

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Duty to report: Any employee of the school unit who has reason to suspect that a child has been or is likely to be abused or neglected must immediately notify the building principal who shall process the report as provided in administrative rules adopted by the District. In addition to notifying the principal, the employee may also make a report directly to the Department of Human Services (DHS) or the District Attorney when the employee believes a direct report will better serve the child in question.

DEFINITIONS

- A. *Child abuse or neglect.* Child abuse or neglect is defined by Maine law as “a threat to a child’s health or welfare by physical, mental or emotional injury or impairment, sexual abuse or exploitation, deprivation of essential needs or lack of protection from these.”
- B. *Person responsible for the child.* A “person responsible for the child” means a person with responsibility for a child’s health or welfare, whether in the child’s home or another home or a facility which, as part of its function, provides for the care of the child. It includes the child’s parent, guardian or other custodian.

The administration shall adopt procedures to follow in reporting suspected child abuse or neglect.

Any person who in good faith reports or participates in the investigation or proceedings of a child protection investigation is immune from any criminal or civil liability for the act of reporting or participating in the investigation or proceeding. Good faith does not include instances when a false report is made and the person knows the report is false.

Legal Reference: 22 MRSA Chap. 1071, Child and family Services and Child Protection Act
20 USC §1232g, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Cross References: ACAA Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students
JLF-AR Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect – Procedures
JLF-E Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect - Report Form
JRA Student Records

Adopted: May 15, 2000

