

Child Abuse Reporting - June 7, 2012, the Legislature enacted Senate Bill 5991, which mandates the duty for all higher education employees who have reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect shall report such incident to the proper law enforcement agency or the Department of Social and Health Services:

The reporting requirement also applies to administrative and academic or athletic department employees, including student employees, of institutions of higher education, as defined in Revised Code of WA (RCW) RCW 28B.10.016, and of private institutions of higher education. If an employee of the above classification has reasonable cause to believe a child has suffered abuse or neglect they are required to report such abuse or neglect immediately to their appropriate administrator or supervisor. If not already a mandatory reporter under RCW 26.44.030, they must report the abuse or neglect within forty-eight hours to a mandatory reporter designated by the institution for this purpose.

In being assigned this legal responsibility, higher education employees join K-12 teachers and healthcare professionals (RCW 26.44.030), who have long had this mandatory duty to report.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse to DSHS

Reports of suspected child abuse should be filed by contacting DSHS Child Protective Services, which offers several ways to report abuse:

- Daytime contact Moses Lake DCFS office – Toll Free Intake 1-800-557-9671
- Nights & Weekends – call 1-800-562-5624 to report abuse during the evening or on weekends.
- Hotline – call 1-866-ENDHARM (1-866-363-4276), Washington State’s toll-free, 24 hour, 7 day-a-week hotline that will connect you directly to the appropriate local office
- You can also report suspected abuse to the police by dialing 911.

Such reports must contain the following information, if known:

1. The name, address, and age of the child.
2. The name and address of the child’s parents, stepparents, guardians, or other persons having custody of the child.
3. The nature and extent of the alleged injury or injuries.
4. The nature and extent of the alleged neglect.
5. The nature and extent of the alleged sexual abuse.
6. Any evidence of previous injuries, including their nature and extent.
7. Any other information that may be helpful in establishing the cause of the child’s death, injury, or injuries and the identity of the alleged perpetrator or perpetrators.