

Child Welfare Mandatory Reporting

Policy/Approach:

As mandated reporters, all SOCFC employees are obligated by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Services – Child Welfare (DHS CW).

Each center has a manual entitled “RECOGNIZING AND REPORTING CHILD ABUSE” which will further assist you in reporting suspected child abuse or neglect.

As they enter the program, parents are informed of our policies, our high regard for children’s safety, and that we are mandated reporters.

This procedure focuses only on the reporting process during a suspected case of neglect or abuse.

SOHS employees are subject to Oregon's Mandatory reporting Law. According to the law, any employee having reasonable cause to believe that any child has suffered abuse, or that any person with whom the employee comes in contact with has abused a child, shall report or cause a report to be made. The report is a request for an assessment into the condition of a child.

All newly hired staff receive training in accordance with State licensing laws. All staff receive annual training including agency child abuse policy and procedures, and training provided by Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) Child Welfare department. Policy Council and the Board of Directors receive training on the agency's approach to mandatory reporting and child abuse prevention during their orientation.

Parents are informed of the agency's child abuse policy at orientation, and in the registration packet. We work together with parents in many ways to prevent child abuse and neglect.

SOHS maintains a collaborative working relationship with ODHS to uphold and support Oregon’s mandatory reporting law. This partnership includes open communication between programs, staff training on mandatory reporting responsibilities, consultations as needed, and coordinated efforts to support safety plans. Additionally, SOHS works alongside caseworkers to assist with family goals whenever possible.

ORS 419B.010 Duty of Officials to report

ORS 419B.045 Investigation on School Premise

Procedure:

- ODHS Child Welfare reports must be made:
 - Immediately.
 - Even if you are uncertain of the degree or reason for your suspicion.
- The staff person making the observation, or receiving the disclosure, is the person who makes the call.
 - Prior to the call the most current child abuse reporting form must be filled out, in detail. **see below*
- A person failing to report suspected abuse, as required by law, may face criminal charges and/or a fine.
- Agency employees and records can only appear in court if subpoenaed.

Completing the Form:

- Use the online [ODHS Child Welfare & Confidential Information Reporting Form](#) located on our agency website.
- Complete the online form with full details: list the names of those involved, time, observations, using specific quotes or actions before making the call. May also include prior concerns/observations that contribute to suspicion.
- Consult with the Site Manager, Family Services Department staff, or Family Advocate if support is needed.

Making the Call:

- Completing the online reporting form does not fulfill your reporting responsibilities.
- Utilize the information from the form, as it is designed to set you up with all of the needed information to make a successful call.
- Hotline.

After Making the Report:

- Fully complete the online reporting form and submit.
- Family Services will monitor, track and maintain digital reports received.
- If the police and/or ODHS Child Welfare worker conduct an investigation at the center, and need to interview a child on site, ask for identification and cooperate fully.

- Communicate the report information fully with the Site Manager, Family Advocate or HS/EHS Teacher for further follow-up and case management. Other team members may be informed of the report but may not need to know all the details.
- Do not notify the family that a ODHS CW report has been made while the case is in investigation. If parents inquire, staff should respond that: "All Head Start employees are mandated reporters. It is possible that someone at our program could have made a call." It is part of our agreement with ODHS CW that we do not discuss a case with the family until the investigation is complete. For safety reasons, we may not tell the parent at any time, who made the ODHS Child Welfare report, unless prior approval is obtained by Family Services supervisor/manager.
- If at any time you feel you are in danger, notify the police by dialing 911. Do not put yourself in a situation where there is a threat of harm.

Report Follow-Up

- Once Family Services receives a report the link and instructions to the online Child Welfare Follow Up form will be sent to both the person who made the report and the Site Manager.
- Site Managers will be responsible for ensuring that follow-up is complete.
- AA's will mark child's SHINE picture with a purple dot, indicating that a Child Welfare Report has been made.
- Follow up on a Child Welfare Report will be completed within 1-2 weeks following a report to see if a Child Welfare case has been opened to an ongoing worker, or closed at assessment.
- In some cases it may take up to 45 days for a full assessment to be complete.
- Once follow up is complete, fill out the Child Welfare Follow Up form and submit.

Documentation Procedures:

- **DO NOT** case note in Shine that a report has been made. Documentation may happen **ONLY** if the case has been assigned to an ongoing worker and only about the ongoing case.
- If case is assigned to an ONGOING CASEWORKER, please make sure to complete the following documentation/follow-up:
 - Enter the ongoing Caseworkers contact information (full name, email address and phone number) in SHINE under the profile tab in the emergency contacts section located at the bottom.

- Obtain a copy of any necessary paperwork (placement papers, safety plans, etc) . Scan and upload in SHINE (e.g. if the state has received custody of the child).
 - If applicable, updated Emergency Card with new guardian information or restricted access.
- Once the Family Services Supervisor receives the report, it will be reviewed for completion and will follow up with reporting staff if necessary. Reports are retained at the Main Office for minimum of five years.

Please see the [Documenting Confidential Information Procedure](#) and ORS 419B.035 Confidentiality of Records.