



INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Jared Prentice, Inspector General

OFFICE: INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES (DCS)
TITLE: DCS FALSE REPORTING
CASE ID: 2024-04-0140
DATE: August 11, 2025

Indiana Office of Inspector General Staff Attorney, Doreen Clark, after an investigation by Inspector General Special Agent Jason Fajt, reports as follows:

The Indiana General Assembly charged the Office of the Indiana Inspector General (OIG) with addressing fraud, waste, abuse and wrongdoing in the executive branch agencies of state government. Ind. Code §4-2-7-2(b). The OIG also investigates allegations of criminal activity and Code of Ethics violations within state government. Ind. Code §4-2-7-3. The OIG may recommend policies and carry out other activities designed to deter, detect and eradicate fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement and misconduct in state government. Ind. Code §4-2-7-3(2).

I. COMPLAINT

On April 22, 2024, the OIG received a complaint concerning former Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) Family Case Manager (FCM) Sara Wood (Wood). The complaint alleged that Wood falsified visit entries concerning four families in DCS' case management system, the Management Gateway for Indiana's Kids (MaGIK).

II. BACKGROUND

DCS first became aware of the falsified entries when Wood's supervisor (supervisor) noticed that Wood made an entry in MAGIK stating that she met with members of the first family (Family 1) on March 1, 2024. The supervisor suspected that the March 1st entry was false because she had recorded in her March 7 staffing notes that Wood stated that she had not spoken to any of the members of Family 1. The supervisor proceeded to contact the father of Family 1 regarding the March 1st visit. The father informed the supervisor that he had never met Wood. The supervisor met with the father a second time at his residence, and he verified again that he had not met with Wood. DCS contacted the mother of Family 1 regarding Wood. The mother stated that Wood had visited her, but no other member of Family 1 was present during the visit.

The supervisor then worked with the DCS Local Office Director and a Division manager to review Wood's previous assessments over the past 30 days. Upon review, they found discrepancies in entries pertaining to three other families. On April 16, 2024, DCS terminated Wood.

III. OIG INVESTIGATION

Special Agent Jason Fajt investigated the complaint. As part of the investigation, Special Agent Fajt obtained and examined Cellebrite and Axion examination reports, Wood's PST file, state issued phone and iPad. Special Agent Fajt also interviewed the DCS Local Office Director, Wood's direct supervisor and all four families at issue. Special Agent Fajt offered Wood and her attorney an opportunity for an interview, but her attorney declined. Wood's attorney provided the OIG with a voluntary statement regarding her work with DCS. The OIG investigation revealed the following:

FAMILY 1

Special Agent Fajt learned that Wood was first assigned to a child abuse case involving Family 1 on February 22, 2024. On March 1, 2024, Woods reported in a MaGIK entry that she had face-to-face contact with the “mother, father, and all other siblings at the father’s home.”

Special Agent Fajt interviewed the father and his daughter. The father recalled two occasions on which he was in contact with DCS. On those two dates, however, he never met Wood. Special Agent Fajt provided a picture of Wood, and the father confirmed that she was not one of the DCS employees with whom he had been in contact. Special Agent Fajt addressed the March 1 entry. In the entry, Wood recorded that she met with Family 1 on March 1 at 1:00 pm. The father clarified that he could not have met Wood at 1:00 pm because he worked until 2:00 pm that day. Special Agent Fajt obtained a copy of the father’s workplace attendance record for March 1, which confirmed that the father did not leave his workplace until 1:59 pm.

Special Agent Fajt interviewed the mother of Family 1. Special Agent Fajt provided a picture of Wood, and the mother did not recognize Wood as one of the DCS employees with whom she had met. The mother explained that she had been in contact with a female and male DCS employee. Special Agent Fajt contacted DCS to inquire about the male and female DCS employees. DCS provided the names of the two employees, and none were Wood. Special Agent Fajt also confirmed that the mother’s children were in school on March 1.

FAMILY 2

On February 13, 2024, Wood reported in a MaGIK entry that she made face-to-face contact with the mother, the mother’s boyfriend and the mother’s three children. Wood also reported that the mother’s boyfriend was present for face-to-face contact.

Special Agent Fajt learned that the visit occurred on February 5 not February 13. Additionally, Wood did not have any face-to-face contact with any of the family members except for the mother. Wood also did not contact the mother's boyfriend in person but did have a telephone conversation with him. Special Agent Fajt confirmed this information by obtaining a copy of a February 5 text message exchange from Wood to the mother in which she discussed visiting her. In the text message, Wood also informed the mother that she had spoken to the mother's boyfriend on the phone.

Special Agent Fajt interviewed the mother. The mother confirmed that none of the children were present on February 5. The mother stated that her children were at daycare and school that day. The only other person present was her sister who was assisting her with laundry. The mother explained that there was a male DCS employee who had accompanied Wood the day of her visit. Special Agent Fajt interviewed the mother's sister, who also confirmed that the only individuals present that day were herself, the mother, Wood, and another DCS coworker. Special Agent Fajt contacted the school and daycare to confirm if the mother's children were present in school on February 5. Both schools confirmed that the children were present on February 5.

FAMILY 3

On January 14, 2024, Wood reported in a MaGIK entry that she made face-to-face contact with the siblings of the child victim. Wood observed that both children appeared "well-nourished, clean appropriately dressed and free of any marks or injuries or bruises. Neither child reported feeling unsafe and demonstrated understanding of body safety."

Special Agent Fajt interviewed one of the siblings of the child victim, the mother, and the mother's boyfriend. The sibling stated that he had met with DCS twice but never met with Wood.

The sibling also did not recognize Wood when Special Agent Fajt provided a picture of her. Special Agent Fajt also provided the mother's boyfriend with a picture of Wood, but he did not recall meeting with Wood during the times he was in contact with DCS.

The mother recalled having some communication with Wood on January 14, which was confirmed through a text message exchange between herself and Wood on that date. The mother's boyfriend, and her three children were present on the day of the visit, but Wood did not speak with any of them. Special Agent Fajt provided the mother with a picture of Wood, and the mother recognized her as the FCM she spoke with on January 14. Special Agent Fajt was able to confirm that there were no pictures, live pictures or videos of the siblings of the victim on that day.

FAMILY 4

Special Agent Fajt interviewed a member of Family 4. The family member recalled making a statement in response to a question on an assessment staffing form but could not remember when she made the statement or to whom she may have made the statement. The OIG investigation could not prove that Family 4 was adversely impacted by Wood or her MaGIK entries. Therefore, the fourth family was not included for certification to the Vanderburgh prosecutor.

IV. CONCLUSION

The OIG submitted the results of the investigation to the Vanderburgh County Prosecutor's Office. The Vanderburgh County Prosecutor's Office filed the following charges against Wood: Three counts of Falsification Child Abuse or Neglect of Information, a Class A misdemeanor under Ind. Code §31-33-22-2(b)(2) and one count of official misconduct, a level 6 felony under Ind. Code §35-44.1-1-1 (1). Accordingly, this investigation is closed.

Dated: August 11, 2025

APPROVED BY:)



Jared Prentice, Inspector General