



Fulton County Services for Children

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REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

Protecting Pennsylvania's children from abuse and neglect is a shared responsibility. It requires collaboration from the formal child protective services system, community partners and our citizens to provide local safety nets for children and families that are facing challenges within our communities and neighborhoods.

Recently, 24 pieces of legislation were enacted, changing how Pennsylvania responds to child abuse. These changes significantly impact the reporting, investigation, assessment, prosecution and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases.

These changes:

- Strengthen our ability to better protect children from abuse and neglect by amending the definitions of child abuse and perpetrator;
- Streamline and clarify mandatory child abuse reporting processes;
- Increase penalties for failure to report suspected child abuse and protect persons who report child abuse;
- Promote the use of multi-disciplinary investigative teams (MDITs) to investigate child abuse related crimes and
- Support the use of information technology to increase efficiency and tracking of child abuse data.

NOTE: YOU MAY REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE BY:

- **CALLING CHILDLINE AT 1-800-932-0313**
- **REPORTING ELECTRONICALLY AT www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis**
- **YOU MAY ALSO CALL THE COUNTY AGENCY FOR ASSISTANCE AT 717-485-3553**

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is child abuse?

Child abuse, according to the CPSL, means intentionally, knowingly or recklessly doing any of the following:

- Causing bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Fabricating, feigning or intentionally exaggerating or inducing a medical symptom or disease which results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any recent act.
- Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through any act or failure to act or a series of such acts or failures to act.
- Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act.
- Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Creating a likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- Causing serious physical neglect of a child.
- Causing the death of the child through any act or failure to act.

Child abuse also includes certain acts in which the act itself constitutes abuse without any resulting injury or condition.

These recent acts include any of the following:

- Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child.
- Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location or the duration of the restraint or confinement.
- Forcefully shaking a child under one year of age.
- Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child under one year of age.

Emergency Services as required. Call 717-485-3553

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- Interfering with the breathing of a child.
- Causing a child to be present during the operation of a methamphetamine laboratory, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement.
- Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual, other than the child's parent, who the parent knows or reasonably should have known was required to register as a Tier II or III sexual offender or has been determined to be a sexually violent predator or sexually violent delinquent.
"Recent" is defined as an abusive act within two years from the date the report is made to ChildLine. Sexual abuse, serious mental injury, serious physical neglect and deaths have no time limit.

Are you a mandated reporter?

The following adults are considered mandated reporters and are required to report suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse:

- A person licensed or certified to practice in any health-related field under the jurisdiction of the Department of State.
- A medical examiner, coroner or funeral director.
- An employee of a health care facility or provider licensed by the Department of Health, who is engaged in the admission, examination, care or treatment of individuals.
- A school employee.
- An employee of a child-care service who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
- A clergyman, priest, rabbi, minister, Christian Science practitioner, religious healer or spiritual leader of any regularly established church or other religious organization.
- An individual paid or unpaid, who, on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, is a person responsible for the child's welfare or has direct contact with children.
- An employee of a social services agency who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
- A peace officer or law enforcement official.
- An emergency medical services provider certified by the Department of Health.
- An employee of a public library who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
- An individual supervised or managed by a person listed above, who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
- An independent contractor who has direct contact with children.
- An attorney affiliated with an agency, institution, organization or other entity, including a school or regularly established religious organization that is responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or control of children.
- A foster parent.
- An adult family member who is a person responsible for the child's welfare and provides services to a child in a family living home, community home for individuals with an intellectual disability or host home for children which are subject to supervision or licensure by the department under Articles IX and X of the Public Welfare Code.

Can you report suspected abuse if you are not a mandated reporter?

- Yes. Anyone who is concerned about the safety of a child is encouraged to make a report. Individuals who are encouraged, although not required by law, to make a report of suspected child abuse, can make a report to ChildLine by calling 1-800-932-0313.

Am I protected from civil and criminal liability if I make a report of suspected child abuse?

Yes, persons making a report of suspected child abuse are immune from civil and criminal liability as long as the report was made in good faith.

If I make a report is my identity protected?

The identity of the person making the report is kept confidential with the exception of being released to law enforcement officials or the district attorney's office.

This website, KeepKidsSafe.pa.gov, is designed to serve as the hub for information related to critical components impacting child protection including a link for mandated reporters to make reports of suspected child abuse electronically, training on child abuse recognition and reporting, information related to clearances and general information related to child protection.