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: September 18, 2025
September 2, 2026

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, at a College-sponsored event or program, and/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. Definitions[1]

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

[1] The College hereby incorporates and adopts the statutory definitions contained in R.I.G.L. 1956 §§ 40-11-2; 40-11-3 including but not limited to the terms listed in Section II of this Policy.

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 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 (meaning daycare facilities and camps whether licensed or unlicensed, including both day and overnight camps)[2].
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.
6. **"Child-on-Child Abuse"** means any child (as defined in Section II(1)) that has been a victim of sexual abuse by another child.

III. Reporting Requirements

A. College Reporting Requirements

The College requires that all members of the College Community report the following situations to the Chief of Public Safety:

1. Any time a member of the College Community has probable cause to know or suspect that any child is an Abused or Neglected Child and such abuse has taken place on College property, at a College-sponsored program or event, and/or by a member of the College Community;
2. Any time a member of the College Community has probable cause to know or suspect that any child has been a victim of Child-on-Child Abuse and such abuse has taken place on College property, at a College-sponsored program or event, and/or by a member of the College Community; and

[2] In 2026, the Rhode Island Legislature expanded the definition of "Person Responsible for Child's Welfare" to include staff from day camps and overnight camps. Therefore, all camp staff, whether operated by the College or a third-party, could now be subject to criminal penalties for child abuse and face imprisonment up to twenty (20) years and fines up to $10,000.00.

3. Any other instances of inappropriate conduct or abuse involving a child that takes place on College property, at a College-sponsored program or event, and/or by a member of the College Community.

All reports must be made 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.

B. Rhode Island Reporting Requirements

College community members may also encounter instances of child abuse or neglect outside of campus that may need to be reported to the State of Rhode Island depending on the nature of the situation, 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 (as defined in Section II(2)), 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). The Office of General Counsel and/or the Office of Public Safety can assist with making these reports.