



Reporter Tip!

Tips for Mandated Reporters

- On July 1, 1986, a law was passed requiring all Mandated Reporters to sign a statement on a DCFS form certifying that they understand their mandated reporting requirements. (<http://www.state.il.us/DCFS/docs/cants22.pdf>) This law is called the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA).

It is a LEGAL requirement that this signed form be in your personnel file.

- You will fulfill your legal obligation as a Mandated Reporter when you call the DCFS Hotline:

1-800-25ABUSE
1-800-252-2873
1-217-524-2606
1-800-358-5117 (TTY)

If the report is a criminal matter, and it is outside of DCFS's jurisdiction, the Hotline will ask you to notify the police.

- While an "*alleged perpetrator*" is the person who either directly causes or allows child abuse or neglect to occur, there are different definitions of this term.

For DCFS purposes, this includes any individual residing in the child's home, any person responsible for the child's welfare, or anyone who came to know the child through a position of trust, such as mother, father, teacher, counselor, or coach to name a few. If the perpetrator does not fit within one of the above categories, the incident may be a crime but it is not classified as "child abuse."

For criminal matters a perpetrator could be anybody.

- Sometimes a child will seek out a trusted adult to tell about the abuse or neglect. When a child tells you about abuse or neglect, CALL THE HOTLINE at 1-800-25-ABUSE!

- ➡ If a child in any higher-risk population tells you he or she is being abused, help protect the child by calling the Hotline at 1-800-25-ABUSE!

- ➡ Extensive interviews of a child about an abuse incident can traumatize the child and have a negative impact on the investigation, if not done appropriately.

After the report is made, a trained professional interviewer will conduct an interview of the child. Multiple interviews of a child can be traumatizing and should be avoided at all costs.

- ➡ As a Mandated Reporter, you have specific rights to:
 - ▶ The Hotline worker's full name
 - ▶ To speak to the Hotline worker's supervisor if you do not agree with the Hotline worker's decision
 - ▶ To request a review of an investigation that has been unfounded if there are concerns regarding the adequacy of the investigation
 - ▶ To receive information about the findings and actions taken by the Department during the investigation, including actions taken to ensure a child's safety

- ➡ As a Mandated Reporter, if you make a good faith report to the Hotline, you are entitled to immunity from legal liability. That means you cannot be successfully sued by the parent or the alleged perpetrator, even if your report is not "indicated." The law presumes you reported in good faith. To successfully sue you, the parent or perpetrator would have to prove that you willfully lied.

- ➡ When in doubt, MAKE A CHILD ABUSE REPORT and let DCFS do its job by investigating!