

454.2 - PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE NEGLECT

Reports of suspected or threatened child abuse or neglect shall be made immediately by phone or personally to the Wood County Social/Human Services Department – Child Protective Services. If a report to that department is not possible, or if the person making the report suspects that the health or safety of a child is in immediate danger and wishes to request an immediate investigation, the school employee should make the child abuse or neglect report to the Wood County Sheriff's Department.

When making a child abuse or neglect report, the reporter should be prepared to provide as much of the following information as possible:

- The employee's name, phone number, relationship to the child, and school phone number.
- The name, home address, and age of the child suspected of or threatened with being abused or neglected.
- The name, home addresses and work places of the child's parents or guardian.
- The names and ages of the child's siblings, if relevant to the report.
- A description of why he/she believes the child has been abused or neglected or has been threatened with abuse or neglect, statements allegedly made by the child to others, and any relevant circumstances or conditions in the home or elsewhere of which the reporter is aware.

In all cases, the building principal or his/her designee shall be informed that a child abuse or neglect report has been or will be filed. The building principal or designee shall support the employee in their action(s) and shall not attempt to delay, modify or prevent any report of suspected child abuse or neglect. Informing the principal or designee of any suspected or threatened abuse or neglect does not eliminate a school employee's independent responsibility to make a report to county child protective services or the appropriate law enforcement agency.

The county agency charged with responsibility for investigating child abuse or neglect reports may generally contact, observe or interview a child at any location, including school, to determine if the child is in need of protection or services. School personnel may not require parent notification before allowing such interviews to take place at school when the department or agency is exercising its investigative authority under state law. County child protective services or law enforcement personnel may request the cooperation of a school teacher, counselor or other person whose presence would aid in the interview process. They may also, in the exercise of professional judgment and in accordance with department standards, exclude school personnel from the interview.

School personnel shall keep in mind state and federal laws and school district procedures regarding the confidentiality of student records when disclosing information from a student's school records to child protective services or law enforcement personnel. Student records may be disclosed under state and federal laws to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of a student or other individuals. School personnel should take into consideration the totality of the circumstances pertaining to the threat to health or safety. When student record information is disclosed in this situation, school personnel shall record: (1) the threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals that formed the basis for the decision; and (2) the parties to whom the student record information was disclosed.

To provide for compliance with state law requirements, school personnel should keep child abuse and neglect reports and any information obtained from child protective services or law enforcement personnel regarding a child abuse or neglect report in a confidential file that is separate from the student's regular school records file(s). Such information can only be disclosed to the persons and for the purposes specified by law.

Adopted: September 17, 2014

Revised: December 21, 2016