

AUSTIN KNUDSEN



STATE OF MONTANA

**MEMO**

TO: Executive Director, Legislative Services Division

FROM: Attorney General's Office

RE: Child Sexual Abuse or Sexual Exploitation Report  
pursuant to Montana Code Annotated § 41-3-210(5) (2025)

DATE: August 15, 2025

Pursuant to Mont. Code Ann. § 41-3-210(5)(2025), please find attached a memo for the Law and Justice Interim Committee and three pages that constitute the “aggregated information” required.

The Attorney General has not acted this fiscal year based on these reports under the authority of § 2-15-501, Mont. Code Ann.

Enc.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

215 North Sanders  
PO Box 201401  
Helena, MT 59620-1401

(406) 444-2026  
Contactdoj@mt.gov  
mtdoj.gov

**MEMO**

TO: Law and Justice Interim Committee

FROM: Attorney General's Office

RE: Report pursuant to Montana Code Annotated  
§ 41-3-210(5)(2023)

DATE: August 15, 2025

On behalf of the Attorney General, and pursuant to Mont. Code Ann. § 41-3-210(5)(2025), please find attached three pages that constitute the “aggregated information regarding the status of the cases reported [in § 41-3-210(3)] by the county attorneys, except for those cases pending review of the county attorney or uncharged cases still under investigation, including data on the total number of cases reported, the number of cases declined for prosecution in the prior fiscal year, the number of cases charged in the prior fiscal year.” The third page includes the initials of defendants charged, convicted, or sentenced arising from reports of child sexual abuse or sexual exploitation. As is discussed below, that data is limited.

The data collected shows a total of 1,505 cases reported by 52 counties. This is an improvement from 2024 where only 50 counties reported.

The attached pages also include “after consideration of the information provided by the department pursuant to § 41-3-211, any county attorney who failed to provide a complete report required by subsection (3)” as required by Mont. Code Ann. § 41-3-210(5)(e). Four counties did

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not report this year, with the Department's report provided under § 2-15-501 Mont. Code Ann. indicating that there was one or more reports provided to the County Attorney's Office. Those counties were: Anaconda-Deer Lodge, Sweet Grass, Meagher, and Wheatland.

Pursuant to Mont. Code Ann. § 41-5-210(5)(d), we respectfully notify the Legislature that in the past fiscal year, the Attorney General has not taken any action under the authority of § 2-15-501, Mont. Code Ann., based on the reports submitted by the County Attorneys pursuant to § 41-5-210(3).

With the 2025 statutory changes in reporting, enacted May 12, 2025, via Senate Bill 69, revised reporting forms were created and instructions were given to all counties regarding how to fill out the forms to upload to the online data reporting portal, with instructions regarding the changed reporting requirements. The Attorney General's Office ("AGO") was advised by the Montana County Attorney's Association ("MCAA") that the membership has strictly interpreted their reporting obligations pursuant to SB 69 (2025). The AGO understands the strict interpretation approach by the MCAA to be the result of continued resource issues for the County Attorneys' Offices. This interpretation has resulted in markedly different data than in years past. Most notably, the MCAA interpretation of SB 69 differs from that of the Attorney General's Office with respect to both the date range of the data required to be reported this reporting cycle, and in the means of obtaining the suspect initials now required to be reported to the LJIC.

With some exceptions, the MCAA membership generally did not provide the AGO with the initials of suspects this reporting cycle. The requirement that the AGO report the initials of each suspect to the

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LJIC was added by SB 69, to Mont. Code Ann. § 41-3-210(5)(d-f) (2025). SB 69 did not add a section to Mont. Code Ann. § 41-3-210(4), which governs what the County Attorneys' Offices must report to the AGO. The AGO has no means of obtaining the suspect initials for cases referred to the County Attorneys' Offices without that information being provided by the County Attorney's Office. As a result, the AGO is substantively unable to comply with Mont. Code Ann. § 41-3-210 (5)(d-f) (2025) in this reporting cycle. The AGO and MCAA have been in conversation about this challenge.

The MCAA membership also strictly interprets the enactment of SB 69 without a retroactive provision in the bill as having superseded the previous statute pursuant to Mont. Code Ann. § 1-2-109. Accordingly, the data received for the June 1, 2025 reporting deadline was submitted by most counties consisting of data from May 12, 2025 through June 1, 2025.

We look forward to answering any questions you may have regarding this data.

Enc.

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| County Number | County              | TOTAL CASES REPORTED BY CAO | Prosecution Declined | Charges Filed | CAO Certifications |
|---------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 30            | Anaconda-Deer Lodge | NR                          | NR                   | NR            | NR                 |
| 18            | Beaverhead          | 40                          | 15                   | 16            | 37                 |
| 22            | Big Horn*           | 22                          | 6                    |               | 22                 |
| 24            | Blaine              | 1                           |                      |               | 1                  |
| 43            | Broadwater          | 14                          | 2                    | 1             | 1                  |
| 1             | Butte-Silver Bow    | 46                          | 7                    | 3             | 12                 |
| 10            | Carbon              | 1                           |                      | 1             | 0                  |
| 42            | Carter              | 1                           | 1                    |               |                    |
| 2             | Cascade             | 118                         | 4                    |               | 6                  |
| 19            | Chouteau            | 4                           |                      |               | 1                  |
| 14            | Custer              | 21                          | 1                    |               | 13                 |
| 37            | Daniels             | 0                           |                      |               | NR                 |
| 16            | Dawson              | 9                           |                      |               | 9                  |
| 39            | Fallon              | 6                           |                      |               | 6                  |
| 8             | Fergus              | 13                          |                      |               | 6                  |
| 7             | Flathead            | 24                          | 1                    | 4             | 128                |
| 6             | Gallatin            | 81                          | 3                    | 4             | 0                  |
| 50            | Garfield            | 0                           |                      |               | 0                  |
| 38            | Glacier             | 6                           |                      |               | NR                 |
| 53            | Golden Valley*      | 9                           | 1                    | 1             | 9                  |
| 46            | Granite             | 2                           |                      |               | NR                 |
| 12            | Hill                | 24                          | 11                   |               | 13                 |
| 51            | Jefferson           | 1                           | 1                    |               | 1                  |
| 36            | Judith Basin        | 0                           |                      |               | 0                  |
| 15            | Lake                | 11                          |                      |               | 8                  |
| 5             | Lewis & Clark       | 81                          |                      |               | 80                 |
| 48            | Liberty             | 4                           |                      |               | 4                  |
| 56            | Lincoln             | 52                          | 2                    | 1             | 29                 |
| 25            | Madison             | 19                          | 2                    | 3             | 12                 |
| 41            | McCone              | 0                           |                      |               | 0                  |
| 47            | Meagher             | 0                           |                      |               | 0                  |
| 54            | Mineral             | 34                          | 13                   | 3             | 14                 |
| 4             | Missoula            | 312                         | 3                    | 6             | 146                |
| 23            | Musselshell         | 5                           |                      |               | 9                  |
| 49            | Park                | 32                          |                      |               | 17                 |
| 55            | Petroleum           | NR                          |                      |               | NR                 |
| 11            | Phillips            | 7                           | 25                   | 8             | 8                  |
| 26            | Pondera             | 4                           |                      |               | NR                 |
| 9             | Powder River        | 0                           |                      |               | 0                  |

| County Number | County      | TOTAL CASES REPORTED BY CAO | Prosecution Declined | Charges Filed | CAO Certifications        |
|---------------|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| 28            | Powell      | 15                          |                      |               | 14                        |
| 45            | Prairie     | 0                           |                      |               | 0                         |
| 13            | Ravalli     | 78                          |                      | 2             |                           |
| 27            | Richland    | 20                          | 4                    | 2             | 20                        |
| 17            | Roosevelt   | 7                           | 0                    | 0             | 0                         |
| 29            | Rosebud     | 6                           | 3                    |               |                           |
| 35            | Sanders     | 55                          |                      | 4             | 5                         |
| 34            | Sheridan    | 0                           |                      |               | 0                         |
| 32            | Stillwater  | 5                           |                      | 2             | 2                         |
| 40            | Sweet Grass | NR                          |                      |               | NR                        |
| 31            | Teton       | 2                           |                      | 3             | 0                         |
| 21            | Toole       | 1                           |                      |               | NR                        |
| 33            | Treasure    | 0                           |                      |               | 0                         |
| 20            | Valley      | 5                           | 2                    |               | 3                         |
| 44            | Wheatland   | NR                          |                      |               | NR                        |
| 52            | Wibaux      | 0                           |                      |               | 0                         |
| 3             | Yellowstone | 316                         | 5                    | 22            | 88                        |
|               |             | <b>1514</b>                 | <b>112</b>           | <b>86</b>     | <b>724</b>                |
|               |             | <b>CAO TOTAL</b>            |                      |               | <b>CAO Certifications</b> |

NR = No report provided

5.12.2025-6.1.2025 Charged, Convicted, or Sentenced Offenders' Initials

| Offender initials | charged as<br>alleged<br>perpetrator fo<br>sexual abuse or<br>exploitation | convicted of<br>sexual abuse or<br>exploitation | sentenced for sexual<br>abuse or exploitation |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| L.S.L.            | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| L.S.L.            | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| A.W.B.            | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| N.R.N.            | X                                                                          | X                                               | X                                             |
| K.C.              | X                                                                          | X                                               | 10 years MSP                                  |
| T.W.              | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| T.A.              | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| H.M.              | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| H.M.              | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| B.L.              | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| S.J.              | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| A.F.              | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| A.F.              | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| J.B.              | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| B.L.              | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| B.L.              | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |
| C.N.              | X                                                                          |                                                 |                                               |