

Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department (BLDHD)
POLICY/PROCEDURE

PROGRAM: School Health

SUBJECT: Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting

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EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 2022

Revised: October 1, 2023

ISSUED BY: Michelle Klein
Director of Personal Health

PURPOSE: To promote the safety and well-being of children and to comply with the Michigan Child Protection Law (Public Act 238 of 1975) by reporting cases of suspected child abuse and neglect.

POLICY: Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department (BLDHD) staff working in all personal health programs, including but not limited to WIC, Immunizations, Family Planning, Community Connections, Parenting Communities, School-Based Health Services Program will report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect for all children under 18 years of age as specified in the Child Protection Law. ***All direct service staff (including supervisors) are viewed as mandated reporters and are required to immediately make a telephone or oral report or online report of the suspected child abuse or neglect. Direct service staff includes but is not limited to physician, dentist, physician's assistant, registered dental hygienist, nurse, nurse practitioner, community health worker, person licensed to provide emergency medical care, audiologist, psychologist, marriage and family therapist, licensed professional counselor, social worker, licensed master's social worker, licensed bachelor's social worker, licensed practical counselor, school administrator, school counselor or teacher, law enforcement officer, member of the clergy, or regulated child care provider.***

Definitions of child abuse, child neglect, presence of a controlled substance in the newborn's body, and religious beliefs are all contained in the Child Protection Law.

Definitions of physical abuse, sexual abuse, child maltreatment, mental injury, and neglect are found in the Mandated Reporter's Resource Guide.

PROCEDURE:

The use of Michigan Online Reporting System (MORS) eliminates the requirement to fill out a DHS-3200 form. To use the Michigan Online Reporting System (MORS) for the first time, you must create a password-protected account and profile on MI Bridges for your security and convenience. To create your account, go to www.michigan.gov/mandatedreporter and click the link to access MORS through MI Bridges. On the MI Bridges home page, click on **Partnerships**. Then, click on **Mandated Reporters** and **Register**. Document significant subjective and objective findings in the CPS report and the medical record assessment/encounter note as well as the contact log documentation.

Roles and Responsibilities of BLDHD/School-Health Team:

1. School-Health Team Members whose role it is to recognize, and report suspected child abuse and neglect as **mandated reporters** include Public Health Nurse or School Wellness Program (SWP) Nurse or Mental Health Provider, Nurse Practitioner, Community Health Worker, or other Mental Health Professional or School-Based Nurse.

2. An online report shall be made **immediately** to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) when a mandated reporter of the fiduciary/BLDHD employee/School Health Team has a reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect.
3. Failure to Report: "A person who is required to report an instance of suspected child abuse and neglect and fails to report is civilly liable for the damaged proximately caused by the failure." (Child Protection Law)

Release of Information, Internal Communication, and Confidentiality

1. Releasing information regarding the suspicion or filing of a report may only occur internally within BLDHD, specifically, the School-Health Team member must send a copy of the online report to the Director of Personal Health.
2. School-Health Team members must also notify their supervisor that a report has been filed through a secured email with a copy of the electronic report.
3. Confidentiality: "Any legally recognized privileged communication except that between attorney and client or that made to a member of the clergy in his or her professional character in a confession or similarly confidential communication is abrogated and shall not constitute grounds for excusing a report otherwise required to be made." (Child Protection Law).
4. *The reporting provider will share with the student that confidentiality cannot be maintained when the provider determines there is a risk of harm to the student.*

Addressing Immediate Safety Concern

Reporting provider will assess for immediate safety and security concerns in the home. If there is a risk for serious harm or danger is imminent, the reporting provider will connect with CPS worker for guidance; if unable to reach CPS worker, the provider will work with supervisor to consult with law enforcement on next steps.

Training, Competency, and Collaboration

1. The State of Michigan Child Abuse and Neglect law is reviewed at all new Personal Health staff orientations.
2. A working relationship is maintained with MDHHS CPS staff through mutual attendance and collaboration at community meetings and workgroups. Joint home visits may be conducted with local MDHHS CPS staff to further enhance the working relationship.
3. Screening for child sexual abuse will be referred to an appropriate team that has proper training and credentials (Traverse Bay Child Advocacy Center).

REFERENCES:

State of Michigan Online Reporting System

https://newmibridges.michigan.gov/s/isd-landing-page?language=en_US

MORS User Guide

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/Michigan_Online_Reporting_System_User_Guide_646790_7.pdf

State of Michigan "Child Protection Law":

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/DHS-PUB-0003_167609_7.pdf

Children's Protective Services Program: Mandated Reporter's Resource

Guide http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/Pub-112_179456_7.pdf