FOR MANDATED REPORTERS ONLY

Who are mandated reporters?
Members of the general public are encouraged to report suspected child abuse and neglect. However, state law mandates that workers in certain professions must make reports if they have reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect. Mandated reporters include:

• Medical Personnel: Physicians, psychiatrists, surgeons, residents, interns, dentists, dental hygienists, medical examiners, pathologists, osteopaths, coroners, Christian Science practitioners, chiropractors, podiatrists, registered and licensed practical nurses, emergency medical technicians, substance abuse treatment personnel, hospital administrators and other personnel involved in the examination, care or treatment of patients.

• School and Child Care Personnel: Teachers, administrators, certified and non-certified school employees, school board members, educational advocates assigned to a child pursuant to the School Code, truant officers, directors and staff assistants of day care centers and nursery schools, and child care workers.

• Law Enforcement: Truant officers, probation officers, law enforcement officers, and field personnel of the Department of Corrections.

• State Agencies: Field personnel from the Department of Children and Family Services, Department of Public Health, Department of Corrections, Department of Human Rights, Department of Healthcare and Family Services, and Department of Human Services. Supervisors and administrators of general assistance under the Illinois Public Aid Code are also included.

• Others: Social workers, counselors, social service administrators, substance abuse treatment personnel, domestic violence program personnel, crisis line or hotline personnel, foster parents, homemakers, recreational program or facility personnel, registered psychologists and assistants working under the direct supervision of a psychologist, funeral home directors and employees, and members of the clergy.

Mandated reporters who make good faith reports have the same immunity from liability under the law as non-mandated reporters. However, a mandated reporter’s willful failure to report suspected instances of child abuse or neglect to DCFS constitutes a Class A misdemeanor. A second or subsequent violation is a Class 4 felony.

Does reporting my suspicions to a superior satisfy my mandated reporter requirement?
No. While you may also inform your superiors (such as the school principal or an administrator) of your suspicions, this does not satisfy your mandated reporter requirement that you call the hotline.

Am I still a mandated reporter if someone who is now over 18 years old tells me he or she was abused as a child?
If the person reporting the abuse has reason to believe that the alleged perpetrator has had, or currently has, access to children under 18, you should call the hotline. In cases where the alleged perpetrator does not have access to children, contact your local law enforcement agency.

How should mandated reporters make reports?
Call the child abuse hotline as soon as possible. You must also send written confirmation to the appropriate DCFS field office within 48 hours. The department will provide a form to use when sending this confirmation. If you suspect a child’s death may have been caused by abuse or neglect, you must also call your county’s coroner or medical examiner.

How can I learn more?
To help mandated reporters understand their critical role in protecting children, DCFS administers a free online training course entitled Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters. To access the training visit www.dcfstraining.org. The Mandated Reporter Manual, available at www2.illinois.gov/DCFS, offers more information about the guidelines for mandated reporters in Illinois.

NOTICE
Any person who knowingly transmits a false report to the department commits the offense of disorderly conduct under subsection (a)(7) of Section 26-1 of the Criminal Code of 2012. A violation of this subsection is a Class 4 felony.” (Source: P.A. 97-189, eff. 7-22-11; 97-1150, eff. 1-25-13.)

Care Enough to Call

To Report Child Abuse and Neglect
1-800-25-ABUSE
TOLL-FREE • 24 HOURS

www2.illinois.gov/DCFS
Printed by Authority of the State of Illinois
DCFS #000 – XXX 2017 – 000 Copies
CFS 1050-14 – Rev. 2/19
CARE ENOUGH TO CALL

Protecting children is a responsibility we all share. It is important for every person to take child abuse and neglect seriously, to be able to recognize when it happens, and to know what to do next. Care enough to call the state’s child abuse hotline:

1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873)

What are child abuse and neglect?

This year hotline workers will handle approximately 70,000 reports of child abuse and neglect. Child abuse is the mistreatment of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caretaker, someone living in their home or someone who works with or around children. The mistreatment must cause injury or harm, or put the child at risk of injury or harm. Child abuse can be physical (such as bruises, burns or broken bones), sexual (such as fondling, penetration, exposure to pornography, or incest) or emotional.

Neglect happens when a parent or responsible caretaker fails to provide adequate supervision, food, clothing, shelter, medical care or other basics for a child.

When should I call the hotline?

You should call the child abuse hotline whenever you believe that a person who is caring for the child, who lives with the child, or who works with or around children may have caused injury or harm or put the child at risk of injury or harm. Child abuse can be physical (such as bruises, burns or broken bones), sexual (such as fondling, penetration, exposure to pornography, or incest) or emotional.

Neglect happens when a parent or responsible caretaker fails to provide adequate supervision, food, clothing, shelter, medical care or other basics for a child.

When should I NOT call the hotline?

Some situations do not require calling the hotline. Use good judgment. Call only when you think a child may have been abused or neglected.

What should I report?

Hotline staff are workers with special training in determining what constitutes child abuse and neglect under Illinois law. Details are important. Ideally, you should be able to tell the hotline worker:

- The child’s name, address and age.
- The nature of the suspected abuse or neglect, including when and where it occurred.
- The names of suspected perpetrators, if known, and their relationship to the child (parent, teacher, etc.).
- Any other information you think may help.

How am I protected?

People who report alleged child abuse or neglect in good faith cannot be held liable for damages under criminal or civil law. In addition, their names are not given to the person they name as the abuser or to anyone else unless ordered by a hearing officer or judge. Members of the general public may make reports to the hotline without giving their names.

Should I call the police?

Always call the child abuse hotline to report suspected child abuse or neglect. However, you should also consider calling the police–especially in emergencies, when the child has been injured, or when the child is in immediate danger of being harmed.