

FACT SHEET

NEW MANDATED REPORTING LEGISLATION IN WEST VIRGINIA

What: Beginning June 5, 2018, new mandated reporting legislation took effect in West Virginia. Senate Bill 465 codified a new mandated reporting law for suspected child abuse and neglect to simplify and clarify requirements for mandated reporting to make them easier to understand and implement.

Who: The new law (§49-2-803) outlines a comprehensive list of mandated reporters including: any medical, dental, or mental health professional, Christian Science practitioner, religious healer, school teacher or other school personnel, social service worker, child care or foster care worker, emergency medical services personnel, peace officer or law-enforcement official, humane officer, member of the clergy, circuit court judge, family court judge, employee of the Division of Juvenile Services, magistrate, youth camp administrator or counselor, employee, coach or volunteer of an entity that provides organized activities for children, or commercial film or photographic print processor who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is neglected or abused. The law also requires mandated reporters to submit their report directly rather than reporting to a supervisor and having the supervisor make the report.

When: The legislation reduces the timeframe for making a report from 48 hours down to not more than 24 hours after receiving a disclosure of abuse or suspecting that abuse or neglect has occurred. In any case where the reporter believes that the child suffered serious physical or sexual abuse, the reporter should additionally contact the State Police and any law-enforcement agency having jurisdiction.

Why: There is a huge need for prompt response and reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect in West Virginia. Last year, WV child advocacy centers served nearly 4,000 children when abuse was suspected or disclosed – a 66% increase in the last five years. For more information, contact the West Virginia Child Advocacy Network at 304-414-4455.



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