

## **Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline**

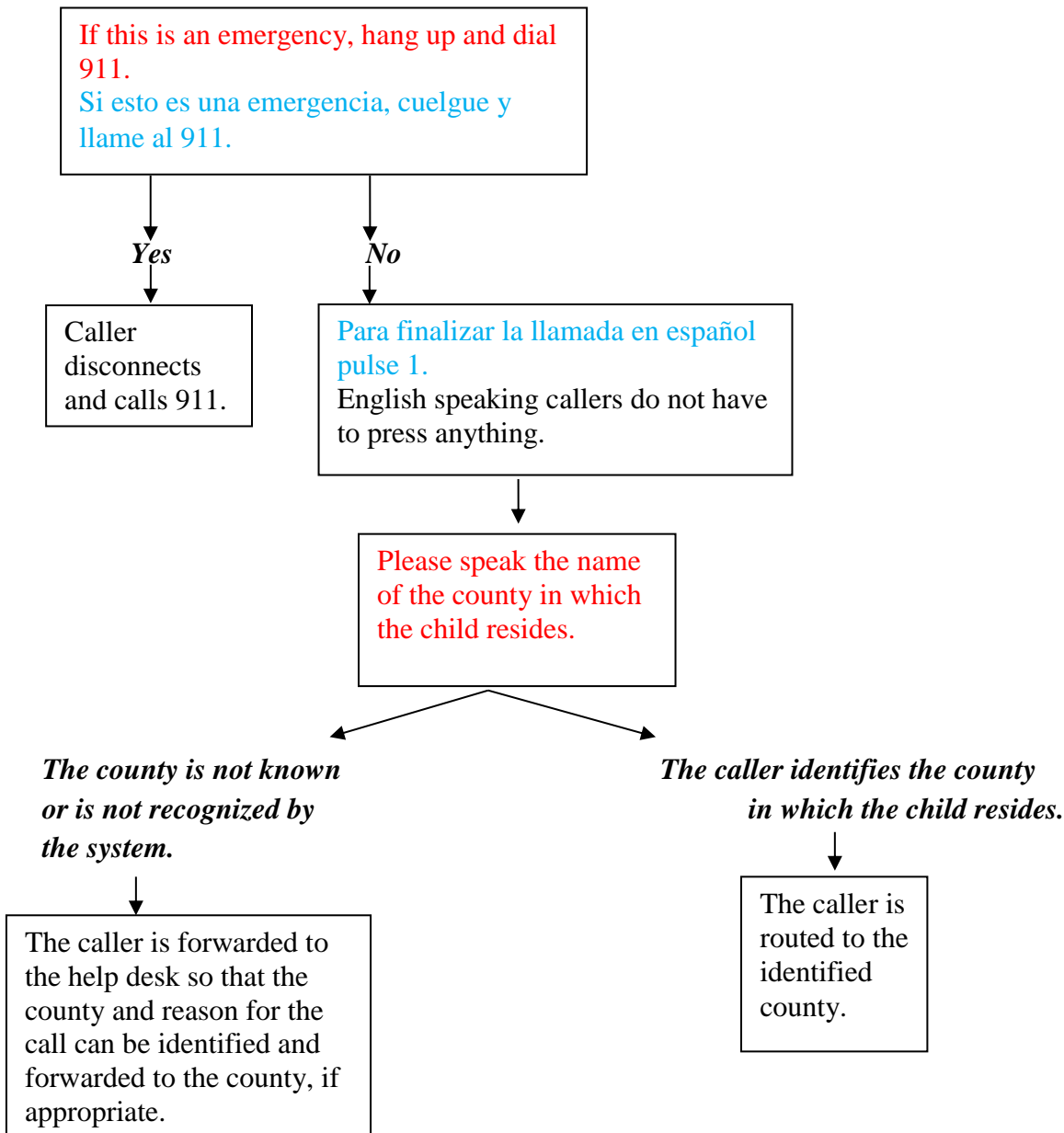
- HB13-1271, signed into law in May 2013, authorized the creation of a steering committee with three key responsibilities: develop a recommendation and implementation plan for a statewide hotline reporting system, a recommendation for a corresponding public awareness campaign, and recommendations for rules relating to the operation of the hotline system and to consistent practices for responding to reports and inquiries.
- Since June 2013, the Hotline Steering Committee has been meeting twice monthly to develop a recommendation for a statewide child abuse and neglect hotline reporting system. The committee's membership includes state staff and partners from the counties and community. Please see the attached membership list for reference.
- Through a competitive process that included a thorough review of proposals by committee members, the Department has hired Hornby Zeller Associates and Pure Brand Communications to assist with the committee's work.
- The committee, in collaboration with Hornby Zeller Associates (HZA) and the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services, has conducted extensive research on call handling in Colorado counties, hotline systems in other states, and telephone systems. Committee members participated in Arapahoe County's tour of its hotline, enhanced screening, and RED team operations; while HZA conducted site visits of Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, Boulder, La Plata, Larimer, and Otero counties. In early September, the committee organized a team of 15 members and participants to explore the child abuse and neglect reporting systems in Columbus, OH and Albany, NY.
- The committee has identified specific features of the statewide reporting system. The following is a summary of the committee's recommendations:
  - Establish a statewide, toll-free number for reporting child abuse and neglect that will route calls to the county where the child resides.
  - Counties will maintain their current practices of accepting reports of abuse and neglect, but to ensure proper routing, each county must have a dedicated line for child abuse and neglect reporting.
  - Calls made directly to a county's dedicated line will also go through the statewide phone system, for data collection purposes, and will be re-routed directly to the county. This process will be automated and seamless, and will not require putting a caller on hold or causing any delay in answering calls.

- The statewide phone system will collect data on all calls received including call volume, call duration, speed of answer, wait time, and abandonment rate. Through Trails, call takers will capture data related to call categories, the number of calls that are reports of abuse, the number of calls from mandated reporters and general public, and categories of callers i.e., health care professional, educator, relative, etc.
- After hours, calls received through the statewide phone system will be routed to an after-hours number that is specified by the counties. There will be flexibility to change the after-hours number as needed.
- All calls will be recorded and linked to corresponding information in Trails. The recordings will be easily accessible and will be used for training, quality assurance, and follow-up analysis when a complaint is received.
- The system for routing callers to counties will be largely automated; however, callers will have the option of speaking with a live person through the Help Desk. The sole function of the Help Desk will be to route callers to the appropriate county. The committee recommends that the State contract with counties to operate the Help Desk, and that there should be multiple Help Desk locations across the state. The committee anticipates the Help Desk should be launched with 12 call takers.
- Callers who speak Spanish will be prompted to complete the call in Spanish (press “2”). Callers who do not speak either English or Spanish will be connected to the Help Desk, which will utilize the Language Line to help the caller complete the call.
- The statewide phone system will incorporate interactive voice response technology, which will allow callers to speak the name of the county where the child resides. Please see attached call flow diagram.
- If a caller does not know the name of the county or the system does not recognize the county name spoken, the call will be directed to the Help Desk, which will assist the caller in determining the county.
- All calls will be entered into Trails either directly or through an automated system. This will permit the identification of the types of calls received that are not reporting child abuse or neglect.
- A comprehensive training curriculum is being developed for all new workers, who will be taking calls, and their supervisors. A modified curriculum will be required for current workers who are experienced at taking calls. The existing training curriculum for caseworkers will be expanded to include a session on hotline screening.
- All staff whose job entails answering hotline calls must pass a certification process that the training office will develop. Annual recertification will also be required.
- An Enhanced Screening Guide has been developed to provide call takers with structured process for interviewing reporters who are calling the hotline. This guide is already being used by 37 Colorado counties. It will now be required for all counties, with training provided.

- In order to ensure continuous quality work, all supervisors will be required to review a sample of calls from every worker at prescribed intervals. This will occur either through monitoring live calls or listening to randomly selected recorded calls. A standardized call evaluation form will be developed. The number of calls to be reviewed for each worker will be determined later by the committee.
- The committee has identified six critical components to ensure a successful implementation and roll out of the hotline reporting system:
  - A routing system that quickly routes calls to counties.
  - Data collection on all calls received through the system;
  - Training and certification for hotline workers and their supervisors;
  - Adequate staffing for counties and the state;
  - Continuous quality improvement; and
  - A public awareness campaign.
- The Division of Child Welfare (“DCW”) completed funding requests for the hotline reporting system and public awareness campaign as per the committee’s decisions. Both funding requests were submitted to the JBC on January 2, 2014.
- Important next steps include:
  - A work group is currently in the process of drafting the RFP for the hotline reporting system vendor. The Department anticipates the RFP will be posted in January 2014.
  - DCW, in collaboration with stakeholders, will develop rules authorized by the HB13-1271 in two phases. The first phase will address rules related to front end child welfare practice, and the second phase will address rules related to the operations of the hotline system. The phase one rules package will be submitted to CDHS’ Boards and Commissions in early 2014. DCW will prepare a document that will crosswalk federal requirements, existing Colorado statutes and rules, and proposed changes. The crosswalk will address any gaps needed for system improvements. The Hotline Steering Committee will begin to review the rules and policy recommendations in March of 2014.

## Call Flow Diagram

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## Hotline Steering Committee Membership

<b>Chairpersons</b>	
<b>Jack Hilbert</b> , Co-Chair Commissioner, Douglas County	<b>Julie Krow</b> , Co-Chair Director, Office of Children, Youth, and Families, CDHS
<b>County Representatives</b>	
<b>Wendy Buxton-Andrade</b> Commissioner, Prowers County	<b>Thomas Davidson</b> Commissioner, Summit County
<b>Cindy Domenico</b> Commissioner, Boulder County	<b>Bob Gaiser</b> Council Member, City and County of Broomfield
<b>Eva Henry</b> Commissioner, Adams County	<b>Kevin Karney</b> Commissioner, Otero County
<b>Nancy Sharpe</b> Commissioner, Arapahoe County	<b>Norm Steen</b> Commissioner, Teller County
<b>Representative of county with largest caseload</b>	
<b>Penny May</b> Manager, Denver Human Services	
<b>State Representatives</b>	
<b>Dan Drayer</b> Communications Director, CDHS	<b>Mary Alice Mehaffey</b> Associate Director, Child Welfare Budget and Finance, CDHS
<b>Sue Nichols</b> Administrative Review Representative, CDHS	<b>Mike Richey</b> Chief Customer Officer Governor's Office of IT
<b>Ann Scheuermann</b> Child Protection Services Administrator, CDHS	<b>Jonathan Sushinsky</b> Manager, Child Welfare Research, Evaluation, and Data, CDHS
<b>Robert Werthwein</b> Deputy Director, Office of Children, Youth, and Families, CDHS	
<b>IT Industry Expert</b>	
<b>Art Burt</b> (Jun. – Aug. '13) Executive Director, Teletech	
<b>Dispatch Center Representative</b>	
<b>Carl Simpson</b> Director, City and County of Denver 911 Dispatch Center	
<b>Legal Representative</b>	
<b>Stephanie Villafuerte</b> Executive Director, Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center	
<b>Community Representatives</b>	
<b>Lucille Echohawk</b> Director, Denver Indian Family Resource Center	<b>Victoria McVicker</b> Executive Director, Safehouse Denver