



Office of Child Support Services
Policy Statement

Policy Name **Policy #**

Classification Administrative Program **Effective Date**
Revision Date

Application All Agency Departments & Personnel
 General Enforcement Administrative Hearing Unit
 Establishment Financial Operations
 Management Services Planning & Development
 Information Technology

Mandate Legislative State
 County HR County Executive/Council
 Director Bargaining Agreement

Introduction
The Office of Child Support Services (OCSS) staff shall be provided specific criteria when determining if a child abuse referral shall be made to the Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) for observed and/or suspected child abuse.

Policy Statement
If any OCSS employee knows or suspects that a child may be a victim of physical abuse, sexual abuse, and/or negligent treatment by their parent, guardian, or custodian, the employee must immediately report this information to DCFS. Ohio Revised Code (ORC) sections 2151.011, 2921.14, and 2151.421 state that mandatory reporting is required for all county government employees who witness or suspect child abuse and/or neglect. A report of child abuse and neglect, should contain all of the following information, if known:

1. The names and addresses of the child and parents or the person or persons having custody of the child.
2. The child's age.
3. The type, extent, and duration of the abuse and neglect.
4. Circumstances regarding the abuse or neglect, including any evidence of previous injuries, abuse, or neglect.



5. The child's current condition.
6. Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the known or suspected injury, abuse, or neglect or the known or suspected threat of injury, abuse, or neglect.

ORC defines Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Neglect and Unlawful Sexual Conduct with a Minor as follows:

PHYSICAL ABUSE: includes but is not limited to, any physical injury or death inflicted other than by accidental means. An injury at variance with medical evidence and the history given, severe corporal punishment, discipline or restraint which is excessive and creates serious physical and/or emotional harm to the child. (ORC Section 2151.031, Abused Child)

SEXUAL ABUSE: any action against a child which includes but is not limited to unlawful sexual conduct and/or sexual contact with the minor. (ORC Section 2907.01, Sex Offenses)

NEGLECT: includes but is not limited to, the failure of a parent or guardian(s) to provide for the necessary survival, education, and/or medical needs of a child. This can be a refusal to provide, faults, habits, or abandonment on the part of the parent, guardian or custodian. (ORC Section 2919.22, Endangering Children)

UNLAWFUL SEXUAL CONDUCT WITH A MINOR: No person who is eighteen years of age or older shall engage in sexual conduct with another, who is not the spouse of the offender, when the offender knows the other person is thirteen years of age or older but less than sixteen years of age. (ORC Section 2907.04, Unlawful Sexual Conduct with Minor)

The following are steps that OCSS employees must take in suspected cases of physical and sexual abuse and/or neglect.

ABUSE IN OCSS LOBBY: If the child is in the lobby of OCSS when the abuse and/or neglect occurs, the employee shall notify Protective Services located within the building. Protective Services will contact DCFS and address the situation in accordance with their approved policy.

ABUSE AT EMPLOYEE WORK AREA: If a parent, guardian or custodian abuses a child while at an employee's work area the employee must immediately notify a supervisor, who will contact Protective Services. Protective Services will contact DCFS and address the situation in accordance with their approved policy.

SUSPECTED ABUSE: If an employee suspects that a child within OCSS is a victim of abuse or neglect, based upon one or more of the criteria listed above. The employee will



contact their Supervisor and advise them of the situation. The employee shall then contact DCFS at (216) 696-KIDS (5437) and follow all instructions given by the HOTLINE.

ABUSE REPORTED TO AN EMPLOYEE BY TELEPHONE AND/OR E-MAIL: If a OCSS employee receives information via telephone and/or e-mail that a child is a victim or possible future victim of abuse and/or neglect by their parent, guardian or custodian, the employee will contact their Supervisor and advise them of the situation. The Supervisor and employee will contact DCFS at (216) 696-KIDS (5437) and follow all instructions given by the HOTLINE.

UNLAWFUL SEXUAL CONDUCT WITH MINOR: OCSS employees must report to DCFS when a minor child is the custodial or non-custodial parent in a support case, and the other parent is a legal age adult. The employee is required to notify their supervisor about the case, the supervisor should assist the employee in contacting DCFS at (216) 696-KIDS (5437) to report possible statutory rape.

OTHER: ORC Section 2919.22 (B), Endangering Children, defines a child to further include any individual up to the age of twenty-one (21), who is mentally or physically impaired, that may be a victim of abuse or neglect. Furthermore, a mentally or physically impaired child may be considered a victim of statutory rape when sexual activity occurs with another child, who is not mentally or physically impaired.

Referrals are accepted on allegations of abuse/neglect regardless of any other Agency or Court involvement. If DCFS is not the appropriate service or resource for a family, they will provide assistance in locating the appropriate resource.

WHEN IN DOUBT CALL THE "KIDS" HOTLINE AT (216) 696- KIDS (5437)

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