

Policy Title: Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting Policy

Applicability: College-Wide

Oversight Department: Office of Public Safety

Purpose: The purpose of this Policy is to inform members of the College Community (administrators, faculty, staff, students, volunteers, independent contractors, trustees, and external organizations using Providence College facilities for programs that include children) and others of their obligation to report suspected child abuse or neglect.

Effective Adoption Date: November 8, 2012

Revision Date: June 27, 2023

I. Purpose & Scope

This Policy sets forth Providence College’s (the “College”) rules, guidelines, and requirements for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect. Consistent with the mission of Providence College, suspected child abuse or neglect that occurs on campus or by a member of the College Community must be reported to a designated College official so that adequate and timely steps can be taken, which may include but are not limited to, ensuring safety and the provision of services, policy enforcement, and law enforcement.

II. Definitions¹

1. **“Child”** means a person under the age of eighteen (18).
2. **“Abused or neglected child”** means a child whose physical or mental health or welfare is harmed, or threatened with harm, when his or her parent or other personal responsible for his or her welfare:
 - (i) Inflicts, or allows to be inflicted, upon the child physical or mental injury, including excessive corporal punishment; or
 - (ii) Creates, or allows to be created, a substantial risk of physical or mental injury to the child, including excessive corporal punishment; or
 - (iii) Commits, or allows to be committed, against the child an act of sexual abuse; or
 - (iv) Fails to supply the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care, though financially able to do so or offered financial or other reasonable means to do so; or
 - (v) Fails to provide the child with a minimum degree of care or proper supervision or guardianship because of his or her unwillingness or inability to do so by situations or conditions such as, but not limited to: social problems, mental incompetency, or the use of a drug, drugs, or

¹ The College hereby incorporates and adopts the statutory definitions contained in R.I.G.L. 1956 § 40-11-2, including but not limited to the terms listed in Section II of this Policy.

alcohol to the extent that the parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare loses his or her ability or is unwilling to properly care for the child; or

- (vi) Abandons or deserts the child; or
 - (vii) Sexually exploits the child in that the person allows, permits, or encourages the child to engage in prostitution; or
 - (viii) Commits, or allows to be committed, any sexual offense against the child.
3. **"State of Rhode Island"** means the State of Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families.
 4. **"Person responsible for child's welfare"** means the child's parent; guardian; any individual, eighteen (18) years of age or older, who resides in the home of a parent or guardian and has unsupervised access to a child; foster parent; an employee of a public or private residential home or facility; or any staff person providing out-of-home care.
 5. **"Probable cause"** means facts and circumstances based upon as accurate and reliable information as possible that would justify a reasonable person to suspect that a child is abused or neglected. The facts and circumstances may include evidence of an injury, or injuries, and the statements of a person worthy of belief, even if there is no present evidence of injury.

III. On Campus Reporting Requirements

Any member of the College Community (as defined) who has probable cause to know or suspect that **any child has been abused or neglected** (as defined in Section II) on College property and/or by any member of the College Community, must report this information to the Chief of Public Safety at 401-865-2391 within twenty-four (24) hours.

Any report made to the Chief of Public Safety should include all relevant information available to the reporting individual, including but not limited to: the date, time and location of the incident; the date the incident was reported to the individual; the identity and age of the victim; and if known, the alleged perpetrator(s).

If any member of the College Community believes that a child on the College campus and/or a child that is under the care, custody, control, or supervision of any member of the College Community is in **imminent danger**, then the individual must immediately call both the Police at 911 and the Office of Public Safety at 401-865-2222.

Willful failure to report a case of suspected child abuse or neglect will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the College. Any person who makes a report pursuant to this Policy in good faith is immune from disciplinary action. However, any person who knowingly and willfully makes, or causes to be made, a false report of child abuse or neglect shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the College.

IV. Rhode Island Reporting Requirements

In addition to the On Campus Reporting Requirements in Section III, members of the College Community may have additional reporting obligations under Rhode Island law depending on the circumstances, specifically:

1. R.I.G.L. 1956 § 40-11-3 requires that any person who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that any child has been abused or neglected, or has been a victim of sexual abuse by another child, must report that information to the State of Rhode Island within twenty-four (24) hours.
2. R.I.G.L. 1956 § 40-11-3.1 requires that any person who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has died as a result of child abuse or neglect must immediately report this information to the State of Rhode Island.
3. R.I.G.L. 1956 § 40-11-3.3 requires that any person who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been the victim of sexual abuse by an employee, agent, contractor, or volunteer of an educational program must immediately report this information to the State of Rhode Island.

Any person that is obligated to report suspected child abuse or neglect under Rhode Island law, should call the State of Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth & Families 24/7 hotline at 1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453).