



OAG

Office of the Auditor General

Report Summary

Performance Audit

Office of Family Advocate (OFA)

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)

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MDHHS's OFA, within Children's Services Administration, oversees independent Safe Systems Reviews (SSRs) of selected cases with a child fatality and recent involvement with MDHHS's child welfare system to help identify and communicate opportunities for systemic improvements. OFA also serves as the MDHHS liaison with Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) and is responsible for communicating and coordinating MDHHS's responses to OCA's findings and recommendations. In addition, OFA addresses constituent concerns and/or complaints related to the child welfare process or specific cases. Further, OFA is responsible for maintaining MDHHS's child fatality registry and tracking and timely notifying OCA, the Michigan Public Health Institute, select legislators, and MDHHS leadership of child fatalities with recent MDHHS child welfare involvement.

Audit Objective			Conclusion
Objective 1: To assess the sufficiency of OFA's efforts to identify and communicate opportunities to improve MDHHS's child welfare activities.			Sufficient, with exceptions
Findings Related to This Audit Objective	Material Condition	Reportable Condition	Agency Preliminary Response
OFA excluded 150 MDHHS child death notifications from its SSR evaluation process and did not complete SSRs for 135 death notifications meeting SSR criteria. Also, almost 30% of SSR information reviewed had some inaccuracies related to information OFA uses for preparing its annual report of SSR demographic data and systemic improvement recommendations. Further, OFA did not consistently distribute its most recently completed SSR annual report to all key areas within MDHHS supporting child welfare system activities (Finding 1).	X		Agrees

Audit Objective			Conclusion
Objective 2: To assess the sufficiency of OFA's efforts to provide selected child fatality information to intended parties.			Sufficient, with exceptions
Findings Related to This Audit Objective	Material Condition	Reportable Condition	Agency Preliminary Response
See Finding 1, part d.			
For periods subsequent to calendar year 2022, OFA had neither reported applicable data in the child fatality registry nor updated the registry's historical information for known discrepancies as of December 2024 (<u>Finding 2</u>).	X		Agrees

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