





# Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect



School district personnel who know or have reasonable cause to believe that a child is dependent, neglected, or abused shall immediately cause a report to be made to the proper authorities in accordance with state law.

1. Under Kentucky law, **any** person is obligated to report child abuse, child sexual abuse, and child neglect or dependency. This means that any school staff member or district employee who becomes aware of abuse or neglect from any source—whether from a student, parent, staff member, or any other person—no matter if the information is oral or in written form, is obligated to report the suspected abuse or neglect to the **Child Protective Services (CPS) hotline at 1-800-752-6200 during business hours or the 24-hour hotline at 1-877-597-2331** immediately.

If you receive information in written form or come into possession of writings, photographs, pictures, or other information in a tangible form that is related to suspected abuse or neglect, do not mark, write on, or otherwise alter the documents or tangible information in any way. Such information should be provided to the proper authorities after you make your report.

2. Abuse or neglect can be caused by a child's parents, guardian, or other person who has the permanent or

temporary care, or custody, or responsibility for the supervision of a child—including district personnel. Abuse can also be caused by another child, a stranger, or someone outside the school setting. For example, a teacher or supervising adult leaves the room unsupervised and a child is sexually assaulted or seriously injured by another student. This should be reported. Regardless of who is reported to have caused the abuse or neglect, you should immediately report it to the proper authorities and let them handle the investigation.

In the event that the abuse or neglect is caused by a Jefferson County Public School (JCPS) employee, this is also a personnel matter that should be reported to the principal of the school so that appropriate action can be taken.

3. An abused or neglected child is defined by state law as follows:

A child whose health or welfare is harmed or threatened with harm when his parent, guardian, or other person exercising custodial control or supervision of the child: inflicts or allows to be inflicted upon the child physical or emotional injury by other than accidental means; commits or allows to be committed an act of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or prostitution upon the child; abandons or exploits such child; does not provide the child with adequate care, supervision, food, clothing, shelter, education, or medical care necessary for the child's well-being.

Forms of abuse include neglect, physical abuse (e.g., assault or contact that causes physical injury or emotional injury) and sexual abuse (e.g., touching private areas or zones of a child's body). If there is any question in your mind whether information you have learned might indicate that a child has been abused or neglected, you should call in the report and let the proper authorities investigate and determine what has occurred.

4. After you have reported the abuse to CPS, immediately inform your principal of the report. Do not inform the person or persons suspected of abuse or neglect of the allegations made against them, and do not inform the person or persons suspected that you have called in a report to the CPS hotline.

In the event that the person who is alleged to have committed the abuse or neglect is an employee of the district, neither the principal nor the person making the report should inform the employee of the allegations of abuse or neglect prior to the principal contacting the Crimes Against Children Unit (CACU), informing CACU that the principal intends to confront the employee concerning the allegations, and allowing CACU the opportunity to be present when the meeting is held. In the event that CACU is unwilling or unable to send an officer to that meeting, the principal may proceed with the meeting in a timely fashion.

Under state law, school personnel are not permitted to conduct an internal investigation in lieu of an official investigation by CPS, CACU, or other law enforcement authorities. Do not delay your report to further investigate suspected abuse or neglect or to confirm it with other parties.

