



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL OF NEBRASKA CHILD WELFARE

SUMMARY OF ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026

Key updates for the OIG-CW's work this past year:

- After one year, the Division of Legislative Oversight has demonstrated that the responsibilities of the Legislative Audit Office align well with the OIGs. The offices have begun to leverage each other's expertise to improve the work and efficiency of each office. It has also been very helpful to have the Legislative Oversight Committee focused on legislative oversight and the work of the Division.
- Despite an overall decrease in the number of deaths and serious injuries reported to the OIG-CW this year, the total number of investigations the OIG-CW must do has increased significantly, challenging its limited resources. Changes to processes are being explored to ensure transparency and timely reviews.
- The majority of the OIG-CW's resources this year were dedicated to the investigation into the allegations of sexual abuse at the Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center at Kearney.

There was a significant decrease in the number of child deaths reported to the OIG-CW by DHHS.

- 10 child deaths were reported to the OIG-CW in FY 25-26 compared to 27 in FY 24-25.
- Only 1 of those deaths is mandated to be investigated by the OIG-CW under the law.

There was a decrease in the number of serious injuries to children reported to the OIG-CW by DHHS.

- 16 serious injuries to children were reported to the OIG-CW in FY 25-26 compared to 27 in FY 24-25.
- 14 of those serious injuries are mandated to be investigated by the OIG-CW under the law.
- 2 of the serious injuries were reported by both DHHS and Juvenile Probation.

Juvenile Probation began reporting deaths and serious injuries to the OIG-CW in October 2025.

- No deaths were reported for FY 25-26.
- 14 serious injuries were reported to the OIG-CW for FY 25-26 since October 2025.
- 11 serious injuries are mandated to be investigated by the OIG-CW under the law.

There was an increase in the number of sexual abuse allegations by state wards due in part to the allegations of sexual abuse at YRTC-Kearney and the addition of reporting by Juvenile Probation.

- It is important to note that what is reported are **allegations**, not the number of substantiated cases.
- There were 310 allegations of sexual abuse of state wards in FY 25-26, up from 293 in FY 24-25.
- Of those investigated by CFS, three were substantiated, and three are pending criminal court action.
- 15 allegations of sexual abuse of youth were reported by Juvenile Probation, and 6 of those are being investigated by law enforcement.

The OIG-CW completed three investigative reports.

- The investigative report into the numerous allegations of sexual abuse at YRTC-Kearney found systemic and cultural concerns within the facility and made several recommendations, including a recommendation that DHHS resume abuse and neglect investigations at the YRTCs.
- An investigative report was completed on the serious injury of a 21-month-old child, which found no violations by DHHS of statute, rules, or regulations, and the OIG-CW made no recommendations.
- An investigative report was completed regarding a complaint concerning DHHS' removal of children and handling of that case. This report also found no violations by DHHS of statute, rules, or regulations, and the OIG-CW made no recommendations.