

Overview of the SCAN Policies Database

The State Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) Policies Database compiles data on the definitions and policies that states use in their surveillance of child maltreatment, along with data on associated risk and protective factors. The SCAN Policies Database is funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation in collaboration with the Children's Bureau in the Administration for Children and Families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The project team is led by Mathematica in partnership with Child Trends.

The project's purpose is to review and compile information from states' definitions and policies, to create a database of those definitions and policies (the SCAN Policies Database) that can be used for analysis. The database is a resource for researchers, analysts, and others who are interested in examining differences between states in their definitions and policies on child maltreatment.

Content

The scope of the SCAN Policies Database includes information about state definitions and policies related to child abuse and neglect for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. This information represents data collected, reviewed, and verified between May 2019 and July 2020. The data reflect the state definitions and policies for the calendar year 2019. The scope of topics in the SCAN Policies Database includes states' definitions of child abuse and neglect as well as information about policies related to reporting, screening, and investigating child maltreatment. Key aspects of the child welfare systems' response and context are also included.

The content in the database is organized into six domains. The state profiles, codebook, data collection protocol, and data file are also organized by these domains. In the protocol, each question is named with a prefix that identifies its associated domain. The six domains are listed below, with the identifying protocol number prefix.

Domain	Question prefix
Definitions	D
Reporting	R
Screening	S
Investigation	I
Child welfare response	W
Child welfare system context	C

State Profile

This SCAN Policies Database state profile serves as a summary of the information collected about the definitions and policies for the identified state. Each profile is organized by topical domains, which contain a set of tables that depict the state's information for each variable within that domain.

This information was gathered through a document collection, review, and coding process conducted by the SCAN Policies Database team. Input from states on data collection was obtained through a confirmation and verification process. More information about the SCAN Policies Database data collection procedures can be found in the data user's guide and data collection protocol which are accessible from the Data Use Resources page <https://www.scanpoliciesdatabase.com/data-use-resources>.

The state profile presents responses for each variable with "yes," "no," "unknown," or other response as appropriate. The response of "unknown" was used for topics that could not be located from the state's available resources or verified with the state. In some cases, "logical skip" was used when a question was not applicable to a particular state given a related response on a preceding question.

Data use resources

Several data use resources are available to support users of the SCAN Policies Database:

- **Data user's guide:** The guide has detailed information about the data set, including the process used to collect and review the data, the scope of information included in the data set, guidance on using the data, such as how to link the data with other data sources; and notes about specific topics. This data user's guide also has two appendices. Appendix A provides a glossary of key terms. Appendix B summarizes the decisions made on the scope and variables to include in the SCAN Policies Database after a data quality assessment.
- **Codebook:** The codebook provides information about each variable in the data set, including variable names, labels, definitions, protocol number, variable type, and frequencies. The codebook has two appendices. Appendix A contains supplemental notes that are important for accurately interpreting and using the data. Appendix B is a comprehensive list of all state statutes and policy documentation sources used to collect data for the SCAN Policies Database for each state, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.
- **Data collection protocol:** The protocol has the questions used to collect information about states' statutes and policies as part of the data review and coding process. Appendix A provides a glossary of key terms.

These data use resources can be found on the SCAN Policies Database website (<https://www.scanpoliciesdatabase.com/data-use-resources>) or from National Data Archive for Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN) (<https://www.ndacan.acf.hhs.gov/>).

More Information

More information about the SCAN Policies Database can be found at <https://www.scanpoliciesdatabase.com>. General inquiries can be submitted to SCANPoliciesDatabase@mathematica-mpr.com.

State Identifying Information

Table I.A. State identifying information

	Response
a. State abbreviation	NC
b. State Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) code	37
c. Census region code	South
d. State verified coding of information	Yes
e. State confirmed documents reviewed	Yes
f. State definitions and policies for calendar year	2019

Domain D: Definitions of child maltreatment

Table II.A. State's definition of child maltreatment

	Response
1. Types of maltreatment included in state definition	
a. Physical abuse	Yes
b. Excessive corporal punishment	Yes
c. Sexual abuse	Yes
d. Emotional maltreatment	Yes
e. Neglect	Yes
f. Inadequate clothing	Yes
g. Inadequate shelter	Yes
h. Malnourishment, inadequate food	Yes
i. Medical neglect, inadequate medical care	Yes
j. Failure-to-thrive	No
k. Educational neglect	Yes
l. Abandonment	Yes
m. Injurious environment. Likelihood of harm to child's health, physical well-being	Yes
n. Drug Lab. Child present within structure where methamphetamine is being created	Yes
o. Inadequate supervision. Failure to meet parent or caretaker responsibilities	Yes
p. Drug or alcohol misuse. Parental drug or alcohol misuse causing harm to child	Yes
q. Prenatal exposure to drugs or alcohol	Yes
r. Illicit substance. Illegally providing a controlled substance to a child	Yes
s. Human trafficking, involuntary servitude, sexual servitude	Yes
t. Female genital mutilation	No
u. Shaken baby syndrome, abusive head trauma	Yes
v. Failure to protect. Failure to protect from harm	Yes
w. Domestic violence. Exposure to domestic violence	Yes
x. Factitious disorder by proxy	No
y. Institutional abuse/neglect	No
z. Other definition (specify)	Yes - Illegal placement or adoption
2. Subtypes of maltreatment included in state definition	
a. Subtypes of maltreatment considered abuse	Abuse includes physical injury, cruel/grossly inappropriate behavior modification, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, moral turpitude, and human trafficking

Table II.A (continued)

	Response
b. Subtypes of maltreatment considered neglect	Neglect includes improper care, improper supervision, improper discipline, abandonment, improper medical/remedial care, injurious environment and illegal placement/adoption
c. Subtypes of maltreatment considered other than abuse or neglect	Not applicable
3. Level of harm included in state's definition of child maltreatment	
a. Inflicts harm	Yes
b. Imminent danger or substantial risk of harm	Yes
4. Differences in level of harm included in state's definition of child maltreatment by type of maltreatment	No
5. Type of harm or injury specified in state's definition of child maltreatment	
a. Death, bodily injury, impairment of physical condition	Yes
b. Impairment of mental or emotional condition	Yes
c. Harmful environment, conditions	Yes
d. Type of harm or injury not specified	No
e. Other (specify)	No
6. Variation in extent of injury or harm by maltreatment type in the state's definition of child maltreatment	No
7. Perpetrator identified as part of state's definition of child maltreatment	Yes
8. Types of perpetrators specified as part of state's definition of child maltreatment	
a. Any adult	No
b. Parent	Yes
c. Guardian	Yes
d. Caregiver/caretaker	Yes
e. Family member/parent paramour	Yes
f. Household member	Yes
g. Person responsible for child	Yes
h. Other (specify)	No

Table II.A (continued)

	Response
9. Types of perpetrators vary by type of maltreatment	Yes
10. Explanation of variation in types of perpetrator by maltreatment type	The perpetrator of human trafficking is any person
11. Child age included in definition of child maltreatment	Yes
12. Specific child age in definition of child maltreatment	Under age 18 with variability under 18
13. Variability of child age by type of maltreatment	Yes - Improper supervision applies to leaving a child age 8 or younger alone without supervision

Table II.B. Child maltreatment definition exemptions

	Response: Yes/No/Unknown
1. Exemption included in state's definition of child maltreatment	
a. Financial issues, financial inability to provide for a child	No
b. Discipline, physical discipline as long as it is reasonable and causes no bodily injury to the child	Yes
c. Safe haven exemption, newborn relinquished or abandoned in accordance with infant safe haven laws	Yes
d. Infant testing positive drugs – medical, newborn with positive test for controlled substance as a result of parent's medical treatment	Yes
e. Religious observance, parent relies on spiritual or religious forms of medical treatment	No
f. Other exemption (specify)	No
2. Safe haven exemption included in state's definition of child maltreatment	
a. Must leave a child at specific safe haven locations	Yes
b. Child must be left by parent or parent's agent	Yes
c. Child must be left by a certain age (specify)	Yes - 7 days old or younger
d. No intent to return	Yes
e. Child must be left unharmed	No
f. Other (specify)	No

Domain R: Reporting child abuse and neglect

Table III.A. Reporting policies

	Response
1. Statewide centralized reporting	No
2. How reporting is decentralized	
a. Each county or region has its own reporting hotline	Yes
b. Some counties or regions have own reporting hotline	No
c. During some times of the day, counties or regions have their own reporting hotline	No
d. Other (specify)	No
3. Standard for reporting child maltreatment	
a. Known abuse and neglect	No
b. Reasonable cause to believe a child was abused or neglected	Yes
4. Universal mandated reporting	Yes
5. Required training for mandated reporters	No
6. Penalties for failure to report	Yes, all adults
7. Specific penalties for failure to report	
a. Criminal charges	Yes
b. Civil charges	Yes
c. Professional licensure suspended or revoked	No
d. Other (specify)	No
8. Penalties for false reporting	No
9. Specific penalties for false reporting	
a. Criminal charges	Logical Skip
b. Civil charges	Logical Skip
c. Professional license suspended or revoked	Logical Skip
d. Other (specify)	Logical Skip
e. Unknown	Logical Skip
10. Immunity for reporters of child abuse and neglect	Yes
11. Information requested at the time of report	
a. Identifying information of child	Yes
b. Location/contact information of child and family	Yes
c. Type/severity of suspected maltreatment	Yes
d. Date of suspected maltreatment	Yes
e. Identifying and other information of alleged perpetrator(s)	Yes
f. Identifying and other information of reporter	Yes
g. Identifying information of child's parents, guardian, or caregiver/caretaker	Yes
h. Identifying and other information of family/household members	Yes
i. Information on prior maltreatment	No
j. Other (specify)	No
12. Anonymity of reporter	
a. All reporters (including mandated reports) can stay anonymous	No

Table III.A (continued)

	Response
b. The general public can be anonymous (mandated reporters cannot remain anonymous)	No
c. Reporters (including mandated reporters) cannot be anonymous	Yes
d. Unknown	No
13. Tribal involvement in accepting reports of tribal cases	
a. Tribes are not involved	No
b. Tribes accept reports (specify tribes)	No
c. Collaboration of tribes with state/local public child welfare agency accept reports (specify tribes)	Yes - Eastern Band of the Cherokee
d. Unknown	No

Table III.B. Types of mandated reporters

	Response	Response	Response
1. Types of mandated reporters	Included in state's definition of mandated reporters	Training required ¹	Subject to penalties for failure to report ²
a. Foster parents	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
b. School staff – teachers	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
c. School bus drivers or other transportation staff	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
d. Before/after school program staff	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
e. Child care staff	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
f. Camp counselors, directors, or administrators	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
g. Athletic coaches or staff	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
h. Medical or dental professionals	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
i. Substance abuse disorder treatment providers	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
j. Mental health, counselors, or other social service professionals	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
k. Police or other law enforcement	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
l. Emergency medical technicians, firefighters, or other emergency personnel	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
m. Judges	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
n. District attorneys or other attorneys	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
o. Guardian ad litem or Court-appointed special advocates	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
p. Other court personnel	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
q. Shelter staff	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
r. Those who work in fields processing or monitoring print, film, or computer images	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
s. Religious clergy	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
t. Volunteers	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
u. Other type of mandated reporter (specify)	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes - Not specified

¹Responses in this column can equal logical skip when the given type of mandated reporter is not included in the state's definition of mandated reporters or when no training is required for mandated reporters (Table III.A.5). Responses in this column can be yes when a state has universal mandated reporting (Table III.A.4) and all mandated reporters require training (Table III.A.5).

Table III.B (*continued*)

²Responses in this column can equal logical skip with the given type of mandated reporter is not included in the state's definition of mandated reporters or when no mandated reporters are subject to penalties (Table III.A.6). Responses in this column can be yes when a state has universal mandated reporting (Table III.A.4) and when all adults or all mandated reporters are subject to penalties (Table III.A.6)

Domain S: Screening reports of child abuse and neglect

Table IV.A. Screening policies

	Response
1. Statewide centralized screening	No
2. How screening is decentralized	
a. Each county or region has its own screening unit	No
b. Some counties or regions have their own screening units	Yes
c. During certain times of the day, counties or regions have their own screening units	No
d. Other (specify)	No
3. Information required to screen in report	
a. Identifying information of child	Yes
b. Location/contact information of child and family	Yes
c. Type/severity of suspected maltreatment	Yes
d. Date of suspected maltreatment	Yes
e. Identifying and other information of alleged perpetrator(s)	Yes
f. Other (specify)	Yes - Information to identify and locate the child(ren), parents, or primary caretaker; Assess the seriousness of the child's situation; Understand the relationship of the reporter to the family and the motives of the reporter
g. Unknown	No

Table IV.B. Screening Decision Process and Activities

	Response	Required cases	Conditions or types of cases
1. Decision processes used during screening			
a. Supervisory review	Yes	Required for all	—
b. Team-based decision	No	Logical Skip	—
c. Individual screener	No	Logical Skip	—
d. Other (specify)	No	Logical Skip	—
e. Unknown	No	—	—
2. Variability of decision process used for screening			
a. Consistent statewide	Yes	—	—
b. Varies locally	No	—	—
c. Unknown	No	—	—
3. Certain activities or information are required as part of screening			
Yes			
4. Activities/information required as part of screening			
a. Safety or risk assessment	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
b. Review agency records for prior involvement with child protective services	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
c. Other (specify)	Yes - Determine the county responsible for completing the CPS assessment	Required for all	Not applicable
5. Types of safety/risk assessment used during screening			
a. Structured Decision Making	Yes	—	—
b. Other (specify)	No	—	—
6. Consistency of screening activities/information			
a. Consistent statewide	Yes	—	—
b. Varies locally (specify)	No	—	—
c. Unknown	No	—	—

Table IV.C. Screeners

	Response
1. Screener of abuse and neglect reports	
a. Case workers (frontline staff)	Yes
b. Case managers (supervisors)	Yes
c. Staff in specialized screening unit	Yes
d. Other (specify)	No
2. Qualifications of screener	
a. Associate's degree	No
b. Bachelor's degree	Yes
c. Master's degree	No
d. Training for screening (specify)	Yes - A minimum of 72 hours of preservice training, plus additional training as needed
e. Years of experience (specify)	No
f. Other (specify)	No
g. Unknown	No
3. Tribal involvement in screening process of tribal cases	
a. Tribes are not involved	No
b. Tribes conduct screening (specify tribes)	No
c. Collaboration of tribes with state/local public child welfare agency (specify tribes)	Yes - Eastern Band of the Cherokee
d. Unknown	No

Domain I: Investigations of child abuse and neglect

Table V.A. Investigations policies

	Response
1. Child maltreatment investigations lead to criminal penalties	Yes
2. Investigator for reports	
a. Case workers (frontline staff)	Yes
b. Case managers (supervisors)	Yes
c. Staff in specialized investigations unit	Yes
d. Law enforcement	Yes
e. Other (specify)	No
3. Qualifications of investigator	
a. Associate's degree	No
b. Bachelor's degree	Yes
c. Master's degree	Yes
d. Training for conducting investigations (specify)	Yes - A minimum of 72 hours of preservice training, plus training specific to investigations
e. Years of experience (specify)	No
f. Other (specify)	No
g. Unknown	No
4. Level of evidence required for substantiation (founded/indicated/confirmed)	
a. Preponderance of evidence	No
b. Credible or substantial evidence	Yes
c. Probable or reasonable cause	No
d. Other (specify)	No

Table V.B. Required activities/information for investigation

	Response	Required cases	Conditions or types of cases
1. Certain activities/information required for the investigation process	Yes		
2. Specific activities or information required for investigation			
a. Review agency records for prior involvement with child protective services	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
b. Visit to child's home	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
c. Interview or observation of child victim	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
d. Interview or observation of other children living in child's home	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
e. Risk or safety assessment	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
f. Evaluation of home environment or home study	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
g. Interviews with child's parents, caregivers, or other adults residing in child's home	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
h. Check of criminal records for adults in home	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
i. Check of child welfare or central registry for prior child maltreatment allegations against adults in home	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
j. Medical evaluation	Yes	Required for some	Physical abuse; Sexual abuse; Neglect; Emotional abuse
k. Mental health evaluation	Yes	Required for some	Physical abuse; Sexual abuse; Neglect; Emotional abuse
l. Interview alleged perpetrator	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
m. Interview reporter or collateral source	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable

Table V.B (continued)

	Response	Required cases	Conditions or types of cases
n. Other (specify)	Yes - Drug screening; Referral for early investigation services	Required for some	Substance-exposed infants; Drug screening, if reason to suspect substance abuse is a safety risk for the child; Referral for early investigation services, for children identified as substance affected infants or who are involved in a substantiated case of abuse, neglect and/or dependency or found in need of services must be screen for referral to the NC Infant Toddler Program (ITP) for early intervention services

Domain W: Child welfare response

Table VI.A. Differential or alternative response

	Response
1. Differential/alternative response	
a. No	No
b. Yes—implemented statewide	Yes
c. Yes—implemented in specific counties or regions (specify)	No
d. Unknown	No
2. Types of maltreatment eligible for differential/alternative response	
a. All types of maltreatment are eligible	No
b. Only certain types of maltreatment are eligible	Yes
c. Unknown	No
3. Types of maltreatment <u>not</u> eligible for differential/alternative response	
a. Cases involving child fatalities	Yes
b. Substance-exposed infants	Yes
c. Physical abuse	Yes
d. Sexual abuse	Yes
e. Neglect	No
f. Abandoned infants	Yes
g. Other (specify)	Yes - The suspected or confirmed presence of a methamphetamine lab where children are exposed; A child less than a year who has been shaken or subjected to spanking, hitting, or other form of corporal punishment
4. Eligibility for differential/alternative response determined by a risk determination	
a. No	Yes
b. Yes	No
c. Other (specify)	No
d. Unknown	No
5. Tools used to determine risk for differential/alternative response	Logical Skip
6. Risk level eligible for differential/alternative response	
a. No risk	Logical Skip
b. Low risk	Logical Skip
c. Moderate risk	Logical Skip
d. Other (specify)	Logical Skip
e. Unknown	Logical Skip
7. Other types of cases or conditions eligible for differential/alternative response	
a. No immediate safety concerns	No
b. No prior reports of child abuse or neglect	No

Table VI.A (continued)

	Response
c. Other (specify)	Yes - Child is not eligible for differential response if they are any of the following: (1) in custody of county child welfare agency residing in family foster homes or residential facilities, (2) a child taken into protective custody by physician or law enforcement, (3) a child hospitalized (admitted to hospital) due to suspected abuse and/or neglect
8. When is determination made for differential/alternative response	
a. At time of screening to screen-out to differential response	No
b. After a report is screened-in	Yes
c. Other (specify)	No
9. Referrals to community services for cases engaged in differential response	
a. No	No
b. Yes—for all cases	No
c. Yes—when families express interest	Yes
d. Yes—when there is a determination of risk	Yes
e. Yes—other (specify)	No

Table VI.B. In-home services and foster care

	Response
1. In-home services provided for unsubstantiated cases to maintain intact families	
a. No	Yes
b. Yes—implemented statewide	No
c. Yes—implemented in specific counties or regions	No
d. Unknown	No
2. In-home services provided post reunification	
a. No	No
b. Yes—implemented statewide	Yes
c. Yes—implemented in specific counties or regions	No
d. Unknown	No
3. Tribal involvement in foster care for tribal cases	
a. Tribes do not provide foster care	No
b. Tribes provide foster care (specify tribes)	Yes - Eastern Band of the Cherokee
c. Unknown	No
4. Foster care extension for those older than 18 years	Yes
5. Age youth are allowed to remain in extended foster care	
a. Age 21	Yes
b. Other (specify)	No
6. Foster care case management staff	
a. State/county public agency staff	Yes
b. Contracted provider staff	No
c. Tribal agency staff	Yes
d. Unknown	No
7. Qualifications of foster care case managers	
a. Associate's degree	No
b. Bachelor's degree	Yes
c. Master's degree	Yes
d. Training for case management (specify)	Yes - A minimum of 72 hours of preservice training, plus additional training as needed; Foster care workers must complete a minimum of 39 hours of additional training
e. Years of experience (specify)	No
f. Other (specify)	No
g. Unknown	No

Table VI.C. Permanency

	Response
1. Kinship guardianship as a permanency option	Yes
2. Subsidized guardianship	Yes
3. Subsidized kinship guardianship	Yes
4. Subsidized adoption	Yes

Domain C: Child welfare system context

Table VII.A. Child welfare system context

	Response
1. State or county-administered child welfare system	
a. State-administered	No
b. County-administered	Yes
c. Hybrid (partially administered by the state and partially administered by the counties)	No
d. Unknown	No
2. State operates under legal consent decree or other court-ordered monitoring	No

Supplemental Notes on State

Reporting

Although it is not the responsibility of the Division of Social Services to train, some mandated reporters are required to have specific training, such as the Guardian ad Litem or legal and medical personnel.

Screening

The maltreatment screening tool used is part of structured decision making.

Investigations

Some counties, such as Wake County, have a specialized investigations unit (such as a Serious Injury Sex Abuse Team), but not all counties do.

State Statutes and Policy Documentation Sources

Criminal Law, N.C. Rev. Stat. § 14 (2019).

Criminal Procedure Act, N.C. Rev. Stat. § 15-A (2019).

General Assembly of North Carolina (2019). *Senate Bill 199: An act to protect children from sexual abuse and to strengthen and modernize sexual assault laws*. Retrieved September 4, 2019, from <https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2019/Bills/Senate/PDF/S199v9.pdf>

Inspection and Licensing of Facilities, N.C. Rev. Stat. § 131-D (2019).

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Juvenile Code, N.C. Rev. Stat. § 7-B (2019).

North Carolina Division of Social Services. (2008). *Safe surrender*. Retrieved June 5, 2020, from <https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/info/olm/manuals/dss/>

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North Carolina Division of Social Services. (2019). *Cross function topics: Policy, protocol, and guidance: Special legal considerations (MEPA, ICWA, Mexican Heritage)*. Retrieved September 4, 2019, from <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/child-welfare/policy-manuals/modified-manual-1/cross-function-2.pdf>

North Carolina Division of Social Services. (2019). *Permanency planning policy, protocol, and guidance: Foster care 18 to 21*. Retrieved August 28, 2019, from <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/child-welfare/policy-manuals/modified-manual-1/permanency-planning-1.pdf>

North Carolina Division of Social Services. (2019). *Permanency planning policy, protocol, and guidance: Placement decision making: Maintaining one single, stable placement*. Retrieved August 28, 2019, from <https://policies.ncdhhs.gov/divisional/social-services/child-welfare/policy-manuals/modified-manual-1/permanency-planning-1.pdf>

Social Services, N.C. Rev. Stat. § 108-A (2019).