

## I. PURPOSE

Athlos Academy of Jefferson Parish believes that the daily contact of school personnel with children places them in a unique position to identify and refer suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to law enforcement. This policy outlines the early protective measures towards allegations of child abuse.

## II. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Mandatory Reporting:** Athlos Academy of Jefferson Parish employees are required to report instances of child abuse or neglect when the employee has a “reasonable suspicion” that child neglect, dependency, physical or sexual abuse has occurred.
- B. **Reasonable Suspicion:** Arises when the facts surrounding the incident or suspicion could cause another reasonable person in the same situation to suspect child abuse or neglect.

## III. POLICY

- A. All school employees are mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect and are obligated to take immediate action.
- B. Any employee who knows or reasonably suspects a child has been the victim of child abuse, neglect, or dependency, shall immediately report the instance to the Lead School Administrator or the school counselor.
- C. The Lead School Administrator or school counselor and the reporter shall relay the report to child protective services or law enforcement.
  - 1. Reporting to the Lead School Administrator or school counselor does not fulfill an employee’s duty to report.
- D. The report shall be made as follows:
  - 1. If the suspected abuser is believed to be the child’s parent/guardian or caretaker, a person who maintains a relationship with the child’s parent/guardian or caretaker, or a person living in the same residence as the parent/guardian or caretaker, the report must be made to the Department of Children and Family Services using the designated state child protection

## Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

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- reporting hotline, or in person at any child welfare office, and may additionally be made to law enforcement.
2. If the suspected abuse~~r~~ is believed to be caused by someone other than those listed above, the report must be made to local or state law enforcement.
- E. A written report, by the mandated reporter, shall be submitted to either the Lead School Administrator or the school counselor within thirty-six (36) hours of the initial oral report, identifying:
1. The child;
  2. Any person believed to be responsible for the abuse or neglect of the child if the person is known;
  3. The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect;
  4. The name and address of the reporter;
  5. An account of how this child came to the reporter's attention;
  6. The number of times the reporter has filed a report on the child or the child's siblings;
  7. The person or person's thought to have caused or contributed to the child's condition, if known;
  8. Any additional information required under Louisiana Children's Code Article 610(B); and
  9. Any other information that the reporter believes may be important or relevant.
- F. The Leader School Administrator or school counselor shall provide a written report to the agency within five days ~~to the agency~~ the abuse was reported, ~~to~~ if the original report was made orally.
- G. In cases where the suspected abuser is the child's parent/guardian or caretaker, the parent/guardian or caretaker may **not** be contacted.
1. If a child is released to a law enforcement officer or a child protective services agent, school administration and the child protective services shall **not** notify the parent/guardian or caretaker.
- H. At the beginning of each school year, the Lead School Administrator shall provide for mandated training for school personnel on how to recognize and report suspected child neglect or child abuse.

## Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

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- I. At the time of hire, every employee at Athlos Academy of Jefferson Parish must sign the *Duty to Report Known or Reasonably Suspected Child Abuse Form* which shall remain in effect for the duration of employment.
  1. The Louisiana Children's Code and LA. R.S. 14:403 provide substantial penalties for mandatory reporters who fail to report facts which would support a reasonable belief that child abuse/neglect has occurred.
  2. Additionally, Athlos Academy of Jefferson Parish school personnel who fail to report suspected child abuse/neglect may be subject to disciplinary and/or dismissal proceedings for neglect of duty.

### Legal References:

[LA. R.S. 14:403](#) (*Abuse of children; reports*)

[Louisiana Children's Code Article 609](#) (*Mandated and permitted reporting*)

[Louisiana Children's Code Article 610](#) (*Reporting Procedure*)

### Related Documents:

Duty to Report Known or Reasonably Suspected Child Abuse Form