

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING INFORMATION SHEET

The Los Angeles Unified School District (District) has policies and procedures regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse to an appropriate child protective agency. The purpose of this summary is to serve as a reference guide to those policies and procedures pertinent to the identification and reporting of suspected child abuse. In addition to this summary, the District *strongly recommends that employees familiarize themselves with the District's "Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements" bulletin No. BUL-1347.2*. Please review this summary and the Child Abuse Reporting bulletin carefully, as each employee will be expected to, and is individually responsible to, adhere to the District's policies and procedures regarding suspected child abuse reporting.

I. California Law

A District employee “. . . in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment, has knowledge of or observes a child whom . . . [the employee] knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect . . . shall report the known or suspected instance of child abuse to a child protective agency immediately, or as soon as practically possible, by telephone. Thereafter, the District employee must prepare and send a written report within 36 hours of receiving the information concerning the incident to the child protective agency called.”

- All District employees are mandated to report suspected child abuse. As such, District employees are “mandated reporters” of suspected child abuse. A report made by a mandated reporter is deemed a “mandated report.”
- Each District employee is individually responsible for reporting suspected child abuse.
- Reporting suspected child abuse to a school principal, site administrator, supervisor, school nurse/doctor, school counselor, co-worker, Los Angeles School Police Department (LASPD), or other person *does not substitute for making a mandated report to an appropriate child protective agency*.
- Contents of a suspected child abuse report shall remain confidential.

II. Definitions – “Child Abuse” includes the following:

- Life Endangerment – any act by a person who willfully causes, inflicts or permits any child to endure cruel and inhuman corporal punishment, mental suffering, etc.
- Neglect – negligent treatment, maltreatment, or failure to provide adequate clothing, food, medical care, shelter, or supervision.
- Physical Abuse – actual physical injury.
- Sexual Abuse – sexual assault, sexual exploitation, molestation of child, etc.

III. Child Abuse Reporting Procedures

- An employee suspecting child abuse/neglect must immediately, or as soon as practically possible, make their mandated suspected child abuse telephone report to an appropriate child protective agency, either the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) or the local law enforcement department serving the school (see Attachment A - *Local Law Enforcement Departments Serving LAUSD Schools*) as follows:
 - Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) – (800) 540-4000
 - Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) – Child Abuse Unit – (213) 486-0530
 - Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department
 - City Police Department serving the school
- A written report must be completed and sent to the same child protective agency called within 36 hours of receiving the information concerning the incident. The report must be submitted to the same agency that received the telephone report.
- Additional copies of “Suspected Child Abuse Report,” Department of Justice form SS 8572 can be printed off the LAUSD website: http://www.schoolsafety.lausd.net/report_child_abuse or the DCFS website: dcfs.co.la.ca.us.
- The identity of a District employee who reports suspected child abuse shall remain confidential and disclosed only between designated child protective agencies, by court order, when needed for specified court actions, or if the employee waives his/her confidentiality.

IV. Prohibited Actions

- Never contact the child’s or the alleged perpetrator’s parent/guardian if indicators point to possible abuse or if abuse is suspected prior to making a report.
- Never conduct an investigation of any kind once abuse or neglect is suspected or prior to making a report.
- Never report suspected child abuse to the Los Angeles School Police Department (LASPD). The law provides that the *LASPD is not a child protective agency.*
- No removal or arranging of any clothing to provide a visual inspection of the underclothing, breast, buttocks, or genitalia of a pupil is permitted.

V. District Employee Named as Alleged Perpetrator

- District officials may temporarily relocate an employee who has been named as an alleged perpetrator in a report of suspected child abuse.
- A District employee who is temporarily transferred or relocated will be presumed innocent pending the outcome of the investigation and will have all

appropriate due process rights.

VI. Consequences for Reporting/Failure to Report

- A violation of District policies and the law may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, demotion, and/or termination from the District.
- Generally, District employees are immune from civil and criminal liability when reporting suspected child abuse as required by law.
- Failure to report suspected child abuse is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment in the county jail for a maximum of six months, a fine up to \$1,000, or both.

**FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CONTACT THE
OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL AT (213) 241-7600**