

Summary of  
Division of Family Services - Public School Districts

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**Reporting**

Delaware law requires that any person who knows or reasonably suspects child abuse or neglect shall make an oral report to:

**THE CHILD ABUSE REPORT LINE 1-800-292.9582 (24 hours per DAY)**

**A written report is required, using the Mandatory Reporting Form, to be filed within 72 hours after making the oral report.**

**Who Reports?**

Reports should be made by the actual reporting person. The oral report takes an average of 20 minutes and will require demographic information on the child and family as well as specifics related to the incident. If necessary, a school designee may be assigned to make the oral report, but the actual reporting person must complete the written report and may be directly contacted by the Division of Family Services (DFS) to provide additional first-hand information.

**Responding to a Report**

- DFS will notify the school within 24 hours if the report will be investigated or not.
- The DFS caseworker attempts to contact the school reporter to discuss the case and related information and to determine if parents will be notified and by whom. The source of the report will be divulged only with the reporter's consent. The criminal proceedings, disclosure of the reporting source may be necessary for court purposes.
- The DFS caseworker decides if the investigation will be initiated at the school. If so, the school reporter will inform the caseworker who the contact person will be upon arrival at the school.
- Upon arriving, the caseworker will show identification and ask to speak with the contact person. The contact person will arrange for an interview location and make the child available.
- If it is necessary to observe physical injuries, the school nurse may be asked to assist. If injuries are severe, DFS may request police to participate in the investigation at the school site. Under no circumstances should the school or DFS conduct a physical examination of alleged sexual abuse or rape. DFS and the police will arrange for a medical examination in these cases with the appropriate medical facility.
- Upon conclusion of the interview and examination, DFS will inform the contact person about the planned course of action for the child.
- DFS is not authorized to transport students. If this becomes necessary, the school or the police will be asked to assist.
- At the conclusion of the family investigation, DFS will send written notice to the reporter that the investigation is completed.

Reports from other sources may need to be investigated in the school setting. The DFS caseworker will request assistance from the school contact person and may request assistance from the school nurse. No examination will be done by school personnel prior to DFS response.

Sharing information is encouraged and requires a Delaware Consent to Release Information Form which can be solicited by either agency and shared by FAX.

If a case is open and the worker is unknown, the school may contact the DFS Report Line and request that the assigned caseworker contact them to share information about the case.