



TITLE	POLICY NUMBER	
Computer Voice Stress Analysis (CVSA)	DCS 13-01	
RESPONSIBLE AREA	EFFECTIVE DATE	REVISION
Office of Child Welfare Investigations (OCWI)	December 23, 2016	2

## **I. POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy supports the Department's commitment to maintain the highest professional standards and to use available technology to support its mission of ensuring child safety.

## **II. APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all Office of Child Welfare Investigations (OCWI) staff. It addresses the use of the investigative tool known as Computer Voice Stress Analysis (CVSA).

## **III. AUTHORITY**

[A.R.S. § 8-453](#)

Powers and duties

[A.R.S. 8-456](#)

Investigative function; training; voice stress analysis; recordings; criminal offenses; definition

[A.R.S. § 8-471](#)

Office of child welfare investigations; training; responsibilities; annual report

[A.R.S. § 8-802](#)

Child safety worker; fingerprint clearance cards; interview requirements; temporary custody limit; cooperation and coordination; alteration of files; violation; classification

## **IV. DEFINITIONS**

Audio Analysis: The CVSA Examiner's analysis of the responses from the recorded interview.

Cold Read: A review by a second CVSA Examiner (who is not familiar with the details of the case) who reads the chart of an interview based strictly on the assessment of the charts that were generated from the initial interview.

Computer Voice Stress Analyzer: An instrument to detect, measure, and chart the stress in a person's voice following a pre-formatted questionnaire.

Computer Voice Stress Analysis Examiner: An OCWI investigator who has successfully completed training and been certified in the use of CVSA.

Department or DCS: The Arizona Department of Child Safety.

Interview: A live, structured interview by a CVSA Examiner. The interview is conducted with the prior knowledge and consent of the subject of the investigation.

OCWI: The Department's Office of Child Welfare Investigations.

Subject of the Examination: The person who will be examined by the CVSA Examiner.

## **V. POLICY**

This policy provides staff conducting OCWI investigations with standards and procedures for requesting and conducting CVSA interviews in OCWI investigations.

- A. This policy provides staff conducting OCWI investigations with standards and procedures for requesting and conducting CVSA interviews in OCWI investigations.
  1. The OCWI Investigator shall use the CVSA results primarily to:
    - a. verify, corroborate, or refute statements;
    - b. obtain additional investigative leads;
    - c. narrow or focus investigations.

2. The OCWI Investigator shall not use the CVSA results as the final determinant in an investigation, or as a substitute for other sound investigative techniques.
3. The Department shall not use covert voice stress analysis during an investigation to determine if abuse or neglect exists. The Department shall not use overt voice stress analysis during an investigation unless the person on whom the analysis is used gives informed consent. Results of computer voice stress analysis are not admissible in court.

B. Eligibility for a CVSA Interview

1. Interviews shall be conducted at the discretion of the CVSA Examiner, in accordance with DCS policy and state and federal law.
2. The CVSA Examiner shall not conduct a CVSA interview on any person who the CVSA Examiner believes to be physically or emotionally unsuitable for testing. This may include, but is not limited to:
  - a. persons with heart conditions;
  - b. women who are pregnant;
  - c. individuals taking certain types of medication that may interfere with the test results.
3. The CVSA Examiner shall only conduct CVSA interviews on persons over the age of 18 who know right from wrong;
4. The CVSA Examiner may seek guidance concerning eligibility from medical or psychological professionals as authorized by DCS. The CVSA Examiner may request the person being interviewed to obtain a medical certificate from an appropriate health care provider in order to help determine eligibility.
5. Persons who are not eligible for CVSA interview include:
  - a. any person under the age of 18;
  - b. any person who has been forced or coerced;
  - c. any person who has been indicted by a grand jury or formally charged for the crime in which the CVSA is being requested;

- d. any person previously administered an interview (CVSA, polygraph, or similar truth verification testing), except under special circumstances and with the approval of the CVSA Examiner and OCWI management;
- e. any person who has a mental or behavioral health disability or who is impaired by drugs or alcohol to the extent that the CVSA Examiner believes the interview should not be conducted.

C. Conduct of a CVSA Interview

- 1. The CVSA Examiner shall prepare all questions used in the interview.
- 2. The CVSA Examiner shall conduct the interview using approved CVSA Protocols.
- 3. The CVSA Examiner has the discretion to authorize other persons to be inside the observation room or the interview room during interviews.

D. CVSA Records

- 1. Each CVSA Examiner shall maintain a log of all interviews conducted.
- 2. CVSA records shall be maintained in accordance with State records retention laws.

E. CVSA Equipment

OCWI shall maintain the Department's CVSA equipment to ensure availability and accuracy of results.

F. Responsibilities of the CVSA Examiner

- 1. The CVSA Examiner shall refrain from any interview that may compromise the CVSA Examiner's integrity; for example:
  - a. the CVSA Examiner shall not conduct a CVSA interview on the CVSA Examiner's own investigative cases;
  - b. only fully trained CVSA Examiners shall conduct CVSA interviews;
  - c. the CVSA Examiner shall keep all relevant certifications current

and, with the support of DCS, shall maintain proficiency in the use of CVSA equipment and interview techniques.

2. Only the CVSA Examiner shall make entries in Guardian or reports related to CVSA results determinations.

G. Responsibilities of the OCWI Investigator

1. When arranging interviews, the OCWI Investigator shall not explain to the subject of an investigation the procedures that will be used in the CVSA interview.
2. OCWI Investigators who are not CVSA Examiners shall not interpret or otherwise make any determination concerning the results of a CVSA in a report or in case notes.
3. The OCWI Investigator shall not interview the subject on the same day of the CVSA interview prior to the completion of the CVSA interview.

## VI. PROCEDURES

These procedures establish the process for an OCWI Investigator to request and conduct a CVSA interview during an investigation.

A. Requesting the CVSA Interview

1. An OCWI-administered CVSA interview may be requested by an OCWI Investigator assigned to an OCWI Investigation.
2. An OCWI-administered CVSA interview may be requested when:
  - a. the assigned DCS investigation includes at least one criminal conduct allegation, except as provided for in VI (B) (3);
  - b. the subject of the examination meets the eligibility for a CVSA interview criteria in section V (B) (4); and
  - c. collaboration with, and clearance from, law enforcement has been completed.

B. Approval of the Request for a CVSA Interview

1. The request for an OCWI CVSA interview must be approved by the OCWI Chief or designee.
2. The OCWI Chief or designee has the discretion to deny the request for any reason, including lack of resources.
3. The OCWI Chief or designee may authorize, subject to available resources, the use of an OCWI administered CVSA interview on any DCS case for investigative or non-investigative purposes.

C. Arranging the Examination

1. The requesting OCWI Investigator contacts an OCWI CVSA Examiner.
2. The OCWI investigator and the CVSA Examiner review the case to determine whether a CVSA is appropriate for a person(s) in an OCWI investigation.
3. If a CVSA is deemed appropriate, they determine:
  - a. which subject(s) will be interviewed; and
  - b. what type of examination to conduct for each subject.
4. The OCWI Investigator works with the CVSA Examiner to arrange a date and time for each interview.

D. Preparing for the CVSA Interview

The OCWI Investigator provides the CVSA Examiner with pertinent information concerning the investigation.

1. If the subject of the examination requires an interpreter, the OCWI Investigator arranges for an interpreter or translator as determined by the CVSA Examiner.
2. The OCWI Investigator meets with the assigned CVSA Examiner to accomplish the following tasks.
  - a. The CVSA Examiner reviews available information pertaining to the investigation and, if necessary, requests additional information from the OCWI Investigator;

- b. The OCWI Investigator provides clarifying or elaborating information as the CVSA Examiner may deem necessary;
- c. The CVSA Examiner develops the questions for the interview.

E. Conducting the CVSA Interview

- 1. Should the subject of the examination be late for, or cancel, the appointment, the OCWI Investigator shall immediately notify the CVSA Examiner.
- 2. The CVSA Examiner shall determine the subject of the examination's health, medical history, and/or use of medications as necessary to assess his/her ability to undergo the interview.
- 3. The CVSA Examiner shall obtain consent from the subject of the examination, and the consent is documented on the Consent to Computer Voice Stress Analyzer Examination Consent Form ([DCS-1221A](#)).
- 4. Consent for the CVSA may be obtained over the phone.
- 5. The DCS 1221A form shall be kept in the case file.

F. Interpreting the CVSA Interview Results

- 1. The CVSA Examiner shall review the CVSA examination chart.
- 2. The CVSA Examiner shall reach one of the following two conclusions:
  - a. No Deception Indicated (NDI); or
  - b. Deception Indicated (DI).
- 3. The CVSA Examiner shall solicit a cold read by a second CVSA Examiner.
- 4. The second CVSA Examiner independently shall read the chart and render an opinion.
- 5. The original CVSA Examiner shall render a final report.
- 6. The original CVSA Examiner shall enter the information into Guardian.
- 7. The original CVSA Examiner shall store all related data according to

policy.

8. The original CVSA Examiner shall provide the OCWI Investigator with the final report.
9. A copy of the report shall be kept in the DCS file according to the Department's record retention schedule.

## **VII. FORMS INDEX**

[Consent to Computer Voice Stress Analyzer Examination \(DCS-1221A\)](#)