

Information on Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

Report Abuse or Neglect of children, the elderly, or people with disabilities.

1-800-252-5400 or www.txabusehotline.org

- Child abuse and neglect are against the law in Texas, and so is failure to report it.
- If you suspect a child has been abused or mistreated, you are required to report it to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or to a law enforcement agency.
- Professionals are required to make a report within 48 hours of first suspecting abuse, neglect or exploitation of children. *Texas Family Code 261.101*
- An elderly or disabled person is in the state of abuse, neglect, or exploitation requires reporting immediately. *Human Resources code Chapter 48 (48.051)*

What if my report is an emergency?

Call 911 or your local law enforcement agency if the situation is an emergency.

Call the Texas Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 if:

- You believe your situation requires action in less than 24 hours.
- You believe a child, adult with disabilities, or person who is elderly faces an immediate risk that could result in death or serious harm.

The website is only for reporting situations that do not require an emergency response.

Reports made through the web site take up to 24 hours to process www.txabusehotline.org (you must create an account)

What is Abuse?

Abuse is mental, emotional, physical, or sexual injury to a child or failure to prevent such injury to a child.

What is Neglect?

Neglect includes (1) failure to provide a child with food, clothing, shelter and/or medical care; and/or (2) leaving a child in a situation where the child is at risk of harm.

How do I make a report?

1. When you make a report, be specific. Tell exactly what happened and when. Be sure to record all injuries or incidents you have observed, including dates and time of day and keep this information secured.
2. Reports should be made as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before bruises and marks start to fade. It is important for the investigators to be able to see the physical signs.
3. Give the agency person any information you have about the relationship between the child and the suspected abuser.
4. Please provide at least the following information in your report.
 - Name, age, and address of the child
 - Brief description of the child
 - Current injuries, medical problems, or behavioral problems
 - Parents names and names of siblings in the home

Will the person know I've reported him or her?

Your report is confidential and is not subject to public release under the Open Records Act. The law provides for immunity from civil or criminal liability, as long as your report is made in good faith. Your identity is kept confidential.

What if I'm not sure?

If you have reason to suspect child abuse, but are not positive, make the report. If you have any doubts call the hotline.