

CEDAR RIDGE MINISTRIES

Policies to Ensure Referrals of Allegations for Investigations Policy

Revision Date: 3/12/2026

POLICY:

Cedar Ridge is committed to maintaining a ZERO tolerance policy for all forms of sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and retaliation, consistent with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2003 (PL 108-79) and 28 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 115, Subpart D – Standards for Juvenile Facilities.

Cedar Ridge shall ensure that allegations involving potentially criminal conduct are referred for investigation to the appropriate law enforcement agency with jurisdiction. Administrative investigations shall be conducted for all allegations, regardless of whether the allegation is referred for criminal investigation. This policy establishes procedures for allegations involving potentially criminal conduct or administrative investigations of allegations as required by **PREA Standard §115.322 – Policies to Ensure Referrals of Allegations for Investigations (28 CFR §115.322)**.

DEFINITIONS:

1. **Allegation:** A report of sexual abuse or sexual harassment, whether substantiated, unsubstantiated, or unfounded.
2. **Substantiated:** An allegation that was investigated and determined to have occurred.
3. **Unsubstantiated:** An allegation that was investigated and the evidence was insufficient to make a final determination.
4. **Unfounded:** An allegation that was investigated and determined not to have occurred.
5. **Sexual Abuse:** As defined under **PREA Standard §115.6 – Definitions Related to Sexual Abuse** and the **Cedar Ridge PREA Compliance Policy**.
6. **Sexual Harassment:** As defined under **PREA Standard §115.6** and the **Cedar Ridge PREA Compliance Policy**.
7. **Staff Sexual Misconduct:** Any behavior or act of a sexual nature directed toward a resident by an employee, volunteer, intern, contractor, official visitor or other Cedar Ridge representative.

ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS (PREA STANDARD §115.322(a)):

1. Cedar Ridge shall conduct an administrative investigation for all allegations of sexual abuse and sexual harassment, including those referred for criminal investigation.
2. Administrative investigations shall:
 - Be prompt, thorough, and objective
 - Be conducted by trained investigators
3. Administrative investigations shall continue even if:
 - The alleged victim recants
 - The alleged perpetrator resigns or is terminated
4. Findings shall be classified as:
 - Substantiated
 - Unsubstantiated
 - Unfounded

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REFERRAL OF ALLEGATIONS FOR CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION (PREA STANDARD §115.322(b)):

1. Mandatory Referral

- All allegations of conduct that may be criminal in nature shall be referred to the appropriate local law enforcement agency immediately upon receipt.
- Referrals shall occur regardless of the source of the allegation (resident, staff, third party, anonymous, hotline, etc.).
- Cedar Ridge shall refer all allegations of conduct that may be criminal in nature to the appropriate law enforcement agency and shall not delay such referral.
- Referrals shall be made as soon as practicable and without unnecessary delay.

2. Jurisdiction

- The referral shall be made to the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over Cedar Ridge facilities.
- If the alleged perpetrator is staff, contractor, or volunteer, the allegation shall also be referred as required by state mandatory reporting laws.

3. Documentation (PREA Standard §115.322(b))

- Cedar Ridge shall document all referrals for criminal investigation.
- Documentation shall include:
 - Date of allegation
 - Nature of allegation
 - Date of referral
 - Agency referred to
 - Name/title of receiving official (if available)
- Documentation shall be maintained in accordance with the **Cedar Ridge Document Retention Policy** and PREA standards.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO POLICY (PREA STANDARD §115.322(b)):

This policy shall be published on the Cedar Ridge website or otherwise made publicly available.

COORDINATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT (PREA STANDARD §115.322(c)):

1. Cedar Ridge shall cooperate fully with external investigators.
2. When a separate law enforcement entity is responsible for criminal investigations, Cedar Ridge's responsibilities include:
 - Receiving and documenting allegations
 - Preserving evidence
 - Protecting residents
 - Making required notifications
 - Cooperating with investigators
3. The investigating entity's responsibilities include:
 - Conducting the criminal investigation
 - Making criminal charging decisions

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4. When a criminal investigation is ongoing, Cedar Ridge shall:
 - Coordinate to avoid compromising criminal proceedings
 - Ensure evidence preservation
5. Administrative investigations may be temporarily suspended at the request of law enforcement but shall resume as appropriate.
6. When a State entity is responsible for conducting administrative or criminal investigations, Cedar Ridge shall cooperate with that entity in accordance with its governing investigative policies (**PREA Standard §115.322(d)**).
7. When a Department of Justice entity is responsible for conducting administrative or criminal investigations, Cedar Ridge shall cooperate with that entity in accordance with its governing investigative policies (**PREA Standard §115.322(e)**).

STAFF REPORTING OBLIGATIONS:

All staff, contractors, and volunteers are mandatory reporters and must immediately report:

- Any knowledge, suspicion, or information regarding sexual abuse or sexual harassment.
- Retaliation against residents or staff who report abuse.
- Any staff neglect or violation of responsibilities that may have contributed to an incident.

YOUTH AND THIRD-PARTY REPORTING:

Residents and third parties may report allegations through:

- Verbal reports to any staff member
- Written grievance
- Hotline or external reporting method
- Anonymous reporting options

PROTECTION FROM RETALIATION:

Cedar Ridge shall protect all individuals who report sexual abuse or cooperate with investigations from retaliation.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Information related to sexual abuse reports and investigations shall be shared only on a need-to-know basis and in compliance with state confidentiality laws, HIPAA (if applicable) and in compliance with applicable confidentiality laws and PREA requirements.

DATA COLLECTION AND REVIEW:

All allegations and investigative outcomes shall be documented and included in:

- Incident tracking system
- Annual PREA data review

REFERENCE:

- Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PL 108-79)
- 28 CFR Part 115, Subpart D – Standards for Juvenile Facilities (§115.322)
- **Cedar Ridge PREA Compliance Policy**