

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: Mandatory Reporting**

School personnel are required by Vermont law to report suspected abuse or neglect to the Department for Children and Families (DCF). Suspected child abuse/neglect shall be reported within 24 hours.

**AUTHORIZATION/LEGAL REFERENCE:**

*State:*

33 V.S.A. § 3502 <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/chapter/33/035>

*Mandated Reporting Law:*

33 V.S.A. Ch. 49 Child Welfare Services <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/33/049/04913>

*Federal:*

42 U.S. Code Chapter 67 – Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Adoption Reform

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2013-title42/html/USCODE-2013-title42-chap67.htm>

42 U.S. Code § 5101 - Office on Child Abuse and Neglect

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2010-title42/html/USCODE-2010-title42-chap67-subchapl-sec5101.htm>

*Vermont Agency of Education*

Rules Governing the Licensing of Educators and the Preparation of Educational Professionals–

[https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/Rules%20Governing%20the%20Licensing%20of%20Educators\\_9\\_20\\_2019.pdf](https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/Rules%20Governing%20the%20Licensing%20of%20Educators_9_20_2019.pdf).

School Nurse/Associate School Nurse Endorsement: 5440-65 School Nurse (Revised March 2017) (page 178);

5440-65A Associate School Nurse (Revised Sept. 2019) (page 182)

**REQUIRED SCHOOL NURSE/ASSOCIATE SCHOOL NURSE ROLES:**

- Follow Vermont law about reporting and documenting suspected abuse or neglect.
  - *Any mandated reporter who reasonably suspects abuse or neglect of a child shall report in accordance with the provisions of section 4914 of this title within 24 hours of the time information regarding the suspected abuse or neglect was first received or observed (33 VSA § 4913(c)).*
  - **The individual who suspects abuse or neglect must [is legally required] make a report directly.**
  - *You must notify Department of Children and Families -Family Services Division (DCF/FSD)*
    - *1 (800) 649-5285.*
- Document findings according to best nursing practice (see documentation section), specifically, objective findings and interventions in the health record.
- Comply with Vermont Child Abuse Reporting Law and school policy and procedure.
- Utilize concepts the Framework for 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Nursing Practice™, particularly care coordination in implementing nursing judgement to develop your plan to address the prevention of child abuse.

**SUGGESTED SCHOOL NURSE/ASSOCIATE SCHOOL NURSE ROLES:**

- Verify with the student that the nurse correctly understands or restates the student's story in the words of the student
- Assist the administration in the development, clarification, and implementation of the school abuse/neglect policies.

- Become a member of the school or community Child Protection Team.
- Advocate and act as a resource for school faculty and staff.
- Collaborate with school staff regarding obligation to report and remind yearly
- Facilitate group reports when more than one professional within the school needs to report on the same information or incident (Act 60, 2015). **For larger groups, the person(s) with the most direct knowledge should call the hotline and the group could submit a corresponding written report.**

**RESOURCES:**

National Association of School Nurses

- National Association of School Nurses. (2016). Framework for 21st Century School Nursing Practice. NASN School Nurse, 31(1), 45-53. doi: 10.1177/1942602X15618644
- Prevention and Treatment of Child Maltreatment – The Role of the School Nurse  
<https://www.nasn.org/nasn/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-child-maltreatment>

Vermont Department for Children and Families - <http://dcf.vermont.gov/>

- **See FSD Policy 50 for child abuse and neglect definitions:**  
<http://dcf.staging.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/FSD/Policies/50.pdf>
  - **Abused or Neglected Child:** A child whose physical health, psychological growth and development or welfare is harmed or is at substantial risk of harm by the acts or omissions of his or her parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare. Also, a child who is sexually abused or at substantial risk of sexual abuse by any person and a child who has died as a result of abuse or neglect (33 VSA § 4912(1)).

Vermont Child Protection Line; to report child abuse or neglect 24 hours a day, 7 days a week call: 1-800-649-5285

- **If a child is in immediate danger, dial 911 or call your local police first. Then, call Family Services Division to make a report.** *Calling law enforcement is not the same as reporting to FSD. You must notify FSD directly.*

**SAMPLE POLICES, PROCEDURES, AND FORMS**

**Written Report (10/21/19):**

The worker will also ask you to complete a written report using form [FS-305](#).

- Print a copy of the form and complete it by hand OR
- Save the form on your computer and complete it as a fillable form (*if your browser does not support fillable forms, try another one*)

Fax your completed report to (802) 241-3301.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS- Answers to these and more here:**

<https://dcf.vermont.gov/protection/reporting/mandated>