

Mandatory Duty to Report All Allegations of Child Abuse or Neglect

Recently, several students' allegations of inappropriate conduct by a school volunteer were not properly reported to authorities, please review the following information and ensure your district's policies and practices appropriately provide for the protection of your students.

- Under Oklahoma statute [10A O.S. § 1-2-101](#), Duty to Report Abuse or Neglect of Child Under Eighteen, **“Every person having reason to believe that a child under the age of eighteen (18) years is a victim of abuse or neglect shall report the matter promptly to the Department of Human Services.”** The statute provides for criminal charges if an individual fails to report the suspected abuse or neglect of a minor. **If a student tells you that an adult has touched or communicated with them inappropriately, you have a legal obligation to report the allegation to the DHS Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-522-3511.**
- **It is against the law to delay reporting to DHS while you investigate a student’s allegation of inappropriate contact.** Every allegation of child abuse or neglect, including any inappropriate touching or communications, must be immediately reported to DHS. Even if you do not believe the student, you must report the allegation to the hotline. **Failure to immediately report to DHS may subject you to criminal penalties, and any delay may expose the student or others to further harm.**
- Any student allegation of abuse or neglect, including inappropriate touching or communications, must be reported to the DHS Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline (1-800-522-3511). **Even if you contact local law enforcement about a student’s allegations of abuse, you must also call the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline to make a report to DHS.**
- Under [70 O.S. § 1210.162](#), **“Each public school shall post in a clearly visible location in a public area of the school that is readily accessible to students a sign in English and Spanish that contains the toll-free number operated by the Department of Human Services...to receive reports of child abuse or neglect.”** Sample signs in English and Spanish are available on the State Department of Education website at: <http://sde.ok.gov/sde/documents/2016-08-22/child-abuse-neglect-hotline-posters>.