

Reporting Child Abuse Policy

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Purpose

To comply with Oklahoma law requiring library personnel to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

Oklahoma law requires all library personnel having reason to believe that a child under the age of eighteen (18) years is a victim of abuse or neglect to promptly report to the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS). Reports may be made personally by calling the OKDHS Abuse and Neglect Hotline at **1-800-522-3511**. Failure to report such information promptly, making false reports, or reporting with lack of factual foundation, shall be a misdemeanor. The law also grants immunity from any civil or criminal liability to a person who in good faith makes such a report. It is not the responsibility of Library personnel to prove the child has been abused or neglected. Evidence of child abuse may consist of the child reporting abuse or neglect, physical marks on the body, signs of sexual abuse, exploitation or neglect.

The following State definitions give guidance on what constitutes Child Abuse or Neglect:

- "Abuse" – harm or threatened harm to a child's health, safety or welfare by a person responsible for the child's health, safety or welfare including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation;
- "Harm or threatened harm to a child's health or safety" includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. nonaccidental physical or mental injury,
 - b. sexual abuse,
 - c. sexual exploitation,
 - d. neglect,
 - e. failure or omission to provide protection from harm or threatened harm, or
 - f. abandonment;
- "Neglect" means failure or omission to provide:
 - a. adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and supervision,
 - b. special care made necessary by the physical or mental condition of the child, or
 - c. abandonment;
- "Sexual abuse" includes, but is not limited to, rape, incest and lewd or indecent acts or proposals made to a child, as defined by law, by a person responsible for the child's health, safety or welfare;
- "Sexual exploitation" includes, but is not limited to, allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution, as defined by law, by a person responsible for the child's health, safety or welfare or allowing, permitting, encouraging, or engaging in the lewd, obscene, or pornographic photographing, filming, or depicting of a child in those acts as defined by the state law, by a person responsible for the child's health, safety or welfare.

The child abuse or neglect reporting obligations are individual, and no employer, supervisor, or administrator shall impede or inhibit the reporting obligations of any employee or other person or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against the employee or other person who in good faith reports suspected child abuse or neglect, or who provides testimony in any proceeding involving child abuse or neglect. Any employer, supervisor, or administrator who discharges, discriminates, or retaliates against the employee or other person shall be liable for damages, costs, and attorney fees. Every Library employee who reports child abuse and/or neglect to the OKDHS shall immediately thereafter advise the CEO, the chief operating officer, the deputy director or the chief of office of people and culture.

Tulsa City-County Library Policies

To facilitate the reporting process, upon receiving notification by the Library employee who made the original report to the OKDHS, of any suspected case of child abuse or neglect, regardless of the identity of the alleged abuser, the CEO, chief operating officer, deputy director, chief of office of people and culture or designee will immediately confer with the employee to confirm the suspicion and if it is believed the child is in imminent threat of harm, also phone the dispatcher at the Tulsa City Police Department (911).

The reporting employee involved and the CEO, chief operating officer, deputy director, chief of office of people and culture or designee will complete the library child abuse report by recording the time and date the OKDHS was called, the number called, the name of the OKDHS individual spoken with, and what information was conveyed to the OKDHS. The report will be signed by the reporting employee involved and the CEO, chief operating officer, deputy director, or chief of office of people and culture. If the library employee making the initial report to the OKDHS cannot reach the CEO, chief operating officer, deputy director, or chief of office of people and culture, the employee will make the report to the employee's immediate supervisor. The employee's immediate supervisor will promptly forward the report to the CEO, chief operating officer, deputy director, or chief of office of people and culture or designee. The CEO, chief operating officer, deputy director, or chief of office of people and culture or designee will retain the original completed Library Child Abuse Report form.