

SCAN Policies Database State Profile 2023: Colorado

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	CO
State Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) code	08
Census region code	West
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	No
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	Yes
x. Factitious disorder by proxy	No
y. Institutional abuse/neglect	Yes
z. Other definition (specify)	Yes - Third-party abuse and/or neglect
2. Subtypes of maltreatment included in state definition	
a. Subtypes of maltreatment considered abuse	Abuse includes physical abuse, malnutrition, failure to thrive, subdural hematoma (shaken baby syndrome), sexual abuse, inadequate clothing, inadequate shelter, inadequate medical care, parental responsibilities, emotional abuse, presence near or access to controlled substance (including methamphetamine), prenatal exposure to controlled substance, human trafficking of a minor for involuntary or sexual servitude, failure to protect, punishment, and genital mutilation

Table D.1 (*continued*)

	Response
b. Subtypes of maltreatment considered neglect	Neglect includes physical abuse, malnutrition, failure to thrive, subdural hematoma (shaken baby syndrome), sexual abuse, inadequate clothing, inadequate shelter, inadequate medical care, parental responsibilities, emotional abuse, presence near or access to controlled substance (including methamphetamine), prenatal exposure to controlled substance, human trafficking of a minor for involuntary or sexual servitude, failure to protect, punishment, and genital mutilation
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

Table D.I (continued)

	Response
9. Types of perpetrators vary by type of maltreatment	Yes
10. Explanation of variation in types of perpetrator by maltreatment type	For institutional abuse, the perpetrators are specific to any public or private facility in the state that provides childcare out of the home, supervision, or maintenance; For third-party abuse and/or neglect, the perpetrator is any person who is not a parent, stepparent, guardian, legal custodian, spousal equivalent, or any other person not included in the definition of intrafamilial abuse or institutional abuse
11. Child age included in definition of child maltreatment	Yes
12. Specific child age in definition of child maltreatment	Under age 18 with variability over 18
13. Variability of child age by type of maltreatment	Yes - Institutional abuse applies to persons under 21 years of age

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	No
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 - For exemption to involuntary servitude, accepted childrearing practices of the culture in which the child participates including, but not limited to, accepted work-related practices of agricultural communities must be considered; Genital mutilation is exempted if it is necessary to preserve the health of the child on whom it is performed, or it is performed on a child who is in labor or who has just given birth when there is a medical need. In both instances, it must be performed by a person licensed to practice medicine
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 - 72 hours 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	Yes
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	Other - Reports of known or suspected child abuse or neglect are made to the county department, the local law enforcement agency, or through the child abuse reporting hotline system; There is a statewide hotline system that routes calls to appropriate county department. Some counties or regions also have their own reporting hotline.
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	No
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	Yes
d. Other (specify)	No
8. Penalties for false reporting	Yes
9. Specific penalties for false reporting	
a. Criminal charges	Yes
b. Civil charges	Yes
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	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 or household members	Yes
i. Information on prior maltreatment	Yes

Table R.I (continued)

	Response
j. Other (specify)	Yes - The nature of any other environmental hazards in the home which may impact child(ren)/youth or worker safety; The name and contact information of any individuals who may have information about the referral, and/or the identity and contact information of collateral agencies and individuals involved with the family; Date and time referral was received; Family strengths and supports, and/or other protective factors or actions taken
12. Anonymity of reporter	General public (not mandated reporters) can remain anonymous
13. Tribal involvement in state or local public child welfare agency's process to accept reports of Tribal cases	Yes, Tribes directly accept reports and collaborate with state/local public child welfare agency - The Southern Ute Indian Tribe and Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
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	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	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
g. Athletic coaches or staff	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
h. Medical or dental professionals	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
i. Substance abuse disorder treatment providers	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
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	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
n. District attorneys or other attorneys	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
o. Guardians ad litem or court-appointed special advocates	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
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	No	Logical Skip	Logical Skip
u. Coroners or medical examiners	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes
v. Staff or contractors of state and county agencies	Yes	Logical Skip	Yes

Table R.II (*continued*)

	Response	Response	Response
w. Other type of mandated reporter (specify)	Yes - Christian science practitioner; Social worker or worker in any facility or agency that is licensed or certified; Veterinarian; Victim's advocate; Officers and agents of the State Bureau of Animal Protection; Animal control officers; The child protection ombudsman; Educator providing services through a federal special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children	Logical Skip	Yes - Christian science practitioner; Social worker or worker in any facility or agency that is licensed or certified; Veterinarian; Victim's advocate; Officers and agents of the State Bureau of Animal Protection; Animal control officers; The child protection ombudsman; Educator providing services through a federal special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children

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	No
2. How screening is decentralized	Each county/region has own screening unit
3. Information required to screen in report	
a. Identifying information of child	No
b. Location and contact information of child and family	No
c. Type and severity of suspected maltreatment	No
d. Date of suspected maltreatment	No
e. Identifying and other information of alleged perpetrator(s)	No
f. Other (specify)	Yes - State does not require any information to screen in a 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 all	—
b. Team-based decision	Yes	Required for some	—
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	—	—
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 some	Cases screened by Review, Evaluate and Direct (RED) Teams, including cases that: (1) Have a child welfare history that includes three or more assessments within the past year regarding the household members in the current referral; (2) A narrative that identifies the alleged victim children as a child with a vulnerability; (3) Two or more screened out non-duplicative referrals with no assessment in the prior twelve months; (4) Criminal history that includes felony and/or misdemeanor convictions related to child abuse and/or neglect, including crimes of violence, domestic violence, and/or unlawful sexual behavior regarding the household members in the current referral; or (5) If there is a there is disagreement in the screening determination between two certified child welfare staff
b. Review agency records for prior involvement with child protective services	Yes	Required for all	Not applicable

Table S.II (*continued*)

	Response	Required cases	Conditions or types of cases
c. Other (specify)	Yes - Review child/youth's vulnerability; Report allegation of sex trafficking to local law enforcement agency	Required for all	Not applicable
5. Types of safety or risk assessment used during screening			
a. Structured decision making	No	—	—
b. Other (specify)	Yes - Colorado uses a RED Team framework that encompasses risk and safety assessments	—	—
6. Consistency of screening activities/information			
a. Consistent statewide	No	—	—
b. Varies locally (specify)	Yes - State screening policies specify circumstances that require immediate response, other conditions that require RED team review, and RED team exclusionary conditions. However, counties can vary as to whether they follow RED team exclusionary criteria and may include other activities at their discretion	—	—

Table S.III. Screeners

	Response
1. Screener of abuse and neglect reports	
a. Caseworkers (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	Yes
d. Training for screening (specify)	Yes - Pre-service training for new social caseworkers (not required for newly hired social caseworkers who have been certified as a social caseworker in Colorado within the previous 4 years), complete all required transfer of learning exercises with the assistance of a supervisor or supervisor's designee, demonstrate competence through pre- and post-tests, trainer observation, and verification by the county department as outlined in the request for certification, receive dual certification as a hotline worker or hotline supervisor, and complete 40 hours of in-service training required each state fiscal year with a minimum of 16 of those hours focused in the area of the social caseworker/supervisor primary job responsibilities to be re-certified as a social caseworker/supervisor; Social casework supervisors must complete the pre-service training for new social caseworker supervisors
e. Years of experience (specify)	Yes - For social caseworkers: Professional, internship, or volunteer work experience in a human services related agency. For social casework supervisors: Three years of professional, internship, or volunteer work experience in a human services related agency if staff person has a bachelor's degree; Or two years of professional, internship, or volunteer work experience in a human services related agency if staff person has a master's degree
f. Other (specify)	No
3. Degree in social work or related field for screeners	Other - Bachelor's degree must include course work related to the job responsibilities of a child welfare social caseworker or supervisor, such as the development of human behavior, child development, family intervention techniques, diagnostic measures, or therapeutic techniques; A master's degree must be in social work or other human behavioral science field
4. Tribal involvement in state or local public child welfare agency's process to screen Tribal cases	Yes, Tribes directly conduct screening and collaborate with state/local public child welfare agency - The Southern Ute Indian Tribe and Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

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)	No
c. Staff in specialized investigations unit	No
d. Law enforcement	Yes
e. Other (specify)	Yes - The county department coordinates all investigations, including assigning persons trained to conduct the investigation; The investigation may include other appropriate agencies (state resources do not specify agencies); Institutional abuse may be investigated by an agency that contracts with the state and has staff trained to conduct investigations, the county departments, or any other entity the state department deems appropriate
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 - Pre-service training for new social caseworkers (not required for newly hired social caseworkers who have been certified as a social caseworker in Colorado within the previous 4 years), complete all required transfer of learning exercises with the assistance of a supervisor, or supervisor's designee, demonstrate competence through pre- and post-tests, trainer observation, and verification by the county department as outlined in the request for certification, receive dual certification as a hotline worker, and complete 40 hours of in-service training required each state fiscal year with a minimum of 16 of those hours focused in the area of the social caseworker's primary job responsibilities to be re-certified as a social caseworker
e. Years of experience (specify)	Yes - Professional, internship, or volunteer work experience in a human services related agency
f. Other (specify)	No
4. Degree in social work or related field for investigators	Other - Bachelor's degree must include course work related to the job responsibilities of a child welfare social caseworker, such as the development of human behavior, child development, family intervention techniques, diagnostic measures, or therapeutic techniques
5. Level of evidence required for substantiation (founded/indicated/confirmed)	Preponderance of evidence
6. Investigation determination can result in an "inconclusive" finding	Yes

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 some	The home conditions are the subject of the assessment; Information obtained in the interview process indicates assessment of the home environment is necessary due to current or impending danger
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 some	The home conditions are the subject of the assessment; Information obtained in the interview process indicates assessment of the home environment is necessary due to current or impending danger
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	No	Logical Skip	Not applicable
k. Mental health evaluation	No	Logical Skip	Not applicable
l. Interview alleged perpetrator	Yes	Required for some	Intrafamilial and institutional abuse and/or neglect cases
m. Interview reporter or collateral source	Yes	Required for some	Intrafamilial and institutional abuse and/or neglect cases

Table I.II (*continued*)

	Response	Required cases	Conditions or types of cases
n. Other (specify)	Yes - Credibility and source of the report; The nature, extent, and cause of the abuse or neglect; The identity of the person responsible for such abuse or neglect; The names and conditions of any other children living in the same place; The environment and the relationship of any children to the person responsible for the suspected abuse or neglect; Obtain culturally relevant and appropriate resources for the alleged victim child(ren)/ youth and their families; All other data deemed pertinent	Required for all	Not applicable

Domain W: Child welfare response

Table W.I. Differential or alternative response

	Response
1. Differential/alternative response	Yes--implemented in specific counties or regions - The executive director of the state department approves any county department of human or social services that chooses to participate in the differential response program. The program is a dual-track response system for referrals that meet the criteria for assignment. The two response options are the High Risk Assessment (HRA) and the Family Assessment Response (FAR). The alternative response track is the FAR. As of 10/2021, 70% of counties in Colorado utilize a differential response system and another 12% are in the process of implementing one.
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	No
c. Physical abuse	No
d. Sexual abuse	Yes
e. Neglect	No
f. Abandoned infants	No
g. Other (specify)	Yes - Institutional abuse
4. Eligibility for differential/alternative response determined by a risk determination	Yes
5. Tools used to determine risk for differential/alternative response	No
6. Risk level eligible for differential/alternative response	
a. No risk	No
b. Low risk	Yes
c. Moderate risk	Yes
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	Yes
d. Other (specify)	No
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

Table W.I (*continued*)

	Response
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	No
d. Yes - when there is a determination of risk	No
e. Yes - other (specify)	Yes - The participating county departments, in administering the program, cooperate with local community service organizations in addressing known or suspected incidents of intrafamilial abuse or neglect

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	Yes
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 - Pre-service training for new social caseworkers (not required for newly hired social caseworkers who have been certified as a social caseworker in Colorado within the previous 4 years), complete all required transfer of learning exercises with the assistance of a supervisor, or supervisor's designee, demonstrate competence through pre- and post-tests, trainer observation, and verification by the county department as outlined in the request for certification, receive dual certification as a hotline worker, and complete 40 hours of in-service training required each state fiscal year with a minimum of 16 of those hours focused in the area of the social caseworker's primary job responsibilities to be re-certified as a social caseworker
e. Years of experience (specify)	Yes - Professional, internship, or volunteer work experience in a human services related agency
f. Other (specify)	No
6. Degree in social work or related field for foster care case managers	Other - Bachelor's degree must include course work related to the job responsibilities of a child welfare social caseworker, such as the development of human behavior, child development, family intervention techniques, diagnostic measures, or therapeutic techniques

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 - Ute Mount Ute Tribe; Southern Ute Indian Tribe
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	Yes
2. Federal ICWA requirements that are codified in state law	
a. Identifying a child's Tribal status	Yes
b. Use of active efforts to prevent removal/reunite families	Yes
c. Notification of child's parents and Tribe for child custody proceedings	Yes
d. Actively working to involve a child's parents and Tribe during the custody proceedings	No
e. Identifying a foster care or pre-adoptive placement using ICWA preferences provisions	Yes
f. Use of qualified expert witnesses	Yes
3. State law codifying ICWA includes state-recognized Tribes	No

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	Other - Generally extended to age 18.5; If a determination is pending or the youth has been determined to be an incapacitated person, then extended foster care continues until either the youth has made a complete transition into adult disability services and it is in the youth's best interests for the juvenile court to terminate jurisdiction or the youth reaches age 21 or such greater age of foster care eligibility as required by federal law, whichever comes first; If a youth is making the transition to adult services, then the court may extend jurisdiction until such transition is complete
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	No
c. Employed	No
d. Participating in workforce development/training program	No
e. Comply with independent living/self-sufficiency plan	No
f. Receive independent living or other services	No
g. Medical condition exemption	No
h. Other (specify)	Yes - Youth can remain in care beyond age 18.5 if they meet one of the following conditions: 1) Involved through a delinquency case, 2) Found to be incapacitated prior to their 18th birthday, 3) Transitioning to adult services through a Community Centered Board
5. Reentry to extended foster care allowed for youth older than age 18 who aged out or left foster care	No
6. Conditions for youth to reenter extended foster care	Logical Skip

Domain C: Child welfare system context

Table C.I. Child welfare system context

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

Supplemental Notes on State

Definitions

The definition of drug lab includes a perpetrator having knowledge of or in a position where they reasonably should know another person possesses ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine, or their salts, isomers, or salts of isomers, with the intent to use the product as an immediate precursor in the manufacture of methamphetamine.

Prenatal exposure to a controlled substance as a type of maltreatment is defined by children born affected by alcohol or substance exposure, except when taken as prescribed or recommended and monitored by a licensed healthcare provider, and the newborn child's health or welfare is threatened by substance use.

Parents may rely on religious forms of healing, except during life-threatening situations or when the condition will result in serious disability if access to medical care is limited. A child whose parent, guardian, or legal custodian inhibits or interferes with the provision of medical treatment in accordance with a court order is considered to have been neglected or dependent and injured or endangered. The religious observance exemption for the classification of child maltreatment does not apply if the child's condition is determined to be life-threatening or could result in serious physical impairment or serious disability without professional medical care. The county department must seek a court order authorizing the provision of the necessary medical care if the parent, guardian, or legal custodian refuses such care.

Reporting

For substance-exposed newborns (SENs), substance abuse is expected to be reported when it meets the definition of child abuse or neglect: Any case in which a child is born affected by alcohol or substance exposure, except when taken as prescribed or recommended and monitored by a licensed health care provider, and the newborn child's health or welfare is threatened by substance use.

Screening

No information is required when screening in a report, but certain information is requested, including the following:

1. The reporting party's name, address, phone number, reporter type, and relationship to the alleged child victim;
2. The alleged victim's name, address, current location, school or childcare, age, any developmental delays, physical disabilities, competency or cultural considerations, and primary language;
3. A narrative describing the case, including the time and date, location, witnesses, whether any injury was sustained, and any medical treatment given;
4. The alleged perpetrator's name, age, location, address, any developmental delays, physical disabilities, competency or cultural considerations, and phone number;
5. Information on where the incident took place, including the name, address, phone number, and whether the institution has been notified of the allegation;

6. Name of the victim's parent or guardian, address, phone number, and whether they have been notified;
7. Who has legal custody of the child;
8. Date and time of the referral.

As part of the screening process, as available and appropriate, the screener will obtain information from collateral sources such as schools, medical personnel, law enforcement agencies, or other care providers.

Staff in specialized screening units are involved in screening through Review, Evaluate and Direct (RED) Teams. Some referrals are required to go to RED Teams but there are no specific requirements for who must participate in RED Teams. Many counties in Colorado have RED Teams made up of only social caseworkers and supervisors, but some counties may also have case aides or other program staff join the RED Team. All RED Team screening decisions must be approved by a social caseworker supervisor.

Child welfare response

Colorado's differential response is a dual-track response system:

1. Family Assessment Response (FAR) is the differential response track established for low- and moderate-risk situations where no finding of abuse or neglect is made. The FAR is used by counties participating in the state's differential response program and is implemented at the county level.
2. High Risk Assessment (HRA) is the differential response track established for high-risk situations where the alleged child victim(s) are identified and a finding of abuse or neglect is made.

As of February 2024, 76 percent of counties in Colorado utilize a differential response system and another 22 percent are in the process of implementing one.

State Statutes and Policy Documentation Sources

Child Welfare Services, Colo. Rev. Stat. § 26-5 (2021).

Child Welfare Services, 12 CCR § 2509-4 (2007).

Child Welfare Services, 12 CCR § 2509-7 (2017).

CO4Kids (2021). Child abuse and neglect FAQs.

Colorado Department of Human Services. (2020). Agency response guide.

Colorado Department of Human Services. (2021). Child Fatality Reviews.

Colorado Sex Offender Registration Act, Colo. Rev. Stat. § 16-22 (2022).

Dependency and Neglect, Colo. Rev. Stat. § 19-3 (2023).

General Provisions, Colo. Rev. Stat. § 19-1 (2023).

Offenses Involving the Family Relations, Colo. Rev. Stat. § 18-6 (2022).

Overview of Child Welfare Services, 12 CCR § 2509-1 (2007).

Referral and Assessment, 12 CCR § 2509-2 (2007).