



Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

A mandatory reporter is defined as a professional who is obligated by law to report known or suspected incidents of child abuse and/or neglect. Any person specified in C.R.S. 19-3-304 is by law a mandatory reporter in Colorado including program staff at Hope Communities. If a mandated reporter has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, the mandatory reporter shall immediately upon receiving such information report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the county department, the local law enforcement agency, or through the child abuse reporting hotline system, and then notify Hope Communities' President and CEO.

Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect

- **Emotional abuse or psychological abuse** is a pattern of behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-worth. This may include constant criticism, threats or rejection, as well as withholding love, support, or guidance.
- **Physical Neglect** is failure to provide for a child's basic needs, such as nutrition, clothing, shelter, hygiene, and medical care. Physical neglect may also involve inadequate supervision of a child and other forms of reckless disregard of the child's safety and welfare.
- **Physical abuse** is any non-accidental physical injury (ranging from minor bruises to severe fractures or death) as a result of punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, stabbing, choking, hitting (with a hand, stick, strap, or other object), burning, or otherwise harming a child, that is inflicted by a parent, caregiver, or other person who has responsibility for the child.
- **Sexual abuse** includes activities by a parent or caregiver such as fondling a child's genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials

Mistreatment or Self-Neglect of an At-Risk Adult

At-risk adults are persons age 18 and older who are unable to provide or obtain services necessary for their health, safety, and welfare OR who lack the capacity to make or understand responsible decisions. Mistreatment or self-neglect includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, caretaker neglect, and exploitation of at-risk elders and at-risk adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). To make a report of suspected mistreatment or self-neglect of an at-risk adult, call the Adult Protective Services (APS) intake number for the county department of human services where the at-risk adult lives.

Reporting Procedures

Reports of known or suspected child abuse or neglect shall be reported immediately to the proper authorities. Employees must **not** investigate allegations on their own. It is the responsibility of the child protection or elder/at risk adult agency to determine if there will be an investigation and to provide direction to reporting persons. Such reports, when possible, shall include the following information:

1. The name, address, age, sex, and race of the child;
2. The source of the report and the name, address, and occupation of the person making the report;
3. The natures and extent of child's injuries, including any evidence of previous known or suspected abuse or neglect to the child or the child's siblings;
4. The names and addresses of the persons responsible for the suspected abuse or neglect, if known;
5. The family composition;
6. Any action taken by the reporting source;
7. Any other information the reporter believes may be helpful in furthering the investigation.
8. Communication of the reported abuse, and any related safety concerns for the staff of Hope Communities, shall then be given to the Hope Communities President and CEO.

Immunity of Liability of Persons Reporting

Any person participating in good faith in making a report or performing her/his duties or legal responsibilities pursuant to this article, shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that otherwise might result by reason of such reporting.

I have read this policy form and agree to fulfill my responsibilities as a Hope Communities employee.

Signature: _____ Date: _____