



CHILD ABUSE REPORTING INFORMATION SHEET

The Los Angeles Unified School District (District) has policies and procedures regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse to an appropriate child protective agency. This summary serves as a reference guide to those policies/procedures pertinent to the identification and reporting of suspected child abuse. In addition to this summary, *employees should familiarize themselves with the District's "Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Requirements" bulletin No. BUL-1347.4*. Employees will be expected to, and are responsible to, adhere to the District's policies regarding suspected child abuse reporting.

I. California Law

A District employee “. . . in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment, 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 immediately, or as soon as practically possible, by telephone. Thereafter, the District employee must prepare and send a written report within 36 hours of receiving the information concerning the incident to the child protective agency called.”

- All District employees are mandated to report suspected child abuse. As such, District employees are “mandated reporters” of 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*.
- Contents of a SCAR shall remain confidential.

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, maltreatment, or failure to provide adequate clothing, food, medical care, shelter, or supervision.
- 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 Reporting Procedures

An employee suspecting child abuse or neglect must: (1) Immediately, or as soon as practically possible, make the child abuse telephone report to an appropriate child protective agency, either Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) (24 hours/7 days per week) or local law enforcement serving the school (see Attachment A - *Local Law Enforcement Departments Serving LAUSD Schools*); and (2) File a written report with the same agency called within 36 hours of receiving the information concerning the conduct as follows:



- 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) can be printed from LAUSD’s website at <http://achieve.lausd.net/Page/1604> or is available on-line through the DCFS website at <http://dcfs.co.la.ca.us/contactus/childabuse.html>.
 - The identity of a District employee who reports suspected child abuse shall remain confidential and disclosed only between designated child protective agencies, by court order, when needed for specified court actions, or if the employee waives confidentiality.

IV. **Prohibited Actions**

- Never 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.
- Never conduct an investigation of any kind once abuse or neglect is suspected or prior to making a report.
- Never report suspected child abuse to LASPD, as the law provides that *LASPD is not a child protective agency*.
- No removal or arranging of any clothing to provide a visual inspection of the underclothing, breast, buttocks, or genitalia of a pupil is permitted.

V. **District Employee Named as Alleged Perpetrator**

- District officials may temporarily reassign an employee who has been named as an alleged perpetrator in a report of suspected child abuse.
- 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 violation of these policies and the law may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Also, failure to report suspected child abuse is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment in jail for a maximum of six months, a fine up to \$1,000, or both.
- Generally, District employees are immune from civil and criminal liability when reporting suspected child abuse as required by law.

**FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CONTACT
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL AT (213) 241-7600**