

**CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Effective: July 1, 2007

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- I. All employees and service providers of the school system who suspect that a child or a vulnerable adult has been subject to abuse or neglect are to follow the following steps and procedures in reporting. Section IV.B of the policy contains additional details regarding responsibility for reporting and protection for doing so.
- A. Immediately file an oral report with the Howard County Department of Social Services (DSS) (Child Protective Services or Adult Protective Services, as appropriate) on business days during business hours, or the Howard County Department of Police (police) on non-business days or hours.
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| DSS, Child Protective Services              | 410-872-4203  |
| 8:30-5:00 Mon. – Fri. (except holidays)     |               |
| DSS, Adult Protective Services              | 410-872-8823  |
| 8:30-5:00 Mon. – Fri. (except holidays)     |               |
| Department of Police, Central Communication | 410-313-2929* |
| 24 hours a day/7 days a week                |               |
- \* Indicate the call is from a school and request a CPS worker on call.*
- B. Notify the principal or appropriate Administrative Director that a report of suspected abuse or neglect has been made. In the case of allegations against an employee or service provider, notify the Assistant Superintendent for School Administration and either the principal or immediate supervisor as appropriate.
- C. Submit a written report within 48 hours after the contact that disclosed the existence of possible abuse and/or neglect. Use the form entitled “Report of Suspected Abuse/Neglect/Mental Injury” (available from the Office of Student Services) to report all abuse or neglect cases. Copies of this report shall be sent to:
1. School principal or the appropriate Administrative Director
  2. Office of Student Services
  3. DSS (2 copies), and,
  4. If the report involves suspected abuse also to the
    - a. Howard County Department of Police, Child Abuse Section or Adult Protective Services, and
    - b. State’s Attorney for Howard County

- D. Do not inform the individual who is the reported offender of the reporting action unless instructed to do so by the Superintendent. Do not discuss any aspect of the case with the victim.
- II. The principal will permit DSS and/or the police to interview the alleged student victim or non-victim witness in school in relation to the reported suspicion of abuse or neglect in accordance with Standard IV.D.5 of the policy.
    - A. Notification of parents regarding reports or interviews will be done in accordance with Standard IV.D.5.c of the policy.
    - B. Decisions regarding removal of a student from school grounds will be done in accordance with Standard IV.D.5.d of the policy.
- III. Principals will appoint school-based liaisons from among their Student Services staff members. School-based liaisons will communicate with DSS and/or the police, coordinate support for students who are suspected of being abused or neglected, participate in meetings of the Multi-Disciplinary Team as needed, and assist with training of school-based staff.
- IV. When students who are 18 years of age or older, and who are not vulnerable adults, report that they may be victims of abuse or neglect, staff must report the information to the school-based liaison and/or other student services staff to determine further action and to consider whether there are violations of other school system policies.
- V. The Superintendent will address instances of reported abuse and neglect involving a school system employee in accordance with Standards IV.F and IV.G of the policy. Allegations of abuse or neglect against an employee or service provider must be conducted by DSS and the police. Once a report of suspected abuse or neglect has been made, the school system cannot conduct any further investigations without the express approval of DSS or the police. However, the school system must always investigate abuse and neglect allegations against an employee or service provider, even when law enforcement or DSS closes out a report without taking action.
- VI. All records concerning abuse and neglect are to be maintained in a confidential manner. Section IV.C of the policy contains details regarding maintenance, retention, and disclosure of records and should be referred to for further information.
    - A. The principal will ensure that school-based records and reports of abuse and neglect are maintained in a confidential manner. Such records will be maintained separately from a student's educational records in the school in which the student was enrolled at the time of the report.
    - B. The Director of Staff Relations will ensure that records and reports of abuse and neglect involving an employee or service provider are maintained in a confidential manner in the Central Office.

- VII. The school system will collaborate with the Department of Social Services DSS and be actively involved in multidisciplinary meetings with regard to investigations and support services, in accordance with Standard IV.H of the policy. School-based liaisons and other appropriate school personnel are expected to provide support and to participate in team meetings as appropriate in accordance with Standard IV.E of the policy.
- VIII. The school system will provide for appropriate professional development to ensure that all employees and service providers will carry out this policy, in accordance with Standard IV.I. Professional development will include notice that the law provides immunity from any liability or criminal penalty to all those who participate in good faith in the making of a report, in an investigation, or any judicial proceedings resulting from such a report.
- A. All new employees and service providers will receive training in recognizing and reporting physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and mental injury.
  - B. An annual review of the policy will be provided to all employees and service providers.
  - C. The Superintendent's designee will identify service providers requiring training under this policy.
- IX. The Director of Staff Relations will serve as the custodian of the confidential files regarding school system employees and service providers who become the subject of abuse and neglect, or who fail to report abuse or neglect. The Director of Staff Relations will provide statistical data to the Office of Student Services for the annual report. This will include the number of reports made by employees and service providers involving accusations against employees and service providers and the final dispositions of those reports by action taken.
- X. History
- ADOPTED: July 22, 1991  
REVIEWED: July 1, 2012  
MODIFIED:  
REVISED: May 28, 1992  
January 26, 2006  
May 10, 2007  
EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2007

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*Notes:*

1. *Many of the procedures outlined in this policy are required by law.*
2. *The Annotated Code of Maryland requires all adults to report suspected abuse or neglect at any time that it comes to their attention.*

Attachment: Memorandum of Understanding