WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §15-2-15

§15-2-15. State Police Child Abuse and Neglect Investigations Unit.

(a) The superintendent shall maintain a special unit of the State Police called the Child Abuse and Neglect Investigations Unit. The purpose of the unit is to focus on identifying, investigating, and prosecuting criminal child abuse and neglect cases, in coordination with Child Protective Services, established pursuant to §49-2-802 of this code. The unit shall assist other State Police members with child abuse or neglect investigations as well as the Division of Child Protective Services. The unit may provide training, technical expertise, and coordination of services for other law-enforcement agencies, Child Protective Services caseworkers, prosecuting attorneys, and multidisciplinary teams established pursuant to the provisions of §49-4-402 of this code, to identify, investigate, report, and prosecute criminal child abuse and criminal child neglect cases. However, nothing in this section may be construed to mean that the unit will assume the duties or investigations of other State Police members or other law-enforcement officers.

(b) The unit shall consist, at a minimum, six members of the State Police. The superintendent shall assign a unit director and five regional members, to be dedicated and trained to assist county Child Protective Services Offices and caseworkers in investigating and coordinating with other law-enforcement personnel, cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. Cases to be investigated include allegations received pursuant to §49-2-803 of this code, and any other credible child abuse or neglect allegations.

(c) The unit director’s duties include:

(1) Overseeing State Police members assigned to the unit;

(2) Coordinating activities of the unit with Child Protection Services;

(3) Assisting Child Protective Services in developing and refining protocols for improving identification and prosecution of suspected criminal acts of child abuse or neglect; and

(4) Assuring that all other directives and responsibilities of the unit are fulfilled.

(d) The unit shall maintain a statewide statistical index on child abuse and neglect convictions resulting from convictions for violations of §61-8D-2, §61-8D-2a, §61-8D-3, §61-8D-3a, §61-8D-4 and §61-8D-4a of this code, to monitor the timely and proper investigation and disposition of child abuse or neglect cases. The statistical data index maintained by the unit shall not contain information of a specific nature that would identify individual cases or persons.

(e) On or before December 31, of each year, the unit director shall submit an annual report to the Joint Committee on Government and Finance. The annual report is to include the

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statistical index required under the provisions of subsection (d) of this section, and may include recommendations for statutory or program reforms that will assist the unit and further promote the goals of the unit. The report may not contain information of a specific nature that would identify individual cases or persons.

(f) Every state law-enforcement agency of this state shall periodically provide statistical information regarding child abuse and neglect cases investigated and prosecuted by that law-enforcement agency to the unit.

(g) The superintendent may propose rules for legislative approval or procedural rules as necessary to effectuate the provisions of this section in accordance with the provisions of §29A-3-1 et seq. of this code. The superintendent shall provide forms to law-enforcement agencies, circuit clerks, and parole officers to facilitate submission of appropriate information necessary to prepare the statistical reports required by this section.

(h) There is continued a special account in the state Treasury, into which shall be deposited any gifts, grants or donations made to the unit, and any other funds directed to be deposited into the account by appropriation of the Legislature, and to be expended for the purposes of this section pursuant to appropriation of the Legislature.

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