

### REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The Board of Education recognizes that student's mental and physical health will have an effect on the student's ability to obtain the most benefit from attending school. In order to increase the student's ability to learn while in school, the Board of Education realizes the importance of identifying students who may be suffering from abuse, neglect or placed in imminent danger of serious harm. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 17a-101, as amended, all school employees, including the Superintendent of Schools, administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, guidance counselors, paraprofessionals, psychologists, social workers, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics as well as school nurses, physicians working in the school system or any other person who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in District schools, who suspects child abuse or neglect must first report it to the Department of Children and Families or to a law enforcement agency. When a school employee suspects child abuse, neglect or that a child has been placed in imminent risk of serious harm, he/she shall within twelve (12) hours make an oral report by telephone or in person to the Commissioner of Children and Families, or a law enforcement agency, followed within 48 hours with a written report. The Building Principal shall be notified immediately after the oral report has been made and the Principal in turn will notify the Superintendent of Schools and the child's parents, if deemed appropriate. The written report prepared and submitted by the mandated reporter shall also be submitted to the Principal.

State law requires registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers, teachers, principals, guidance counselors, paraprofessionals, physical therapists, speech and language pathologists (among others) who have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a person with *intellectual disability* (formerly "mental retardation") has been abused or neglected to report such information to the Director of Developmental Services.

Any school personnel who has reasonable cause to suspect that a district employee is abusing a student should orally report that suspicion as soon as possible but no later than twelve (12) hours by telephone or in person to the Commissioner of Children and Families followed no later than 48 hours of making the oral report with a written report to the Department of Children and Families. The Superintendent of Schools or supervising agent may be notified immediately after the oral report has been made. The Commissioner of Children and Families or his/her designee, is required to notify the head of a school, except when that person is the alleged perpetrator. The Superintendent or supervising agent must: 1) immediately notify parent(s) of the alleged abuse that a report has been made; and 2) immediately notify the police department of the alleged abuse.

In addition, the Superintendent or supervising agent, must submit a written report of suspected child abuse or neglect by a school employee who has been entrusted with the care of a child and who holds a certificate, permit or authorization issued by the State Board of Education to the Commissioner of Education or his/her representative. The Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families has a similar obligation. The Superintendent shall suspend a certified staff

REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT (Continued...)

employee when the investigation produces evidence that the employee abused a child. The Department of Children and Families is required to send to the State Department of Education a copy of the report. Within seventy-two (72) hours after such suspension the Superintendent shall notify the Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education or his/her representative of the reasons for and conditions of the suspension. If the contract of employment of a school employee who possesses a certificate, permit or authorization issued by the State Board of Education is terminated, or if such certified school employee resigns his/her employment as a result of an investigation which reveals that child abuse has occurred, the Superintendent shall notify the Commissioner of Education within 72 hours of such termination.

If the report of child abuse or neglect involves an employee of the District as the perpetrator, the District may conduct its own investigation into the allegation, provided that such investigation shall not interfere with or impede any investigation conducted by the Department of Children and Families or of law enforcement agencies.

The Superintendent shall maintain records of allegations, investigations and reports that a child has been abused or neglected by a school employee. Such records will be maintained in the District's Central Office. The records shall include any reports made to the Department of Children and Families. Such Department is to have access to all such records.

The Board, recognizing its responsibilities to protect children and in compliance with its statutory obligations shall provide an in-service regarding the requirements and obligations of mandated reporters. District employees shall also participate in training offered by the Department of Children and Families. In addition, all District employees shall complete a training program pertaining to the accurate and prompt reporting of abuse and neglect, made available by the Commissioner of Children and Families. Also, all employees must complete a refresher program at least once every three years. Employees hired before July 1, 2011 must complete the refresher training program by July 1, 2012 and must retake it once every three years thereafter.

This policy will be distributed annually to all employees. Documentation shall be maintained that all employees have, in fact, received the written policy and completed training related to mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect as required by law.

The Board shall not retaliate against any mandated reporter for his/her compliance with the law and Board policy pertaining to the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect.

REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT (Continued...)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-220a Inservice training. Professional development committees. Institutes for educators. Cooperating teacher program, regulations (as Amended by PA 11-93)

10-221d Criminal history records check of school personnel,. Fingerprinting. Termination or dismissal (as amended by PA 11-93)

17a-28 Definitions. Confidentiality of and access to records; exceptions. Procedures for aggrieved persons. Regulations (as amended by PA 11-93)

17a-101 Protection of children from abuse. Reports required of certain Professional persons. When child may be removed from surroundings without court order. (as amended by PA 96-246, PA 0-220, PA 02-106, PA 03-168, PA 09-242 and PA 11-93)

17-101a Report of abuse or neglect by mandated reports. (as amended by PA 02-106 and PA 11-93)

17a-102 Report of danger of abuse. (as amended by PA 02-106)

17a-106 Cooperation in relation to prevention, identification and treatment of child abuse/neglect.

10-151 Teacher Tenure Act

P.A. 11-93 An Act Concerning the Response of School Districts and the Departments of Education and Children and Families to Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect and the Identification of Foster Children in a School District.

Administrative Regulations to Policy 5141.4  
Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

I. All school employees pursuant to the performance of services and duties for the district's school who has reasonable cause to suspect that any child under the age of 18 has had serious physical injury or injuries other than by accidental means by:

1. a person responsible for such student's health, welfare, or care;
2. by a person given access to such child by the responsible person in paragraph 1 above;
3. or by a school employee.

or if the child under the age of eighteen has injuries which are at variance with the history given of them, or is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment, or cruel punishment, or has been neglected as defined by section 46b-120, shall report, or cause a report to be made, following the procedures outlined in 1 through 5 below:

1. In accordance with CGS 17a-101, a mandated oral report regarding the suspected abuse shall be made by telephone or in person within twelve (12) hours to the Department of Children and Families or to the local or state police.
2. The oral report is to be followed within forty-eight (48) hours with a written report to the Commissioner of The Department of Children and Families or his/her designee, containing all the required information.
3. In cases where the mandated reporter suspects or believes such injury has been caused by a school employee, he/she shall report that suspicion as outlined in items 1 and 2. In addition the Superintendent of Schools or supervising agent shall be notified immediately, after the oral report has been made and he/she shall also receive a copy of the written report.
4. The Superintendent, in a situation of alleged child abuse by a school employee, shall immediately notify the child's parents or other person responsible for the child's care that a report has been made.
5. The Commissioner of Education shall also receive a copy of the written report in cases involving a school employee.

Administrative Regulations to Policy 5141.4  
Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

Reports, oral and written, shall contain the names and addresses of the child and his/her parents or other person responsible for his/her care, if known, the age and gender of the child, the nature and the extent of his/her injuries, maltreatment or neglect, together with any evidence of previous injury, and any other information which the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of injury or injuries and protecting the child, the approximate date and time of the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect occurred, information concerning any previous injury or injuries to, or maltreatment of the child or his/her siblings, the circumstances in which the injury, maltreatment or neglect came to the known to the reporter, the name of the person or persons suspected to be responsible for causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect, and whatever action, if any was taken to treat, provide shelter, or otherwise assist the child.

II. Immunity and Penalty Associated with the Report of Suspected Abuse and Neglect

Under state law, any person who, in good faith, makes a report of suspected child abuse or neglect is immune from any civil or criminal liability. Employers may not discharge, discriminate or retaliate against an employee for making a good faith report or testifying in an abuse or neglect proceeding. Any employer who violates this provision may be assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$2,500.00 and other penalties as the court deems appropriate.

Also under state law, any person who is required to report suspected child abuse or neglect and fails to make such a report shall be fined up to \$500.00. In addition, any person who knowingly makes a false report of child abuse or neglect shall be fined no more than \$2,000.00 nor imprisoned not more than one year or both.

III. Informing the Family

Mandated reporters are under no legal obligation to inform parents that they have made a report to DCF about their child. However, depending on the circumstances, it may be appropriate or beneficial to do so. In cases of serious physical abuse or sexual abuse, or in cases that involve a member of the household, it is not appropriate for the reporter to inform the parents of a report and impending investigation. The primary concern should always be the safety and welfare of the child.

The decision to inform the parents of a report to DCF should be decided on a case by case basis, taking into account all of the factors in the specific situation. The final decision regarding informing the parents should be made by the principal or his/her designee.

Administrative Regulations to Policy 5141.4  
Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

If it is decided that it is appropriate to inform the child's parents of the DCF report, school personnel should make every effort to encourage the parents to fully support the investigation of DCF. Parents should be informed that school personnel are mandated to report their observations of suspected abuse or neglect to DCF and that the purpose of the process is to protect the welfare of the child.

IV. Investigation and Interviewing the Student

DCF and/or the police are the lead agencies responsible for the investigation of any suspected abuse or neglect, including suspected abuse/neglect by a school employee. The seriousness of the suspected abuse/neglect may require that DCF conduct an immediate interview with the child in the school. DCF must obtain consent of the parent, guardian or person responsible for the child's care before any interview with a student unless the alleged perpetrator is such person or a member of the child's household. When consent is not required, the interview must be conducted in the presence of a "disinterested party," such as a teacher, pupil services specialist or principal. The latter does not apply if a disinterested adult is not accessible after a reasonable search, and an immediate interview is necessary.

If school personnel believe that an interview in the school setting may be necessary in order to protect the child, they must notify DCF as early as possible to provide both DCF and school administration ample time to coordinate appropriate activities and actions. Upon receipt of such notice, DCF will advise school personnel whether the child must be interviewed in the school. If school personnel decide to retain the child after the scheduled school day in order to ensure an interview by DCF or local or state police, school personnel must attempt to notify the parents of the child, except where the alleged abuse involves the parents.

If DCF determines that a school interview is appropriate, the DCF social worker shall be required to notify the superintendent of schools prior to the school visit with as much advance notice as possible. The DCF social worker shall provide the superintendent of schools with a DCF identification. If the DCF social worker is not known to school personnel, a verifying call to the local DCF office shall be made. DCF personnel are solely responsible for scheduling such interviews. The school administration shall provide a private place to interview the child. The DCF social worker may request that school personnel be present during the interview. The removal of clothing as part of an investigation into an injury which may have been caused by child abuse shall be done only at the request of the school medical advisor or the school nurse.

Administrative Regulations to Policy 5141.4  
Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

V. Suspected Abuse Committee by a School Employee

When an investigation by DCF produces evidence of child abuse by a certified school employee in a position requiring a certificate, the superintendent of schools shall suspend the certified professional employee with pay and without termination of benefits, and shall notify the Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education or his representative of the reasons for and conditions of suspension within forty-eight (48) hours after the suspension. If the contract of employment of a certified school employee is terminated as a result of an investigation of abuse, the superintendent shall notify the Commissioner of Education or his representative within forty-eight (48) hours after such termination. Upon receipt of any report required under P.A. 96-246, the Commissioner of Education may commence certification revocation proceedings in accordance with 10-145b of the General Statutes.

The superintendent of schools is authorized to delegate his or her representative for receiving and making reports, notifying and receiving notification, and conducting investigations to a designee acting in his or her behalf. Under state law, the superintendent of schools is authorized to receive notice from the State's Attorney of convictions of certified school employees for crimes involving an act of child abuse or neglect or sexual assault.

The superintendent of schools may suspend any other school staff member when DCF produces evidence of child abuse by this staff member.

V. Emergency Health Care and Reasonable Injury

When reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused or neglect exists or when a child has a visible injury, public school personnel may make reasonable inquiry of the child regarding such suspicion or visible injury.

If a school nurse or school medical advisor is not readily available and the rendering of emergency first aid is necessary, other public school personnel who have completed a course in first aid offered by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, to the Connecticut Department of Health Services may render such emergency first aid to a child. In accordance with state law, any person providing such aid is not liable for civil damages for any personal injuries which result from acts or omissions by such person rendering the emergency first aid, which constituting gross, willful or wanton negligence.

Administrative Regulations to Policy 5141.4  
Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

The area DCF office serving the district is located in Torrington. The telephone number is 860-496-5700. DCF regional offices are open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. After 4:30 p.m. on weekdays, and on weekends and holidays, Care-Line is the officially designated access to the Connecticut Department of Children and Families.

If child abuse is suspected during a late afternoon, evening or weekend activity, the staff member must make the telephone report to Care-Line at 1-800-842-2288.

The school principal, on the same day that the report was telephoned into DCF:

1. notifies the Director of Special Services
2. confers with the school social worker, the school nurse, and/or other appropriate personnel --- these individuals may have pertinent information regarding the case or may become involved at a later date.
3. calls the police (860-379-2721), to inform the department of the suspected child abuse report. The result of this communication will be a decision as to further action to be taken. If the decision is that the police will take action, such action may include, but not limited to, the following options:
  - a. may contact DCF to expedite follow-through on report;
  - b. may contact parents to inform and verify complaint;
  - c. may visit child's home, with or without child, to observe conditions;
  - d. may take the child into protective custody.

**Form to be Completed**

A Report of Suspected Child Abuse is to be completed by the reporter within 48 hours of the oral report. The individual completing the form removes the yellow copy and sends the rest of the form (copies and carbon) intact to Protective Services of the DCF regional office. The address of the regional offices to be used by the staff is:

Protective Services  
Department of Children and Families  
62 Commercial Boulevard  
Torrington, Connecticut 06790

Administrative Regulations to Policy 5141.4  
Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

The copy of the report is to be sent to the Director of Special Services. This copy is to be considered confidential and will be sent in a sealed envelope, stamped "confidential."

The Director of Special Services will be responsible for maintaining the school system's central file on cases of suspected abuse. This file is to be kept separately from student's confidential records. Under no circumstances should a copy of a report be filed in a student's records. The Director of Special Services will be the individual to make the determination on any person's "right to know," regarding suspected child abuse reports and related cases.

**Suspected Child Abuse by Certified School Employee**

If the reporter suspects a school employee who possesses a certificate, permit or authorization issued by the State Board of Education of possible child abuse, the Superintendent of Schools should be immediately notified. Upon such notification, the Superintendent will:

1. make an immediate oral report to DCF, to the police, and to the Connecticut Commissioner of Education.
2. immediately investigate the report with assistance from DCR, if desired, and the police.
3. complete Child Abuse form within 48 hours of oral report.

If the investigation substantiates child abuse by a certified employee, the Superintendent notifies child's parents or guardians, the police, DCF, and the Connecticut Commissioner of Education and will suspend the employee with pay and benefits until the Board of Education acts under 10-151 on teacher termination proceedings.

**A. CHILD ABUSE PROCEDURAL CHECK LIST**

(when suspected offender is not certified school employee)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Reporter calls DCF to report suspected case of child abuse within 12 hours.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Reporter notifies Principal of suspected case of child abuse.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Principal contacts police.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Principal contacts Superintendent of Schools. If suspected offender is certified staff member, the Superintendent follows steps in B below:

Administrative Regulations to Policy 5141.4  
Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

5. \_\_\_\_\_ Principal contacts Special Services Director.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Principal confers with school social worker or school nurse about suspected child abuse.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Reporter completes Child Abuse form within 48 hours of oral report.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Send Child Abuse form to DCF.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Send Child Abuse form to Special Services Department.

**B. CHILD ABUSE PROCEDURAL CHECK LIST**

(When suspected offender is certified school employee)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Reporter notifies Superintendent of Schools of suspected case of child abuse.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ The Superintendent makes an immediate oral report to DCF, to the police, and to the Connecticut Commissioner of Education.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ The Superintendent, with assistance from DCF if desired, and the police immediately investigate the report.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ If the investigation substantiates child abuse by a certified employee, the Superintendent notifies child's parents or guardians, the police, DCF, and the Connecticut Commissioner of Education.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Superintendent suspends the employee with pay and benefits until Board acts under 10-151 on teacher termination proceedings.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Superintendent completes Child Abuse form within 48 hours of oral report.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

17a-101 Protection of children from abuse. Reports required of certain professional persons. When child may be removed from surroundings without court order.

17a-102 Report of danger of abuse.

17a-103 Reports by others.

17a-104 Treatment by Christian Science practitioner.

17a-106 Cooperation in relation to prevention, identification and treatment of child Abuse and neglect.

46b-120 Definitions.

# REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

DCF-136  
10/01/02 (Rev)



HOTLINE  
1-800-842-2288

Within forty-eight hours of making an oral report, a mandated reporter shall submit a written report (DCF-136) to the Hotline.  
See the reverse side of this form for a summary of Connecticut law concerning the protection of children.

*Please print or type*

CHILD'S NAME	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	AGE OR BIRTH DATE
CHILD'S ADDRESS		
NAME OF PARENTS OR OTHER PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILD'S CARE	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
WHERE IS THE CHILD STAYING PRESENTLY IF NOT AT HOME?	PHONE NUMBER	DATE PROBLEM(S) NOTED
NAME OF HOTLINE WORKER TO WHOM ORAL REPORT WAS MADE	DATE OF ORAL REPORT	DATE AND TIME OF SUSPECTED ABUSE/NEGLECT
NAME OF SUSPECTED PERPETRATOR, IF KNOWN	ADDRESS AND/OR PHONE NUMBER, IF KNOWN	RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD

NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE CHILD'S INJURY(IES), MALTREATMENT OR NEGLECT.

INFORMATION CONCERNING ANY PREVIOUS INJURY(IES), MALTREATMENT OR NEGLECT OF THE CHILD OR HIS/HER SIBLINGS.

LIST NAMES AND AGES OF SIBLINGS, IF KNOWN.

DESCRIBE THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THE INJURY(IES), MALTREATMENT OR NEGLECT CAME TO BE KNOWN TO THE REPORTER.

WHAT ACTION, IF ANY, HAS BEEN TAKEN TO TREAT, PROVIDE SHELTER OR OTHERWISE ASSIST THE CHILD?

REPORTER'S NAME AND AGENCY	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
REPORTER'S SIGNATURE	POSITION	DATE

WHITE COPY: TO DCF HOTLINE, 505 Hudson Street, Hartford, CT 06106

YELLOW COPY: REPORTER'S COPY

## SUMMARY OF LEGAL REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

### PUBLIC POLICY OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

To protect children whose health and welfare may be adversely affected through injury and neglect; to strengthen the family and to make the home safe for children by enhancing the parental capacity for good child care; to provide a temporary or permanent nurturing and safe environment for children when necessary; and for these purposes to require the reporting of suspected child abuse, investigation of such reports by a social agency, and provision of services, where needed, to such child and family.

### WHO IS MANDATED TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT?

Battered Women's Counselors	Optometrists
Chiropractors	Parole Officers (Juvenile or Adult)
Dental Hygienists	Pharmacists
Dentists	Physical Therapists
Department of Children and Families Employees	Physician Assistants
Licensed/Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselors	Podiatrists
Licensed/Certified Emergency Medical Services Providers	Police Officers
Licensed Marital and Family Therapists	Probation Officers (Juvenile or Adult)
Licensed or Unlicensed Resident Interns	Psychologists
Licensed or Unlicensed Resident Physicians	Registered Nurses
Licensed Physicians	School Coaches
Licensed Practical Nurses	School Guidance Counselors
Licensed Professional Counselors	School Paraprofessionals
Licensed Surgeons	School Principals
Medical Examiners	School Teachers
Members of the Clergy	Sexual Assault Counselors
Mental Health Professionals	Social Workers

Any person paid to care for a child in any public or private facility, child day care center, group day care home or family day care home which is licensed by the State.

Department of Public Health employees responsible for the licensing of child day care centers, group day care homes, family day care homes or youth camps.

The Child Advocate and any employee of the Office of the Child Advocate.

### DO THOSE MANDATED TO REPORT INCUR LIABILITY?

**No.** Any person, institution or agency which, in good faith, makes or does not make a report, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability provided such person did not pertrate or cause such abuse or neglect.

### IS THERE A PENALTY FOR NOT REPORTING?

**Yes.** Any person, institution or agency required to report who fails to do so shall be fined \$500.00 - \$2,500.00 and shall be required to participate in an educational and training program.

### IS THERE A PENALTY FOR MAKING A FALSE REPORT?

**Yes.** Any person, institution or agency who knowingly makes a false report of child abuse or neglect shall be fined not more than \$2,000.00 or imprisoned not more than one year or both. The identity of such person shall be disclosed to the appropriate law enforcement agency and to the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.

### WHAT ARE THE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

- An oral report shall be made by a mandated reporter by telephone or in person to the DCF Hotline or to a law enforcement agency as soon as practicable, but not later than 12 hours after the mandated reporter has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused or neglected or placed in imminent risk of serious harm. If a law enforcement agency receives an oral report, it shall immediately notify Hotline. Oral reports to the Hotline shall be recorded on tape.
- Within forty-eight hours of making an oral report, a mandated reporter shall submit a written report to the DCF Hotline.
- When the report concerns an employee of a facility or institution which is licensed by the State, the mandated reporter shall also send a copy of the written report to the executive head of the state licensing agency.

### DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

**Child Abuse:** any child or youth who has a non-accidental physical injury, or injuries which are at variance with the history given of such injuries, or is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment.

**Child Neglect:** any child or youth who has been abandoned or is being denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotionally, or morally or is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his well-being.

**Exception:** The treatment of any child by an accredited Christian Science practitioner shall not of itself constitute neglect or maltreatment.

**Child Under 13 with Venereal Disease:** a physician or facility must report to Hotline upon the consultation, examination or treatment for venereal disease of any child not more than twelve (12) years old.

### DO PRIVATE CITIZENS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY FOR REPORTING?

**Yes.** Any person having reasonable cause to suspect or believe that any child or youth under the age of eighteen (18) is in danger of being abused or has been abused or neglected, may cause a written or oral report to be made to the Hotline or a law enforcement agency. A person making the report in good faith is also immune from any liability, civil or criminal. However, the person is subject to the penalty for making a false claim.

### WHAT IS THE AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (DCF)?

All children's protective services are the responsibility of the Department of Children and Families.

Upon the receipt of a child abuse/neglect report, the Hotline shall cause the report to be classified, evaluated immediately and forwarded to the appropriate investigation unit for the commencement of an investigation within timelines specified by statute and policy.

If the investigation produces evidence of child abuse/neglect, the Department shall take such measures as it deems necessary to protect the child, and any other children similarly situated, including, but not limited to, immediate notification to the appropriate law enforcement agency, and the removal of the child or children from his home with the consent of the parents or guardian or by order of the Superior Court, Juvenile Matters.

If the Department has probable cause to believe that the child or any other child in the household is in imminent risk of physical harm from his surroundings, and that immediate removal from such surroundings is necessary to ensure the child's safety, the Commissioner or designee shall authorize any employee of the Department or any law enforcement officer to remove the child and any other child similarly situated from such surroundings without the consent of the child's parent or guardian. The removal of a child shall not exceed ninety-six (96) hours. If the child is not returned home within such ninety-six hour period, with or without protective services, the Department shall file a petition for custody with the Superior Court, Juvenile Matters.

### WHAT MEANS ARE AVAILABLE FOR REMOVING A CHILD FROM HIS HOME?

- 96-Hour Hold by the Commissioner of DCF (see above)
- 96-Hour Hold by a Hospital – Any physician examining a child with respect to whom abuse or neglect is suspected shall have the right to keep such child in the custody of a hospital for no longer than ninety-six hours in order to perform diagnostic tests and procedures necessary to the detection of child abuse or neglect and to provide necessary medical care with or without the consent of such child's parents or guardian or other person responsible for the child's care, provided the physician has made reasonable attempts to (1) advise such child's parents or guardian or other person responsible for the child's care that he suspects the child has been abused or neglected and (2) obtain consent of such child's parents or guardian or other person responsible for the child's care. In addition, such physician may take or cause to be taken photographs of the area of trauma visible on a child who is the subject of such report without the consent of such child's parent's or guardian or other person responsible for the child's care. All such photographs or copies thereof shall be sent to the local police department and the Department of Children and Families.
- Custody Order – Whenever any person is arrested and charged with an offense under Section 53-20 or 53-21 or under Part V, VI, or VII of Chapter 952, as amended, the victim of which offense was a minor residing with the defendant, any judge of the Superior Court may, if it appears that the child's condition or circumstances surrounding his case so require, issue an order to the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families to assume immediate custody of such child and, if the circumstances so require, any other children residing with the defendant and to proceed thereon as in cases reported.

### WHAT IS THE CHILD ABUSE CENTRAL REGISTRY?

The Department of Children and Families maintains a registry of reports received and permits its use on a twenty-four hour daily basis to prevent or discover child abuse of children. Required confidentiality is ensured.

DCF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT HOTLINE: 1-800-842-2288

STATUTORY REFERENCES: §17a-28; §17a-101 et. seq.; §46b-120.