

Integrated Day Charter School  
Governing Board



Policy Series: 4000

Policy Number: 4141/4241

## PERSONNEL

### REPORTS OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF MENTALLY CHALLENGED ADULTS

Section 46a-11b of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that certain school personnel (including teachers, school administrators, school guidance counselors, paraprofessionals, psychologists, registered and licensed practical nurses, social workers, licensed or certified substance abuse counselors, mental health professionals, physical therapists, occupational therapists, dental hygienists, speech pathologists and licensed professional counselors) report any suspected abuse or neglect of mentally challenged persons between eighteen (18) and sixty (60) years of age. In furtherance of this statute and its purpose, it is the policy of the Board of Education to require ALL EMPLOYEES of the Board of Education to comply with the following procedures in the event that, in the ordinary course of their employment or profession, they have reasonable cause to suspect that any mentally challenged person between eighteen (18) and sixty (60) years of age has been abused or neglected.

#### 1. Scope of Policy

This policy applies not only to employees who are required by law to report suspected abuse and/or neglect of mentally challenged adults, but also to ALL EMPLOYEES of the Governance Board.

#### 2. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

"Abuse" means the willful infliction of physical pain or injury or the willful deprivation by a caretaker of services which are necessary to the person's health or safety.

"Neglect" means a situation where a mentally challenged person either is living alone or is not able to provide for himself or herself the services which are necessary to maintain his or her physical and mental health or is not receiving such necessary services from the caretaker.

"Statutory Mandated Reporter" means an individual required by Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 46a-11b to report suspected abuse and/or neglect of mentally challenged adults. In the public school context, the term "statutory mandated reporter" includes teachers, school administrators, school guidance counselors, paraprofessionals, registered or licensed practical nurses, psychologists, social workers, licensed or certified substance abuse counselors, mental health professionals, physical therapists, occupational therapists, dental hygienists, speech pathologists and licensed professional counselors.

#### 3. Reporting Procedures for Statutory Mandated Reporters

If a statutory mandated reporter has reasonable cause to suspect that any mentally challenged person between eighteen (18) and sixty (60) years of age has been abused or neglected, he/she shall, as soon as practicable, but not later than seventy-two (72) hours after having reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect, make an oral report to the Director of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for

**Persons with Disabilities.** The statutory mandated reporter shall also immediately notify the Director.

Such initial oral report shall be followed by a written report to the Director of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities not later than five calendar days after the initial oral report was made, and a copy of any written report shall be given to the IDCS Director.

4. Reporting Procedures for Non-Statutory Mandated Reporters

The following procedures apply only to employees who are not statutory mandated reporters, as set forth above.

- a) If an employee who is not a statutory mandated reporter has reasonable cause to suspect that any mentally challenged person between eighteen (18) and sixty (60) years of age has been abused or neglected, the following steps shall be taken.
  - (1) The employee shall as soon as practicable, but not later than seventy-two (72) hours after having reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect, make an oral report by telephone or in person to the Director or his/her designee, to be followed by an immediate written report to the Director or his/her designee.
  - (2) If the Director or his/her designee determines that there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a mentally challenged person between eighteen (18) and sixty (60) years has been abused or neglected, he/she shall cause reports to be made in accordance with the procedures set forth for statutory mandated reporters, set forth above.
- b) Nothing in this policy shall be construed to preclude an employee from reporting suspected abuse and/or neglect of mentally challenged adults directly to the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities.

5. Contents of Report

Any oral or written report made pursuant to this policy shall contain the following information, if known:

- a) the name and address of the allegedly abused or neglected person;
- b) a statement from the reporter indicating a belief that the person is mentally challenged, together with information indicating that the person is unable to protect himself or herself from abuse or neglect;
- c) information concerning the nature and extent of the abuse or neglect; and,
- d) any additional information which the reporter believes would be helpful in investigating the report or in protecting the mentally challenged person.

6. Investigation of the Report

If the suspected abuser is a school employee, the Director shall thoroughly investigate the report, and shall, to the extent feasible, endeavor to coordinate any such investigation with the investigation conducted by the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities.

The Director's investigation shall include an opportunity for the suspected abuser to be heard with respect to the allegations contained within the report. During the course of an investigation of suspected abuse by a school employee, the Director may suspend the employee with pay or may place the employee on administrative leave with pay, pending the outcome of the investigation.

If the investigation by the Director and/or the Office of Protection and Advocacy produces evidence that a mentally challenged person has been abused by a school employee, the Director

4141/4241

and/or the Board, as appropriate, may take disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

7. Delegation of Authority by Director

The Director may appoint a designee for the purposes of receiving and making reports, notifying and receiving notification, or investigating reports pursuant to this policy.

8. Disciplinary Action for Failure to Follow Policy

Any employee who fails to comply with the requirements of this policy shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

9. Non-discrimination Policy

The Governance Board shall not discharge or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against any employee who, in good faith, makes a report pursuant to this policy, or testifies or is about to testify in any proceeding involving abuse or neglect.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes:

Section 46a-11a

Section 46a-11b et seq.