

Mandatory Reporting Guidelines

Key Policy Changes

Elimination of Pre-Reporting Internal Delays

- **What Changed:** Procedures that previously suggested holding internal staff meetings or exhausting community resources before calling authorities have been eliminated.
- **Policy Requirement:** Mandatory reporting must occur immediately upon obtaining reasonable cause, and no later than 24 hours. Principal notification occurs concurrently with or immediately after the call—never as a prerequisite delay.

Direct Routing for Employee-Perpetrated Abuse

- **What Changed:** A dedicated routing protocol is now established for allegations involving school or district employees.
- **Policy Requirement:** If the suspected perpetrator is a District Employee, report directly to local law enforcement / Sheriff's Office rather than social services.

Strict Prohibition on Reporting Based Solely on Socioeconomic Status or Disability

- **What Changed:** Explicit statutory safeguards have been incorporated regarding neglect definitions.
- **Policy Requirement:** No report may be made based solely on race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status (inadequate housing, clothing, or income), or disability status. Poverty or lack of resources alone does not constitute reportable neglect.

Updated Referral Form & File Storage

- **What Changed:** The Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect Referral Form has been revised to include law enforcement routing checkboxes and updated record-keeping procedures.
- **Policy Requirement:** Referral forms must be completed within 24 hours and stored strictly in the student's Confidential Health File under *Documents/Private Documents* in PowerSchool—never in a disciplinary record.

Mandatory Staff Compliance Protocol

Every District 70 employee who learns of suspected abuse or neglect while acting in their official capacity is legally required to carry out the following reporting steps:

Step 1: Identify Reasonable Cause & Refrain from Investigation

- **Observe & Listen:** Report any reasonable cause to suspect physical abuse, unlawful sexual contact, emotional abuse, or severe neglect.
- **Do Not Investigate:** Staff members must not conduct an internal investigation, contact parents/guardians, or interview suspected perpetrators. Staff may make a preliminary, non-leading inquiry to the child regarding an observed injury but must avoid repeated interviews.

Step 2: Determine Routing & Make Immediate Oral Report

- **Individual Responsibility:** The individual with firsthand knowledge must personally make the oral report. Duty cannot be delegated, and consulting leadership does not absolve individual liability.
- **Immediate Danger:** Call **911** immediately.
- **Employee Perpetrator:** Call **Local Law Enforcement / Sheriff's Office** directly.
- **All Other Cases:** Call **Pueblo County DHS** or the **Colorado Hotline** immediately (and within 24 hours).
- **Record Call Details:** Always obtain and record the Hotline Reference / Call ID Number and representative name.

Step 3: Leadership Notification & Written Documentation

- **Inform Principal:** Notify your Principal orally or via memo concurrently with or immediately after placing the call.

- **Submit Form:** Complete the updated *Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect Referral Form* and submit written copies within 24 hours to the investigating agency (if requested) and to your Principal.

Step 4: Follow-up & File Management

- **Confidential Processing:** The Principal will send the documentation to the District Director of Student Services, log the report in PowerSchool, and route the form to the confidential health file.
- **In-Service Training:** The Board will provide mandatory periodic in-service programs on recognizing, reporting, and supporting victimized students.

Emergency Contacts & Support

- **Immediate Danger:** 911
- **Pueblo County DHS:** [719-583-6901](tel:719-583-6901)
- **Colorado Child Abuse Hotline:** 1-844-CO-4-KIDS ([1-844-264-5437](tel:1-844-264-5437))
- **District Guidance:** Director of Student Services- Chris Slobodnik

Note: Failure to report promptly may result in civil or criminal liability. Staff members who report in good faith maintain full legal immunity.