

JEFFERSON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Identifying and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Revised 9/98, 7/00, 7/04

I. Policy:

It is the policy of Jefferson County Department of Health and Environment to comply with the Child Protection Act of 1987 (CRS 19-3-301) and with the mandatory reporting requirements of that Act. All staff will be trained in identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect.

Any employee who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, as defined by the Child Protection Act of 1987 (CRS 19-3-301), shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Jefferson County Department of Human Services. In those cases where the child abuse is observed to be in progress, notification shall be made immediately to the law enforcement agency of that jurisdiction.

The Child Protection Act grants Department employees and other persons who report child abuse or neglect, immunity from any liability that might otherwise be incurred, except for knowingly making a false report. The legal responsibility of the employee who suspects abuse or neglect is not satisfied by reporting that suspicion to other Health Department employees. Violation of the Act's reporting requirement is punishable as a Class 3 misdemeanor and may create liability for any further injuries.

Except as otherwise provided specifically by law, report of child abuse or neglect, the name and address of any child, family or informant, or any other identifying information contained in such reports shall be confidential and shall not be public information.

II. Definition:

The Child Protection Act of 1987 (CRS 19-3-301) defines child abuse or neglect as an act or omission in one of the following categories, which threatens the health or welfare of a child.

- A. Any case in which a child exhibits evidence of skin bruising, bleeding, malnutrition, failure to thrive, burns, fractures of any bone, subdural hematoma, soft tissue swelling, or death, and such condition or death is not justifiably explained, or where the history given concerning such condition or death is at variance with the degree or type of such condition or death, or

circumstances indicate that such condition or death may not be the product of an accidental occurrence;

- B. Any Case in which a child is subjected to sexual assault or molestation, sexual exploitation, or prostitution. Sexual assault of a minor is defined as sexual activity between a minor less than 15 years old and a perpetrator four or more years older, or sexual activity between a 15 or 16 year old and a perpetrator who is 10 or more years older. This rule applies only when the perpetrator is not a spouse.
- C. Any case in which the child's parents, legal guardians, or custodians fail to take the same actions to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision that a prudent parent would take.
- D. Any case in which a child is subjected to emotional abuse which impairs the child's development, mental health or physical health. Emotional abuse includes the child observing domestic violence directed at others.

III. Procedure:

Subjective: It is not the responsibility of the employee to prove that the child has been abused or neglected. When appropriate and feasible, the employee is encouraged to ask the child or the parent how an injury has occurred, however, the employee shall not make additional contacts to the child's family or any other persons to determine the cause of the suspected abuse or neglect.

Objective: When feasible and appropriate, the employee will note behaviors of the child and the perpetrator, observable marks, bruises, or other injuries and their extent, noting location, color or other characteristics. Other objective data such as height and weight may be pertinent.

Assessment: If the child or parent's response to questioning is vague or inconsistent, or if the injury does not fit the explanation, the suspicion of abuse or neglect exists.

Plan:

1. The employee shall immediately complete the Jefferson County Multi-Agency Child Abuse/Neglect Report Form. Send the original report form to Social Services.
2. The employee shall immediately report those facts, or cause a report of the facts to be made, to the Jefferson County Department of Human Services.
3. In those cases where the child abuse is observed to be in progress, notification shall be made immediately to the law enforcement agency of that jurisdiction.
4. The employee shall inform his or her supervisor that a child abuse report has been made.
5. Documentation of each report shall be maintained in the patient's chart or location specified by department supervisor.
6. A copy of the medical or WIC record may be released to the Department of Human Services and/or the law enforcement agency, when so requested. The official from the Department of Human Services and/or the law enforcement

officer will sign the Release of Medical Records Form. Neither the official nor the officer needs a medial release form from the parents in order to obtain medical or WIC records.

7. At the time of service, the Medical Records clerk and/or the RN and/or the RD will assure that the release of the Medical Records Form is completed and documented on the patient's record, and that the requested copies of the patient's record are made and released to the authorized requesting agency.
8. After the date of service, requests for records involving suspected child abuse cases will be managed directly through the Medical Records or the WIC office.
9. Federal Law and Regulations regarding confidentiality of alcohol and drug patient records will be applied as appropriate.

IV. Training

All personnel of Jefferson County Department of Health and Environment are required to be trained to identify and report child abuse and neglect based on Colorado law and the Department's Policy. All personnel are affirmatively charged with familiarizing themselves with the reporting requirements.

- A. All new personnel will attend the first available training.
- B. Each division will annually update their staff on current policy and regulations.

**JEFFERSON COUNTY MULTI-AGENCY
CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT - REPORT FORM**

Reporting Agency _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Child's Name: _____

Client's Name: _____ Client # _____

Individual Initially Suspecting: _____

Individual's Business Address: _____

Individual Completing Form: _____

CHILD INVOLVED AND SIBLINGS	DOB	AGE	SEX	ADDRESS

PARENTS/GUARDIANS	REL	ADDRESS	PHONE	WORK PHONE

Alleged Perpetrator _____

DOB _____ Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Relationship: _____

Description of suspected abuse/neglect: Include how information was obtained, description of concern or injury, date, time, place, child's whereabouts (continue on back page, if needed):

Incident date reported to social services/law enforcement on:

Date/Time: _____

Signature: _____

Shift supervisor notified (if applicable): _____

Initial reporter notified report has been made to social services/law Enforcement: (if applicable)

_____ Signature/Date _____

Name of Social Services intake worker/law enforcement representative contacted:

Report sent to Jeffco Social Services/law enforcement: _____ Date: _____

CALL SOCIAL SERVICES:

Jefferson County Department of Human Services
Child Intake Department
900 Jefferson County Parkway
Golden, CO 80401
303-271-4131
303-271-4123

OR LAW ENFORCEMENT IN YOUR AREA:

Arvada Police Attention Victim Services 8101 Ralston Road Arvada, CO 80002 303-431-3016	Golden Police 911 10 th St. Golden, CO 80401 303-384-8045	Westminster Police 8800 N. Sheridan Blvd. Westminster, CO 80030 303-430-2400
Edgewater Police 5901 2. 25 th Ave. Edgewater, CO 80214 303-235-0500	Jefferson County Sheriff's Dept. 200 Jefferson County Parkway Golden, CO 80401 303-277-0211	Wheat Ridge Police 7500 2. 29 th Ave. Wheat Ridge, CO 80215 303-235-2945
	Lakewood Police 445 S. Allison Parkway Lakewood, CO 80226 303-987-7111	

**REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT
JEFFERSON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

Child Abuse Hotline
303-271-4131 or 303-271-4357

From 8am-5pm, Monday through Friday, when you call the hotline, you will get the Intake screeners. Nights and weekend (and holidays), the answering service will take a message and page the on-call caseworker who will call you back as soon as possible.

What information will you be asked when you call in?

- Name, address, age, race and gender of the child.
- Name and address of the parent, guardian or custodian of the child.
- Work and home phone numbers are important.
- Family composition
- Name and address of the person suspected of committing the abuse.
- Where is the child currently? When is the child going home? How does the child go home (bus, car, walk)? If someone picks up the child, is it the parent? Does the child go to day care after school, and if so, what is the name, address, phone number of the day care provider?
- What are your specific concerns? (i.e. physical abuse, neglect, etc).
- What is the nature and extent of the child's injuries? Are there current injuries? If so, where on the body is the injury? What does it look like? (Size, shape, color, etc.)
- How did you discover the abuse/neglect?
- What did the child say to you? Be specific and quote the child if possible.
- Have you had concerns in the past? Have you talked with the parents regarding your concerns about this or other issues? Is parent receptive/wanting assistance? Is the parent upset or feeling intruded upon or defensive?
- Your name, phone, address, and occupation. Any action you have taken.