

FAQ for DCF Electronic Reporting (Update)

Q: Who is eligible to use the Electronic Reporting Process?

A: Mandated Reporters in schools who are reporting non-emergent suspicions of abuse or neglect.

Q: How do I determine if my suspicion is non-emergent?

A: A non-emergent suspicion is defined as a circumstance wherein there is suspicion of abuse or neglect and the alleged victim, or similarly situated minor, is not presenting:

- In immediate harm
- With need for urgent or emergent medical or mental health care
- With a realistic fear of further abuse or neglect within the next 24 hours
- As at risk of being inaccessible within the next 24 hours

This triage guide should help identify emergent vs. non-emergent, based on the reporter's professional opinion. A "yes" response to any of the below would suggest a need to call the Careline:

1. Is the child victim presenting with fear of returning to the alleged perpetrator's care and child is scheduled to have contact with the alleged perpetrator within the next 24 hours?
2. Does the child victim present with any injury that is suspected to be caused by a recent incident of abuse or neglect?
3. Is there an incident of alleged child abuse or neglect that requires an immediate response required by Mobile Crisis, Police, or Emergency Medical Personnel?
4. Is there concern that the child victim, who is of a developmental age that requires supervision, is going to be without a responsive caregiver?

Q: What do I do if my suspicion does not meet this criteria and is emergent?

A: You must contact the DCF Careline at 800-842-2288 and make an oral report followed by submitting the DCF-136 form, per usual process.

Q: How does the Electronic Reporting Process work?

A: A Mandated Reporter will complete the "Electronic Report of Non-Emergent Child Abuse or Neglect" PDF- this is not the same as a DCF-136. It is important to read the document and provide as much detail as you have regarding the demographics and the incident. The DCF Careline will review the information provided, and as is done with oral reports, will determine acceptance status and response time. Electronic Reports will be received Monday through Friday between 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. to accommodate school personnel. As a Mandated Reporter once

such a decision is made regarding your referral you will receive an email (Mandated Reporter letter) with the acceptance status.

Q: If I submit an electronic report, and prior to DCF responding, the child's circumstances change and it is now emergent, what should I do?

A: Contact the DCF Careline immediately at 800-842-2288.

Q: I am not able to open the PDF, what should I do?

A: Your PDF viewer needs to be updated to the latest version of Adobe Reader. Follow the instructions that are provided after the "Please wait..." message when trying to open the attachment.

Q: How can I ensure my responsibilities are fulfilled as a Mandated Reporter?

A: You have met your legal responsibilities by:

- Making a report or ensuring that a report has been filed within 12 hours of becoming aware of a suspicion of abuse or neglect.
- By providing as much information as reasonably possible.
- Ensuring that only non-emergent matters are submitted electronically.

Q: Do I have to submit a 136 if I made an online report?

A: No, the online report satisfies this requirement.

Q: How do I correctly send the PDF?

A: Once the Online Referral Form is completed, select FILE then SEND FILE. Your email should then pop-up, at which point you would send to DCF.referral@ct.gov

Q: What happens after I submit an online report?

A: Upon proper submission, the reporter will receive an automatic response that the email was received by DCF. If an auto-response is not received in the reporter's inbox, they should check their "Junk" folder. If no auto-response was found, DCF did not receive your submission- please resubmit or contact the Careline. Upon a correct submission, the referral will be reviewed by a screener for acceptance criteria, at which point a mandated reporter will be receive an email with the decision.

Q: Why can't we find the referral online and what is next?

A: This is the pilot to the more robust online reporting system that is in development and will be available to all mandated reporters. Over the last year the Careline has experienced an increase in reports by nearly 20% and we strategically identified schools as the target population to provide a resource for you in making referrals to the Department. Due to this pilot being only available to a select audience, publishing the document online would not be appropriate. This pilot is providing valuable information regarding the processes that will be considered for the larger system implementation. Once we get there, the online submission will be a web based portal with a variety of features that are currently not available today.

Q: What if I still have questions?

A: Please contact your regional DCF office.