

**Explanation of the Statutory Requirement
That School Personnel Report Suspected
Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect, As Set Forth
in the Illinois Abused And Neglected Child
Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/1 et seq.)**

Any school personnel, including teachers, administrators, nurses, social workers, educational support personnel and psychologists, who have reasonable cause to believe a child, known to them in their professional capacity, may be an abused or neglected child are required by law to immediately report the case to the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS). An "abused child" is one whose parent, or immediate family member, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, or any individual residing in the same home, or a paramour of the child's parent, inflicts upon or creates a substantial risk of physical or emotional injury to the child, commits a sex offense against the child, or commits torture or inflicts excessive corporal punishment upon the child. A "neglected child" is one whose parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare fails to provide the child with the necessary care and support, such as nourishment, medical care, education as required by law, clothing and shelter, or who is abandoned. A child may not be considered abused or neglected solely because a parent or guardian, in good faith, depends upon spiritual prayer alone for the treatment of disease. A child may not be considered neglected or abused solely because the child is not attending school in accordance with the requirements of The School Code.

A report of suspected child abuse or neglect must be made orally to DCFS either by calling the statewide 24-hour child abuse and neglect hotline number (1-800-252-2873) or by contacting the nearest DCFS office by telephone or in person. The oral report must be confirmed in writing to the appropriate Child Protective Service Unit within 48 hours. School personnel should inform the school principal that they have reported a suspected abuse or neglect case to DCFS.

When making a report to DCFS, the following information is required, if known:

1. The name and address of the child and his or her parents or guardian.
2. The child's age, sex and race.
3. The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect.
4. Any evidence of previous injuries.
5. The names of persons apparently responsible for the abuse or neglect.
6. The family's composition, including the names, ages, sexes, and races of other children.

7. The reporter's name, occupation, and a place where he or she may be reached.
8. The actions taken by the reporter.
9. Any other information the reporter believes may be helpful.

School personnel who report a suspected case of child abuse or neglect have immunity if the report was made in good faith. School personnel who willfully fail to report a case of abuse or neglect to DCFS are guilty of a Class A misdemeanor and subject to a \$1,000.00 fine or up to one year in prison, or both, and also may have their certificates suspended for a period not to exceed one (1) year. Any school employee who knowingly transmits a false report to DCFS commits the offense of disorderly conduct under Subsection (a)(7) of Section 26-1 of the Criminal Code of 1961. A violation of this subsection is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by a term of imprisonment for up to one year or by a fine not to exceed \$1,000.00, or by both such term and fine. A subsequent violation of the false reporting provision is a Class 4 felony.

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