

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

Any person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected is obliged to report the abuse to the appropriate authorities.

1. Professionals Required to Report

Individuals designated as mandatory reporters typically have frequent contact with children. These professionals can be held liable by both the civil and criminal legal systems for intentionally failing to make a report. The following persons are mandated reporters:

- Physicians, osteopaths, medical examiners, chiropractors, nurses, or hospital personnel
- Other health or mental health professionals
- Practitioners who rely solely on spiritual means for healing
- Teachers, school officials and personnel
- Social workers, daycare center workers, professional child care, foster care, residential or institutional workers including volunteers
- Law enforcement officers and judges
- Counselors and therapists
- Clergy, clerical staff from all denominations
- Photo processors, computer repair technicians
- Probation and parole officers
- Animal control officers
- Court appointed special advocates or Guardians

2. Standards for Making a Report

A report must be made when the reporter *suspects* or *has reasons to believe* that a child has been abused or neglected. This includes when the reporter has knowledge of, or observes a child being subjected to, conditions that would reasonably result in harm to the child.

It is an individual's responsibility to make a report; they do not need the permission of a supervisor to do so, nor can anyone prevent them from doing so.

3. Inclusion of the Reporter's Name in the Report

There is a toll-free telephone number for receiving reports of abuse or neglect. Reports may be made anonymously to this reporting number, but it is helpful to investigations to know the identity of reporters. Professionals who are mandated reporters are required to provide their names to hotline staff.

4. A report is required when:

- A person knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected