1. Understand (and be able to apply) policy when making findings regarding the allegations.

   If the incident is a policy violation (example, spanking without injuries), such violations do not require a finding per policy. Any actions which do rise to the level of abuse or neglect would require a finding.

   Substantiated findings result in an automatic CPS Programs Review.

2. Understand the difference between a Programs Review and the Appeal Process; and understand why findings are overturned.

   Programs Reviews are specific to OOH investigations. Most findings that are overturned are findings made on policy violations.

3. Understand documenting an OOH investigation.

   Biological children of the placement provider are generally documented as collaterals and interviewed as appropriate. If indicated, there may also be a home investigation where they are documented as victims.

4. Review and identify who is considered a victim in an OOH Child Care Investigation.

   In a child care center investigation, only the children specifically alleged to have been abused or neglected should be documented as victims.

5. Review (and be able to apply) the definition of a Person Responsible for Child (PRFC), Alleged Perpetrator and 3rd Party Perpetrator.

   As applied to Child Care Centers or Homes, a PRFCs include the employee(s) named, the owner/operator (even if not present) and director.

   A third party perpetrator is an alleged adult perpetrator who is not an employee (or does not live in a Child Care Home).
In foster homes, a 3rd party perpetrator may include a biological (minor) child of the foster parent who is occasionally given responsibility for their care or supervision.

6. Identify when investigations are conducted on 3rd Party Perpetrators. Only when the 3rd party perpetrator has allegedly caused the death of a child.

7. Review (and be able to apply) priority guidelines and investigative time frames in OOH and Child Care Investigations.

Time frames for investigation in Child Care Centers and Homes (where no extensions are approved) are: child Interviews completed and documented within 5 days/Caretaker Interviews completed and documented within 5 days/Investigation completed within 30 days

OOH investigations in foster or trial adoptive investigations are assigned as a Priority I unless safety can be assured, then Priority II (2-3 days)

In OOH foster or trial adoptive investigations, a staffing must be held within 10 working days

Overall time frames for investigation in OOH foster or trial adoptive investigations are: child interviews completed and documented within 5 days/PRFC interviews completed and documented within 5 days/Investigation completed within 30 days

8. Understand policy in regards to extensions for OOH Investigations.

When a worker has a valid reason not to be able to complete all interviews within 5 days (example, abuse alleged with numerous and/or previous victims)

9. Review (and be able to apply) policy on preliminary inquiries.

A preliminary inquiry regarding an accidental or unexplained injury in foster care must be completed within 23 hours after a report is received by DHS

10. Understand the removal process of a child from OOH Care.

Resource Provider is notified immediately if the child will not be returned to their home. The “Notice of Decision Not To Return Child After Investigation”, form 04MP031E (DCFS-17-A) must be hand delivered by the child’s ongoing worker within 3 days after the decision is made. Resource Provider signature to verify receipt of this form is obtained.
11. Understand what responses are available when present danger exists in an OOH placement or children are found to be unsafe in OOH Care.

   An Immediate Protective Action Plan (IPAP) may be put in place during the investigation in certain circumstances. The IPAP may include removal of the child from the placement. An ongoing safety plan is never utilized.

12. Understand who is notified when a child is injured in OOH Care.

   The ongoing worker and supervisor/ District Director/ CPS Programs Office/ Resource specialist and supervisor/child’s biological parent are all notified at the beginning of an investigation of an alleged injury.

13. Review (and be able to apply) policy in regards to 10 day staffing.

   The purpose of the 10 day staffing is for each specialist involved with the child/children or foster family to provide their perspective and to make informed decisions.

14. Understand who is notified at the end of an OOH Investigation and what information is accessible by contracted parties.