

Coweta Charter Academy Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

A. Background

Coweta Charter Academy prioritizes safety and strives to provide a safe learning environment for everyone. In 2022, the Georgia Mandated Reporter law was passed (O.C.G.A. 19-7-5). Any volunteer or employee in a school is considered a “mandated reporter.” This means that Coweta Charter Academy faculty, staff, and volunteers in all capacities working with students are required to by Georgia law to report incidents of child abuse and neglect. Georgia law states that “Any person or official required by subsection (c) of this Code section to report a suspected case of child abuse who knowingly and willfully fails to do so shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.” Georgia law also requires that reports be made no later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred.

B. Definitions

- a. “Abuse” of a child includes any of the following:
 - i. Physical injury or death inflicted upon a child by a parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person responsible for the care of such child by other than accidental means; provided, however, that physical forms of discipline may be used as long as there is no physical injury to the child;
 - ii. Neglect of a child by a parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person responsible for the care of such child;
 - iii. Emotional abuse of a child;
 - iv. Prenatal abuse of a child by a parent;
 - v. An act or failure to act that presents an imminent risk of serious harm to the child’s physical, mental, or emotional health;
 - vi. Trafficking a child for labor servitude; or
 - vii. Sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child
 - 1. Sexual abuse means a person’s emplying, using, persuading, inducing, enticing, or coercing and minor who is not that person’s spouse to engage in any act which involves:
 - 2. Sexual intercourse, including genital-genital, oral-genital, anal-genital, or oral-anal, whether between persons of the same or opposite sex;
 - 3. Bestiality
 - 4. Masturbation;
 - 5. Lewd exhibition of genitals or pubic area of any person;
 - 6. Flagellation or torture by or upon a person who is nude;

7. Condition of being fettered, bound, or otherwise physically restrained on the part of the person who is nude;
 8. Physical contact in an act of apparent sexual stimulation or gratification with any person's clothed or unclothed genitals, pubic area, or buttocks with a female's clothed or unclothed breasts;
 9. Defecation or urination for the purpose of sexual stimulation; or
 10. Penetration of the vagina or rectum by an object except when done as a part of a recognized medical procedure.
- b. Sexual abuse shall include consensual sex acts when the sex acts are between minors if any individual is less than 14 years of age; provided, however, that it shall not include consensual sex acts when the sex acts are between a minor and an adult who is not more than four years older than the minor. This provision shall not be deemed or construed to repeal any law concerning the age or capacity to consent.
- i. Sexual exploitation means conduct by any person who allows, permits, encourages, or requires a child to engage in:
 1. Prostitution
 2. Sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing any visual or print medium depicting such conduct.

C. Reporting Requirements

School teachers, substitute teachers, visiting teachers, administrators, counselors, school social workers, psychologists, nurses, substitute nurses, law enforcement, ASP/BSP care workers, and volunteers as "mandated reporters." This means that individuals working in these capacities within Coweta Charter Academy are required by law to report incidents of child abuse and neglect. Georgia law states that "Any person or official required by subsection (c) of this Code section to report a suspected case of child abuse who knowingly and willfully fails to do so shall be guilty of a misdemeanor." Georgia law also requires that reports be made no later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred. Mandatory reporters are required to report regardless of whether it is based on privileged/confidential communication.

Reports can either be made verbally by calling 1-855-CHILD (1-855-422-4453) or by:

Fax: - 229-317-9663

Email: cpsintake@dhs.ga.gov

Web: <https://cps.dhs.ga.gov/Main/Default.aspx>



6675 EAST HIGHWAY 16
SENOIA, GA 30276
Tel: 770-727-5959
Fax: 770-727-5949

cowetacharteracademy.org

****Web-based reporting requires completion of Mandated Reporter Training to obtain and ID#**

Mandated Reporter Training

The Governor's Office for Children and Families and Prevent Child Abuse of Georgia have partnered with ProSolutions Training to make this valuable online training available for free any time or day that you may want to use it. It is two hours of your time to learn how to better recognize the indicators of abuse and neglect, understand your role in responsible reporting, and identify the groups of children that may be at a higher risk of being abused or neglected. Please click here to register: [Mandated Reporters: Critical Links in Protecting Children in Georgia.](#)

In all cases where a report is made, it must also be reported to the Superintendent and Director(s) so that they are aware of the situation and can assist DFCS should they have any questions.

D. Policy Implications and Consequences

- a. No Coweta Charter Academy employee making a report of child abuse and neglect in good faith may be discharged from employment, disciplined, or otherwise discriminated against in regard to employment, or threatened with any such treatment because that employee made a report.
- b. Any Coweta Charter Academy employee who fails to report suspected child abuse or neglect in violation of this policy may be found to be in violation of an applicable work rule and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.