

SHERIFFS' CHILD PROTECTIVE INVESTIGATIONS

Program Performance Evaluation Report

JANUARY 31, 2001

*CONDUCTED BY THE BROWARD, MANATEE, PASCO, PINELLAS, AND
SEMINOLE COUNTY SHERIFFS' OFFICES
AND
THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The 2000 Legislature mandated that the Department of Children and Families submit an annual report on the performance of sheriffs' offices receiving general appropriations to provide child protective investigations. Requirements for the program performance evaluation report include the following:

- To address quality performance, outcome attainment, and cost efficiency;
- Be based upon criteria mutually agreed upon by the sheriffs and the department;
- Be conducted by a team of peer reviewers from the sheriffs' offices performing investigations and representatives from the department; and
- Be delivered to the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, and the Governor by January 31 of each year (s. 39.3065[3][d], F.S.).

The evaluation report is a collaborative effort between the staffs of the Sheriffs of Broward, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Seminole counties and the Department of Children and Families. The report does not address the performance of the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, since this office did not assume responsibility for protective investigations until October 2000.

Evaluation Plan and Design

The program performance evaluation questions for this evaluation were based upon language in s. 39.3065(3)(d), F.S. In summary, these questions are

1. How does the quality of performance in child protective investigation compare between the sheriffs and the department on essential investigation requirements in Chapter 39, F.S.?
2. Have the sheriffs achieved the performance standards and outcomes specified in their grant agreements, as required by the General Appropriations Act and s. 39.3065(3)(b), F.S.? How does outcome attainment compare between the sheriffs and the department?
3. Are the sheriffs performing child protective investigations cost efficiently, and how do their costs compare to those of the department?

Representatives from the sheriffs' offices and the department composed the program evaluation planning team. The team selected a comparison model design. Counties in which the sheriffs' offices conduct protective investigations (review counties) were compared on the three evaluation components (quality performance, outcome attainment, and cost efficiency) to a comparison county in which the department conducts protective investigations. Comparison counties were selected based upon proximity to the review counties on six variables. Hillsborough County was selected as the best comparison county for Broward and Pinellas counties, and Marion County was selected as the comparison county for Manatee and Pasco counties. In Hillsborough

and Marion counties, the department provides child protective investigations through its state employees.

Quality Performance Review

The methodology for the quality performance component of the evaluation called for a review of case records. A statistically reliable, randomly selected sample of all initial child maltreatment cases locked between July 1, 2000 through 30 days before the review was drawn for the four sheriffs' offices and the two comparison counties. The sample sizes selected were designed to yield results with an error of no more than plus or minus ten percent with a confidence level of 90 percent.

The program performance evaluation was conducted by a team of peer reviewers composed of representatives from the sheriffs' offices and the department. The approach to the peer review proposed by the department and accepted by the sheriffs' representatives is one in use for several years by the Quality Assurance Unit for child protective services. The reviews of the sheriffs' offices and comparison counties occurred from September 18 through November 30, 2000.

Peer reviewers assessed case files individually, onsite, using case review instruments modified for this evaluation by representatives of the department's Quality Assurance Unit and the Broward County Sheriff's Office. The case review instruments address the statutory requirements for the investigator's initial response to the report of alleged child maltreatment and the emergency removal and placement of children, if this occurred. The instruments contain a number of statements or questions that address indicators used to determine how well essential steps in the investigation have been achieved.

Outcome Measures and Standards

Paragraph 39.3065(3)(b), F.S., requires that the sheriffs operate, at a minimum, in accordance with the performance standards and outcome measures established by the Legislature for protective investigations conducted by the department. Three performance measures from the General Appropriations Act for the fiscal years 1999-00 and 2000-01 apply to child protective investigations and are referenced in the Grant Agreements with the sheriffs. The performance measures and standards used to determine outcome attainment for the sheriffs and the comparison counties are the following:

1. One hundred percent (100%) of investigations to be completed within 60 days.
2. One hundred percent (100%) of alleged victims to be seen within 24 hours.
3. One hundred percent (100%) of cases are to be reviewed by supervisors in accordance with department timeframes for the early warning system.

The data for the first two measures come from routine management reports produced by the data unit at the department's Family Safety Program Office from the database of the Florida Abuse Hotline Information System. A standard reporting period of July 1, 2000 through September 30, 2000 was selected for the evaluation. The third measure,

supervisory review, is not available from current automated information systems on a statewide basis and, therefore, cannot be reported.

Cost Efficiency

In contrast to the programmatic peer review process, no onsite visits were made or meetings held to compile data and complete this component of the evaluation report. Because of the intense involvement of sheriff staff in the programmatic peer review, no sheriff staff was available to assist with the cost efficiency analysis. As an alternative approach, sheriff and department staffs were provided opportunities to review and comment on the draft reports.

Data sources included the sheriffs' budget requests and expenditure reports; the sheriffs' grant agreements; the department's accounting and personnel records; General Appropriations Acts; the department's Legislative Budget Request and the Governor's Recommended Budget for Fiscal Year 2001-02; and the Florida Abuse Hotline Information System. Data were adjusted to improve comparability. Data were collected for fiscal years 1999-00, 2000-01, and 2001-02.

Findings

Quality Performance Review

The total scores from the quality performance review do not show a significant difference between the sheriffs' and the department's operations. Regardless of the length of time performing child protective investigations, no county received a superior performance rating on the quality of protective investigations. Five of the six counties received satisfactory performance ratings, and one county received a partial performance rating. This county, Broward, was almost ten percentage points below the its department comparison county.

Outcomes

Examining performance on outcome measures shows inconclusive results. No county achieved the mandated standard for performance on either outcome; however, there were statistically significant differences between review and comparison counties. For the first outcome, cases closed within 60 days, the Manatee and Pasco Sheriff's Offices performed significantly better than the department comparison county, Marion County. In contrast, Hillsborough County, the comparison county, significantly outperformed the Broward and Pinellas County Sheriff's Offices on this outcome.

For the second outcome, victims seen within 24 hours, again, the Manatee and Pasco Sheriff's Offices significantly outperformed the comparison county, Marion County. Among the larger counties, there were no significant differences on this outcome.

Cost Efficiency

Sheriff and comparison program costs and staffing data were collected and examined. Although adjustments were made to create comparable data, there were too many variations among the sheriffs. Broward County was the most unlike the other sheriffs in terms of the range of services provided. Manatee, Pasco, Broward, and Pinellas counties assumed full responsibility for child protective services. Broward County assumed more limited responsibility for protective services than the other three counties.

The number of supervisors to the number of investigators ratio range for the sheriffs was one supervisor to 3.5 investigators to one supervisor to 6.67 investigators. Other than making a comparison to the department's internal staffing standard of one supervisor to six investigators, the significance of the reported range of variance for this ratio is unknown. There is no data available to determine if a smaller or larger span of control for a supervisor has any impact of operational efficiency or program outcomes.

The fact that this was the year in which Pasco, Broward, and Pinellas counties began to conduct child protective investigations created another disparity. This was partially overcome by annualized all budget data. However, this only provides one estimate of what the actual program costs would have been if the three counties were operational the entire fiscal year of 1999-00. The data for fiscal years 2000-01 and 2001-02 are also only estimates.

These disparities significantly reduced the ability to compare costs. Until such time as each sheriff and comparison county has full or almost full staffing and that staff is trained and certified to handle a full caseload, a meaningful conclusion cannot be drawn. Implementation of the report's recommendations should improve the ability to perform an evaluation that will determine whether the sheriffs are performing child protective investigations cost efficiently.

Recommendations

1. Continue the sheriffs' grants and reassess performance during 2001, since performance results are inconclusive. This will allow those sheriffs' offices operating protective investigations for one year or less to fully implement their program and stabilize their operations. Performance results in subsequent program evaluation reports will be a more accurate reflection of true performance.
2. Do not include any sheriff's office in subsequent reviews that has not been performing protective investigations for at least one year. This is in keeping with the basic tenets of program evaluation not to examine the outcomes of a program that has operated for less than one year. For start-up programs, an implementation or process study would be appropriate and could provide the site with valuable information on practices and procedures.

3. Modify the program evaluation methodology to address concerns raised by the department and the sheriffs such as the sample size for the case review, scoring and consensus process for the quality performance review, and the community partner survey.
4. Expand the scope of the evaluation to look at the following:
 - Additional important performance measures not specified in the General Appropriations Act.
 - The relationship between investigations and related legal and service provision functions, when these are privatized or divested to other agencies.
5. Involve representatives from the sheriffs' offices in identifying appropriate practice standards and performance measures for protective investigations.
6. Use the results of quality performance review to identify pre-service and in-service training needs of investigators and supervisors. Several common themes are apparent as areas needing improvement, for example, assessment of short-term and long-term risk; thoroughness of investigation; and supervisory review, direction, and guidance to investigators.
7. Working agreements should be reviewed and updated at least annually to reflect "lessons learned" and "best practices". The working agreements are those between the sheriffs and
 - The lead agency for community-based care or the department,
 - The provider of child welfare legal services (Office of the Attorney General, State Attorney, or department staff), and
 - Local law enforcement agencies.
8. Require sheriff and district staff participation in the development of the performance measures, data collection, and data analysis for the preparation of the cost efficiency analysis section of subsequent evaluations.
9. Data required to measure performance should be tracked and reported throughout the year. For instance, turnover and vacancy data should be added to the sheriff's quarterly management report. District staff should collect and report comparison county data on a quarterly basis
10. The department should prepare a random moment sampling process and train sheriffs' staffs to enable the procedure to become operational by July 1, 2001.
11. A team of department and sheriffs' staff should be established to define administrative cost and to determine the process to collect the relevant data.
12. Before implementing additional sheriff programs, performance measures should be established to determine cost efficiency. The Senate's Interim Report #2110-007 recommends that the department and the sheriffs jointly develop standards for

measuring the effectiveness of the sheriff's programs relative to those of the department. It is recommended that those standards be developed and in place for fiscal year 2001-02. The first year's data collection would provide the baseline for measuring subsequent years' performance.

INTRODUCTION

Program Performance Evaluation

The 2000 Legislature mandated that the Department of Children and Families submit an annual report on the performance of sheriffs' offices receiving general appropriations to provide child protective investigations. Requirements for the program performance evaluation report include the following:

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The report that follows is a collaborative effort between the staffs of the Sheriffs of Broward, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Seminole counties and the Department of Children and Families. The report does not address the performance of the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, since this office did not assume responsibility for protective investigations until October 2000.

At the time of the performance reviews, the sheriffs' offices had performed child protective investigations for the following lengths of time:

- Manatee Sheriff's Office three years, five months;
- Pinellas Sheriff's Office twelve months;
- Broward Sheriff's Office ten months; and
- Pasco Sheriff's Office eight months.

With the exception of the Manatee Sheriff's Office, the other sheriffs' offices may have performed the investigation function for too short a time to assess accurately practice and outcome performance and cost efficiency. A basic tenet of program evaluation is that a program operate for at least 12 months before the program's effectiveness and efficiency is assessed. During the implementation phase of a program, an implementation study or process evaluation can be informative to program managers and staff. These studies can identify needed modifications to the program's design and help ensure that best practices are in place and procedures are sound. For the sheriffs' offices, the first year was a time of transition and implementation requiring the development of new infrastructures; recruitment, hiring, and training of staff; and the development of relationships with community partners. These implementation demands were coupled with the rapid growth in the number of abuse and neglect reports requiring investigations.

History of the Involvement of Sheriffs in Child Protective Investigations in Florida

The Manatee County Sheriff's Office began conducting investigations of more serious cases of child maltreatment in February 1997, under legislation passed in 1993. This legislation allowed the department to enter into agreements, within existing resources, with a county sheriff's office or local police department to assume the lead in conducting criminal investigations of child maltreatment as well as partial or full responsibility for conducting certain components of child protective investigations.

Legislation passed during the 1998 legislative session required the department to transfer the responsibility for all child protective investigations in Manatee, Pasco, and Pinellas counties to the sheriffs' offices by July 1999. The legislation permits the sheriff to subcontract with other law enforcement officials or private agencies to conduct investigations of child neglect cases. The 1999 Legislature added the Broward County Sheriff's Office to those sheriffs authorized to conduct child protective investigations.

During the 2000 legislative session, child protective investigations in Seminole County were transferred to the Sheriff's Office beginning in fiscal year 2000-01. The legislature also authorized the department to enter into grant agreements with other sheriffs to perform child protective investigations in their respective counties (s. 39.3065[3][a], F.S.).

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PLAN AND DESIGN

Performance Evaluation Questions

The program performance evaluation questions for this evaluation were based upon language in s. 39.3065(3)(d), F.S. In summary, these questions are

1. How does the quality of performance in child protective investigation compare between the sheriffs and the department on essential investigation requirements in Chapter 39, F.S.?
2. Have the sheriffs achieved the performance standards and outcomes specified in their grant agreements, as required by the General Appropriations Act and s. 39.3065(3)(b), F.S.? How does outcome attainment compare between the sheriffs and the department?
3. Are the sheriffs performing child protective investigations cost efficiently, and how do their costs compare to those of the department?

Development of the Evaluation Design and Plan

Department representatives from the offices of Programs, Operations, Mission Support and Performance, and Family Safety developed the initial evaluation design and plan,

including the stakeholder survey and case file review instruments. Two meetings were held in Tampa with representatives of the Broward, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Seminole County Sheriffs' Offices to review and refine the evaluation design, plan, and data collection instruments. Representatives from the department and the sheriffs' offices reached agreement on the evaluation approach, sampling methodology, data collection instruments, and instrument scoring procedures. The sheriffs' offices did not feel that they had the resources to participate as members of a team with department staff to collect and analyze cost efficiency information, as was proposed in the initial evaluation plan.

Comparison Design and Counties

The program evaluation planning team selected a comparison model design. Counties in which the sheriffs' offices conduct protective investigations (review counties) were compared on the three evaluation components (quality performance, outcome attainment, and cost efficiency) to a comparison county in which the department conducts protective investigations. Comparison counties were selected based upon proximity to the review counties on the following six variables:

1. Total population;
2. Population under 18 years of age;
3. Initial abuse/neglect reports for children (FY 1999-00);
4. Population of children in poverty (1995);
5. Domestic violence, total index (1999); and
6. Total index crime (1999).

The mean scores for Broward and Pinellas counties and the mean scores for Pasco and Manatee counties on each of the six variables were compared against scores of candidate counties. The absolute percentage differences between candidates and the review county means were summed for each county. The county with the smallest total percentage difference across the six variables from the mean of the review counties was selected for the comparison. Hillsborough County was selected as the best comparison county for Broward and Pinellas counties, and Marion County was selected as the comparison county for Manatee and Pasco counties. In Hillsborough and Marion counties, the department provides child protective investigations through its state employees.

Sampling Methodology and Size

The methodology for the quality performance component of the evaluation called for a review of case records. A statistically reliable, randomly selected sample of all initial child maltreatment cases locked between July 1, 2000 through 30 days before the review was drawn for the four sheriffs' offices and the two comparison counties. Extending the sampling period to as close to the review date as possible was necessary to ensure that each sheriffs' office that assumed responsibility for child protective investigations during fiscal year 1999-00 had a sufficient number of cases referred,

investigated, and locked from which to draw a reliable sample. The definition of a locked report is an investigation that has been completed, reviewed, signed by the investigator and supervisor, and closed in the Florida Abuse Hotline Information System.

The sample sizes selected were designed to yield results with an error of no more than plus or minus ten percent with a confidence level of 90 percent. (The confidence level and error rate selected means that if 100 samples of the selected sample size were drawn from the total population of cases in an agency, in 90 of these samples the sample mean will be within ten percent of the population mean.) The intended use of the data dictates the error rate that can be tolerated. Although confidence levels of 95 and 99 percent are often used in academic research, there is nothing absolute about these levels. In selecting a 90 percent confidence level with a ten percent error rate, statistical confidence was balanced with workload realities. It was felt that the larger sample sizes demanded by a 95 percent confidence level with a five or ten percent error rate would strain the time and resources of peer review team members and their respective agencies. The samples were randomly drawn from the Florida Abuse Hotline Information System database 30 days before each review.

County	Estimated Initial Reports Locked July 1 to 30 Days Before Review Date	Number of Cases Reviewed	Estimated Percent Error at 90% Confidence Level
Manatee S.O.	350	63	10
Pasco S.O.	450	67	10
Marion DCF	700	65	10
Broward S.O.	2290	75	10
Pinellas S.O.	1900	70	10
Hillsborough DCF	1400	65	10

Quality Performance

Peer Review Teams

Paragraph 39.3065(3)(d), F.S., requires that the program performance evaluation be conducted by a team of peer reviewers composed of representatives from the sheriffs' offices and the department. The approach to the peer review proposed by the department and accepted by the sheriffs' representatives is one in use for several years by the Quality Assurance Unit for child protective services. However, the case review instruments used by the Quality Assurance Unit were modified for this evaluation. The peer review process used by the Quality Assurance Unit is based upon similar procedures used by national accreditation organizations.

The definition of peer, as used in this performance evaluation, means sheriffs and department personnel who perform protective investigations and their respective quality

assurance personnel, where applicable. The criteria established for peer reviewers included experience in child protective investigations; certification or, minimally, completion of child protective investigative training; supervisory level staff or above; or a staff member of the department's Quality Assurance Unit. Peer review teams ranged in size from eight members for smaller counties to nine or ten members for larger counties.

The quality performance peer review teams were organized and coordinated by the Office of Operations in the department's central office. Each team had two co-leads: one from the department and one from a sheriff's office, who also served as reviewers. Representatives from the department's Offices of Programs and Mission Support and Performance accompanied the review team to conduct the community partners interviews with representatives of the sheriffs' offices but did not serve as members of the peer review team. A peer review team was not used to collect and analysis cost data for the cost efficiency component of the evaluation.

Case Review Instruments

Peer reviewers assessed case files individually, onsite, using case review instruments modified for this evaluation by representatives of the department's Quality Assurance Unit and the Broward County Sheriff's Office. The case review instruments address the statutory requirements for the investigator's initial response to the report of alleged child maltreatment and the emergency removal and placement of children, if this occurred. The instruments contain a number of statements or questions that address indicators used to determine how well essential steps in the investigation have been achieved. Indicators cover such areas as thoroughness of background checks, timeliness of investigations, and thoroughness of child safety assessments. In all, 19 indicators compose the initial response review form, and five indicators compose the emergency removal and placement review form.

Assessing Performance

To assess performance, the reviewers used a ten-point numeric scale to rate each indicator. The scale may be divided into performance categories where nine represents the highest performance possible and zero the lowest. The performance categories are as follow:

- Superior Performance (8,9)
- Satisfactory Performance (5,6,7)
- Partial Performance (2,3,4)
- Non-Performance (0,1)

The entire team of case file reviewers, through a consensus process, determined the final performance rating on each indicator. Overall performance was then based upon the sum of the indicator scores divided by the maximum possible score to produce a

percentage. Using the performance categories, the derived percentages translate into the following performance levels:

- Superior Performance 89% -- 100%
- Satisfactory Performance 55% -- 88%
- Partial Performance 22% -- 54%
- Non-Performance 0% -- 21%

Stakeholder Interviews and Instrument

Interviews with community stakeholders and partners were conducted during the onsite reviews to provide qualitative information on the perceived performance of the sheriffs' offices and the comparison counties. The purpose of the interviews was to supplement information found in the case file reviews and to involve a broader community in the evaluation, rather than provide statistically reliable survey results. Community stakeholders and partners who are involved in some aspect of protective investigations or protective services for children were interviewed. In each review county, a core set of interviews were conducted with the following community partners:

- Guardian Ad Litem
- Dependency Court Judge
- Child Protection Team
- Child Welfare Legal Services (department, State Attorney, or Attorney General)
- Emergency Shelter providers or parents
- Law Enforcement agencies
- Early Services Intervention workers (department and/or provider)
- Others unique to the review county

The number of interviews conducted ranged from eight to 14 depending on the array of stakeholders and the availability of interviewees.

A representative from the central office of the department and from a sheriff's office conducted the interviews jointly using the instrument. The interviewers were not members of the peer review team. The instrument contains 14 questions designed to assess general performance and working relationships. The instrument is similar to the one used by the department for its annual community partners survey but modified for the evaluation. Each question was answered using a five-point rating scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". Interviewees were also afforded the opportunity to provide comments or observations to elaborate on their answers. Only the responses "agree" or "strongly agree" to each question were considered when calculating the percentage of interviewees responding positively to the survey questions.

OUTCOME MEASURES ATTAINMENT

Measures and Standards

Paragraph 39.3065(3)(b), F.S. requires that the sheriffs operate, at a minimum, in accordance with the performance standards and outcome measures established by the Legislature for protective investigations conducted by the department. Three performance measures from the General Appropriations Act for the fiscal years 1999-00 and 2000-01 apply to child protective investigations and are referenced in the Grant Agreements with the sheriffs. The performance measures and standards used to determine outcome attainment for the sheriffs and the comparison counties are the following:

4. One hundred percent (100%) of investigations to be completed within 60 days.
5. One hundred percent (100%) of alleged victims to be seen within 24 hours.
6. One hundred percent (100%) of cases are to be reviewed by supervisors in accordance with department timeframes for the early warning system.

It should be noted that outcomes numbers two and three are more stringent than the practice requirements specified in statute or agency operating procedures.

Sources of Data and Analysis Methods

The data for the first two measures come from routine management reports produced by the data unit at the department's Family Safety Program Office from the database of the Florida Abuse Hotline Information System. These data reports specifically list each sheriff's office as a protective investigation program. A standard reporting period of July 1, 2000 through September 30, 2000 was selected for several reasons:

- The reporting period coincides with the sampling period for the quality performance review,
- The reporting period adjusts for the variance in implementation dates for the sheriffs, and
- The reporting period ensures a sufficiently large number of cases upon which to calculate outcome performance.

The third measure, supervisory review, is not available from current automated information systems on a statewide basis and, therefore, cannot be reported.

The algorithms for calculating the outcome measures are those established by the department in consultation with the Governor's Office of Policy and Budget as well as the substantive and appropriation committees of the Legislature having jurisdiction for the department and are the following:

- For the first performance measure, investigations completed within 60 days, the numerator is the number of child protective investigations received during the period where the investigation completed date is within 60 days of the received date. The

denominator is the total number of child protective investigations received during the same period as the numerator.

- The second performance measure, alleged victims seen within 24 hours, the numerator is the number of alleged victims in closed abuse/neglect reports where the alleged victim was seen within 24 hours of receipt of the report. The denominator is the total number of alleged victims in closed abuse/neglect reports.

Outcomes are calculated using all abuse and neglect reports in the Florida Abuse Hotline Information System from July through September 2000 for the review and comparison counties.

COST EFFICIENCY

Sources of Data

Multiple sources for financial data were accessed for the cost efficiency analysis component of the evaluation. Financial data were collected for fiscal years 1999-00, 2000-01, and 2001-02. The data sources include the following:

- Quarterly Expenditure Reports prepared by each sheriff's office. Each report contains the annual (grant) budget, current reporting quarter expenditures, year-to-date expenditures, and the annual (grant) budget less year-to-date expenditures.
- Budget requests by each sheriff before the start of each grant period. Each report contains the annual recurring request, one time costs, total request (recurring plus one time costs), reduction for any lapsed budget item, adjusted recurring request, and the total request. The total request is the sum of the adjusted recurring request plus the one time costs. The total of the recurring (unadjusted) and one time costs reflects the annualized budget request.
- Expenditure data for the comparison counties provided by district staff from the accounting system.
- Staffing, personnel, and organization structure data provided by each sheriff and district staff.
- Actual and projected number of investigations from the Florida Abuse Hotline Information System.
- The General Appropriations Act for fiscal years 1999-00 and 2000-01.
- The Department of Children and Families' Legislative Budget Request for fiscal year 2001-02.
- The Governor's Recommended Budget for fiscal year 2001-02.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Sources of information for the program descriptions of the review and comparison counties are the following:

- General descriptive information provided by the counties at the time of review;

- Specific information on personnel provided for the cost efficiency component of the evaluation; and
- Data from department management reports derived from the Florida Abuse Hotline Information System.

The information on personnel and caseload in this section of the report will differ somewhat from the information presented in the cost efficiency section. The information presented below is as of the time of the onsite review, while the information in the cost efficiency section covers multiple fiscal years.

Descriptive Summary Table at the Time of the Review				
Site	# of Investigator With Caseloads	% Vacant	Avg. Caseload	Avg. # of Cases per Investigator per Month
Manatee S.O.	16	27%	63	18
Pasco S.O.	24	14%	89	15
Marion DCF	18	28%	97	18
Broward S.O.	70	5%	94	18
Pinellas S.O.	46	8%	90	18
Hillsborough DCF	65	7%	28	14

¹ Child Welfare League standard is 12.

Manatee County

The quality performance peer review was conducted from October 9 through October 12, 2000. The Manatee County Sheriff’s Office assumed responsibility for child protective investigations in February 1997, beginning with one unit consisting of a supervisor, six investigators, and a secretary. A second unit consisting of a supervisor, seven investigators, one direct service aide, and a secretary was in place by May 1997. The sheriff’s office received no start-up costs during the 1997 implementation and, therefore, incurred costs that were not reimbursable. The grant agreement amount for fiscal years 1999-01 and 2000-01 contained additional resources to fund additional staff and purchase equipment. The funding for equipment allowed Manatee to have a comparable level of funding as was provided for the Pasco, Pinellas, and Broward sheriffs’ offices.

The investigation units operate from one location in the county. Investigators cover 40 square miles containing five municipalities, each with its own police department. In September 2000, investigators and the private, community-based care service provider, the Partnership for Safe Families, became collocated. The Office of the Attorney General, which is not collocated, provides child welfare legal services for the investigators.

Child protective investigations now comprise three units within the Criminal Investigation Division. The chain of command includes a major and a captain, who are in charge of the division, but not funded under the grant with the department. The cost of the

captain and major are not included in the cost efficiency analysis of the evaluation. A lieutenant is in command of the three child protective investigation units, each of which is headed by a civilian supervisor. There are 39 funded positions: 29 professional positions (22 investigators, four supervisors, one lieutenant, one program specialist), seven support positions (five secretaries and two clerks), and three direct service aides.

At the time of the review, there was a 27 percent vacancy rate for investigators, giving investigators an average caseload of 63, based upon 1,002 open cases. During the three months before the review, the Manatee County Sheriffs Office received an average of 289 initial and addition reports for investigation each month, giving each investigator 18 new cases each month, considerably above the standard of 12 recommended by the Child Welfare League of America. At the time of the review, 605 cases had been open for more than 60 days (backlog). For fiscal year 1999 – 2000, Manatee County accounted for nearly two percent of the child abuse and neglect reports in the state. The county shows a 36 percent increase in the number of reports received in the first six months of fiscal year 2000-01 from the comparable period in fiscal year 1999-00.

Of the original 16 investigator positions transferred from the department, only seven department investigators were able to complete the hiring process successfully. The majority of those not hired were not able to pass the polygraph test required by the sheriff's office. Investigators and supervisors undergo more rigorous screening procedures than do state workers, including a physical, drug screening, polygraph test, personality inventory, and review by an eligibility board. The sheriff's office and the Professional Development Centre provide training for investigators on topics such as evidence collection, child abuse investigation, interviewing, sexual abuse, and Munchausen by Proxy Syndrome.

Employees are provided with civilian or soft uniforms and a variety of equipment to aid in the performance of their jobs:

- Midsize sedans (investigators) and vans (direct service aides);
- Mobile phones with radio, paging and cellular capability provided to investigators, supervisors, and aides;
- Electronic pagers for investigators and supervisors;
- Voice mail service for office telephones;
- Digital cameras for investigators;
- Infant and toddler car seats for investigators and aides;
- Desktop computers with Intranet and Internet capability;
- One network printer, eight laser jet printers, seven dot matrix printers; and
- Wireless laptop computers with remote database capabilities are scheduled to be available by 2001.

The cost of the motor vehicles, laptops/desktop computers, printers, and servers was allocated across two or more fiscal years for the cost efficiency analysis. The purpose of the allocation was to improve the accuracy of the comparative analysis in the cost efficiency analysis component of this evaluation.

Investigators are accompanied by officers from local law enforcement agencies in their respective jurisdictions for criminal child abuse cases or for personal safety reasons. Case staffings occur with Early Service Intervention providers within ten days of identifying the family's service needs or removing the child. Early Service Intervention workers are responsible for shelter visits, case planning, and transportation after the case staffing. The investigator remains involved in the case through adjudication and is responsible for completing the Pre-Disposition Summary.

Pasco County

The quality performance peer review of the Pasco County Sheriff's Office was conducted from November 27 through November 30, 2000. The sheriff's office began providing child protective investigation services in April 2000. All of the protective investigative functions are performed from two operations centers. Current funding provides a staffing configuration consisting of one major, one captain, one lieutenant, three supervising sergeants, 28 child protective investigators, five civilian supervisors, one staff assistant, two family support workers, four clerical support and two analyst clerks. At the time of the review, there was a 14 percent vacancy rate among investigators. Investigators and supervisors wear civilian attire.

At the time of the review, there were 2,135 open cases in Pasco County giving each investigator an average caseload of 89, based upon 24 filled positions carrying caseloads. The sheriff's office received an average of 372 initial and additional reports each month in the previous three months, giving investigators an average of 15 new cases each month, above the Child Welfare League of America standard of 12. At the time of the review, there were 1,551 cases that had been open for more than 60 days. For fiscal year 1999-00, Pasco County accounted for slightly more than two percent of abuse and neglect reports in the state. The county experienced a 16 percent increase in the number of reports from the first six months of fiscal year of 1999-00 to the same period in fiscal year 2000-01.

Employee candidates undergo a centralized application and hiring process which includes the following assessments: Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, Test of Adult Basic Education, polygraph, fingerprint, credit and drug screen. Once selected, employees receive pre-service training provided by the Professional Development Centre and supplemental in-service training as provided by the sheriff's training division.

Investigators are accompanied by officers from local law enforcement agencies in their respective jurisdictions for criminal child abuse cases or for personal safety reasons, if needed. The protective services and foster care service providers are located within the same office complex, which promotes expedited delivery of services to children and their families and increased communication between the two entities. Child welfare services in Pasco County are being transferred from the department to the Family Continuity Program, a private, community-based care provider. Child welfare legal

services are provided by the State Attorney's Office and are collocated in the Dade City office; however, they are not collocated in the New Port Richey office.

Each investigator employed by the sheriff is equipped with the following items in order to perform the tasks associated with the position:

- Midsize sedan;
- Cellular telephone;
- Electronic pager;
- Desktop computer (Internet & Intranet access); and
- Infant car seats.

The cost of the motor vehicles, laptops/desktop computers, printers, and servers was allocated across two or more fiscal years for the cost analysis. The purpose of the allocation was to improve the accuracy of the comparative analysis in the cost efficiency analysis component of this evaluation.

In addition, Family Support workers have been assigned midsize sedans for transporting children and their families, cellular telephones, and electronic pagers.

Equipment being considered for purchase includes laptop computers with remote database capability, cameras, and soft uniforms for each investigator.

Marion County

The quality performance peer review of Marion County was conducted from October 16 through October 19, 2000. The Department of Children and Families, District 13, provides child protective investigations in Marion County. The protective investigation functions are performed from one service location within the county. The funded staffing configuration consists of one program administrator, one program specialist, four supervisors, 26 investigators, one crime intelligence analyst, two family support workers, two direct service aides, and four support staff.

At the time of review, there were 1,756 open cases in the county, giving each investigator a caseload of 97, based upon 18 filled investigator positions carrying caseloads. Twenty-eight percent of investigator positions were vacant at the time of the review and 25 percent of supervisory positions. The average number of initial and additional reports received each month for the previous three months was 322, giving investigators 18 new cases each month, considerably above the Child Welfare League of America standard of 12. There were 1,343 cases that had been open more than 60 days at the time of the review. In fiscal year 1999-00, Marion County accounted for slightly more than two percent of the abuse and neglect cases in the state. The county experienced a 17 percent increase in the number of abuse and neglect reports received in the six months of fiscal year 2000-01 from the same period in fiscal year 1999-00.

When a child is removed from their home, a case staffing is held within seven days of the child's removal. In cases that do not require removal, investigators may

immediately begin in-home services such as Family Builders. Investigators are expected to staff the case within ten days of completing the risk assessment. Formal case staffings are held weekly and are attended by department staff and community service providers as well as the Guardian Ad Litem and the Department of Juvenile Justice, as appropriate. Once a case is staffed for services, the Early Service Intervention counselor assigned to the case is responsible for the following:

1. Conducting weekly shelter visits with the child;
2. Developing the case plan with the family;
3. Identifying needed services for the child and family in conjunction with the investigator; and
4. Coordinating service delivery for the child and family.

The investigator maintains responsibility for completing collateral contacts and attending all court hearings through disposition and prepares the Pre-Disposition Summary. Child welfare legal services are provided by the department and are collocated with the investigation units.

A sheriff's deputy is outposted to the investigation units. The deputy reviews all incoming abuse reports and coordinates the dual investigator and law enforcement response on all case that the deputy determines warrant a criminal investigation. This coordination involves all law enforcement agencies in the county during the normal business day. During non-business hours, the investigator contacts the appropriate law enforcement agency. The deputy also assists with criminal background checks for adults who are subjects of the abuse investigation. Investigators are accompanied by officers from local law enforcement agencies for criminal child abuse cases or for personal safety reasons.

Employee candidates undergo a centralized application and hiring process. Investigators and supervisors undergo the same screening as career service employees who work directly with clients, including background checks, criminal history screening, and drug screening. Once selected, employees receive pre-service training provided by the Professional Development Centre.

Investigators use their personal vehicles and pay for their own car insurance. Mileage is reimbursed at the state rate of 29 cents per mile. No compensation is provided to investigators for any additional wear and tear caused by the transportation of alleged victims. Four investigators are piloting the use of remote access wireless laptop computers. Each investigator employed by the district is equipped with the following items to perform the tasks associated with their position:

- Cellular telephone;
- Electronic pager;
- Desktop computer (Internet & Intranet access);
- Network printers; and
- 35 mm camera.

Broward County

The quality performance peer review of the Broward County Sheriff's Office was conducted from October 30 through November 2, 2000. The sheriff's office began incrementally assuming responsibility for child protective investigations in the county during July 1999. On January 10, 2000, the sheriff's office assumed responsibility for all investigations of abuse and neglect reports. Backlog cases, i.e., those cases open more than 60 days, aside from those belonging to former department investigators hired by the sheriff's office, remained in the department. Responsibility for service intervention for children and families as well as the non-relative placement of children removed from their homes remained with the department. Of the original 58 investigator positions transferred to the sheriff's office, 14 department investigators were hired. These investigators brought nearly 600 backlogged cases with them and began taking new cases immediately, preventing the use of these personnel as trainers and mentors for new investigators. Investigations are conducted from a single service site in the county. The District 10 Early Services Intervention and Placement Units recently relocated adjacent to the sheriff's facility. The Office of the Attorney General, which is not collocated, provides child welfare legal services for the investigation units.

For fiscal year 2000-01, the Broward Sheriff's Office is funded for 154 positions composed of 100 investigators; 15 supervisors; 35 support staff, including crime intelligence analysts, investigative aides, and community service aides; and four command level managers. Authorized staffing includes 15 investigative squads, nine of which are supervised by sergeants with the remaining six supervised by civilians. At the time of the review, there was a five percent vacancy rate for investigators, and 22 investigators were in training, giving an effective investigator staffing of 70.

As of November 1, 2000, there were 6,600 open investigation cases being handled by the sheriff's office, with an average of 1,247 initial and additional reports each month for the previous three months. These numbers translate to an average caseload of 94 per investigator, based upon 70 filled positions. Additionally, investigators receive an average of 18 new cases a month, considerably above the Child Welfare League of America recommended standard of 12. At the time of the review, there were 4,794 cases in backlog. In fiscal year 1999-00, Broward County accounted for nearly nine percent of all abuse and neglect reports in the state; exceeded only slightly by Dade County (8.56% compared with 8.67%). The county experienced an 18 percent growth in abuse and neglect reports from the first six months in fiscal year 1999-00 to the same period in fiscal year 2000-01.

Employment screening for investigators and supervisors include background investigations, criminal history checks, drug screening, psychological evaluations, and polygraph examinations. Investigators and supervisors complete the child protective investigation training provided by the Professional Development Centre as well as training required by the sheriff's office in driver safety, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, diversity, court testimony, and computer skills.

The sheriff's office has a memorandum of understanding with all other law enforcement agencies in the county to conduct joint initial responses at the commencement of each investigation for all abuse reports received in the county.

When children are removed from their homes, investigators try to place the child with a relative after a satisfactory home study is conducted. Investigators deliver all children removed from their homes to the District 10 Child and Family Intake Assessment Center. The department's Early Service Intervention and Placement Units are located at the assessment center. Once the case is staffed, the service worker participates in the arraignment, mediation, case planning, and disposition hearing in collaboration with the investigators. Investigators are responsible for completing the Pre-Disposition Summary and remain involved in the case through adjudication. Cases are staffed with Early Service Intervention workers within two weeks of identifying service needs or removing children. Once a case is staffed, service workers are responsible for shelter visits, case planning, and transportation.

In cases where families require services, but removal of the child is not necessary, investigators may do the following:

1. Refer cases to department-funded service providers for voluntary services;
2. Staff the case for supervision by a department protective services worker; or
3. Recommend that a petition for adjudication of dependency be filed to ensure court ordered supervision of high-risk cases.

The Broward Sheriff's Office brought a number of enhancements to the investigation function to increase overall effectiveness and efficiency:

- Analytical unit (assigns abuse reports to units, completes a prior report history, criminal history checks, provider information, Department of Corrections background information, Florida Department of Law Enforcement sexual offender history, and necessary information, forms and brochures for the investigation);
- Vehicles;
- Infant and toddler car seats;
- Cellular telephones and pagers;
- Remote wireless laptop computers;
- Tape recorders; and
- Cameras.

The cost of the motor vehicles, laptops/desktop computers, printers, and servers was allocated across two or more fiscal years for the cost analysis. The purpose of the allocation was to improve the accuracy of the comparative analysis in the cost efficiency analysis component of this evaluation.

Pinellas County

The quality performance peer review of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office was conducted from November 13 through November 16, 2000. The sheriff's office assumed responsibility for all child protective investigations on October 31, 1999. Forty-five investigator positions were transferred, and an additional eight positions were approved for fiscal year 1999-00. Of the 45 investigator FTEs transferred to the sheriff's office, 27 department investigators completed the sheriff's hiring process. There are now 72 funded investigator positions and 19 supervisory positions in the sheriff's office. Additional personnel consist of 21 support staff, including data specialists and a technical support specialist; eight family support workers; one child protection coordinator; one program specialist; a training coordinator; and one diligent search analyst. A captain heads the investigation division with a lieutenant as second in command. The investigators operate out of four service centers located throughout the county. A sergeant heads each center, with civilian supervisors in charge of the 13 investigation units. There is a separate case assignment unit headed by a sergeant and under the command of the lieutenant.

Before the sheriff's office assumed the investigation function, the Salvation Army, through a contract with the department, handled services for neglect cases. The sheriff's office did not receive the \$500,000 in funds associated with the contract, although neglect cases account for nearly 15 percent of the caseload for the county. The contract with the Salvation Army specifically stated that no investigations were to be performed. The Salvation Army stopped taking new referrals in September 1999. From that time until the contract expired on June 30, 2000, the Salvation Army worked with the department on backlog investigations in Pinellas County.

At the time of the review, there was an eight percent vacancy rate for investigators; all supervisory positions were filled. As of November 1, 2000, there were 4,153 open reports in Pinellas County giving each investigator an average caseload of 90, based upon 46 positions carrying caseloads. In the three months preceding the review, the sheriff's office received an average of 819 initial and additional reports each month, giving investigators an average of 18 new cases each month, considerably above the Child Welfare Standard of 12. There were 2,921 cases open more than 60 days as of November 1, 2000. The sheriff's office assumed the backlog of 461 cases for the 27 investigators hired from the department. In fiscal year 1999-00, Pinellas County accounted for six percent of the abuse and neglect reports in the state. The county experienced a seven percent increase in the number of abuse and neglect reports received in the first six months of fiscal year 2000-01 from the same period in fiscal year 1999-00.

The sheriff's office uses more stringent hiring practices than the state for investigators and supervisors, including polygraph examinations, psychological screening, and credit histories. In addition to the required training provided by the Professional Development Centre for all investigators and supervisors, personnel receive additional in-service training provided by the sheriff's training division. Investigators wear civilian attire.

The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office introduced new equipment and a number of enhancements to the investigative function:

- Compact vehicles;
- Notebook computers;
- Cellular telephones;
- Formalized mentoring program for new trainees; and
- Computerized child protection reporting system, including chronological reports, referral forms, and digital photographs.

The cost of the motor vehicles, computers, printers, and servers was allocated across two or more fiscal years for the cost analysis. The purpose of the allocation was to improve the accuracy of the comparative analysis in the cost efficiency analysis component of this evaluation.

The provision of child welfare services to children and families in Pinellas County is incrementally transferring from the department to a private, community-based care provider, Family Continuity. Currently, investigation units are collocated with service units; however, the north county service units are relocating. The Office of the State Attorney, which is not collocated, provides child welfare legal services with the child protection investigators. Reports come from the Hotline to the child protection investigation division's Case Assignment Unit for distribution to one of the four service centers based upon location and caseloads. The protective investigator has primary responsibility for all aspects of the case until disposition. When cases are staffed for services, investigators and service providers determine together who will complete the case plan, attend judicial reviews, visit children in shelter, and perform other service delivery functions. Investigators complete the Pre-Disposition Summary and handle all court hearings.

The Child Protection Investigation Division has written working agreements with the 13 law enforcement agencies in the county. Division staff periodically meets with other members of the Pinellas Police Standards Council; a coordinating organization represented by all county law enforcement agencies.

Hillsborough County

The quality performance peer review was conducted from September 18 through September 21, 2000. The Department of Children and Families, District 6, performs protective investigations from 18 units in three service locations in Hillsborough County. Within each service center, a Program Administrator supervises six protective investigation units. In addition to the 18 unit supervisors, the county is funded for 102 investigators, 12 direct service aides, two crime intelligence analysts, and 14 support staff. At the time of the review, there was a seven percent vacancy rate for investigators and a two percent vacancy rate for supervisors.

As of September 1, 2000, the county had approximately 1,829 open cases, with an average of 897 initial and additional reports each month for the preceding three months. Average caseload size was 28 based upon 65 filled positions carrying caseloads. Based upon the number of new cases each month, investigators received an average of 14 cases each month, above the Child Welfare League of America standard of 12. At the time of review, Hillsborough had 572 cases open more than 60 days. In fiscal year 1999-00, Hillsborough County accounted for nearly seven percent of the abuse and neglect reports in the state. The county experienced a five percent increase in the number of abuse and neglect reports received from the first six months in fiscal year 1999-00 to the same period in fiscal year 2000-01.

Investigators and supervisors undergo more extensive screening than regular career service employees including background checks, criminal history screening, and drug screening. The Professional Development Centre provides pre-service training. After preservice training, new investigators have 60 days of on-the-job training shadowing experienced investigators before joining a unit and receiving cases.

Investigators use their personal vehicles and pay their own car insurance. Mileage is reimbursed at the state rate of 29 cents per mile. No compensation is provided to investigators for any additional wear and tear caused by transporting alleged victims. The following equipment is provided to investigators:

- Mobile telephones with radio, paging, and cellular capability;
- Voice mail on office telephones in two of the three service locations;
- Remote access wireless laptop computers as a pilot for six investigators;
- Desktop computers with shared network printers; and
- Cameras.

The department has working agreements with four local law enforcement agencies, McDill Airforce Base, and the Seminole Indian Reservation. The Office of the Attorney General, which is not collocated with the investigators, provides child welfare legal services.

Investigators are responsible for completing the Pre-Disposition Summary and remain involved in the case through adjudication. Cases are staffed with Early Service Intervention workers within two weeks of identifying service needs or removing children. Once a case is staffed, Early Service Intervention workers are responsible for shelter visits, case planning, and transportation.

Requests are made of local law enforcement agencies to accompany investigators in cases of criminal abuse or for personal safety reasons. These latter requests are usually honored; however, accompaniment to possible criminal abuse cases varies by local law enforcement agency.

FINDINGS

Quality Performance

How does the quality of performance in child protective investigation compare between the sheriffs and the department on essential investigation requirements in Chapter 39, F.S.?

Teams of peer reviewers from the department and the sheriffs' offices conducted the quality performance reviews from September 18 through November 30, 2000. A summary of the performance findings is presented in the table below. The percentages displayed in the table are based upon relatively small samples and, therefore, should be interpreted as approximate. The true percentages, if all cases rather than samples had been used, can be assumed with confidence to fall somewhere within plus or minus ten percent at the 90 percent confidence level. Based upon the confidence level and estimated error rate established by the sampling methodology, there is no statistically significant difference between the department's comparison counties and the sheriffs' offices in the quality of performing child protective investigations. The sample size for Emergency Removal and Placement was too small to calculate significance.

Quality Performance Review Summary Table			
County	Initial Response	Emergency Removal and Placement	Total Score
Manatee S.O.	59.52% (75/126)	77.77% (28/36)	63.58% (103/162)
Pasco S.O.	54.76% (69/126)	63.88% (23/36)	56.79% (92/162)
Marion DCF	55.55% (70/126)	63.88% (23/36)	57.40% (93/162)
Broward S.O.	42.85% (54/126)	55.55% (20/36)	45.67% (74/162)
Pinellas S.O.	54.76% (69/126)	58.33% (21/36)	55.55% (90/162)
Hillsborough DCF	52.38% (66/126)	66.66% (24/36)	55.55% (90/162)

No significant differences found at $p < .10$

Manatee County

The sheriff's office received a satisfactory performance rating with 103 of 162 points or a 64 percent achievement of performance indicators. For initial response to the maltreatment reports, the sheriff's office received 75 of 126 points for a satisfactory rating or 59 percent of performance indicators achieved. For emergency removal and placement, 28 of 36 points were received for a satisfactory performance rating or 78 percent of performance indicators achieved.

Summarized observations of the review team pertaining to performance are the following:

Areas of Best Performance:

Child Safety

- The Initial Child Safety Assessments contained sufficient information and were updated at case closure or as new information was received.
- Other children in the household were seen by the investigator and in a timely manner.
- Emergency removal and placement cases were well documented, alternatives to shelter placement were appropriate, and services were in place where needed.

Supervisory Reviews

- Supervisory reviews were evident in almost all cases with appropriate guidance and direction given to investigators. There was some evidence of supervisors locking cases without the guidance and direction being completed by the investigators.

Areas Needing Improvement:

Child Safety

- Thorough assessments of the family situation and risks to the child were not adequately addressed in all cases. Information in the case record was sometimes insufficient to assess risk adequately.
- Observations of children tended to be somewhat sketchy and did not address parent/child interaction or child development.

Services Needed and Referred

- Communication and collaboration with service providers were lacking, especially in cases where subsequent abuse or neglect reports were received after services had been initiated.

Pasco County

The sheriff's office received an overall satisfactory performance rating with a score of 92 of 126 or a 57 percent achievement of performance indicators. For initial response to maltreatment reports, a satisfactory performance rating was received with 69 of 126 points or 55 percent of performance indicators achieved. For emergency removal and placement, a satisfactory performance rating was received with 23 of 36 point or a 64 percent achievement of performance indicators. It should be noted that the Sheriff's Office did not assume responsibility for investigations until April of 2000 and the results reflect only a few months handling investigations.

Summarized observations made by the review team on performance are as follows:

Areas of Best Performance:

Supervisory Review

- In general, supervisory reviews were occurring.

Areas Needing Improvement:

Child Safety

- There were some problems with the adequacy of background checks. Some Client Information System providers were not reviewed, and some prior Florida Abuse Hotline Information System reports were not in the case file.
- Although files contained copies of law enforcement incident reports on all calls made regarding the subjects of the abuse report, it did not appear that the investigators were taking this information into consideration when making child safety decisions.
- In general, observations of alleged child victims were weak. There were no documented observations of interactions between the child(ren) and the parent(s), especially in cases where this information was pertinent.
- In 20 of the 58 cases, it was felt that the case should have been staffed with the State Attorney's Office for additional guidance and direction.
- The assessment of the family situation and risk to the child was not thoroughly completed before case closure.
- In a few cases, the placement home was not assessed until after the child had been placed.

Supervisory Review

- The guidance and direction given to investigators appeared to be weak. Supervisors do not have child welfare experience and have come directly from law enforcement.

Marion County

The department-operated protective investigations received a satisfactory performance rating receiving 93 of 162 points or 57 percent of performance indicators achieved. For the initial response to maltreatment reports, the county received 70 of 126 points, a satisfactory rating, with 55 percent of performance indicators achieved. For emergency removal and placement, 23 of 36 points were received, also a satisfactory rating, with 64 percent of performance indicators achieved.

Summarized observations by the review team are as follows:

Areas of Best Performance:

Child Safety

- The majority of the initial contacts with the victims were within 24 hours, although a few of the other children in the home were not seen and interviewed.
- The majority of applicable reports were appropriately seen by the Child Protection Team in a timely manner.

- The majority of applicable reports were referred for child welfare legal services staffing. Most of the investigations not receiving needed legal staffing involved domestic violence issues.

Supervisory Reviews

- Supervisory reviews were documented in the files.

Areas Needing Improvement:

Child Safety

- The long-term risks to children was not documented in many of the files that included prior abuse reports, severe criminal histories, or inadequate support systems.
- Generally, not all provider checks were completed on each subject in the report, although this information can inform counselors about current and prior services provided. When new information was learned, the counselors were not requesting or repeating background checks based on the new information or the new individuals.
- Appropriate observations, especially interactions between the child and caretaker, were not consistently documented. Considering that domestic violence and drug usage were a common theme in the sample reports, interactions between family members would have been helpful in assessing long-term risks to children.
- Interviews with the victims and caretakers were sometimes limited although the case involved prior abuse reports. Many interviews with victims did not include questions to address all of the allegations in the reports. In other interviews, conflicting and contradictory information was not resolved with appropriate interview questions.
- Appropriate collateral contacts were needed in several investigations to assist with evidence gathering and to assess the family thoroughly. Some of the appropriate collateral contacts not completed included a probation officer, non-relatives who cared for the children, and prior service providers.

Services Needed and Referred

- Many investigations were closed with no services, although some services were needed.
- Communication and collaboration with agency staff and service providers were not documented in many of the files. Communication was needed with protective supervision and foster care counselors, mental health providers for the children and parents, and counselors with the Family Builders program.

Broward

The Broward County Sheriff's Office received an overall rating of partial performance with a score of 74 of a possible 162 points or a 46 percent achievement on quality performance indicators. For initial response to maltreatment reports, a partial performance rating was received with 54 of 126 points or 43 percent of performance indicators achieved. For emergency removal and placement, a satisfactory

performance rating was received with 20 of 36 points or 56 percent of performance indicators achieved.

Summarized observations by the quality performance reviewers were the following:

Areas of Best Performance:

Child Safety

- The Initial Child Safety Assessments were completed and signed by the investigator within the appropriate time frame.
- Investigators interviewed adult subjects in the case in a timely manner.
- Investigators documented their decision to remove the child from his or her home in the case file.
- Children removed from their homes were placed in homes where an adequate home study had been conducted.

Supervisory Reviews

- Supervisors reviewed the Initial Child Safety Assessment within the appropriate time frame.

Areas Needing Improvement

Child Safety

- Analysts did not check for Client Information System provider information and, therefore, could not be aware whether there was an active services case (protective supervision or foster care) for the family.
- Investigators did not make diligent efforts to locate and see victims, identify all children living in the home and see them, or to locate and see children who were unavailable at the time of the initial contact.
- Some investigators completed the Initial Child Safety Assessment before seeing the children and did not update the assessment in a timely manner after contact was made.
- Investigators were assessing immediate safety but not long-term risks, and investigations were not thorough enough to anticipate long-term risks.
- Investigators did not run background checks when it became known that other adults or juveniles, in addition to those subjects of the report, were found living in the home or checks for adults/juveniles who regularly frequented the home (paramours, child care sitters etc.).
- Investigators' observations of children were not adequate. There was little or no discussion of development, age appropriate behaviors, or interaction with parents and other adults. Statements were not individualized to each child and often used boilerplate language that was inadequate to provide an accurate picture, e.g., "happy and healthy", "free of marks and bruises."
- Investigators were missing obvious collateral contacts such as school staff, reporters, medical personnel, and extended family members, who would have important knowledge about the family.

- In half of the applicable cases, investigators were not referring children to the Child Protection Team or other medical resources. For cases that were referred, the investigator did not always follow the Child Protection Team recommendations.
- Serious situations were identified by the reviewers in which legal action would affect child safety yet there was no staffing with the Attorney General's Office.

Supervisory Reviews

- For the most part, supervisory reviews of the Initial Child Safety Assessment did not provide needed guidance and direction to the investigators. When direction was given, cases were frequently closed without investigator follow-up.
- Supervisors were not providing guidance on obtaining collateral information or helping investigators understand the importance of these contacts for the accurate assessment of child safety.
- Little or no evidence of supervisory guidance and direction was found even in instances where additional reports were not commenced, victims and other children were not seen, required legal staffings were not held, mandated Child Protection Team referrals were not completed, and obvious collateral contacts were not made.
- When supervisors were providing guidance and direction, they often locked cases without investigative follow-up. This was true even when victims had not been seen.

Services Needed and Referred

- Less than half of the applicable cases documented that all of the children's service needs were appropriately identified, planned, and/or arranged from the time the child was removed until the time the case was staffed for early intervention services.

Pinellas County

The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office received an overall rating of satisfactory performance with a score of 90 of 162 points or 56 percent of performance indicators achieved. For the initial response to the maltreatment report, the sheriff's office received a satisfactory rating with 69 of 126 points or 55 percent achievement of performance indicators. For emergency removal and placement, the sheriff's office received 21 of 36 points or 58 percent of performance indicators met for a satisfactory performance.

Summarized observations by the quality performance review team are as follows:

Areas of Best Performance:

Child Safety

- Two-thirds of the cases that needed to be staffed with legal services were staffed. However, since the State's Attorney Office is not collocated with the investigative units, ongoing and consistent communication has become a concern. Communication by telephone and by fax is not easily accomplished although regular meetings are now scheduled.

- In those cases where emergency removals occurred, the Protective Services counselor completed much of the court and casework. This type of workload sharing is excellent. Local staff did express concern that this division of labor has not been clearly defined with the new community-based care providers for the county.

Supervisory Reviews

- The strongest area of performance was the supervisory reviews. However, this was diminished by the lack of follow-up by the investigators when supervisors provided guidance about additional activities to be completed. In addition, the supervisors did not ensure these recommended activities were completed before closing/locking the case.

Areas Needing Improvement

Child Safety

- The approach to completing an investigation reflected a narrow view of only the maltreatments listed in the current report without a focus on assessment of family functioning and its impact on child safety. Issues of domestic violence, criminal behavior, and substance abuse were not given sufficient weight when determining the depth of an investigation and the appropriateness of a disposition decision. Investigators needed to complete a more in-depth investigation in certain instances, resulting in improved child safety and fewer subsequent reports.
- Investigators did not consistently make timely repeat home visits when victim(s) or subjects of the report were not home at the time of the first visit.
- Some investigations did not document interviews with key subjects or the interviews were not timely. For example, the perpetrator, alternative caretaker, or parents in the home were either not interviewed or not interviewed in a timely manner in one or more of the reports.
- Some files did not contain all of the background checks, especially the results from Florida Department of Law Enforcement. In some files, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement checks were obtained at closure or after closure of the investigation. When serious criminal histories were documented, the counselors did not determine that further investigative activities were needed and that a disposition decision should include an assurance that services were obtained for the children and family.
- Relevant collateral contacts were not contacted, such as the reporter, school officials, therapists currently seeing the family, child protective services in other states, Department of Juvenile Justice counselors, probation officers, and law enforcement agencies with active warrants.
- In many cases, the maltreatment findings were not clearly justified in the narrative section. Cases documented consistent statements from victims, children, parents, or perpetrators yet the findings were not coded as verified. In other cases, maltreatments were coded as some indication without documented evidence to support the findings.

Services Needed and Referred

- The files did contain documentation that parents were told of community services. However, cases were closed without confirming that services were in place. In these cases, voluntary protective supervision would have assisted the family in obtaining and ensuring that needed services were accessed.

Hillsborough County

The department-operated protective investigations received an overall satisfactory performance score of 90 of 162 points or 56 percent of performance indicators were achieved. For the initial response to the maltreatment report, the county received 66 of 126 points or 52 percent of indicators achieved for partial performance. For emergency removal and placement, a score of 24 of 36 points, satisfactory performance, was received or 67 percent of performance indicators achieved.

Summarized observations of the quality performance review team are following:

Areas of Best Performance:

Child Safety

- In emergency removal and placement cases, the county performed well. Alternatives to shelter placement were appropriate and services were in place where needed.

Supervisory Reviews

- Supervisory reviews were evident in almost all the cases reviewed and appropriate guidance and direction were given to investigators.

Areas Needing Improvement:

Child Safety

- A thorough assessment of the family situation and risks to the child was not adequately addressed before case closure.
- Other children in the household were either not seen or were not seen in a timely manner.
- Observations of children were minimal, did not indicate appropriate development or parent/child interaction, and tended to state that the child “appeared healthy with no signs of abuse or neglect.”
- Collateral contacts with neighbors, schools, and professionals who could give information to corroborate or refute the allegations were not made.

Supervisory Reviews

- Although supervisory reviews were evident in almost all of the sample cases, and appropriate guidance and direction given, supervisors locked cases despite their guidance and direction not being completed by the investigator. Had the investigator

followed through, the case would have been more thoroughly investigated, other children seen, and collateral contacts made.

Services Needed and Referred

- Communication and collaboration between investigators and assigned services counselors were lacking. These were particularly important in those cases where a subsequent abuse report was received after services were initiated. The investigator and service counselor need to communicate and coordinate any services needed as a result of the subsequent report. Communication between investigators and other service providers in the community also appears to be lacking.

Community Partner Survey

The table on the next page displays a summary of the percentage of respondents who “strongly agreed” or “agreed” with the survey questions. Not applicable responses were not included in the calculation of these percentages. The responses of those responsible for child welfare legal services in Marion County are included in the table to keep the categories of respondents consistent across the review counties, although these services are provided by department employees, not a community partner. Responses to Question 10, related to arranging community services, are categorized as “not applicable” for the Broward County Sheriff’s Office because their model of investigations provides limited referral to community services. This function remains with the department.

Among the smaller counties, the Manatee County Sheriff’s Office received the most positive responses from community partners. For the larger counties, the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office received the most positive responses from community partners. Across all counties, respondents seemed to feel that investigators did not keep community partners informed of changes affecting cases (Question 5). Conversely, all counties received favorable responses concerning a good working relationship with community partners (Question 14). With the exception of Marion County, the counties received favorable responses about staff accessibility (Question 11).

Most striking were the responses to Question 13 on the support given to investigators to accomplish their job. None of the respondents in Marion County agreed that investigators received the support they needed from the department, and only 44 percent of the respondents in Hillsborough County agreed with this statement. This may be compared with the favorable responses regarding the sheriff’s’ offices’ levels of support for their investigators.

Community Partners: % Strongly Agree or Agree & # interviewed Summary Table						
Questions	Counties					
	Manatee S.O. 10 interviewed	Pasco S.O. 10 interviewed	Marion DCF 8 interviewed	Broward S.O. 14 interviewed	Pinellas S.O. 13 interviewed	Hillsborough DCF 11 interviewed
In my opinion the agency.....						
1. Consults with us on all abuse/neglect investigation cases where appropriate.	80	75	50	64	100	75
2. follows our recommendations	70	78	37	74	82	67
3. Shares pertinent information with us.	90	70	37	67	92	64
4. Meets often with my organization or me.	80	67	75	64	77	82
5. Keeps us informed of changes affecting abuse/neglect cases.	67	60	37	42	56	50
6. Provides timely information to assist our work.	78	80	25	69	80	73
7. Does a good job identifying children at risk.	80	67	37	86	90	91
8. Does a good job in identifying children needing emergency removal and placement.	100	56	25	86	90	91
9. Does a good job in following-up its cases.	78	89	12	50	80	67
10. Does a good job in arranging or referring to community services.	71	71	62	N/A	100	50
11. Has staff who are accessible to my organization.	100	100	37	86	100	82
12. Has staff who are competent to perform investigations.	89	80	37	77	100	64
13. Provides its child protection specialists with the support to accomplish their tasks.	75	89	0	82	100	44
14. Has a good working relationship with my organization.	90	90	75	86	83	82

Outcome Measures Attainment

Have the sheriffs achieved the performance standards and outcomes specified in their grant agreements, as required by the General Appropriations Act and s. 39.3065(3)(b), F.S.? How does outcome attainment compare between the sheriffs and the department?

Outcome data were from a July – September 2000 Florida Abuse Hotline Information System database report. Supporting data presented in the tables below were derived from department management reports and are also based upon the Florida Abuse Hotline Information System database.

Manatee S.O.	Pasco S.O.	Marion DCF	Broward S.O.	Pinellas S.O.	Hillsborough DCF
Outcome 1: 100 % of Investigations Completed Within 60 Days					
62.33% ³	44.88% ⁴	36.69%	48.78% ¹	29.93% ²	57.28%

¹ p<.001

² p<.0001

³ p<.00001

⁴ p<.02

As can be seen from the outcome data, no county reached the mandated standard of 100 percent of investigations completed within 60 days. The chi-square statistical test was used to determine whether there were statistically significant differences between a sheriff’s office and its department comparison county. The chi-square statistic is a general test to evaluate the discrepancy between a set of observed frequencies and a set of expected frequencies. Among the smaller counties, the Manatee and Pasco County Sheriffs’ Offices outcome performance differed significantly from the comparison county, Marion County, which had significantly lower performance on the outcome percentage of investigations completed within 60 days. For the larger counties, Hillsborough, the comparison county, significantly outperformed the sheriffs’ offices on this outcome.

Manatee S.O.	Pasco S.O.	Marion DCF	Broward S.O.	Pinellas S.O.	Hillsborough DCF
Growth in Backlog Cases July – September 2000					
0%	40%	-9%	17%	8%	-37%
Number of Cases Backlogged at Time of Review					
605	1,551	1,343	4,794	2,921	572
Growth in Reports Received July – September 2000					
12%	9%	-8%	-2%	-8%	9%

Backlogged cases, or those cases open for more than 60 days, are the inverse of completed cases and may result from a variety of factors: the number of vacant positions, the number of experienced investigators, the number of judicial cases, an increased number of reports, and the rate of that increase. From fiscal year 1998-99 through fiscal year 1999-00, abuse and neglect reports increased 29 percent statewide, with a projected 14 percent increase by the end of fiscal year 2000-01. Three of the four sheriffs' offices have a higher number of backlog cases than the comparison counties. As can be seen in the table above, there does not appear to be a consistent relationship between the growth in abuse reports and the growth in backlog cases during the same period for the review and comparison counties.

Manatee S.O.	Pasco S.O.	Marion DCF	Broward S.O.	Pinellas S.O.	Hillsborough DCF
Outcome 2: 100% of Victims Seen Within 24 Hours					
56.99% ¹	60.68% ²	45.25%	53.60%	51.79%	54.56%

¹ p<.0001

² p<.001

As can be seen from the outcome data above, none of the counties reached the mandated standard of 100 percent of victims seen with 24 hours of receiving the report. Again, the chi-square statistical test was used to determine whether there were statistically significant differences between a sheriff's office and its department comparison county. Among the smaller counties, the Pasco and Manatee Sheriffs' Offices significantly outperformed the department comparison county, Marion, on achievement of the outcome. Among the larger counties, while the department comparison county, Hillsborough, had the highest performance, differences among these counties were not statistically significant.

Manatee S.O.	Pasco S.O.	Marion DCF	Broward S.O.	Pinellas S.O.	Hillsborough DCF
Percentage of Cases Commenced Within 24 Hours Based Upon Locked Reports					
98.37% ¹	91.74% ¹	82.80%	93.32%	95.00%	96.26%

¹ p<.0001

There may be many reasons why investigators are unable to see alleged victims within 24 hours. For example, the address in the report may be incorrect, the family not home, the investigator denied access to the child, or the child not in the home. A more accurate measure of compliance with statutory practice requirements is to examine the percentage of cases commenced within 24 hours (s. 39.201[5], F.S.), which is the requirement in statute. As can be seen in the above table, five of the six counties were able to commence most investigations within 24 hours of receiving the report. For the larger counties, there were no significant differences between the sheriffs' offices and the comparison county. However, for the smaller counties, the Manatee and Pasco Sheriffs' Offices differed significantly from the comparison county. The sheriffs' offices commenced a significantly greater proportion of investigations within 24 hours than did Marion County.

Cost Efficiency Analysis

Legislative Appropriations

Before the 1999 regular legislative season, staff of the department and the sheriffs' offices held several meetings to

- Determine programmatic protocols;
- Identify funding needs for the startup and transition period; and
- Prepare a request to fund service delivery and legislative proposals.

Consequently, legislation was proposed, and subsequently enacted, that authorized the Broward County Sheriff's Office to conduct child protective investigations. The sheriffs requested \$12.2 million in funding and the Legislature appropriated \$10.8 million for fiscal year 1999-00.

The sheriffs believed that for child protective investigative functions to be performed in an appropriate manner, it was critical for each investigator to be equipped with the items listed below. Of the four sheriffs, only Broward elected to lease its motor vehicles. The lease costs were included in Broward's budget documents as a recurring cost. The purchase cost for motor vehicles by Manatee, Pasco, and Pinellas were included in their budgets as a non-recurring cost.

The sheriffs budgeted \$3.2 million to purchase the following items:

- Motor vehicles;
- Telecommunications equipment (cellular telephones, radios, and beepers);
- Office furnishings;
- Laptop and desktop computers;
- Computer software and program support services;
- Data communications line installation;
- Child/infant car seats;
- Tape recorders; and
- Cameras.

These same equipment items were not funded in the department's budget for its protective investigation staff. The 2000 Legislature did provide funding for the department to test the use of cellular telephones and wireless laptops in selected areas during fiscal year 2000-01. Department staff use their own motor vehicles, pay their car insurance, and are reimbursed 29 cents per mile in accordance with state policy. No compensation is provided for any additional wear and tear on the employee's vehicle caused by the transportation of the department's clients.

During fiscal year 1999-00, the department continued performing investigations while the Pasco, Broward, and Pinellas Sheriffs' Offices prepared to assume the program. Advantages of the transition period included:

- Reduction of the likelihood of service disruption;
- New staff could complete classroom and field training;
- Sheriffs established policies and procedures;
- Sheriffs pursued interagency working agreements with other law enforcement entities within their respective counties; and
- Motor vehicles, telecommunications equipment, office furnishings, and computer equipment could be ordered and received.

The following provides a summary of the legislative appropriations for fiscal years 1999-00 and 2000-01 for child protective investigations. The Seminole County Sheriff's Office was authorized to begin conducting child protective investigation in fiscal year 2000-01.

The allocation of the \$10.8 million special appropriation for fiscal year 1999-00 is displayed below. The Manatee County Sheriff's Office began to conduct child protective investigations in 1997. Unlike Pasco, Broward, and Pinellas counties, Manatee County had already established most of its infrastructure needs. Manatee County was also receiving all funds previously spent by the department for that county because the transition period was already complete.

Manatee	\$ 889,666	Broward	\$3,364,200
Pasco	\$1,484,709	Pinellas	\$5,100,077
Marion	-0-	Hillsborough	-0-

Fiscal Year 2000-01 appropriations were provided for:

- \$3.2 million for Broward County for service delivery;
- \$2.6 million for Seminole County for start-up and service delivery;
- \$1.3 million annualization of the fiscal year 1999-00 year appropriation; and
- \$4.7 million of the new appropriation for the department's child investigation program. The \$4.7 million was allocated as shown below.

Manatee	\$359,050	Broward	\$1,555,220
Pasco	\$472,875	Pinellas	\$1,173,295
Marion	\$394,148	Hillsborough	\$ 795,327

Implementation

The actual dates for assuming full responsibility were:

Manatee	February 1997	Broward	July 1999
Pasco	April 2000	Pinellas	October 1999
Seminole	March 2001 (planned date)		

Manatee County

In fiscal year 1999-00, the Manatee County Sheriff's Office received its first funding increase since the sheriff began to conduct child protective investigations in Manatee County in 1997. This additional funding enabled Manatee to receive funding commensurate with Pasco, Broward and Pinellas.

County	Grant Amount	Grant Period	Extended To	Total Expenditures	Unexpended Balance
Manatee	\$1,930,425	7/1/99 to 6/30/00	Not Extended	\$1,920,278	\$10,147

Following the terms and conditions of the grant agreement, Manatee retained the unexpended funds. Those funds may only be used for child protective investigation purposes.

Pasco County

The Pasco County Sheriff's Office planned to take full responsibility for child protective investigations on January 1, 2000. Full assumption of responsibility was delayed to April 1, 2000. The department retained staff through April 1, 2000 to perform investigations for new cases and through June 30 to reduce the case backlog that accrued before April 1, 2000. The number of department staff declined during the year as staff was hired by the sheriff's office, found other employment within the department, retired, or left for employment elsewhere.

County	Grant Amount	Grant Period	Extended To	Total Expenditures	Unexpended Balance
Pasco	\$1,484,435	7/1/99 to 6/30/00	September 30, 2000	\$1,383,884	\$100,551

The unexpended balance was returned and the department deposited it into the state's General Revenue Fund as a prior year refund. There was an unexpended balance due to the delay of Pasco's assumption of child protective investigations. No adjustment for the unexpended balance was made in the calculation of the adjusted, annualized budget for purposes of this report. For comparative purposes, an annualized budget was used for all counties.

Broward County

The Broward County Sheriff's Office entered into a transition contract in May 1999 and executed a grant agreement on August 30, 1999. Broward assumed full caseload responsibility for child protective investigations on January 10, 2000. The department retained staff through June 30, 2000 to assist with the transition and reduce case backlog. The number of department staff declined during the year as staff was hired by the sheriff's office, found other employment within the department, retired, or left for employment elsewhere.

County	Grant Amount	Grant Period	Extended To	Total Expenditures	Unexpended Balance
Broward	\$5,272,864	7/1/99 to 6/30/00	August 30, 2000	\$5,272,864	- 0 -

Pinellas County

The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office planned to take full responsibility for child protection investigations on October 1, 1999 but was delayed to October 31, 1999. The delay was due, in part, to several of the department's staff declining employment with the sheriff's office after passing the sheriff's employment requirements. The department retained staff through June 30, 2000 to assist with the transition and reduce case backlog. The number of department staff declined during the year as staff was hired by the sheriff's office, found other employment within the department, retired, or left for employment elsewhere.

County	Grant Amount	Grant Period	Extended To	Total Expenditures	Unexpended Balance
Pinellas	\$5,590,992	7/1/99 to 6/30/00	July 30, 2000	\$5,590,992	-0-

The Pinellas Sheriff initiated an amendment to reduce the grant amount by \$31,300 for fiscal year 2000-01. The district will use the funds to assist the sheriff's office with

backlog closure. This is the only source of funds for the district available for this purpose.

Comparison Counties

The adjusted, annualized budget for Marion and Hillsborough counties for fiscal year 1999-00 was:

Marion	\$1,245,679
Hillsborough	\$5,410,484

Methodology and Data Presentation

Data were collected from staff of the sheriffs’ offices and the department as well as the Florida Abuse Hotline Information System. Data were collected with the intent, at a minimum, to answer the following questions:

1. How are resources (personnel, facilities, equipment and material, time) allocated?
2. What percentage of total program cost is administrative? How does this compare to the approved FY 2000-01 General Appropriations Act standard for the department’s Family Safety Program (6.4%)?
3. What is the unit cost for each investigation?
4. What is the vacancy rate for investigators? Supervisors?
5. Are the sheriffs’ offices participating in random moment sampling for federal funding? If not, what are the financial consequences? Is there a remedy?

Throughout the data collection process, sheriff and department staff was provided opportunities to review and comment on the draft reports. Additional information and corrections were requested to ensure that the final product was as accurate, fair and complete as possible. In contrast to the programmatic peer review process, no onsite visits were made or meetings held to compile data and complete this component of the evaluation report. Because of the intense involvement of sheriff staff in the programmatic peer review, no sheriff staff was available to assist with the cost efficiency analysis. Data for the Seminole County Sheriff’s Office was collected and presented for information purposes only.

The cost efficiency analysis was based on the following assumptions:

- Fiscal data was presented to reflect a full fiscal year of operations;
- The value of assets with a useful life of more than one year was allocated across the appropriate number of fiscal years;
- Investigator and supervisor positions were always filled by trained and certified staff;
- Sheriff and comparison counties provide the same range of child protective investigative and protective services; and
- Indirect cost data was not available for all counties and therefore was not included in this report.

Data Collection

Data Sources

Data sources included the following:

- The sheriffs' budget requests for fiscal year 1999-00, 2000-01, and 2001-02;
- The sheriffs' final report of expenditures for fiscal year 1999-00;
- Sheriffs' staff;
- District fiscal and human resources staff;
- The department's accounting records;
- The General Appropriations Act for fiscal years 1999-00 and 2000-01;
- The Department of Children and Families' Legislative Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2001-02:
- The Governor's Recommended Budget for Fiscal Year 2001-02;
- Senate Report 2001-007 "Cost Analysis of the Protective Investigative Functions Performed by Sheriffs"; and
- The Florida Abuse Hotline Information System.

Investigations Data

The Florida Abuse Hotline Information System provided the number of actual investigations for fiscal year 1999-00. The department's estimated number of investigations for fiscal year 2000-01 served as the basis to allocate the new appropriation. That same estimate and the estimate used in the department's legislative budget request for fiscal year 2001-02 were used to calculate the caseload for each investigator and the unit cost for each investigation ratios.

Data Not Available

Some data were not available at the time this analysis was completed. The identification and allocation of indirect costs contributed by non-grant-funded positions and related non-grant-funded expenditures were not included. These indirect costs would include a prorated share of the salary and related costs of the sheriff, immediate staff to the sheriff, fiscal and personnel staff costs for services provided to grant-funded staff, and in-house training provided by non-grant-funded staff. Because this information was not available for the sheriffs, indirect costs for the department were not included in the department's budget data. Other data not available were costs related to child protective investigations paid by the department and associated with the sheriffs' use of any department information systems, data communication line usage, and closed records storage.

Adjusted, Annualized Budget

Budget information is displayed as "adjusted, annualized budget" throughout the cost efficiency analysis. Several adjustments were made to each sheriff's requested budget for fiscal years 1999-00, 2000-01, and 2001-02. The same adjustments were made to

the actual expenditure data for fiscal year 1999-00, the budgeted amount for fiscal year 2000-01 and the requested budget for fiscal year 2001-02 for the comparison counties. An itemization of all adjustments for each county by fiscal year is included as Appendix I. The adjustments were:

- Annualize the amount of each grant agreement;
- Allocate the value of assets with a useful life of more than one year across the appropriate number of fiscal years; and
- Include child protective investigation related costs paid by the department on behalf of the sheriffs.

Annualization

Pasco, Broward and Pinellas counties each submitted a budget request for fiscal year 1999-00. Each request represented the estimated, annual budget requirement for start-up and service delivery. Salaries and related costs were reduced to match the phase-in schedule for each sheriff. The reduced budget request became the amount contained in the grant agreement. For comparative purposes, the request for the estimated, annual budget requirement was used throughout the cost efficiency analysis. The budget request for the Pasco and Seminole Sheriffs' Offices for fiscal year 2000-01 was annualized in the same manner. No annualization adjustments were required for the sheriffs' budget requests for fiscal year 2001-02.

Adjustments for Costs Paid by the Department on Behalf of the Sheriffs

The department's accounting records were used to identify the child protective investigation related costs paid by the department on behalf of the sheriffs. The costs included Professional Development Centre training for sheriff staff and lease costs including utilities, janitorial and telephone service. These costs were added to the annual budget requests submitted by the sheriffs.

The sheriffs do not have any control over the costs of the Professional Development Centre training. However, whether the child protective investigations are delivered by the sheriffs or the department, the Professional Development Centre training costs are a cost of this program. Pursuant to subsection 39.3065(1), Florida Statutes, persons performing child protective investigations and first line supervisors are required to meet certain training and certification requirements. The department provides these services to departmental and sheriff staff through the Professional Development Centre. The Professional Development Centre costs are included in the budget data for sheriff and comparison counties.

The Professional Development Centre training expenditures are eligible for 75 percent funding from the federal government for training provided to departmental staff. Should the Professional Development Centre budget resources be included in the sheriffs' grant amount, only 25 percent (the state's matching funds) of the total resources would be available to the sheriffs. At this time, federal regulations do not allow the sheriffs'

expenditures for training to be federally funded. Retention of the resources in the department maximizes federal funding and reduces the overall state funded cost.

The department retained the resources to continue the lease and utility payments on behalf of Pasco and Pinellas counties. The competitive bid process obtained the private leased space. Other leases were for state owned facilities. The Pasco and Pinellas Sheriffs do not have control over these leases or the related costs. However, these same costs would be incurred should the department administer the program. Additional lease costs were assigned to the Pasco and Pinellas Sheriffs beginning in fiscal year 2000-01 associated with the increase in their staffing.

Fiscal data for the comparison counties, Marion and Hillsborough, were obtained from the department's district fiscal and human resources staff.

Allocate Costs Across Fiscal Years

The last adjustment was to allocate the value of assets having a useful life of more than one year to the applicable number of fiscal years. The costs of computers, printers, servers, and other computer equipment were allocated across two fiscal years. The purchase costs of motor vehicles were allocated across three fiscal years. The purpose of this allocation was to increase the ability to compare costs between the sheriffs and to the comparison counties. For example, Broward County leased its motor vehicles and therefore had a recurring cost in each year. In that case, there was nothing to allocate. The two comparison counties did not have the budget resources to purchase these same items. The mileage reimbursement to department staff for use of their own cars was included in the comparison counties' costs.

How are resources (personnel, facilities, equipment and material, time) allocated?

Data for fiscal years 2000-01 and 2001-02 were based on the requested budget, including the number and classification of positions, submitted by the sheriffs. The sheriffs, however, can reallocate budget, change staff classification, and pay as needed with no approval required from the department. Therefore, actual implementation may vary from the budget request and supporting information.

Data for fiscal year 2000-01 for the comparison counties were based on the initial approved operating budget and staffing data. The initial operating budget included the allocation of the new appropriation. Data for fiscal year 2001-02 for the comparison counties were based upon the Governor's Recommended Budget for Fiscal Year 2001-02.

Investigation data source for fiscal year 1999-00 was the Florida Abuse Hotline Information System. The department's estimates for the anticipated number of investigations were used for fiscal years 2000-01 and 2001-02.

The following charts display how the sheriffs and the comparison counties allocated human and budget resources:

Adjusted, Annualized Budget Allocation by Category of Expenditure

- Supervisor to Investigator Ratio, Based on Budget Positions;
- Investigations per Investigator per Month for Fiscal Years 1999-00, 2000-01, and 2001- 02, Based on Budgeted Positions;
- Investigations per Filled Investigator Positions for January 2000 through June 2000.

The Adjusted, Annualized Budget Allocation by Major Category of Expenditure chart displays both the amount and percentage of the adjusted, annualized budget allocated to each major category of expenditure for fiscal years 1999-00, 2000-01, and 2001-02. Non-recurring costs include one-time expenditures for the purchase of motor vehicles, computers, printers, and servers.

The estimated adjusted, annualized budget for fiscal year 2001-02 for Marion and Hillsborough counties is \$1,791,341 and \$6,854,264, respectively. It is not known how the resources would be allocated by major category of expenditure.

ADJUSTED, ANNUALIZED BUDGET ALLOCATION BY MAJOR CATEGORY OF EXPENDITURE

SALARIES	FISCAL YEAR		
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Manatee	1,284,505	1,595,625	1,757,110
Pasco	1,625,447	2,250,538	2,780,791
Marion	976,374	1,299,972	N/A

SALARIES	FISCAL YEAR		
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Manatee	73.68%	72.99%	74.62%
Pasco	70.31%	78.90%	79.75%
Marion	78.38%	81.16%	N/A

Broward	4,555,000	8,362,735	9,026,733
Pinellas	4,002,952	6,256,399	6,687,338
Hillsborough	4,144,539	4,144,539	N/A

Broward	78.57%	79.82%	83.47%
Pinellas	67.45%	72.87%	76.38%
Hillsborough	76.60%	66.59%	N/A

Seminole	N/A	1,890,471	1,948,793
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Seminole	N/A	59.38%	61.50%
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EXPENSES	FISCAL YEAR		
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Manatee	232,445	369,955	414,570
Pasco	505,341	432,333	487,467
Marion	269,305	301,766	N/A

EXPENSES	FISCAL YEAR		
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Manatee	13.33%	16.92%	17.61%
Pasco	21.86%	15.16%	13.98%
Marion	21.62%	18.84%	N/A

Broward	997,605	1,921,045	1,722,451
Pinellas	1,109,768	1,740,834	1,607,852
Hillsborough	1,255,508	2,079,116	N/A

Broward	17.21%	18.34%	15.93%
Pinellas	18.70%	20.28%	18.36%
Hillsborough	23.21%	33.41%	N/A

Seminole	N/A	721,135	933,603
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Seminole	N/A	22.65%	29.46%
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NON-RECURRING	FISCAL YEAR		
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Manatee	226,359	220,531	182,987
Pasco	180,890	169,615	218,539
Marion	0	0	N/A

NON-RECURRING	FISCAL YEAR		
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Manatee	12.98%	10.09%	7.77%
Pasco	7.83%	5.95%	6.27%
Marion	0.00%	0.00%	N/A

Broward	244,715	193,675	64,843
Pinellas	822,170	588,340	460,050
Hillsborough	10,437	0	N/A

Broward	4.22%	1.85%	0.60%
Pinellas	13.85%	6.85%	5.25%
Hillsborough	0.19%	0.00%	N/A

Seminole	N/A	572,225	286,599
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Seminole	N/A	17.97%	9.04%
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TOTAL	FISCAL YEAR		
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Manatee	1,743,309	2,186,111	2,354,667
Pasco	2,311,678	2,852,486	3,486,797
Marion	1,245,679	1,601,738	N/A

Broward	5,797,320	10,477,455	10,814,027
Pinellas	5,934,890	8,585,573	8,755,240
Hillsborough	5,410,484	6,223,655	N/A

Seminole	N/A	3,183,831	3,168,995
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The following chart indicates the supervisor to investigator ratio based on budgeted positions for fiscal year 1999-00 and requested positions for fiscal years 2000-01 and 2001-02. The ratio was calculated by dividing the total budgeted/requested investigator positions by the total budgeted/requested supervisor positions. It was assumed that all positions were or will be continually filled during each fiscal year. The standard staffing ratio generally used by the department is one supervisor for every six investigators.

SUPERVISOR TO INVESTIGATOR RATIO
BASED ON BUDGETED POSITIONS

COUNTY	Fiscal Year 99-00			Fiscal Year 00-01			Fiscal Year 01-02		
	Supervisors	Investigators	Ratio	Supervisors	Investigators	Ratio	Supervisors	Investigators	Ratio
Manatee	3	18	6.00	4	22	5.50	4	22	5.50
Pasco	4	21	5.25	8	28	3.50	8	33	4.13
Marion	3	18	6.00	4	26	6.50	N/A	N/A	N/A
Broward	9	58	6.44	15	100	6.67	15	100	6.67
Pinellas	11	53	4.86	14	72	5.14	14	72	5.14
Hillsborough	14	82	5.86	18	102	5.67	N/A	N/A	N/A
Seminole	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	24	8.00	3	24	8.00

The next chart displays the ratio of the monthly average caseload for each protective investigator. The ratio was calculated by dividing the number of investigations by 12 (months) and then by the number of budgeted investigator positions. The source data was the budgeted number of investigator positions for fiscal year 1999-01 and the number of requested investigator positions for 2000-01 and 2001-02. This chart reflects the potential caseload for each investigator by county if all positions were filled with fully trained staff. The number of investigations includes initial and additional reports and not backlog.

INVESTIGATIONS PER INVESTIGATOR PER MONTH
BASED ON BUDGETED POSITIONS

COUNTY	Fiscal Year 99-00			Fiscal Year 00-01			Fiscal Year 01-02		
	Investigators	Investigations	Ratio	Investigators	Investigations	Ratio	Investigators	Investigations	Ratio
Manatee	18	3,058	14.16	22	3,554	13.46	22	4,043	15.31
Pasco	21	3,942	15.64	28	4,590	13.66	33	5,222	13.19
Marion	18	3,252	15.06	26	3,762	12.06	N/A	N/A	N/A
Broward	58	13,465	19.35	100	15,628	13.02	100	17,782	14.82
Pinellas	53	9,717	15.28	72	11,292	13.07	72	12,848	14.87
Hillsborough	82	10,851	11.03	102	12,599	10.29	N/A	N/A	N/A
Seminole	N/A	N/A	N/A	24	3,462	12.02	24	3,939	13.68

The next chart displays the monthly average caseload for each filled protective investigator position by month for January through June 2000. The ratio was calculated by dividing the number of investigations by 12 (months) and then by the number of filled investigator positions. The chart does not take into account that whether the staff was

trained and able to carry a full caseload. This chart demonstrates the direct impact that vacancies have on a county's ability to handle new cases. The more vacancies, the more cases that have to be assigned to existing staff.

The Child Welfare League of America recommends each investigator receive no more than 12 new cases each month.

INVESTIGATIONS PER INVESTIGATOR PER MONTH
 BASED ON FILLED POSITIONS
 January 1 through June 30, 2000

COUNTY	January			February			March		
	Staff	Investigations	Ratio	Staff	Investigations	Ratio	Staff	Investigations	Ratio
Manatee	15	283	18.87	17	302	17.76	17	302	17.76
Pasco	10	0	N/A	14	0	N/A	15	0	N/A
Marion	15	294	19.60	14	293	20.93	15	319	21.27
Broward	57	1,089	19.11	53	1,165	21.98	57	1,428	25.05
Pinellas	30	909	30.30	43	840	19.53	44	945	21.48
Hillsborough	70	879	12.56	70	980	14.00	77	1,132	14.70

COUNTY	April			May			June		
	Staff	Investigations	Ratio	Staff	Investigations	Ratio	Staff	Investigations	Ratio
Manatee	17	264	15.53	15	308	20.53	18	268	14.89
Pasco	19	338	17.79	19	394	20.74	20	329	16.45
Marion	15	349	23.27	16	288	18.00	18	307	17.06
Broward	58	1,193	20.57	58	1,338	23.07	58	1,296	22.34
Pinellas	46	841	18.28	49	954	19.47	50	801	16.02
Hillsborough	80	908	11.35	82	984	12.00	82	878	10.71

Pasco began to assume new cases in April 2000. Those staff employed before April were in training to prepare to take on a caseload in April.

With the exception of the staffing increase in Pinellas in February, the number of filed positions in the other counties was constant during this six month period.

What percentage of total program cost is administrative cost?

The implementing bill for the fiscal year 2000-01 General Appropriations Act provides the performance measures and standards that are directly linked to the appropriations made in the 2000-01 General Appropriations Act as required by the Government Performance and Accountability Act of 1994. Specifically, section 68 (2) (c) 10. a. of Chapter 2000-171, Laws of Florida, provides the following program management measure for the Department of Children and Families:

“Administrative cost as a percent of total program cost.....6.4%”

The fiscal year 2000-01 grant agreement with the respective sheriffs requires the sheriffs to “operate, at a minimum, in accordance with performance standards and outcome measures established by the Legislature for child protective investigations conducted by the Department of Children and Families...” The sheriffs and the department have agreed to collect administrative cost data during fiscal year 2000-01 to serve as a baseline of performance.

Because of the timing of the planned data collection, a determination of administrative cost as a percentage of total program cost cannot be calculated at this time. A recommendation is included in this report to create a team of sheriff and department staff to define administrative cost and to establish the process for collection of the relevant data.

What is the unit cost for each investigation?

Unit Cost Based upon Adjusted, Annualized Budget

The following chart displays the unit cost per investigation, by county, for fiscal years 1999-00, 2000-01, and 2001-02. The unit cost was calculated by dividing the adjusted, annualized budget by the number of investigations for the same fiscal year.

UNIT COST PER INVESTIGATION
BASED UPON ADJUSTED, ANNUALIZED BUDGET

COUNTY	Fiscal Year 99-00			Fiscal Year 00-01			Fiscal Year 01-02		
	Adjusted, Annualized Budget	Actual Number of Investigations	Unit Cost	Adjusted, Annualized Budget	Estimated Number of Investigations	Unit Cost	Adjusted, Annualized Budget	Estimated Number of Investigations	Unit Cost
Manatee	1,743,309	3,058	570.08	2,186,111	3,554	615.11	2,354,667	4,043	582.41
Pasco	2,311,678	3,942	586.42	2,852,486	4,590	621.46	3,486,797	5,222	667.71
Marion	1,245,679	3,252	383.05	1,601,738	3,762	425.77	1,791,341	4,280	418.54
Broward	5,797,320	13,465	430.55	10,477,455	15,628	670.43	10,814,027	17,782	608.14
Pinellas	5,934,890	9,717	610.77	8,585,573	11,292	760.32	8,755,240	12,848	681.45
Hillsborough	5,410,484	10,851	498.62	6,223,655	12,599	493.98	6,854,264	14,336	478.12
Seminole	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,183,831	3,462	919.65	3,168,995	3,939	804.52

Unit cost comparison between the peer review evaluation and the Florida Senate’s report

In November 2000, the Florida Senate issued its Interim Report 2001-007 entitled “Cost Analysis of the Protective Investigative Functions Performed by Sheriffs”. The underlying fiscal data was identical to the fiscal data in this evaluation report. However, additional research was conducted and adjustments were made to the data for this evaluation. To improve the comparability between sheriffs and the comparison counties, the following adjustments were made:

- Annualize the amount of each grant agreement;
- Allocate the value of assets with a useful life of more than one year across the appropriate number of fiscal years; and

- Include child protective investigation related costs paid by the department on behalf of the sheriffs.

The chart below compares the unit cost for each investigation based upon the adjusted, annualized budget to the Senate's reported unit cost per investigation.

UNIT COST PER INVESTIGATION
 COMPARE UNIT COST PER ADJUSTED, ANNUALIZED BUDGET TO SENATE REPORT
 FISCAL YEAR 2000-01

COUNTY	Adjusted, Annualized Budget	Investigations	Unit Cost	Senate Report	Investigations	Unit Cost
Manatee	2,186,111	3,554	615.11	2,100,045	3,554	590.90
Pasco	2,852,486	4,590	621.46	2,363,855	4,590	515.00
Marion	1,601,738	3,762	425.77	N/A	N/A	N/A
Broward	10,477,455	15,628	670.43	10,226,626	15,628	654.38
Pinellas	8,585,573	11,292	760.32	7,252,964	11,292	642.31
Hillsborough	6,223,655	12,599	493.98	N/A	N/A	N/A
Seminole	3,183,831	3,462	919.65	3,251,216	3,462	939.11

The Seminole County Sheriff's Office total adjusted, annualized budget for fiscal year 2000-01 included \$572,225 for non-recurring costs. The unit cost for only the recurring costs was about \$754 per investigation.

What is the vacancy rate for investigators? Supervisors?

The vacancy rate data are for a time period before the onsite peer reviews. Therefore, the data presented in the chart below are provided to indicate the level of success in filling positions during the transition period for Pasco, Pinellas, and Broward counties. The vacancy rate was calculated for January 2000 through June 2000 as follows:

- The numerator was the number of months each supervisor position was vacant.
- The denominator was the number of supervisor positions budgeted for the six month period.

For example:

A county has five of eight supervisor positions vacant the whole six months. The numerator would be five times six or 30. The denominator would be the eight budgeted supervisor positions times six months or 48. The quotient would be 62.5 percent.

The some methodology was applied to calculate the vacancy rate for the investigator positions.

VACANCY RATES
January 1 - June 30, 2000

COUNTY	SUPERVISORS
Manatee	0.00%
Pasco	25.00%
Marion	0.00%
Broward	0.00%
Pinellas	0.00%
Hillsborough	10.71%

COUNTY	INVESTIGATORS
Manatee	8.33%
Pasco	23.02%
Marion	13.88%
Broward	2.01%
Pinellas	17.61%
Hillsborough	6.30%

Are the sheriffs participating in random moment sampling for federal funding? If not, what are the financial consequences? Is there a remedy?

The department conducts a random moment sampling process to determine the amount of expenditures that are eligible for federal funding. There is no mechanism to include non-departmental staff in the random moment sampling process. For this reason, when the Manatee Sheriff began providing child protective investigative services, the staff was required to complete daily time logs to document the activities performed. Activity data were to be recorded every fifteen minutes every day by each employee. The data were summarized and reported to the federal government as documentation of earning federal funds. At the time, the number of staff performing the child protective investigative functions was too small to be considered a valid sample size for random moment sampling.

The sheriffs have agreed to participate in a separate random moment sampling process for their protective investigative staffs. As of the date of this report, the department has not yet developed a random moment sampling methodology that would allow the sheriffs' programs to meet the federal criteria to earn federal funds. The department has conducted preliminary research to develop a valid random moment sampling process.

The Senate Interim Report 2001-007, "Cost Analysis of the Protective Investigative Functions Performed by Sheriffs", recommends that the department pursue implementation of the random moment sampling process for next fiscal year. The Senate report also recommends reversing the initial fund shift by reducing the department's general revenue funding by \$2.3 million and increasing trust fund authority in the same amount. The federal earnings, as documented by the results of the random moment sampling process, would provide the funding for the trust funded budget. The Governor's Recommended Budget for Fiscal Year 2001-02 contains the same recommendation and fund shift.

To fund the trust budget authority, a random moment sampling process must be in place on July 1, 2001. Without the federal funding, the \$2.3 million will be prorated as a program reduction to the sheriffs in fiscal year 2001-02.

Conclusions

Performance Summary Table				
County	Quality Performance Total Score	Outcome #1 Closed in < 60 Days	Outcome #2 Seen in 24 Hours	Unit Cost per Investigation
Manatee S.O.	63.58%	62.33% ³	56.99% ²	\$615.11
Pasco S.O.	56.79%	44.88% ⁴	60.68% ¹	\$621.46
Marion DCF	57.40%	36.69%	45.25%	\$425.77
Broward S.O.	45.67%	48.78% ¹	53.60%	\$670.43
Pinellas S.O.	55.55%	29.93% ²	51.79%	\$760.32
Hillsborough DCF	55.55%	57.28%	54.56%	\$493.98

¹ p<.001

² p<.0001

³ p<.00001

⁴ p<.02

Performance

The total scores from the quality performance review do not show a significant difference between the sheriffs' and the department's operations. Regardless of the length of time performing child protective investigations, no county received a superior performance rating on the quality of protective investigations. Five of the six counties received satisfactory performance ratings, and one county received a partial performance rating. This county, Broward, was almost ten percentage points below its department comparison county.

Examining performance on outcome measures shows inconclusive results. No county achieved the mandated standard for performance on either outcome; however, there were statistically significant differences between review and comparison counties.

For the first outcome, cases closed within 60 days, the Manatee and Pasco Sheriff's Offices performed significantly better than the department comparison county, Marion. In contrast, Hillsborough, the comparison county, significantly outperformed the Broward and Pinellas County Sheriff's Offices on this outcome.

For the second outcome, victims seen within 24 hours, again, the Manatee and Pasco Sheriff's Offices significantly outperformed the comparison county, Marion. Among the larger counties, there were no significant differences on this outcome.

Cost Efficiency

Data were collected to address the initial two-part question raised in the beginning of this report. The question was "Are the sheriffs performing child protective investigation cost efficiently, and how do those costs compare to those of the department?"

Supervisor to Investigator Staffing Ratio

With the exception of Broward in fiscal year 1999-00, the sheriffs' unit costs for each investigation exceed those for the comparison counties for fiscal year 1999-00; 2000-01; and, if funded at the level requested by the sheriffs, 2001-02. In fiscal year 1999-00, the sheriffs received \$10.8 million in additional legislative appropriations primarily for the initial startup costs to equip staff and to increase the staffing based upon estimated caseloads. The department did not receive additional resources until fiscal year 2000-01. The sheriffs received their fair share allocation of those funds. In addition, Broward received \$3.2 million.

The department's staffing standard ratio for the child protective investigation program is one supervisor for every six investigators. Any staffing ratio lower than the department's standard of 1:6.00, requires additional financial resources for the additional supervisors. The impact of variances in staffing configurations and ratios upon performance is not known.

The following chart demonstrates the cost impact of variations from the department's general standard for the number of supervisors to investigator staff ratio.

Number of Investigator positions	Staffing Ratio of Supervisors to Investigators	Supervisors Required	Cost Impact
30	1:6.00	5	Department's standard
30	1:5.00	6	Increase in salary and related expenditures for the one additional supervisor
42	1:6.00	7	Department's standard
42	1:7.00	6	Reduction in salary and related expenditures for one less supervisor

The following chart displays the supervisor to investigator ratios and unit cost per investigation, by county, for fiscal year 1999-00, 2000-01, and 2001-02.

Supervisor to Investigator Ratio and Unit Cost per Investigation Data Chart						
	Fiscal Year 1999-00	Fiscal Year 1999-00	Fiscal Year 2000-01	Fiscal Year 2000-01	Fiscal Year 2001-02	Fiscal Year 2001-02
County	Supervisor to Investigator Ratio	Unit Cost per Investigation	Supervisor to Investigator Ratio	Unit Cost per Investigation	Supervisor to Investigator Ratio	Unit Cost per Investigation
Manatee	1:6.00	\$ 570.08	1:5.50	\$ 615.11	1:5.50	\$ 582.41
Pasco	1:5.25	586.42	1:3.5	621.46	1:4.13	667.71
Marion	1:6.00	383.05	1:6.5	425.77	N/A	418.54
Broward	1:6.44	430.55	1:6.67	670.43	1:6.67	608.14
Pinellas	1:4.82	610.77	1:5.14	760.32	1:5.14	681.45
Hillsborough	1:5.86	498.62	1:5.67	493.98	1:5.14	478.12
Seminole	N/A	N/A	1:8.00	919.65	1:8.00	804.52

Of the smaller counties, Pasco County's staff ratio is consistently lower than Manatee and Marion counties, and the department's staffing standard. Consistent with the information in the cost impact chart above, the unit costs for each investigation for Pasco County are the highest of the three smaller counties.

This same logic holds true when applied to Pinellas County. If Pinellas County had the same staffing ratio as the department's standard, there would be two less supervisor positions included in each of the budget request for the three fiscal years. The salary and related costs of the two additional supervisors contribute to the higher unit cost for each investigation.

Other factors influence the unit cost for each investigation. This is demonstrated when reviewing the information from the Broward County Sheriff's Office. While the sheriff's office has the highest staffing ratios, it does not have the lowest unit cost of the three larger counties. Factors that increase the unit cost for each investigation for the sheriff's office include the following:

- Broward County has a separate unit for crime intelligence function.
- Broward County has a separate analytical unit.
- Unlike Pinellas County, Broward's lease payments are not paid by the department but were included in the sheriff's budget resources.

Vacancy Rates

Vacancy rate data were collected for January through June 2000. It may take up to a year for recent sheriff staffing increases to have the full impact on addressing new and backlog cases. Until staff are recruited, trained and certified, they cannot handle a full caseload.

Because of the length of time required to staff fully a new operation, a longer transition period may have improved the combined performance of the sheriff and the district during the first and second year.

Actual turnover data were not available for all counties. However, vacancy rates provide some idea of what the turnover data may be. If turnover data had been available, the cost for turnover could have been calculated. Each time an investigator position is vacated and then filled, training costs are incurred. For an investigator position, costs include the following:

- Recruitment and background screenings;
- Profession Development Centre training costs;
- Trainee's salary and travel expenses; and
- Costs related to the mentor assigned to the trainee.

Costs and staffing data have been collected and compared. The period of evaluation was a transition year for Pasco, Broward, and Pinellas. Until such time as each of the sheriff and comparison counties have full or almost full staffing and that staffing is fully trained and certified, a meaningful conclusion cannot be drawn. Implementation of the below listed recommendations should improve the ability to complete an evaluation that will be able to determine whether the sheriffs are performing child protective investigations cost efficiently.

Recommendations

Programmatic

1. Continue the sheriffs' grants and reassess performance during 2001, since performance results are inconclusive. This will allow those sheriffs' offices operating protective investigations for one year or less to fully implement their program and stabilize their operations. Performance results in subsequent program evaluation reports will be a more accurate reflection of true performance.
2. Do not include any sheriffs' office in subsequent reviews that has not been performing protective investigations for at least one year. This is in keeping with the basic tenets of program evaluation not to examine the outcomes of a program that has operated for less than one year. For start-up programs, an implementation or process study would be appropriate and could provide the site with valuable information on practices and procedures.
3. Modify the program evaluation methodology to address concerns raised by the department and the sheriffs such as the sample size for the case review, scoring and consensus process for the quality performance review, and the community partner survey.

4. Expand the scope of the evaluation to look at the following:
 - Additional important performance measures not specified in the General Appropriations Act.
 - The relationship between investigations and related legal and service provision functions, when these are privatized or divested to other agencies.
5. Involve representatives from the sheriffs' offices in identifying practice standards and performance measures for protective investigations.
6. Use the results of quality performance review to identify pre-service and in-service training needs of investigators and supervisors. Several common themes are apparent as areas needing improvement, for example, assessment of short-term and long-term risk; thoroughness of investigation; and supervisory review, direction, and guidance to investigators.
7. Working agreements should be reviewed and updated at least annually to reflect "lessons learned" and "best practices". The working agreements are those between the sheriffs and:
 - The lead agency for community-based care or the department;
 - The provider of child welfare legal services (Office of the Attorney General, State Attorney, or department staff); and
 - Local law enforcement agencies.

Fiscal

1. Require sheriff and district staff participation in the development of the performance measures, data collection, and data analysis for the preparation of the cost efficiency analysis section of subsequent evaluations.
2. Data required to measure performance and conduct subsequent peer reviews should be tracked and reported throughout the year. For example, turnover and vacancy data should be added to the sheriff's quarterly management report. District staff should collect and report comparison county data on a quarterly basis
3. The department should prepare a random moment sampling process and train sheriffs' staffs to enable the procedure to become operational by July 1, 2001.
4. A team of department and sheriffs' staff should be established to define administrative cost and to determine the process to collect the relevant data.
5. Before implementing additional sheriff programs, performance measures should be developed to determine cost efficiency. The Senate's Interim Report 2001-007 recommends that the department and the sheriffs jointly develop standards for measuring the effectiveness of the sheriff's programs relative to those of the department. It is recommended that those standards be developed and in place for fiscal year 2001-02. The first year's data collection would provide the baseline for measuring subsequent years' performance.

APPENDIX

RECONCILIATION

ANNUALIZE GRANT BUDGET, ALLOCATE NON-RECURRING BUDGET AND ADD AMOUNTS PAID DIRECTLY BY DEPARTMENT

MANATEE	Fiscal Year 1999-00			Fiscal Year 2000-01			Fiscal Year 2001-02		
	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL
Grant Agreement Budget	1,443,739	486,686	1,930,425	1,925,045	175,000	2,100,045	2,131,145	47,258	2,178,403
Annualization	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Annual Budget	1,443,739	486,686	1,930,425	1,925,045	175,000	2,100,045	2,131,145	47,258	2,178,403
Adjust Non-Recurring									
Motor Vehicles - Cost	0	(302,291)	(302,291)	0	(159,200)	(159,200)	0	(33,000)	(33,000)
Motor Vehicles - Allocate	0	100,764	100,764	0	153,831	153,831	0	164,829	164,829
Computers - Cost	0	(95,600)	(95,600)	0	(15,800)	(15,800)	0	(8,000)	(8,000)
Computers - Allocate	0	47,800	47,800	0	55,700	55,700	0	11,900	11,900
File Server - Cost	0	(22,000)	(22,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0
File Server - Allocate	0	11,000	11,000	0	11,000	11,000	0	0	0
Subtotal Non Recurring Adjustments	0	(260,327)	(260,327)	0	45,531	45,531	0	135,729	135,729
Paid by Department									
Professional Development Centre	73,211	0	73,211	40,535	0	40,535	40,535	0	40,535
Subtotal Paid by Department	73,211	0	73,211	40,535	0	40,535	40,535	0	40,535
Adjusted, Annualized Budget	1,516,950	226,359	1,743,309	1,965,580	220,531	2,186,111	2,171,680	182,987	2,354,667

PASCO	Fiscal Year 1999-00			Fiscal Year 2000-01			Fiscal Year 2001-02		
	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL
Grant Agreement Budget	983,560	500,875	1,484,435	2,356,025	7,830	2,363,855	3,037,938	149,669	3,187,607
Annualization	960,114	0	960,114	96,526	0	96,526	0	0	0
Annual Budget	1,943,674	500,875	2,444,549	2,452,551	7,830	2,460,381	3,037,938	149,669	3,187,607
Adjust Non-Recurring									
Motor Vehicles - Cost	0	(474,600)	(474,600)	0	0	0	0	(105,000)	(105,000)
Motor Vehicles - Allocate	0	158,200	158,200	0	158,200	158,200	0	193,200	193,200
Computers - Cost	0	(5,000)	(5,000)	0	0	0	0	(38,661)	(38,661)
Computers - Allocate	0	2,500	2,500	0	2,500	2,500	0	19,331	19,331
Printers - Cost	0	(2,170)	(2,170)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Printers - Allocate	0	1,085	1,085	0	1,085	1,085	0	0	0
Subtotal Non Recurring Adjustments	0	(319,985)	(319,985)	0	161,785	161,785	0	68,870	68,870
Paid by Department									
Telephone	1,754	0	1,754	1,754	0	1,754	1,754	0	1,754
Lease and Utilities	161,764	0	161,764	182,559	0	182,559	182,559	0	182,559
Professional Development Centre	23,596	0	23,596	46,007	0	46,007	46,007	0	46,007
Subtotal Paid by Department	187,114	0	187,114	230,320	0	230,320	230,320	0	230,320
Adjusted, Annualized Budget	2,130,788	180,890	2,311,678	2,682,871	169,615	2,852,486	3,268,258	218,539	3,486,797

MARION	Fiscal Year 1999-00			Fiscal Year 2000-01			Fiscal Year 2001-02		
	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL
Annual Budget	1,180,183	0	1,180,183	1,563,332	10,999	1,574,331	1,760,708	3,226	1,763,934
Adjust Non-Recurring	0		0	0		0	0		0
Paid by Department									
Professional Development Centre	65,496	0	65,496	27,407	0	27,407	27,407	0	27,407
Adjusted, Annualized Budget	1,245,679	0	1,245,679	1,590,739	10,999	1,601,738	1,788,115	3,226	1,791,341

RECONCILIATION
ANNUALIZE GRANT BUDGET, ALLOCATE NON-RECURRING BUDGET AND ADD AMOUNTS PAID DIRECTLY BY DEPARTMENT

BROWARD	Fiscal Year 1999-00			Fiscal Year 2000-01			Fiscal Year 2001-02		
	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL
Grant Agreement Budget	4,934,474	338,390	5,272,864	10,126,626	100,000	10,226,626	10,592,030	81,708	10,673,738
Annualization	618,131	0	618,131	0	0	0	0	0	0
Annual Budget	5,552,605	338,390	5,890,995	10,126,626	100,000	10,226,626	10,592,030	81,708	10,673,738
Adjust Non-Recurring							0		
Computers - Cost	0	(167,350)	(167,350)	0		0	0	(33,730)	(33,730)
Computers - Allocate	0	83,675	83,675	0	83,675	83,675	0	16,865	16,865
File Server - Cost	0	(20,000)	(20,000)	0		0	0	0	0
File Server - Allocate	0	10,000	10,000	0	10,000	10,000	0	0	0
Subtotal Non Recurring Adjustments	0	(93,675)	(93,675)	0	93,675	93,675	0	(16,865)	(16,865)
Paid by Department									
Professional Development Centre	0	0	0	157,154	0	157,154	157,154	0	157,154
Subtotal Paid by Department	0	0	0	157,154	0	157,154	157,154	0	157,154
Adjusted, Annualized Budget	5,552,605	244,715	5,797,320	10,283,780	193,675	10,477,455	10,749,184	64,843	10,814,027

PINELLAS	Fiscal Year 1999-00			Fiscal Year 2000-01			Fiscal Year 2001-02		
	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL
Grant Agreement Budget	3,736,482	1,854,510	5,590,992	7,221,664	0	7,221,664	7,519,621	32,100	7,551,721
Annualization	903,140	0	903,140	0	0	0	0	0	0
Annual Budget	4,639,622	1,854,510	6,494,132	7,221,664	0	7,221,664	7,519,621	32,100	7,551,721
Adjust Non-Recurring									
Motor Vehicles - Cost	0	(1,332,000)	(1,332,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Motor Vehicles - Allocate	0	444,000	444,000	0	444,000	444,000	0	444,000	444,000
Computers - Cost	0	(271,080)	(271,080)	0	0	0	0	(32,100)	(32,100)
Computers - Allocate	0	135,540	135,540	0	135,540	135,540	0	16,050	16,050
File Server - Cost	0	(17,600)	(17,600)	0	0	0	0	0	0
File Server - Allocate	0	8,800	8,800	0	8,800	8,800	0	0	0
Subtotal Non Recurring Adjustments	0	(1,032,340)	(1,032,340)	0	588,340	588,340	0	427,950	427,950
Paid by Department									
Telephone	8,681	0	8,681	8,681	0	8,681	8,681	0	8,681
Lease and Utilities	384,000	0	384,000	580,523	0	580,523	580,523	0	580,523
Professional Development Centre	80,352	0	80,352	155,000	0	155,000	155,000	0	155,000
Janitorial	65	0	65	65	0	65	65	0	65
Backlog Assist	0	0	0	31,300	0	31,300	31,300	0	31,300
Subtotal Paid by Department	473,098	0	473,098	775,569	0	775,569	775,569	0	775,569
Adjusted, Annualized Budget	5,112,720	822,170	5,934,890	7,997,233	588,340	8,585,573	8,295,190	460,050	8,755,240

HILLSBOROUGH	Fiscal Year 1999-00			Fiscal Year 2000-01			Fiscal Year 2001-02		
	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL	Recurring	N/R	TOTAL
Annual Budget	5,255,750	10,437	5,266,187	5,994,302	67,212	6,061,514	6,681,395	10,728	6,692,123
Adjust Non-Recurring	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paid by Department									
Professional Development Centre	144,297	0	144,297	162,141	0	162,141	162,141	0	162,141
Adjusted, Annualized Budget	5,400,047	10,437	5,410,484	6,156,443	67,212	6,223,655	6,843,536	10,728	6,854,264

RECONCILIATION
ANNUALIZE GRANT BUDGET, ALLOCATE NON-RECURRING BUDGET AND ADD AMOUNTS PAID DIRECTLY BY DEPARTMENT

SEMINOLE	Fiscal Year 1999-00			Fiscal Year 2000-01			Fiscal Year 2001-02		
	recurring	NR	TOTAL	recurring	NR	TOTAL	recurring	NR	TOTAL
Grant Agreement Budget				2,206,460	1,044,756	3,251,216	2,845,681	0	2,845,681
Annualization				368,431	0	368,431	0	0	0
Annual Budget	Not applicable			2,574,891	1,044,756	3,619,647	2,845,681	0	2,845,681
Adjust Non-Recurring									
Motor Vehicles - Cost				0	(557,800)	(557,800)	0	0	0
Motor Vehicles - Allocate				0	185,934	185,934	0	185,933	185,933
Computers - Cost				0	(191,600)	(191,600)	0	0	0
Computers - Allocate				0	95,800	95,800	0	95,800	95,800
Printers - Cost				0	(3,050)	(3,050)	0	0	0
Printers - Allocate				0	1,525	1,525	0	1,525	1,525
File Server - Cost				0	(6,681)	(6,681)	0	0	0
File Server - Allocate				0	3,341	3,341	0	3,341	3,341
Subtotal Non Recurring									
Adjustments	Not applicable			0	(472,531)	(472,531)	0	286,599	286,599
Paid by Department									
Professional Development Centre				36,715	0	36,715	36,715	0	36,715
Subtotal Paid by Department	Not applicable			36,715	0	36,715	36,715	0	36,715
Adjusted, Annualized Budget	Not applicable			2,611,606	572,225	3,183,831	2,882,396	286,599	3,168,995