SPECIAL TRANSMITTAL

SUBJECT: Unknown Specific Start and End Dates for Incidents of Child Abuse

TO: Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF), Regional Offices
County Children and Youth Agencies (CCYAs)
Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators

FROM: Jonathan Rubin
Deputy Secretary for Children, Youth and Families

DATE: November 19, 2021

PURPOSE

The purpose of this transmittal is to establish a standard and provide guidance for investigating agencies to adhere to when the specific start and end date of an incident(s) of child abuse is unknown. For example, situations including but not limited to when children disclose they were abused and the incident occurred "around" the time of a known holiday, or during a season of the year (i.e. winter).

BACKGROUND

The Child Welfare Information Solution (CWIS) release, implemented in March of 2019, requires a system validation for the start and end date(s) of an incident of child abuse required as part of the Child Protective Services Investigation Report, also known as the CY-48 Form. This system validation, designed to ensure proper completion of the CY-48 Form/data quality, prevents an investigating agency from submitting a child abuse investigation outcome without populating a start and end date.

It is the practice of the Department of Human Services (DHS) to reject a CY-48 Form back to an investigating agency if the:
- The incident start and end date is not populated, or only partially populated (i.e. only the start date is populated);
- Narrative portion of a CY-48 Form supports that there is an incident start and end date, however the incident start and end date is not populated; or
- Narrative portion of a CY-48 Form supports a general time frame (i.e. occurred "around" a known holiday or season) for when an incident of child

abuse occurred, however the incident start and end date is not populated, or only partially populated.

*   *ChildLine does not make any changes to a CY-48 Form based on the narrative, unless rejected and clarified with the investigating agency.*

DISCUSSION

When the specific start and end date of an incident of child abuse is unknown, however a month, year, season, or holiday for when the incident occurred is known and is supported in the narrative, the following standards may be used to provide a start and end date.

- If the incident occurred sometime during or over the span of a specific month, use the first day of the month (along with the appropriate year) as the start date and the last day of the month (along with the appropriate year) as the end date (i.e. 4/1/21 to 4/30/21). Select the "estimated" indicator box for both the start date and end date of the incident.
- If the incident occurred over the span of several months and the specific timeframe cannot be narrowed down, select the broadest date range possible that is supported by the facts of the investigation. Use the first day of the first month (along with the appropriate year) as the start date, and the last day of the last month (along with the appropriate year) as the end date. (i.e. 6/1/21 to 10/31/21). Select the "estimated" indicator box for both the start date and end date(s).
- If the incident occurred over the span of an entire year, use January 1 (along with the appropriate year) as the start date and December 31 (along with the appropriate year) as the end date (i.e. 1/1/21 to 12/31/21). Select the "estimated" indicator box for both the start and end date.
- If the incident occurred during a season of the year, use the following dates for the corresponding season (along with the appropriate year) and select the "estimated" indicator box for both the start and end date:
  - Spring 3/20/XX (start date), 6/19/XX (end date);
  - Summer 6/20/XX (start date), 9/21/XX (end date);
  - Fall 9/22/XX (start date), 12/21/XX (end date); and
  - Winter 12/22/XX (start date), 3/19/XX (end date).
- If the incident occurred during a holiday (name of holiday is to be noted in the narrative portion of the CY-48 Form), use the following guidance for the holiday and select the "estimated" indicator box for both the start and end date:
  - For the start date, select the day and month that was 15 days prior to day of holiday (along with the appropriate year);
  - For the end date, select the day and month that was 15 days after the day of the holiday (along with the appropriate year); and
  - i.e. incident occurred around Memorial Day 2021 = 5/16/21 (start date), and 6/15/21 (end date).