



CHILD ABUSE REPORTING INFORMATION SHEET

The Los Angeles Unified School District (District) has policies and procedures regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect to a child protective agency (e.g., Department of Children and Family Services, local law enforcement). This summary serves as a reference guide to those policies pertinent to the identification and reporting of suspected child abuse. In addition to this summary, employees should familiarize themselves with the District's policy, BUL-1347, *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements*. Employees will be expected and are responsible to adhere to the District's policies regarding suspected child abuse reporting.

I. Law and Policy

California law and District policy provide that a District employee in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment, that 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.

- All District employees are mandated to report suspected child abuse.
- Each District employee is individually responsible for reporting suspected child abuse.
- Reporting suspected child abuse to a principal, site administrator, school nurse, school counselor, co-worker, Los Angeles School Police Department (LASPD), or other person *does not relieve a mandated reporter of their duty to report to a child protective agency*.
- Suspected child abuse reports are confidential, however, the identity of an employee who reports suspected child abuse may be disclosed between designated child protective agencies, by court order, when needed for specified court actions, or if the employee waives confidentiality.

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

- Physical Abuse – physical injuries such as bruises, welts, burns, cuts, etc.
- Sexual Abuse – sexual assault, sexual exploitation, molestation, human sexual trafficking, etc.
- Neglect – negligent treatment, or failure to provide adequate clothing, food, medical care, shelter, supervision, etc.
- 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.

III. Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting Procedures

An employee suspecting child abuse or neglect must file a Suspected Child Abuse Report (SCAR):

1. If the employee has an emergent (urgent) SCAR to make (e.g., immediate risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation or that the child is in imminent danger of harm or death), the employee must: (1) telephone report immediately or as soon as practically possible to a child protective agency; and (2) file a written report with the same agency within 36 hours of receiving the incident information.
2. If the employee has a non-emergent (non-urgent) SCAR to make (e.g., non-life threatening and non-emergency), the employee has an option to immediately or as soon as practically possible report to DCFS by using the one-step online “Child Abuse Reporting Electronic System” (CARES) offered by DCFS: reportchildabusela.org.



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY BULLETIN

ATTACHMENT D

- 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

The SCAR (SS 8572) is available online through the DCFS website at <http://dcfs.co.la.ca.us/contactus/childabuse.html> or can be printed from LAUSD's website at <http://achieve.lausd.net/Page/1604>.

IV. Prohibited Actions

- a. Do not contact the child's or the alleged perpetrator's parent or guardian if indicators point to possible abuse or if abuse is suspected prior to making a report.
- b. Do not conduct an investigation of any kind once abuse or neglect is suspected or prior to making a report.
- c. Do not report suspected child abuse to LASPD, as the law provides that LASPD is not a child protective agency.
- d. Do not remove or arrange clothing to provide a visual inspection of the underclothing, breast, buttocks, or genitalia of a pupil.

V. District Employee Named as Alleged Perpetrator

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

VI. Consequences for Reporting or Failing to Report

- a. Failure to comply with these laws and policies may subject an employee: (1) to a misdemeanor punishable by up to 6 months in jail and \$1000 dollars fine; (2) to personal civil and criminal liability; and (3) to discipline, including dismissal and revocation of credentials.
- b. Generally, District employees are immune from civil and criminal liability when reporting suspected child abuse as required by law.

FOR ASSISTANCE, CONTACT OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL (213) 241-7600