

BROCKTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF MANDATED REPORTER STATUS

As an employee who works in direct contact with students, you are a “mandated reporter” for purposes of the Massachusetts child abuse and neglect law. The statute is General Law Chapter 119, section 51A. That section of the law gives a name to the report – a “51A” – that must be filed when abuse or neglect is suspected.

Section 51A: Reporting of suspected abuse or neglect; mandated reporters; collection of physical evidence; penalties; content of reports; liability; privileged communication

Section 51A. (a) A mandated reporter who, in his professional capacity, has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from: (i) abuse inflicted upon him which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare, including sexual abuse; (ii) neglect, including malnutrition; (iii) physical dependence upon an addictive drug at birth, shall immediately communicate with the department orally and, within 48 hours, shall file a written report with the department detailing the suspected abuse or neglect; or (iv) being a sexually exploited child; or (v) being a human trafficking victim as defined by section 20M of chapter 233.

If a mandated reporter is a member of the staff of a medical or other public or private institution, school or facility, the mandated reporter may instead notify the person or designated agent in charge of such institution, school or facility who shall become responsible for notifying the department in the manner required by this section.

A mandated reporter may, in addition to filing a report under this section, contact local law enforcement authorities or the child advocate about the suspected abuse or neglect.