

The Department of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (OSI) is a federal law enforcement agency responsible for conducting independent criminal investigation involving Department of Defense (DoD), Air Force, and Space Force personnel, property, or resources, to include family members of Active Duty personnel or civilian employees in certain situations, as appropriate. OSI's jurisdiction in this regard is broad. OSI derives its federal law enforcement authority and the authority to conduct independent criminal investigations from Public Law directing the Secretary of the Air Force to vest authority in OSI. This statutory authority is implemented through regulations. OSI's authority to make apprehensions and arrests and to request and execute federal warrants is enumerated by statute.

OSI must initiate criminal investigations in accordance with law and governing regulations when there is a DoD, Air Force, or Space Force nexus and do not require approval from any authority outside of OSI. Commanders not assigned to OSI do not impede or interfere with investigations or investigative techniques deemed appropriate by OSI. A DoD nexus requires a likelihood the crime occurred on a DoD installation, facility or vessel; DoD resources were utilized in the commission of the crime; a DoD entity, civilian employee, service member, or military dependent was the victim of the crime; or the subject or target of the investigation is currently affiliated with the DoD, was affiliated with the DoD at the time of the offense, or is subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

Specific to child victims of crime that would fall into OSI's investigative purview, OSI investigates allegations of physical, sexual, or psychological maltreatment or neglect that places a child in imminent danger of death, grievous bodily injury, or significant mental harm. Grievous bodily harm, as defined in the UCMJ, is serious bodily injury and includes fractured or dislocated bones, deep cuts, torn members of the body, serious damage to internal organs, and other serious bodily injuries. OSI also is responsible for investigating most allegations of child sexual exploitation involving Air Force or Space Force personnel, their dependents, or those affecting the Air Force and Space Force community. Additionally, OSI may investigate Problematic Sexual Behavior in Children and Youth (PSB-CY). Problematic sexual behavior is defined by the Department of Defense as behaviors initiated by youth under the age of 18 years that involve sexual body parts (i.e., genitals, anus, buttocks, or breasts) in a manner that deviates from normative or typical sexual behavior and are developmentally inappropriate and/or potentially harmful to the individual initiating the behavior or others.

If offenders of child-related crimes are not or cannot be charged in military court, OSI may refer investigations to Assistant United States Attorneys' Offices, or to other State or Local jurisdictions for prosecution as allowed by 18 USC, Section 13, Assimilative Crimes Act, Laws of States Adopted for Areas with Federal Jurisdiction, which provides; "Whoever within or upon any of the places now existing or hereafter reserved or acquired as provided in 18 USC, 7, Special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States defined, or on, above, or below any portion of the territorial sea of the United States not within the jurisdiction of any State, Commonwealth, territory, possession, or district is guilty of any act or omission which, although not made punishable by any enactment of Congress, would be punishable if committed or omitted within the jurisdiction of the State, Territory, Possession, or District in which such place is situated, by the laws thereof in force at the time of such act or omission, shall be guilty of a like offense and subject to a like punishment."

The OSI office at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio developed and maintains close cooperative and collaborative relationships with the two child advocacy centers (CAC) in proximity to the installation: Dayton Children's Hospital CARE House in Montgomery County, and Michael's House in Greene County.

OSI Special Agents actively and frequently participate in training offered by the CACs and attend Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings for cases that involve military-affiliated children. Not only do Greene and Montgomery County children services agencies refer to the WPAFB team, but OSI brings cases to the attention of the CACs.

These relationships, notifications and the successes of jointly running investigations involving child victims are made possible because the team members live and work close to WPAFB. Try as we may to make ourselves known to all necessary counterpart agencies, the further distance from the installation, the lower the likelihood that law enforcement, children's services, child advocacy centers, and/or prosecutors will consider, or even know to, contact OSI or the installation at all when they receive information of a crime involving the child of a military-affiliated family.