

Chapter 22

DETERMINATION OF FINDINGS

22-1. Purpose. To determine the appropriate finding(s) upon the completion of the investigation, an investigator must be able to clearly present credible evidence in support or refutation of child maltreatment (as defined in CFOP 170-4, Child Maltreatment Index) for each alleged victim. This determination by the investigator is based upon information gathered during the investigation from interviews, personal observations, and the review of records and forensic assessments (e.g., medical exams, CPT findings, police reports, drug tests, etc.).

22-2. Procedures.

a. If during the course of an investigation the investigator becomes aware of additional maltreatments within the focus household, the investigator must add these maltreatments to the existing investigation. With the exception of the “Death” maltreatment, a call to the Hotline is not required to add a maltreatment during an active investigation.

b. The following three findings are available to document the determination for each maltreatment:

(1) **“Verified”** is used when a preponderance of the credible evidence results in a determination the specific harm or threat of harm was the result of abuse, abandonment or neglect.

(2) **“Not Substantiated”** is used when there is credible evidence which does not meet the standard of being a preponderance to support that the specific harm was the result of abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

(3) **“No Indicators”** is used when there is no credible evidence to support the allegations of abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

c. The maltreatment findings should be based upon the definitions of harm contained in the Child Maltreatment Index (Index) and related to the evidence obtained during the investigation. The Index documents the types of evidence (observations, interviews, and professional consultations) to support making an accurate finding for each type of maltreatment. The findings are only one set of considerations in determining the safety of the child and the family’s capacity to provide care.

d. Each intake must contain at least one maltreatment. There is no limit to the number of maltreatments included in a report as long as each maltreatment is justified by information contained in the allegation narrative or FFA-Investigation.

22-3. Supervisor. When initiated, Supervisor Consultation should be provided to affirm:

a. The investigator correctly identified all maltreatments contained in the intake allegation narrative or from additional information discovered through investigative activities.

b. Sufficient information was collected by the investigator on the extent of maltreatment to accurately describe:

(1) Type of maltreatment.

(2) Severity of maltreatment.

(3) Description of specific events.

- (4) Description of child's emotional and physical symptoms.
- (5) Identification of victim child and maltreating caregiver.
- (6) Condition of the child.

c. Sufficient information was collected by the investigator on the circumstances surrounding the maltreatment to accurately describe:

- (1) Duration of maltreatment.
- (2) History of maltreatment.
- (3) Pattern of caregiver functioning leading to or explaining the maltreatment.
- (4) Caregiver explanation for the maltreatment and family conditions.
- (5) Unique aspects of the maltreatment (e.g., use of weapons, etc.).
- (6) Caregiver intent, acknowledgement and attitude about the maltreatment.

d. The totality of the information is complete enough to support the finding(s) determined by the investigator.

e. The necessary documentation and evidence to support a "Verified" finding clearly indicate how the maltreatment has significantly impaired or is likely to significantly impair the child's physical, mental, or emotional health.

22-4. Documentation.

a. The investigator will document all information collected and the rationale to support the determination of findings in the FFA-Investigation and case notes.

b. The supervisor will document the consultation using the supervisor consultation page hyperlink in the investigation module within two business days.