

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 (ODHS CW).

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 (**ORS 419B.010(1) Duty of officials to report child abuse**). This law states, “any public or private official having reasonable cause to believe that any child with whom the official comes in contact has suffered abuse or that any person with whom the official comes in contact has abused a child shall immediately report or cause a report to be made.”

The report is a request for an assessment into the condition of a child.

ORS 419B.010 Duty of Officials to report
ORS 419B.045 Investigation on School Premise

Procedure: Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect

- 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.
- 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.

Step 1: Complete the Form

- Prior to the call, the most current child abuse reporting form **must** be filled out, in detail. 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.

- You may provide additional context regarding the child and family, including relevant observations, patterns, concerns, protective factors, and family strengths, to provide a complete picture of the child and family circumstances.
- Consult with the Site Manager, Family Services Department staff, or Family Advocate if support is needed.

Step 2: Make the Call

- Completing the online reporting form does not fulfill your reporting responsibilities. You **MUST** call the Oregon Child Abuse Hotline at 1-855-503-7233 to make your report.
- Use the information from the completed form to ensure you have the details needed to make the report by phone.

Step 3: After Making the Report

- Ensure the online reporting form is completed and submitted.
- Family Services will monitor, track and maintain digital reports received.
- Communicate the report information fully with the Site Manager, Family Advocate, or HS/EHS Teacher for further follow-up and case management. Information shared with additional team members should follow confidentiality procedures and be limited to what is needed to support the child and family.

Step 4: Complete Report Follow-Up *(This happens 1-2 weeks after making the report)*

- The reporting staff member may receive information regarding the outcome of the report during the initial call with ODHS Child Welfare, through follow-up communication from ODHS Child Welfare, or may need to contact ODHS Child Welfare **within 1-2 weeks** following the report to determine if the report was closed at screening or assigned to an ongoing caseworker.
 - In some cases it may take up to 45 days for a full assessment to be complete.
- 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 via email.
 - Site Managers will be responsible for ensuring that follow-up is complete.
 - Once follow up is complete, fill out the Child Welfare Follow Up form and submit

- AA's will mark child's database picture with a purple dot, indicating that a Child Welfare Report has been made.

Documentation Procedures:

- **DO NOT** case note in child file database 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:
 - Document the ongoing caseworker's contact information in the 'Profile' tab in child file database, under Emergency Contacts to ensure appropriate staff have access, including full name, email address, and phone number.
 - Obtain a copy of any necessary paperwork (placement papers, safety plans, etc) . Scan and upload in child file database (e.g. if the state has received custody of the child).
 - If applicable, coordinate with ERSEA to complete required updates related to changes in guardianship, authorized contacts, or restricted access according to current enrollment procedures.
 - 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.

Important Information/Reminders:

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

- 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.

Training, Prevention & Partnership:

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

Parents are informed of the agency's child safety and mandated reporting practices at orientation. We work together with parents in many ways to prevent child abuse and neglect.

All newly hired staff receive training on child abuse and neglect prevention, identification, and mandatory reporting responsibilities as part of the onboarding process.

In addition, all staff receive annual training on child safety, recognizing and reporting concerns of child abuse and neglect, and mandatory reporting responsibilities. Training includes completion of the Oregon Mandatory Reporting training video and annual training in partnership with ODHS Child Welfare to support staff understanding of mandatory reporter responsibilities, Child Welfare's role, and collaborative practices that support children and families.

SOHS maintains a collaborative working relationship with ODHS Child Welfare to support staff training, ongoing communication, and understanding of Oregon's mandatory reporting requirements. 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.

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