

# Reporting Child Abuse – Childline

ChildLine (<http://www.pa-fsa.org/Mandated-Reporters/Recognizing-Child-Abuse-Neglect/Reporting-Abuse-ChildLine>) provides information, counseling, and referral services for families and children to ensure the safety and well-being of the children of Pennsylvania. The toll-free intake line, **1-800-932-0313**, is available 24 hours/7 days a week to receive reports of suspected child abuse.

Professionals who come into contact with children (i.e., mandated reporters) are **required** to report when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child under the care, supervision, guidance or training of that person or of their agency, institution or organization is an abused child. However, **any** person may report suspected abuse.

All mandated reporters must submit their name and contact information when making a report. Other members of the community who report can choose to remain anonymous.

Each call is answered by a trained intake specialist who interviews the caller to determine the most appropriate course of action. Actions include forwarding a report to a county agency for investigation as child abuse or general protective services, forwarding a report directly to law enforcement officials, or referring the caller to local social services.

If you are a mandated reporter, you must report suspected abuse immediately, either by phone or electronically.

## Reporting Abuse By Phone

**Call ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313.** ChildLine is available 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week. As a mandated reporter, you must provide your name and contact information when making the call. After making the call, mandated reporters must follow up with an electronic report or a written report completed on the [CY-47 form](#) within 48 hours of making the oral report.

Copies of the blank form may be requested from the local county agency, ChildLine or downloaded below.

## Report Abuse Electronically

The report is submitted directly to ChildLine via the [Child Welfare Information Solution portal](#). The Report of Suspected Child Abuse, or CY-47, form can be accessed at the links below.

You will need to include your name, telephone number and email address. You will also need to include any other actions you have taken. You will receive an email confirmation that your report has been received; you should print and keep this confirmation for your records.

- [CY-47](#) - For use by mandated reporters. Please send to the local county children and youth agency where the incident of alleged abuse took place.

## **Other Actions by Mandated Reporters**

There are certain actions that reporters must take on behalf of a child suspected of being abused. A mandated reporter must in good faith:

- Make a report
- Cooperate with an investigation
- Notify police, if appropriate
- Testify in proceedings that result from their report

A mandated reporter may also:

- Take photographs of the child's injuries
- Have X-rays taken
- Have the child hospitalized
- Have the child moved into protective custody according to the law
- Have a medical exam performed by a medical professional

Any photographs, X-rays and/or medical summaries should then be sent to the county agency with the Report of Suspected Child Abuse, or as soon after as possible. The mandated reporter must give the county access to the actual photographs and X-rays.

## **Taking Protective Custody**

Only a court official, law enforcement officer, physician, or hospital administrator can take protective custody of a child. A caseworker must obtain a court order. This action may be taken when it is immediately necessary to protect the child from further harm. When a child is taken into protective custody that person (e.g., law enforcement, physician, etc.) must immediately notify the county agency. A child cannot be held in this type of protective custody for more than 24 hours. However, if necessary, the county agency can obtain a court order permitting the child to remain in protective custody for a longer period of time. If a child is taken into emergency custody, the case must be brought before a judge within 72 hours.

In all cases, the county maintains written records of the investigation.