

Welcome to the Texas Abuse Hotline Website

The Department of Family and Protective Services provides this secure website for reporting suspicions of abuse, neglect and exploitation of children, adults with disabilities, or people 65 years or older.

Use this website to report situations that **do not** need to be investigated right away. It may take more than 48 hours to process online reports due to high volume.

Answer the questions as thoroughly as possible. The information provided must meet the definitions of abuse, neglect or exploitation according to Texas codes in order to be sent to local DFPS investigative staff for review. A lack of descriptions and details may result in your report being closed at intake without further action.

Do not use this website to report urgent or emergency situations.

- Call the Texas Abuse Hotline (1-800-252-5400) if your situation is urgent and needs to be investigated within 24 hours.
- Call 911 or your local law enforcement agency if you have an emergency or life-threatening situation that must be dealt with immediately.

When do I call the Texas Abuse Hotline instead of using this website?

Call the Texas Abuse Hotline when the situation is urgent. Urgent means someone faces an immediate risk of abuse or neglect that could result in death or serious harm. Call the Texas Abuse Hotline at **1-800-252-5400** for situations including but not limited to:

- Serious injuries
- Any injury to a child 5 years or younger
- Immediate need for medical treatment (including suicidal thoughts)
- Sexual abuse where the abuser has or will have access to the victim within the next 24 hours
- Children age five and under are alone or are likely to be left alone within the next 24 hours
- Anytime you believe your situation requires action in less than 24 hours

If you need to call the Texas Abuse Hotline and are deaf and equipped with a Teletypewriter (TTY), call Relay Texas by dialing 711 or 1-800-735-2989. Tell the relay agent you need to call the Texas Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400.

Call the Texas Abuse Hotline if for any reason you have trouble reporting your concerns on this website.

Report Abuse of a Minor – currently under 18 years old

First-hand knowledge - report made to you by a minor

Texas law requires any individual who has cause to believe a person who is currently a minor is being abused to report the information regarding possible abuse to:

1. Any local or state law enforcement agency; or
2. The Texas Department of Family & Protective Services (DFPS) by calling the 24-hour abuse hotline at 1-800-252-5400 or filing a report as instructed on the website at www.txabusehotline.org.

Additional Diocese of Austin reporting requirements for individuals who are required to be EIM compliant and have cause to believe a minor is being abused:

3. File a **Notice of Concern** with the Diocese of Austin; and
4. Report the information to the pastor, principal, or supervisor.

• Second-hand knowledge - report made to you by another adult about a minor

Reporting requirements for individuals who are required to be EIM compliant and receive a report from another regarding possible abuse of a person who is currently a minor:

1. **Refer the reporter to the reporting requirements noted above** and offer to assist the reporter to report the allegation to law enforcement or DFPS;
2. If you have cause to question whether the allegation has been reported, report the allegation to law enforcement or DFPS;
3. File a **Notice of Concern** with the Diocese of Austin; and
4. Report the information to the pastor, principal, or supervisor.

Reporting requirements for pastors, principals, and supervisors who receive a report from another

regarding possible abuse of a person who is currently a minor:

5. **Refer the reporter to the reporting requirements noted above** and offer to assist the reporter to report the allegation to law enforcement or DFPS;
6. If you have cause to question whether the allegation has been reported, report the allegation to law enforcement or DFPS;
7. File a **Notice of Concern** with the Diocese of Austin if a question exists as to whether the allegation has been reported; and

Contact the diocesan legal staff for consultation regarding further steps (for example, placing an employee on administrative leave, removing a volunteer from ministry, notifying the parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, etc.).