

Reporting Child Abuse

The NW BOCES Board recognizes that because of their sustained contact with school age children, NW BOCES employees are in an excellent position to identify abused or neglected children and refer them for treatment and protection.

Therefore, in accordance with reporting requirements of the Child Protection Act, any NW BOCES employee who suspects that a child's physical or mental health may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect shall report the matter to the Administrative Director or designee as provided for in Regulation 8019-R.

NW BOCES employees and administration shall not contact the child's family or any other persons to determine the cause of the suspected abuse or neglect.

It is not the responsibility of the NW BOCES administration or employee to prove that the child has been abused or neglected.

Employees who make a report of suspected child abuse in good faith or while performing their duties in response to such a report, or participating in a judicial proceeding resulting there from, shall be immune from liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed.

Reporting Child Abuse and/or Neglect

1. Any NW BOCES employee who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that any child has been subjected to any abuse and/or neglect or has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that could reasonably result in abuse and/or neglect must immediately report the situation to the Administrative Director who will report such information to the DFS office and/or the local law enforcement agency in the county where the abuse and/or neglect occurred. This oral report should be followed at once by a written report.

2. The written report should include:

a. Name of the child;

b. The nature of the child's injury or conditions; information on conditions leading to abuse and/or neglect - all with dates as appropriate;

c. Any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries or the conditions observed;

3. The Administrative Director or designee shall contact the Department of Family Services, using procedures and forms as may be required by that department;

4. After the report is made to the Department of Family Services, NW BOCES staff members will make themselves available for meetings with the Department's representative to facilitate communication. NW BOCES will report any further incidents of abuse and/or neglect to the agency's representative;

5. As the case is being investigated, NW BOCES shall provide supportive aid and counseling services for the child;

6. Once a report of child abuse and/or neglect is given to the Department of Family Services, the responsibility for investigation and follow-up lies with that department. It is not the responsibility of NW BOCES staff to investigate the case.

8019-R

Therefore, the school staff will not

- a. Make home visits for investigative purposes;
- b. Take the child for medical treatment (this does not preclude taking action in an emergency situation);
- c. Convey message between the agency and the parents/guardian.

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