

REPORTS OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

Purpose: As school personnel, all district employees have specific legal obligations to report child abuse and neglect above and beyond the mandatory reporting requirements of all individuals in the state. The purpose of this policy is to provide directives and guidelines to assist district employees in fulfilling their legal responsibilities.

Statement: Any employee with reason to believe any child under the age of eighteen years is a victim of child abuse or neglect must immediately report the matter to the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS) and law enforcement. Any district employee having a reason to believe that any student eighteen years or older is a victim of abuse or neglect shall immediately report the matter to local law enforcement.

When to Report: An employee must make immediate reports to DHS and law enforcement when they have reason to believe that abuse or neglect has occurred—for example, when they have a good faith suspicion or otherwise receive a report of abuse or neglect.

No specific proof is needed to trigger the requirement to report the concern to the appropriate authorities. Further, employees are not expected to determine whether a situation meets a statutory definition of abuse or neglect. If an employee has a reasonable suspicion or otherwise receives a report that a child/student may be experiencing abuse or neglect, they must report what they know immediately to DHS and law enforcement as required by this policy. By reporting the potential abuse or neglect, the matter can be investigated by the appropriate officials. State law grants immunity from any civil or criminal liability to any person who in good faith makes such a report.

“Abuse” generally means harm or threatened harm to a person’s health, safety, or welfare, including but not limited to nonaccidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse/exploitation, contributing to the delinquency of a minor, child trafficking, and unlawful child taking. In state law, “sexual abuse” and “sexual exploitation” encompass various criminal acts. They include, but are not limited to: rape, sexual battery, incest, lewd acts/proposals, and indecent exposure; as well as encouraging, soliciting, or otherwise allowing a child to engage in illegal sexual activities.

“Neglect” generally means failing to provide a child’s basic needs like food, shelter, medical care, or supervision—or otherwise failing to protect a child’s health, safety, or welfare.

How to Report: To report child abuse or neglect to DHS, employees shall call the statewide hotline: 1-800-522-3511. To report abuse or neglect to Tulsa Public Schools’ Police Department, employees shall call 918-749-9966.

Employees who suspect child abuse or neglect must make their reports directly to DHS and law enforcement. Reporting concerns to a supervisor does not fulfill an employee’s obligation under the law or this policy.

Upon making a report to DHS and law enforcement of suspected abuse or neglect, employees must inform their building school principal, other supervisor, or the Director of Health Services. The principal or supervisor will arrange for a school nurse to assess the student, if appropriate, as well as make any other necessary reports to other school officials.

Penalties for Not Reporting: Failure to report in accordance with this policy and Oklahoma law may be grounds for dismissal from employment. Failure by any employee to immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect may also be referred to law enforcement to face potential criminal charges. Interference by any employee in the reporting of child abuse or neglect by another employee is strictly prohibited and will result discipline, up to and including dismissal, as well as potential criminal charges.

Annual Attestation of Reporting Responsibilities: Every district employee shall annually sign an attestation form acknowledging their responsibility to report child abuse or neglect pursuant to this policy and state law. The attestation will also acknowledge the employees' awareness of the consequences for failure to report. Signed attestations shall be maintained in personnel files.

Revised: September 2025

Legal references: Okla. Stat. tit. 10A, § 1-2-101 et seq
Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 1210.163; Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 6-194