

Quality Assurance at the Office of the Child Advocate

The OCA provides oversight of executive branch agencies that serve children, with a particular focus on the child protective and juvenile justice systems. This work includes reviewing individual cases that come to our attention in a variety of ways, including from our Complaint Line as well as hundreds of reports we receive from state agencies each year. These include:



- **Critical incident reports**, which occur when a child who is receiving state services suffers a fatality, near fatality, serious bodily injury, or emotional injury.
- **Supported reports of abuse or neglect in out-of-home settings**, including at foster care, congregate care programs, childcare facilities, public schools, private schools, after-school and summer programs, school-funded transportation companies, and hospitals.
- **Foster care alerts**, which are issued at the conclusion of a Foster Care Review when an immediate safety concern for a child or youth is identified.

OCA staff review and analyze each case to evaluate the safety and wellbeing of the child(ren) involved in the incident and identify policy and/or practice concerns. We bring all of our concerns to the appropriate state agencies and do not close a case until our concerns have been resolved.

OCA Investigations

The OCA reviews hundreds of cases each year, and our staff regularly contact involved agencies with questions and concerns.

From time to time, we issue our recommendations through a public report. Recent public reports include:

- [Harmony Montgomery](#)
- [David Almond](#)

OCA Quality Assurance Reviews (FY24)

Complaint Line Inquiries
532

Critical Incidents
278

Supported Reports of Abuse and Neglect in Out-of-Home Settings
465

Foster Care Review Safety Alerts
15

For all the data we collect, please read our [Annual Report](#).

617-979-8360



childadvocate@mass.gov

About the OCA Complaint Line

Anyone who needs help can call our **Complaint Line**. We help navigate individual concerns of families and children who have an issue regarding children's services they are receiving or should be receiving.

Youth, their family members, foster parents, advocates, attorneys – anyone – can call the OCA Complaint Line with concerns about children. Our Complaint Line helps people navigate resources related to the health, education, safety, and/or the wellbeing of any child or youth.



How Can the OCA Complaint Line Help? We Can Answer Questions Like:

- Answer questions about rights & services
- Listen to your constituents' concerns
- Provide advice, information, and resources
- How do I get the resources my family or I need?
- I need help navigating DCF, or another state agency's process. What should I do?
- I feel my rights have been violated, what can I do?



Youth Engagement

The OCA wants to hear directly from youth - and we are reaching out where they are, in congregate care settings and beyond!

Anyone can call or email our Complaint Line!

We are here to help:

617-979-8360
mass.gov/childadvocate



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