

SCAN Policies Database State Profile 2023: Arkansas

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, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Mathematica leads this project 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 that can be used for analysis. The SCAN Policies Database is a resource for researchers, analysts, child welfare agency staff, and others interested in examining differences between states in their definitions and policies on child maltreatment and how they change over time.

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. The SCAN Policies Database team gathered this information through a document collection, review, and coding process. The team obtained input from states on data collection through a confirmation and verification process. More information about these data collection procedures can be found in the data user's guide and data collection protocol, accessible at <https://www.scanpoliciesdatabase.com/data-use-resources>.

The SCAN Policies Database 2023 represents data collected, reviewed, and verified between June 2023 and July 2024. The data reflect the state definitions and policies for the calendar year 2023. The scope of topics in the 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 SCAN Policies 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 begins with a letter prefix identifying the domain for each variable. The six domains with the identifying protocol number prefix are listed below.

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 is a summary of the information collected about the definitions and policies for the identified state. Each of the six domains contain a set of tables that depict the state's information for all variables within that domain.

The state profile presents data for each variable with “yes,” “no,” “unknown,” or other response, as appropriate. The response of “unknown” appears for topics that could not be located from the state's available resources or verified with that state. In some cases, “logical skip” appears when a question was not applicable to a particular state, given a related response on a preceding question. Some information was not included in the state profile to ensure alignment with Executive Orders or other Presidential Actions.

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. The data user's guide includes appendices, including information about changes to the data between 2021 and 2023 that reflect changes to state laws and policies during that time period. There is one data user's guide that is updated and applicable for all rounds of data collection for the SCAN Policies Database.
- **Codebook:** The codebook provides information about each variable in the data set, including variable names, labels, definitions, protocol number, variable type, and frequencies. There are separate codebooks to summarize the data from each round of data collection.
- **Errata statement:** The errata statement presents corrections applied to previous rounds of data for the SCAN Policies Database. Starting in 2023, there is one errata statement that is updated and applicable for all rounds of data collection for the SCAN Policies Database.
- **Data collection protocol:** The protocol has the questions used to collect information about states' laws and policies as part of the data review and coding process for each round of data collection. There are separate data collection protocols for each round of data collection for the SCAN Policies Database.

These data use resources can be found on the SCAN Policies Database website (<https://www.scanpoliciesdatabase.com/data-use-resources>) or from the 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. State Identifying information

	Response
State abbreviation	AR
State Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) code	05
Census region code	South
State verified coding of information	Yes
State confirmed documents reviewed	Yes
State definitions and policies for calendar year	2023
Data version	2023v1

Domain D: Definitions of child maltreatment

Table D.I. 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	Yes
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	Yes
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	No
x. Factitious disorder by proxy	Yes
y. Institutional abuse/neglect	No
z. Other definition (specify)	No
2. Subtypes of maltreatment included in state definition	
a. Subtypes of maltreatment considered abuse	Abuse includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, exposure to a drug lab, illegal substances, trafficking, female genital mutilation, and Munchausen syndrome by proxy (Factitious disorder by proxy)
b. Subtypes of maltreatment considered neglect	Neglect includes failure to protect, malnourishment, inadequate clothing/shelter, medical neglect, injurious environment, inadequate supervision, educational neglect, prenatal exposure, injurious environment, and abandonment

Table D.1 (*continued*)

	Response
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 person	Yes
b. Parent	Yes
c. Guardian	Yes
d. Caregiver/caretaker	Yes
e. Family member or parent's paramour	Yes
f. Household member	Yes
g. Person responsible for child	Yes
h. Other (specify)	No
9. Types of perpetrators vary by type of maltreatment	Yes
10. Explanation of variation in types of perpetrator by maltreatment type	For sexual abuse, the perpetrator can include any person (including teens) as well as caretakers
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 - The criteria for what constitutes sexual abuse varies by type of perpetrator, age of perpetrator, and depending on the perpetrator's age, the child's age varies from under age 15 to under age 18; Educational neglect applies to children between the ages of 6 and 17; Shaking a child applies to children 3 and younger; Striking a child on the face or head applies to children 6 and younger

Table D.II. Child maltreatment definition exemptions

	Response
1. Exemption included in state's definition of child maltreatment	
a. Financial issues, financial inability to provide for a child	Yes
b. Discipline; physical discipline, if 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 and safe surrender laws	Yes
d. Infant testing positive for drugs – medical; newborn with positive test for controlled substance due to parent's medical treatment	Yes
e. Religious observance; parent relies on spiritual or religious forms of medical treatment	Yes
f. Other exemption (specify)	Yes - A child maltreatment investigation will have an individual finding of 'true but exempt,' which means the offender's name will not be placed in the child maltreatment central registry for underaged juvenile offenders if there is an overall true finding of sexual abuse by a child under the age of 14 to another child; Prenatal exposure to drugs or alcohol is considered 'true but exempt' through Garret's Law, resulting in a protective services case to create a plan of safe care; When a child suffers transient pain or minor temporary marks as the result of an appropriate restraint
2. Safe haven exemption included in state's definition of child maltreatment	
a. Must leave a child at specific safe haven locations or designated providers	Yes
b. Child must be left by parent or parent's agent	Yes
c. Child must be left by a certain age (specify)	Yes - 30 days old or younger
d. No intent to return	Yes
e. Child must be left unharmed	No
f. Other (specify)	No

Table D.III. Definitions and response for child fatalities and near-fatalities cases

	Response
1. State's definition of fatalities or deaths caused by child maltreatment	
a. Not specified or defined	No
b. Injury from abuse or neglect caused death	No
c. Abuse or neglect was contributing factor in death	Yes
d. Death of child who was in child welfare custody or foster care	No
e. Other (specify)	No
2. State conducts case reviews with a child fatality review team or a similar review process for fatalities caused by child abuse or neglect	Yes, reviews are required for all or some cases
3. State's definition of near-fatalities or near-deaths caused by child maltreatment	
a. Not specified or defined	No
b. General reference to a serious or critical condition or injury that is life threatening with a substantial risk of death	Yes
c. Specific injury or specific medical treatment or intervention (specify)	No
d. Other (specify)	No
4. State conducts case reviews with a review team or similar review process for near-fatalities caused by child abuse or neglect	Yes, reviews are required for all or some cases

Domain R: Reporting child abuse and neglect

Table R.I. Reporting policies

	Response
1. Statewide centralized reporting	Yes
2. Decentralized reporting	Logical Skip
3. Standard for reporting child maltreatment	
a. Known abuse and neglect	Yes
b. Reasonable cause to believe a child was abused or neglected	Yes
4. Universal mandated reporting	No
5. Required training for mandated reporters	Yes, some mandated reporters
6. Penalties for failure to report	Yes, all mandated reporters
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	Yes
9. Specific penalties for false reporting	
a. Criminal charges	Yes
b. Civil charges	No
c. Professional license suspended or revoked	No
d. Other (specify)	No
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 and contact information of child and family	Yes
c. Type and severity of suspected maltreatment	Yes
d. Date of suspected maltreatment	No
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	No
h. Identifying and other information of family or household members	No
i. Information on prior maltreatment	No
j. Other (specify)	Yes - Potential danger to staff assessing the report; Current risk of harm to the child; Identity and location of possible witnesses or persons knowledgeable about the alleged child maltreatment; Licensing authority and facility involved if applicable

Table R.I (continued)

	Response
12. Anonymity of reporter	No reporters can be anonymous
13. Tribal involvement in state or local public child welfare agency's process to accept reports of Tribal cases	No, there are no Tribes within the state
14. State requires all notifications of substance-exposed newborns (SENs) to be submitted as reports of child maltreatment	
a. State does not require all cases of SENs to be reported for child maltreatment, but they could be reported if they meet certain criteria	Yes
b. State requires all SENs to be reported as child maltreatment	No
c. Other (specify)	No
15. Accepts reports of risk without an allegation of child maltreatment (risk-only reports)	No

Table R.II. 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	No	Yes
b. School staff - teachers	Yes	Yes	Yes
c. School bus drivers or other transportation staff	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
d. Before- /after-school program staff	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
e. Child care staff	Yes	No	Yes
f. Camp counselors, directors, or administrators	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
g. Athletic coaches or staff	Yes	Yes	Yes
h. Medical or dental professionals	Yes	No	Yes
i. Substance abuse disorder treatment providers	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
j. Mental health, counselors, or other social service professionals	Yes	No	Yes
k. Police or other law enforcement	Yes	No	Yes
l. Emergency medical technicians, firefighters, or other emergency personnel	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
m. Judges	Yes	No	Yes
n. District attorneys or other attorneys	Yes	No	Yes
o. Guardians ad litem or court-appointed special advocates	Yes	No	Yes
p. Other court personnel	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
q. Shelter staff	Yes	No	Yes
r. Those who work in fields processing or monitoring print, film, or computer images	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
s. Religious clergy	Yes	No	Yes
t. Volunteers	Yes	No	Yes
u. Coroners or medical examiners	Yes	No	Yes
v. Staff or contractors of state and county agencies	Yes	No	Yes

Table R.II (*continued*)

	Response	Response	Response
w. Other type of mandated reporter (specify)	Yes - Domestic abuse advocate; Employee of child advocacy center or child safety center; Sexual abuse advocate; Rape crisis advocate; A child abuse advocate; Victim or witness coordinator; Victim assistance professional; An individual employed by a nonprofit charitable organization other than a nonprofit hospital; Child Welfare Ombudsman; A coach or director of a public or private nonathletic organization, team, or club; A licensed massage therapist; A person who is 18 years of age or older and observes abuse, sexual abuse, or sexual exploitation of a child	No	Yes - Domestic abuse advocate; Employee of child advocacy center or child safety center; Sexual abuse advocate; Rape crisis advocate; A child abuse advocate; Victim or witness coordinator; Victim assistance professional; An individual employed by a nonprofit charitable organization other than a nonprofit hospital; Child Welfare Ombudsman; A coach or director of a public or private nonathletic organization, team, or club; A licensed massage therapist; A person who is 18 years of age or older and observes abuse, sexual abuse, or sexual exploitation of a child

¹ Responses 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 R.II). Responses in this column can be yes when a state has universal mandated reporting (Table R.I) and all mandated reporters require training (Table R.II).

² Responses 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 mandated reporters are subject to penalties (Table R.I). Responses in this column can be yes when a state has universal mandated reporting (Table R.I) and when all adults or all mandated reporters are subject to penalties (Table R.I).

Domain S: Screening reports of child abuse and neglect

Table S.I. Screening policies

	Response
1. Statewide centralized screening	Yes
2. How screening is decentralized	Logical Skip
3. Information required to screen in report	
a. Identifying information of child	No
b. Location and contact information of child and family	Yes
c. Type and severity of suspected maltreatment	Yes
d. Date of suspected maltreatment	No
e. Identifying and other information of alleged perpetrator(s)	No
f. Other (specify)	Yes - Current risk of harm to the child; Identity and location of possible witnesses or persons knowledgeable about the alleged child maltreatment; Licensing authority and facility involved, if applicable; Potential danger to staff assessing the report

Table S.II. 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 some	—
b. Team-based decision	No	Logical Skip	—
c. Individual screener	Yes	Required for all	—
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	—	—
3. Certain activities or information are required as part of screening	Yes		
4. Activities or 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)	No	Logical Skip	Not applicable
5. Types of safety or 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	—	—

Table S.III. Screeners

	Response
1. Screener of abuse and neglect reports	
a. Caseworkers (frontline staff)	No
b. Case managers (supervisors)	No
c. Staff in specialized screening unit	Yes
d. Other (specify)	No
2. Qualifications of screener	
a. Associate's degree	No
b. Bachelor's degree	No
c. Master's degree	No
d. Training for screening (specify)	Yes - In-house training (not specified)
e. Years of experience (specify)	Yes - 2 years of customer service experience
f. Other (specify)	Yes - High school diploma
3. Degree in social work or related field for screeners	Logical Skip
4. Tribal involvement in state or local public child welfare agency's process to screen Tribal cases	No, there are no Tribes within the state

Domain I: Investigations of child abuse and neglect

Table I.I. Investigations policies

	Response
1. Findings from child maltreatment investigations can lead to criminal penalties	Yes
2. Investigator for reports	
a. Caseworkers (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	No
d. Training for conducting investigations (specify)	Yes - New staff training occurs within the first year and includes courses on foundational practices, dynamics of child maltreatment, assessment strategies, family engagement, safety, permanency and well-being, and additional concentrations
e. Years of experience (specify)	No
f. Other (specify)	No
4. Degree in social work or related field for investigators	Yes, required
5. Level of evidence required for substantiation (founded/indicated/confirmed)	Preponderance of evidence
6. Investigation determination can result in an "inconclusive" finding	No

Table I.II. Required activities/information for investigation

	Response	Required cases	Conditions or types of cases
1. Certain activities or 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	No	Logical Skip	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; Burns, fractures or dislocations in children under three years of age; Burns, fractures or dislocations in children of any age if unexplained or implausibly explained; Burns, bruises, or fractures in non-ambulatory children; Reasonable suspicion that vaginal or oral penetration has occurred; Cases involving sexually transmitted diseases in prepubescent children; Cases of malnutrition and failure to thrive; Cases of serious medical neglect; Cases of alleged head and abdominal injuries (regardless of presence of visible injury); Reports in which the child has an observable injury, the caretaker admits responsibility for the injury and there is reason to believe that there are internal injuries or other injuries which have occurred in the past

Table I.II (continued)

	Response	Required cases	Conditions or types of cases
k. Mental health evaluation	Yes	Required for some	Impairment of the intellectual, emotional, or psychological development as evidenced by observable and substantial reduction in the child's ability to function within a normal range of performance and behavior; Suffered a substantial impairment in the ability to function as a result of a specific, non-accidental action or interaction committed by a parent or caretaker
l. Interview alleged perpetrator	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable
m. Interview reporter or collateral source	Yes	Required for some	The investigator may interview collateral sources, as appropriate, including teachers, neighbors, witnesses, and the reporter
n. Other (specify)	No	Logical Skip	Not applicable

Domain W: Child welfare response

Table W.I. Differential or alternative response

	Response
1. Differential/alternative response	Yes--implemented statewide
2. Types of maltreatment eligible for differential/alternative response	Only certain types of maltreatment are eligible
3. Types of maltreatment <u>not</u> eligible for differential/alternative response	
a. Cases involving child fatalities and near-fatalities	Yes
b. Substance-exposed infants	Yes
c. Physical abuse	Yes
d. Sexual abuse	Yes
e. Neglect	Yes
f. Abandoned infants	Yes
g. Other (specify)	No
4. Eligibility for differential/alternative response determined by a risk determination	Yes
5. Tools used to determine risk for differential/alternative response	Yes - Health and Safety Assessment
6. Risk level eligible for differential/alternative response	
a. No risk	Yes
b. Low risk	Yes
c. Moderate risk	No
d. Other (specify)	No
e. Unknown	No
7. Other types of cases or conditions eligible for differential/alternative response	
a. No other cases or conditions	No
b. No immediate safety concerns	Yes
c. No or few prior reports of child abuse or neglect	No
d. Other (specify)	Yes - All of the following factors must be present for a report to be assigned to Differential Response: (1) identifying information for the family members and their current address or a means to locate them is known at the time of the report, (2) the alleged perpetrators are parents, birth or adoptive, legal guardians, custodians, or any person standing in loco parentis, (3) the family has no pending investigation or open protective services or supportive services case, (4) the alleged victims, siblings or other household members, are not currently in the care and custody of Arkansas Department of Children and Family Services or wards of the court, (5) protective custody of the children has not been taken or required in the current investigation

Table W.I (continued)

	Response
8. When is determination made for differential/alternative response	
a. At the time of screening to assign 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	Yes
c. Yes - when families express interest	No
d. Yes - when there is a determination of risk	No
e. Yes - other (specify)	No

Table W.II. In-home services, foster care, and permanency

	Response
1. In-home services provided for unsubstantiated cases to maintain intact families	Yes--implemented statewide
2. In-home services provided post reunification	Yes--implemented statewide
3. Permanency	
a. Kinship guardianship as a permanency option	Yes
b. Subsidized guardianship	Yes
c. Subsidized kinship guardianship	Yes
d. Subsidized adoption	Yes
4. Foster care case management staff	
a. State/county public agency staff	Yes
b. Contracted provider staff	No
c. Tribal agency staff	No
5. Qualifications of foster care case managers	
a. Associate degree	No
b. Bachelor's degree	Yes
c. Master's degree	No
d. Training for case management (specify)	Yes - New staff training occurs within the first year and includes courses on foundational practices, dynamics of child maltreatment, assessment strategies, family engagement, safety, permanency and well-being, and additional concentrations
e. Years of experience (specify)	Yes - 5 years of child welfare experience can substitute for the degree requirement
f. Other (specify)	No
6. Degree in social work or related field for foster care case managers	Yes, required

Table W.III. Tribal foster care and Tribes that directly operate Title IV-E programs through an agreement with HHS

	Response
1. Tribal involvement in foster care for Tribal cases	Yes, Tribes within state provide foster care - Cherokee Nation
2. Tribes directly operate a Title IV-E program through an agreement with US HHS	No
3. Number of Tribes that directly operate a Title IV-E program through an agreement with US HHS	Logical Skip
4. Specify Tribes that directly operate a Title IV-E program through an agreement with US HHS	Not applicable

Table W.IV. Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)

	Response
1. Federal ICWA requirements codified in state law	No
2. Federal ICWA requirements that are codified in state law	Logical Skip
3. State law codifying ICWA includes state-recognized Tribes	Logical Skip

Table W.V. Extended foster care

	Response
1. Foster care extension for youth older than age 18	Yes
2. Age youth are allowed to remain in extended foster care	Up to age 21 (until 21st birthday)
3. Youth must proactively request, provide consent, or opt-in to receive extended foster care	Yes
4. Criteria for youth to remain in extended foster care	
a. There are no criteria to remain in extended foster care	No
b. Enrolled in school	Yes
c. Employed	Yes
d. Participating in workforce development/training program	Yes
e. Comply with independent living/self-sufficiency plan	Yes
f. Receive independent living or other services	No
g. Medical condition exemption	Yes
h. Other (specify)	No
5. Reentry to extended foster care allowed for youth older than age 18 who aged out or left foster care	Yes
6. Conditions for youth to reenter extended foster care	
a. Youth consent or sign a voluntary placement agreement	Yes
b. Youth develop an independent living plan	No
c. It is in the best interest of the youth	No
d. Other (specify)	No

Domain C: Child welfare system context

Table C.I. Child welfare system context

	Response
1. State- or county-administered child welfare system	State-administered
2. State operates under legal consent decree or other court-ordered monitoring	No

Supplemental Notes on State

Definitions

Reviews are required for near fatalities and fatalities of children who are receiving services or who have recently received services from the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

Reporting

Failure to notify by a mandated reporter does not apply to a person who is both a mandated reporter and victim of any of the following committed by the same offender whom the person observed subjecting a child to abuse, sexual abuse, or sexual exploitation: (1) domestic abuse, (2) an offense involving physical injury, the threat or risk of physical injury, or apprehension of imminent physical injury, or (3) a sex offense.

Clergy members are not required to report when they (1) have acquired knowledge of suspected child maltreatment through communications required to be kept confidential pursuant to the religious discipline of the relevant denomination or faith, or (2) received the knowledge of the suspected child maltreatment from the alleged offender in the context of a statement of admission.

Volunteer includes the following:

1. Domestic violence shelter volunteer,
2. A person who is at least 21 years of age and volunteers in a public school or private school,
3. Sexual abuse volunteer who works with a victim of sexual abuse as an employee of a community-based victim service or mental health agency,
4. Rape crisis volunteer,
5. Child abuse volunteer who works with a child victim of abuse or maltreatment as an employee of a community-based victim service or a mental health agency,
6. Victim assistance volunteer, and
7. Reproductive healthcare facility volunteer.

Screening

After screening in report, the Child Abuse Hotline Unit determines the appropriate investigating agency (Crimes Against Children Division (CACD) or DCFS) or whether a referral to the DCFS Prevention and Reunification Unit is needed.

DCFS Prevention and Reunification Unit conducts secondary reviews of hotline reports that do not contain reporter information or collateral information required in policy

Investigations

DCFS is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of children in Arkansas, and the Arkansas State Police CACD collaborates with DCFS to conduct investigations of child maltreatment allegations.

The investigator has the right to obtain a criminal background check, including a fingerprint-based check in any national crime database, on any subject of the report.

Child welfare response

The following are specific types of cases that are ineligible for differential response:

1. Inadequate supervision reports involving a child younger than age 5, or a child age 5 or older with a physical or mental disability that limits the child's skills in the areas of communication, self-care, self-direction, and safety;
2. Educational neglect reports involving a child who was never enrolled in an educational program;
3. Environmental neglect reports involving a child younger than age 3, and those situations in which the hotline assesses an immediate danger to the child's health or physical well-being based on the severity;
4. Lock out reports involving a child younger than age 10 and those situations in which the hotline assesses an immediate danger to the child's health or physical well-being based on the severity;
5. Medical neglect reports involving a child younger than age 13 or a child with a severe medical condition that could become serious enough to cause long-term harm to the child if untreated will be assigned to the investigative pathway;
6. Reports of human bites, sprains or dislocations, striking a child age 7 or older on the face, striking a child with a closed fist, and throwing a child when these allegations occurred less than one year ago or if the caller to the hotline can verify an injury either through physical signs (for example, scarring), medical information, dated photographs, etc.

There are no federally or state-recognized Tribes in Arkansas. Cherokee Nation operates open resource homes in the state.

State Statutes and Policy Documentation Sources

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Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Children and Family Services. (2020).
Child Maltreatment Investigation Determination Guide.

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Policy and procedure manual.

Arkansas Office of Personnel Management. (2019). Family Service Worker [Job description].

Arkansas State Police and Division of Children and Family Services. (2023). SDM Hotline
Assessment Procedures Manual.

Child Maltreatment Act, Ark. Code Ann. § 12-18 (2023).

Disposition of Offenders, Ark. Code Ann. § 5-4 (2019).

General Provisions, Ark. Code Ann. § 9-8 (2019).

Human Trafficking Act of 2013, Ark. Code Ann. § 5-18 (2019).

Juvenile Courts and Proceedings, Ark. Code Ann. § 9-27 (2021).

Offenses Against Children or Incompetents, Ark. Code Ann. §5-27 (2019).

Postsecondary Institutions Generally, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-61 (2019).