

Manual for Mandated Reporters



May 2015
Revised Edition



Illinois Department of
DCFS
Children & Family Services
Children's Justice
Task Force

Guidelines for Calling the Child Abuse Hotline

Mandated reporters are required to call the Hotline when they have **reasonable cause to believe** that a child known to them in their professional or official capacity may be an abused or neglected child. The Hotline worker will determine if the information given by the reporter meets the legal requirements to initiate an investigation.

Criteria needed for a child abuse or neglect investigation

- The alleged victim is a child under the age of 18.
- The alleged perpetrator is a parent, guardian, foster parent, relative caregiver, paramour, any individual residing in the same home, any person responsible for the child's welfare at the time of the alleged abuse or neglect, or any person who came to know the child through an official capacity or position of trust (for example: health care professionals, educational personnel, recreational supervisors, members of the clergy, volunteers or support personnel) in settings where children may be subject to abuse and neglect.
- There is a specific incident of abuse or neglect or a specific set of circumstances involving suspected abuse or neglect.
- There is demonstrated harm to the child or a substantial risk of physical or sexual injury to the child.

Information the reporter should have ready to give to the Hotline

- Names, birth dates (or approximate ages), races, genders, etc. for all adult and child subjects.
- Addresses for all victims and perpetrators, including current location.
- Information about the siblings or other family members, if available.
- Specific information about the abusive incident or the circumstances contributing to risk of harm—for example, when the incident occurred, the extent of the injuries, how the child says it happened, and any other pertinent information.

If this information is not readily available, the reporter should not delay a call to the hotline.

Illinois Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873)

The Hotline operates 24 hours per day, 365 days a year. Reporters should be prepared to provide phone numbers where they may be reached throughout the day in case the Hotline must call back for more information.

May 2015

Dear Mandated Reporters:

The Department of Children and Family Services has designed this manual to help you understand your responsibility to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the DCFS Child Abuse Hotline. If your report is accepted, DCFS child protection specialists will begin an investigation to determine the occurrence of abuse or neglect. You will be informed of the investigation results, and you may request a review of "unfounded" investigations if there is important information that was overlooked during the investigation (see ANCRA, 325 ILCS 5/7.21). If the Hotline does not accept your report, you may ask to speak with a Hotline supervisor and have your information reassessed as stated on page 13 of this manual.

This manual contains a link to a copy of the *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act* (ANCRA) which defines the department's intake and investigation of child abuse and neglect reports. Some of the most significant changes to this law that have taken effect since this manual was last revised are noted below.

1. The list of mandated reporters required by the Act to report child abuse and neglect has been broadened and clarified to now include: *"licensed professional counselors of any office, clinic, or any other physical location that provides abortions, abortion referrals, or contraceptives."* [325 ILCS 5/4]
2. The definition for "Police station" now means a municipal police station, a county sheriff's office, a campus police department located on any college or university owned or controlled by the State or any private college or private university that is not owned or controlled by the State when employees of the campus police department are present, or any of the district headquarters of the Illinois State Police. [315 ILCS 2/10]
(The above definition has a direct effect on Section 300.180, Abandoned Newborn Infants)
3. Personnel of institutions of higher education, athletic program or facility personnel, and early intervention providers are now mandated reporters.
4. Possibly one of the most disturbing issues of our times worldwide and one that has affected us here at home as well is the worldwide epidemic of "Human Trafficking." No longer seen only in Eastern Europe or Asia, but now here in Illinois, allegation #40/90 Human Trafficking of Children has been added to ANCRA and it is defined as follows: *"Federal law defines severe forms of trafficking of persons as: sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery."* [U.S.C. § 7102(8)]

In addition to distributing this manual, the Department of Children and Family Services provides training opportunities for all mandated reporters in Illinois. To request training or to obtain needed information, please contact the DCFS Division of Child Protection at 217-785-4010. The *Manual for Mandated Reporters* is also available in both English and Spanish versions on the department's website at www.DCFS.illinois.gov.

Sincerely,



George H. Sheldon, Acting Director

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Disclaimer

This manual is provided as a public service by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and is intended for the informational use and convenience of interested persons and should not be considered a substitute for the advice of legal counsel.

Although the information found in this manual is believed to be reliable as of the time of this manual's publication, no warranty, expressed or implied, is made regarding the accuracy, completeness, or legality of any information, either isolated or in the aggregate. The information is provided "as is". Changes may be periodically made to the information contained herein; these changes may or may not be incorporated into this manual; and information contained in the manual may quickly become out of date. Therefore, we encourage you to consult an attorney of your choice for legal advice and for the most recent versions and interpretations of the applicable law.

Further, if you find any errors or omissions, we encourage you to report them to the DCFS Office of Child and Family Policy by email at cfpolicy@idcfs.state.il.us or phone 217-524-1983.

Introduction

A professional with the legal responsibility to report suspected child abuse or neglect carefully considers the decision to make a report. Sometimes the case is clear cut; other times there are issues which make reporting less certain. The goal of this manual is to help guide you in making that critical decision. Professionals who work with children need to know:

- Who must report suspected abuse or neglect of children?
- What happens when a report of child abuse or neglect is made?
- Why are some cases accepted for investigation while others are not?
- What are the legal definitions of abuse and neglect and how are they interpreted?
- What legal protections are afforded mandated reporters?
- What are the possible penalties for failure to report?
- What happens after a report is accepted?

The purpose of this manual is to answer these questions and to acquaint you with the operation of the child protection system in Illinois.

The ability of the state to intervene in families to protect children comes from the authority granted to the State by law. Both legislation and case law established by the courts set the limits of State intervention. While there are many laws guiding child protection and child welfare interventions, the most important in Illinois is the **Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA)**. Illinois (and all other states) require a wide range of professionals to report suspected child maltreatment. These professionals and any other person required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect are called **mandated reporters**. In Illinois, the definition of abuse and neglect and the definition of mandated reporters and some of the “rules” for investigating and responding to abuse and neglect are spelled out in the **Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA)** of 1975. This act has been amended numerous times and forms the basis for all child protection policies and activities throughout the State.

Child Welfare Laws and Their Impact

Difficulties in Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is the state agency given the responsibility by ANCRA to conduct investigations of child maltreatment and to arrange for needed services for children and families where credible evidence of abuse or neglect exists ("Indicated" cases). In Illinois, approximately 65 percent of all calls to report abuse or neglect to DCFS's Hotline (the central registry for reporting) come from mandated reporters.

The requirement that professionals report child maltreatment, together with a growing public awareness of child abuse and neglect, have had a significant impact over the past 25 years. Reports of abuse and neglect have risen sharply nationwide. An estimated 125,000 Illinois children are abused or neglected each year, and one in five kids are abused before age 18. DCFS receives, investigates and acts upon a report of child abuse or neglect every five minutes, child sex abuse every two hours, and a child death by abuse or neglect every day-and-a-half.

Despite the increase in reports, many serious cases of child maltreatment go unreported, even by mandated reporters. On the other hand, many calls to the Hotline are not accepted as reports to be investigated or are found to lack credible evidence of abuse or neglect when investigated ("Unfounded" cases). There are a number of issues which help explain this seeming inconsistency.

- Some reporters believe that "it doesn't do any good" to make a report. This concern may come from the experience of having a report not accepted or from not seeing any clear beneficial result from the report.
- Reporters may not be open to the possibility of child maltreatment and may therefore deny its presence.
- The lack of specificity in the law and its definitions of abuse and neglect create many "gray areas", leading to confusion for reporters. While this lack of specificity may make judgment about what must be reported unclear, it also allows for some flexibility in interpretation. This is important in covering all possible situations.
- Reporters may lack a thorough understanding of the limits of the authority of DCFS to intervene in certain kinds of situations which fall outside DCFS's legal jurisdiction.
- Finally, concern about a child's well-being or a fear of being accused of failing to report may lead mandated reporters to "err on the side of caution", reporting incidents that may not meet the definition of abuse or neglect.

When mandated reporters make good faith efforts and their reports are either not accepted by the DCFS Hotline or are not indicated upon investigation, reporters can feel frustrated and distrustful. Yet, due to the limitations of its legal jurisdiction, DCFS cannot accept some cases.

Careful screening of reports by Hotline staff is in order. The investigation of abuse or neglect is necessarily very intrusive into family life. The state must exercise its authority cautiously and appropriately in order to respect the rights of parents. The guiding principle used is “minimally acceptable parenting standards.” The State has the authority to intervene in family life when basic standards of care and protection from harm are not met. Not only the law, but the courts constrain DCFS intervention. It is important to remember that many decisions about child protection are made in conjunction with the court. In Illinois the Juvenile Court determines if there is sufficient evidence to adjudicate a child abused or neglected under the law. The court also determines if children will be removed from their homes and placed in foster care. In making its decisions, the Juvenile Court must have a preponderance of evidence that abuse or neglect has occurred.

Mandated reporters express concern that children who have been abused or neglected often remain in their parents’ care. This fact illustrates the philosophy and law of the State of Illinois as well as federal law that the majority of children are best served in their own homes by their own families, with specialized services and monitoring of child safety provided by the State. According to ANCRA, DCFS shall

“protect the health, safety, and best interests of the child in all situations in which the child is vulnerable to child abuse or neglect, offer protective services in order to prevent any further harm to the child and to other children in the same environment or family, stabilize the home environment, and preserve family life whenever possible.”

(325 ILCS 5/2)

DCFS is often limited in its ability to intervene in family life, both by the law which defines its operations and by the resources available. In making a report, mandated reporters are in the best position to identify signs of harm to children and to take the steps necessary to help protect them. This manual should increase your understanding of the procedure for making a report and your knowledge of what happens once a report is accepted. By making the most effective reports, the available resources for protecting children can be put to the best use.

Responsibilities of Mandated Reporters

Who are mandated reporters?

This section identifies the responsibilities of mandated reporters to report child maltreatment and the basic types of maltreatment that must be reported. The information in this chapter comes from the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/4).

Mandated reporters are professionals who may work with children in the course of their professional duties. There are seven groups of mandated reporters as defined in 325 ILCS 5/4:

Medical Personnel: for example, physician, dentist, LPN, RN, medical social worker, emergency medical technician, nurse practitioner, chiropractor, hospital administrator

School Personnel: includes administrators and certified and non-certified staff such as the superintendent, teacher, principal, school counselor, school nurse, school social worker, assistant principal, teacher's aide, truant officer, school psychologist, and secretary, including personnel of institutions of higher education

If an allegation of abuse is raised to a school board member, the school board as a governing body or the individual member has the authority to direct the superintendent of the school district, or other equivalent school administrator, to report the abuse as required by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

Social Service/Mental Health Personnel: for example, mental health personnel, social workers, psychologists, domestic violence personnel, substance abuse treatment personnel, staff of state agencies dealing with children such as Department of Human Services, Department of Public Aid, Department of Public Health, Department of Corrections, and Department of Children and Family Services

Law Enforcement Personnel: for example, employees of the court, parole/probation officer, emergency services staff, police, states attorney and staff, juvenile officer

Coroner/Medical Examiner Personnel

Child Care Personnel: includes all staff at overnight, day care, pre-school or nursery school facilities, recreational or athletic program or facility personnel, early intervention providers as defined in the Early Intervention Services System Act, and foster parents

What is required of mandated reporters?

Members of the Clergy: includes any member of the clergy that has reasonable cause to believe that a child known to him or her in a professional capacity may be an abused child

It should be noted that the protection of children is the responsibility of the entire community and that the law provides that **anyone** may make a report to the Hotline.

Mandated reporters are **required** to report suspected child maltreatment immediately when they have “**reasonable cause to believe**” that a child known to them in their professional or official capacity may be an abused or neglected child”. (325 ILCS 5/4) This is done by calling the DCFS Hotline at **1-800-252-2873** or **1-800-25ABUSE**.

As professionals who work with children, mandated reporters are assumed to be in the best position to recognize and report child abuse and neglect as soon as possible. Mandated reporters are the state’s “early warning system” to identify probable abuse early enough to avoid serious and long-term damage to a child. The State’s primary goal is to protect the child and, whenever possible, to stabilize and preserve the family so that it may remain intact.

The Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act places several requirements on you as a mandated reporter.

- You are required to “*immediately report or cause a report to be made to the department*” of suspected child abuse or neglect.
- **Privileged communication between professional and client is not grounds for failure to report.** Willful failure to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect is a misdemeanor (first violation) or a class 4 felony (second or subsequent violation). Further, professionals may be subject to penalties by their regulatory boards for willful failure to report. A member of the clergy may claim privilege under Section 8-803 of the Code of Civil Procedure.
- State law protects the identity of all mandated reporters, and you are given immunity from legal liability as a result of reports you make in good faith; however, you may have to testify regarding any incident you report if the case becomes the subject of legal or judicial action.
- Reports must be confirmed in writing to the local investigation unit within 48 hours of the Hotline call. Forms may be obtained from the local DCFS office or you may duplicate and use the forms in Appendix D of this manual.

What is abuse?

Physical Abuse as defined by 325 ILCS 5/3 occurs when a parent or a person responsible for the child's welfare:

- *"inflicts, causes to be inflicted, or allows to be inflicted upon such child physical injury, by other than accidental means, which causes death, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function". Such common injuries include bruises, human bites, bone fractures, and burns.*
- *"creates a substantial risk of physical injury" likely to have the physical impacts listed above. Examples in DCFS allegation definitions include such incidents as choking or smothering a child, shaking or throwing a small child, and violently pushing or shoving a child into fixed objects. Other circumstances include incidents of domestic violence in which the child was threatened, violations of orders for the perpetrator to remain apart from the child, and a history of past sexual abuse that may place other children at risk.*
- *"acts of torture" which is defined by DCFS as "deliberately and/or systematically inflicting cruel or unusual treatment which results in physical or mental suffering".*
- *"inflicts excessive corporal punishment" is included in ANCRA, but is not specifically further defined by DCFS. However, bruises inflicted on a child, especially a young child, are usually considered to meet this definition.*
- *"commits or allows to be committed the offense of female genital mutilation."*
- *"causes to be sold, transferred, distributed, or given to such child under 18 years of age, a controlled substance" (i.e. illegal drugs) except when prescribed by a physician.*

Sexual Abuse occurs when a person responsible for the child's welfare commits any of the following acts:

- sexually transmitted diseases are by DCFS definition "diseases which were acquired originally as a result of sexual penetration or conduct with an individual who was afflicted"
- sexual penetration includes any contact between the sex organ of one person and the sex organ, mouth, or anus of another person. Typical acts include vaginal, oral and anal sex.

- sexual exploitation is defined by DCFS as “sexual use of a child for sexual arousal, gratification, advantage, or profit”. This includes such acts as explicit verbal enticements, child pornography, self masturbation in the child’s presence, and forcing a child to watch sex acts.
- sexual molestation is defined by DCFS as “sexual conduct with a child when such contact, touching, or interaction is used for arousal or gratification of sexual needs or desires”. Examples include fondling a child or having the child touch the perpetrator sexually. (DCFS Procedures 300.Appendix B)

For both physical and sexual abuse, parents and caretakers are charged with the responsibility to take reasonable steps to stop abuse. If they do not, they may be charged with abuse themselves. (325 ILCS 5/3)

Neglect occurs when a person responsible for the child deprives or fails to provide the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, or needed medical treatment. Neglect is also alleged when an adult provides inadequate supervision of a child. This can occur when children are left either unsupervised or in the care of someone unable to supervise due to his/her condition. ANCRA also includes the following when defining neglected child; “a child “who is subjected to an environment which is injurious insofar as (i) the child’s environment creates a likelihood of harm to the child’s health, physical well-being, or welfare and (ii) the likely harm to the child is the result of a blatant disregard of parent or caretaker responsibilities.” Children can suffer injuries that are the result of “blatant disregard” and are considered neglect. According to DCFS, “Blatant disregard” means an incident where the real, significant, and imminent risk of harm would be so obvious to a reasonable parent or caretaker that it is unlikely that a reasonable parent or caretaker would have exposed the child to the danger without exercising precautionary measures to protect the child from harm. (Rules 300.20, Definitions)

The definitions in ANCRA are not perfectly clear in helping mandated reporters (or DCFS investigators later) in distinguishing between inappropriate/undesirable parenting and those acts which constitute abuse and neglect. It is clear that there are many points at which judgments must be made. What is excessive corporal punishment? At what age is it safe to leave children alone? At what point does a dirty house become a health and safety concern? How do you distinguish

What are the guidelines to determine if there is reasonable cause to believe physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect may have occurred?

poverty from neglect? A question to ask yourself is “Has the child been harmed or been at substantial risk of harm?” This helps focus the issue and moves away from value judgments and attitudes about lifestyles.

In considering whether there is “reasonable cause” to make a report, there are some issues that are important for mandated reporters to consider in deciding whether to report an incident as suspected abuse or neglect. While it is not the function of the mandated reporter to investigate, enough information must be obtained to determine if a Hotline call is needed.

- Did you observe evidence that some damage was done to the child? In physical abuse, this is most often some physical evidence of harm — a bruise, a fracture, or cuts. In sexual abuse cases, it is usually information from the victim about a specific incident of molestation, penetration, or exploitation. With neglect, there are concrete observations of a failure to provide for physical needs.
- What communication has the child provided? Is the information consistent and plausible with what you have observed?
- If the explanation comes from someone other than the child, how credible and/or complete is the information?
- Since the signs of sexual abuse can be uncertain, if a child tells you he/she is being abused by a caretaker or person responsible for the child’s welfare, report it.
- Have there been past incidents which, in retrospect, may have been suspicious?

The law says that physical injury or the risk of injury that is accidental does not constitute abuse. This does not include the “I didn’t mean to hit him so hard” excuse as accidental, but it does mean that injury to a child caused in reasonable circumstances may not be abuse. Children do engage in activities and behaviors in which they receive injuries but for which no one is responsible. On the other hand, some “accidental” injuries are preventable and can be attributed to “blatant disregard”. What this means to the mandated reporter is that any information you have about the circumstances of the alleged abuse is important for the Hotline worker to know. When it is possible to determine, however, that a cut or a bruise or even a broken bone was due to an accident that might be understandable even with parental supervision, it is not necessary to make the report.

The law in Illinois is quite clear about the circumstances under which DCFS can investigate and intervene when abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The following conditions must be present:

1. the victim must be under the age of 18;
2. the alleged perpetrator (the person alleged to have committed the abuse/neglect) must be a parent, step-parent, paramour of the natural parent, guardian, foster parent, immediate family member (siblings and grandparents), any person living in the home of the child, a person who came to know the child through an official capacity or position of trust (such as a teacher, health care professional, or volunteer in a youth program), or a person who is responsible for the welfare of the child (such as a babysitter, day care facility, or residential facility);
3. there must be a specific incident of abuse or neglect or a specific set of circumstances involving suspected abuse or neglect; and
4. there must be either demonstrated harm or a substantial risk of physical or sexual injury to the child.

These conditions are very important. If a case does not contain all of these elements, the department has no jurisdiction and cannot investigate the allegation. In such cases the Hotline intake worker may refer the reporter to a community agency (domestic violence shelter, youth crisis center) or to the police. If the reporter's call is not accepted for investigation, the Hotline worker must notify the reporter that the information is not sufficient for a report and will not be investigated. Such attempted reports, however, will be kept on the computer data base for six months.

Your role as a mandated reporter is to inform the department when you determine there is reason to believe that a child has been harmed or is in danger of being harmed — physically, sexually, or through neglect — and that a caretaker either committed the harm or should have taken steps to protect the child from the harm. You need to make the call immediately and no one within your employment setting is permitted to restrain the call. The function of the Hotline worker is to determine whether or not the harm to the child as described by the reporter qualifies as abuse or neglect under the State's definition and can be investigated by DCFS. It is not the job of the Hotline worker to make a determination that the suspected abuse has actually occurred. This is the function of the DCFS child protection specialist.

When can the Department of Children and Family Services become involved in suspected cases of child abuse or neglect?

Talking to the Hotline

Making A Report

Calling the DCFS Hotline

Most mandated reporters know that they are required to report suspected incidents of abuse, but they are not sure to whom they are reporting or what happens as a result of reports they make. This section provides an introduction to the State Central Register Hotline, where all calls reporting suspected abuse or neglect are taken. The discussion covers how the Hotline works in taking calls and how the Hotline workers screen calls to decide whether a report will be taken.

It is helpful to know some key terms as they are used by the department.

allegation of harm - The content of the reporter's concern about a child is coded by the Hotline worker into one or more allegations which define the nature of the harm or the risk of harm to the child. The allegations are listed in Appendix C.

report - If the Hotline worker concludes that the allegation is one the department is legally empowered to investigate and that there is sufficient information to warrant investigation, a **report** will be taken. This means that DCFS will initiate an investigation of the allegation. Every call to the Hotline does not necessarily result in a report.

credible evidence - means that the available facts when viewed in light of surrounding circumstances would cause a reasonable person to believe that a child may have been abused or neglected.

indicated - Cases are called "**indicated**" when an investigation has determined that credible evidence of the alleged abuse or neglect can be documented.

unfounded - Cases are called "**unfounded**" when an investigation has determined that credible evidence of the alleged abuse or neglect cannot be documented. All unfounded reports alleging sexual abuse or serious physical abuse are kept by the State Central Register (SCR) for a period of three years. With few exceptions, all other unfounded reports from mandated reporters are retained for one year. In addition, mandated reporters may request a review of an unfounded report within 10 days of notification if they have concerns about the adequacy of the investigation or if they feel that specific information has been overlooked. Reports that are unfounded are expunged from the SCR computer files when the retention period expires, unless the subject of the report believes the report was falsely filed and requests that it be retained.

All calls to report suspected abuse or neglect must be made to the statewide Hotline. The toll-free number is **1-800-252-2873 (1-800-25-ABUSE)**. At the Hotline, specially trained intake workers answer the phones and handle calls from anyone who wishes to report an incident of suspected child abuse or neglect. The Hotline is available 24 hours per day, seven days per week, 365 days a year.

Ideally, the mandated reporter with the most direct knowledge of the suspected abuse should be the one to make the call, however this is not a requirement. Having more information and details of the situation may make the difference between getting a report taken or not. Sometimes someone else in the organization is asked to make the actual call. This practice must not delay the making of the report. In addition to calling the Hotline, a mandated reporter may also notify his/her supervisors in the organization that a report has been made. It must be noted, however, that ANCRA prohibits any individual, even a supervisor, from suppressing, changing, or editing a report (325 ILCS 5/4).

When someone other than the person who directly observed the evidence of abuse is reporting, it is helpful for the staff member(s) with direct information to write it down. You may wish to use the checklist in Appendix B as a way to organize the information. This will ensure that both the Hotline and DCFS investigative workers have complete and accurate information on which to base decisions.

When too many calls come in to the Hotline to be taken immediately, a recording will engage your call and a system is implemented to screen and re-call reporters who are waiting. A "call back" will be made just as soon as an intake worker becomes available. However, if your call is an emergency or a child is in immediate danger, you should tell the message taker, and your call will be taken. The Hotline system tries to assure that all call backs are made just as soon as possible, but mandated reporters should take two steps when dealing with the Hotline at a busy time:

1. Reporters should remain on the line, even when lines are busy and a recording is heard; a worker will break in after a short time to take call back information.
2. When giving call back information, try to anticipate where you will be for the next several hours and give the worker not only your present number, but any number(s) where you may be reached at a later time.

The State Central Register Hotline

In an organization such as a school or a hospital, who should make the report?

What happens if I call and all the lines are busy?

SCR Hotline Procedures

Also, mandated reporters should anticipate that their callback may be delayed. Therefore, calls should be made to the Hotline well before the end of a working day. It is always important to report suspected abuse or neglect as soon as any evidence is observed. If children are in danger of harm, it is important to begin the investigation quickly. Seeing children as soon as possible is critical because perishable evidence such as bruises may fade rapidly, or the willingness of the child to talk about the incident may disappear. If possible, Hotline reports should be made during the week, especially if it is desirable to see the children at school or at a day-care facility during the week. A call made late Friday will result in the child being seen at home on the weekend, making it harder to speak privately. Depending on the allegation, this may not be the best situation for open disclosure.

When a Hotline worker answers a call, the worker should identify himself/herself. If the worker forgets to do that, you are entitled to ask for the worker's name so you will know with whom you spoke. You may wish to note the worker's name, particularly if a report is not taken and you wish to talk further with a supervisor. As explained earlier, it is the job of the Hotline worker:

- to talk with callers to get as much information about the allegation, the alleged victim(s), and the alleged perpetrator(s) as possible; and
- to determine whether the harm, as described by the reporter, qualifies as alleged abuse or neglect under the law and department guidelines.

Due to the large number of calls, Hotline workers are instructed to handle calls efficiently and quickly. All Hotline calls are audiotaped for purposes of quality assurance. You will be asked to provide the following information:

- Name, address and age of victim(s)
- Name and address of parent(s)/caretaker(s) and siblings
- Relationship of caretaker(s) to victim(s)
- Details of the abuse, including specifics of the incident(s), location and severity of injuries, any pattern of neglect or abuse, and any physical evidence.
- Any explanation provided by the child
- Any other relevant information that would expedite the investigation, such as directions to the victim's house (especially in rural areas) or information about potential risks to the investigator.

The Hotline worker will use the SCR computer system to determine if there are any pending investigations on the family or any reports which have been "indicated" previously since this information is critical to an accurate assessment of risk.

If the Hotline worker does not accept your call as a report, you will be informed of that fact and given the reason. Most often the explanation will relate to DCFS' legal jurisdiction or to the evaluation of risk of harm to the child. If you disagree with the conclusions of the Hotline worker, you may ask to speak with a Hotline supervisor. Explain the details of the case situation, the reasons you were given for the report being refused, and why you think the worker's assessment was inaccurate.

If the Hotline worker does not take a report, the information is entered into the computer data system, reviewed and either approved or caused to be turned into a report by a Hotline supervisor. Calls from mandated reporters which do not result in a report being taken are maintained on file for six months at SCR. If a report is not taken, the Hotline worker will often refer you to the police (for investigation of a crime outside DCFS mandates).

If a report is taken by the Hotline worker, an investigation will normally be initiated within 24 hours. **As a mandated reporter, you should supply a written confirmation of your verbal report within 48 hours.** You may access the forms (CANTS 4 or 5) on the DCFS website at: http://www.state.il.us/dcf/library/com_communications_forms.shtml. If you do not have access to the internet, please contact the local DCFS field office for assistance in obtaining copies of the forms. **Your written confirmation may be used as evidence in any judicial proceeding that results from the incident.**

What if I do not agree with the Hotline worker about whether a report should be taken?

What happens if a report is taken?

Appendix B

Checklist for Mandated Reporters

I. Alleged Victim(s)

Name(s) of victim(s):

Birthdate(s) of victim(s) or approximate age:

Address (or approximate address):

II. Alleged Perpetrator(s)

Name(s)

Birthdate(s) or Age(s) or some approximation so role of DCFS can be determined

Relationship to Victim(s)

Address

III. Harms to Victim(s)

Physical Abuse

Sexual Abuse

Risk of Harm

Neglect

Death

NOTE: The Hotline worker will be able to put the allegation in the proper sub-category such as Physical Abuse/Cuts, Bruises, and Welts.

IV. Description of Incident(s)

Be prepared to give a brief description of the incident(s) of abuse. This description should include:

1. as much detail as you have about the actual incident
2. indication of intention (especially in physical abuse)
3. description of the time and place of the incident
4. information, if any, about possible witnesses to the abuse
5. evidence of abuse (physical evidence, behavioral indicators, disclosure by the victim, etc.)

V. Date and time of when Hotline call is made

Name of Hotline worker taking the call

What action, if any, will be taken by DCFS

Appendix C

DCFS Allegations System

You will note that some allegations (e.g. death of a child) may be made under either abuse or neglect, depending on the circumstances that led to harm to the child. As a mandated reporter, you will not need to know all the allegations, but they are presented here to give you an idea of how the Hotline worker will try to categorize the harm you describe.

Abuse	Neglect
#1 Death	#51 Death
#2 Head Injuries	#52 Head Injuries
#4 Internal Injuries	#54 Internal Injuries
#5 Burns	#55 Burns
#6 Poison/Noxious Substances	#56 Poison/Noxious Substances
#7 Wounds	#57 Wounds
#9 Bone Fractures	#59 Bone Fractures
#10 Substantial Risk of Physical Injury/Environment Injurious to Health and Welfare	#60 Substantial Risk of Physical Injury/Environment Injurious to Health and Welfare
#11 Cuts, Bruises, Welts, Abrasions and Oral Injuries	#61 Cuts, Bruises, Welts, Abrasions and Oral Injuries
#12 Human Bites	#62 Human Bites
#13 Sprains/Dislocations	#63 Sprains/Dislocations
#14 Tying/Close Confinement	_____
#15 Substance Misuse	#65 Substance Misuse
#16 Torture	_____
#17 Mental and Emotional Impairment	#67 Mental and Emotional Impairment

- #18 Sexually Transmitted Diseases _____
- #19 Sexual Penetration _____
- #20 Sexual Exploitation _____
- #21 Sexual Molestation _____
- #22 Substantial Risk of Sexual Injury _____

#40 Human Trafficking of Children

#90 Human Trafficking of Children

- #74 Inadequate Supervision
- #75 Abandonment/Desertion
- #76 Inadequate Food
- #77 Inadequate Shelter
- #78 Inadequate Clothing
- #79 Medical Neglect
- #81 Failure to Thrive (non-organic)
- #82 Environmental Neglect
- #83 Malnutrition (non-organic)
- #84 Lock-out
- #85 Medical Neglect of Disabled Infants

NOTE: DCFS no longer takes reports on Educational Neglect which was formerly listed as a neglect allegation.

DCFS no longer takes reports on Lack of Immunizations, which was formerly a form of medical neglect.