental Injury** (maltreatment type) - An injury to the emotional well-being or intellectual or psychological capacity of a child, as evidenced by an observable and substantial impairment in the child's ability to function.

**Missing Documentation** (placement setting) - A placement was ended but insufficient information was entered into ORCA to determine subsequent placement setting.

**Native Child** - Any mention of Alaska Native or American Indian race.

**Neglect** (maltreatment type) - Failure by a Caregiver to provide necessary food, care, clothing, shelter,

medical attention, or education for a child.

**Non-child specific** - A provider license not issued for only specific children.

**Not Substantiated** - Initial Assessment disposition that determines there is not sufficient evidence under Alaska law or policy to conclude that the child has been maltreated or is at risk of being maltreated. Includes Closed without a Finding, which is a disposition that does not conclude with a specific finding because the Initial Assessment could not be completed for such reasons as: the family moved out of the jurisdiction or the family could not be located.

**Office of Children's Services (OCS)** - A division of Alaska's Department of Health and Social Services.

**ORCA** - Online Resources for the Children of Alaska, OCS's main database.

**Out-of-Home Placement (OOH or OOHP) / Removal:** Placing the child in the physical care of someone other than the child's Caregiver. Removal may include situations in which the child is living in the same residence as the Caregiver, but the Caregiver's ability to exercise physical care and control of the child. Only includes children who remained out of home for at least one night.

**Pending Discharge** (placement setting) - Foster Care placement has ended for reasons such as Adoption, Guardianship, Aging-Out, Emancipation, Death of Child, or other reason to release State legal responsibility for care and maintenance of a child, but Discharge paperwork had not been completed at the end of the Reporting Period.

**Perpetrator** - A parent, guardian, or caregiver with Substantiated abuse against a child Victim; the person who has been determined to have caused or knowingly allowed the maltreatment of the child.

**Physical** (maltreatment type) - Physical harm to a child is defined in AS 47.10.015 as conduct or conditions created by the Caregiver resulting in physical injury to, physical mistreatment of, or sexual contact with, the child. AS 47.10.015 also defines "substantial risk of physical harm" as a negligent act or omission by a child's Caregiver that creates a substantial risk of physical injury to the child.

**Placement** - The physical setting in which a child resides after Removal; that is, the resultant Foster Care setting. A new Placement setting results when the Foster Care setting changes, for example, when a child moves from one Foster family home to another or to a Group Home or Institution.

**Pre-Adoptive** (placement setting) - A home in which a child is placed with a family with the understanding that the family plans to adopt the child.

**Protective Service Report (PSR)** - A report of child Maltreatment. A PSR may contain multiple Allegations, each of which consists of one Alleged Victim/Alleged Perpetrator/Maltreatment combination.

**Region, as used in this Initial Assessment report** - One of five areas of Alaska, assigned based on the office of the primary OCS worker responsible for the screening, initial assessment or case. Because a Case can have more than one IA, occasionally a case may be represented in more than one Region. For an on-line map of OCS Regions please see: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Pages/offices/default.aspx>.

**Removal** - The physical act of a child being taken from his or her normal place of residence, by court order or a voluntary placement agreement, and placed in a substitute care setting, or the removal of Custody from the parent or relative Guardian pursuant to a court order or voluntary placement agreement which permits the child to remain in a substitute care setting.

**Reporting Period** - Complete month or calendar year, as specified in the report. Owing to Unique Counts, data reported on a monthly basis will not necessarily sum to annual figures.

**Reunification** (discharge reason) - Discharge from Out of Home Placement to reunite child and family.

**Runaway** (placement setting) - A child who left the Provider he/she was placed with, whose whereabouts are either currently unknown or who is staying in an unapproved setting, and for whom the State retains legal responsibility for care and maintenance of a child.

**Safe** - Children are considered safe when there is no present danger or impending danger, or the caregivers' protective capacities control existing threats.

**Screened In / Screened Out** - A decision as to whether the reporter's concerns within a PSR constitute a potential threat to child safety. If so, the PSR is Screened In and an Initial Assessment is completed. If not, the PSR is Screened Out and the Case is closed with no further action.

**Sexual** (maltreatment type) - the child has suffered sexual abuse, or is at substantial risk of suffering sexual abuse, as a result of conduct by or conditions created by the child's Caregiver or by the failure of the Caregiver to supervise the child adequately. If the Caregiver has actual notice that a person has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor within the past 15 years, is registered or required to register as a sex offender, or is under investigation for a sex offense against a minor, and the Caregiver subsequently allows a child to be left with that person, this alone may constitute sufficient evidence that the child is at substantial risk of being sexually abused.

**Substantiated** - A type of Initial Assessment disposition which concludes that the allegation of maltreatment or risk of maltreatment was supported or founded by State law or policy. This is the highest level of finding by OCS.

**Supervised Independent Living** (placement setting) - A type of voluntary extended Foster Care placement where young adults can live on their own, while still getting casework and support services to help them become independent and self-sufficient.

**THV Expired - Custody Retained** (discharge reason) - A trial home visit exceeded six months or a

time period ordered by a court. If a trial home visit exceeds this time limit, or if a child is placed at home and custody lapses and the child is placed in out-of-home care again, it is considered a second removal from home,

**Transfer to another Agency** (discharge reason) - Transfer of child Legal responsibility for care and maintenance of a child to a tribe or other non-OCS entity.

**Transfer to DJJ** (discharge reason) - Transfer of Legal responsibility for care and maintenance of a child to Alaska's Department of Juvenile Justice, an agency is in the same Department as OCS. DJJ has a different database of record, but OCS is responsible for paying Foster Care for these children.

**Trial Home Visit (THV)** (placement setting) - The child has been in a Foster Care placement, but, under continuing OCS supervision, is returned to the child's principal Caregiver for a limited period of time. If the THV is successful legal responsibility for care and maintenance of a child may be returned to the principal Caregiver.

**Tribe Assumed Jurisdiction** (discharge reason) - Legal responsibility for care and maintenance of a child was transferred to a Native tribe.

**Unique Count** - An unduplicated count within the Reporting Period; that is, each person, ID, or combination of person or ID with other factors is counted only once regardless of the number of times represented within the reported group during the Reporting Period. For example, a Victim of multiple instances of Neglect in the Anchorage region will be counted once in that maltreatment type and region, though the same Victim may be counted again for other types of Maltreatment, or in other Regions. A Victim-Maltreatment-Region combination counted in multiple monthly reporting periods within a calendar year will be counted only once for that combination in a report based on calendar year.

**Unsafe** - Children are considered Unsafe when they are vulnerable to present or impending danger and Caregivers are unable or unwilling to provide protection, or caregivers lack the protective capacities to ensure the child will be safe.

**Victim** - A child for whom Maltreatment has been substantiated or indicated by an Initial Assessment.

*(case flowchart follows)*

# Office of Children's Services Case Flowchart

