

Mandated Reporter Guidelines

Who is a mandated reporter? Anyone who works with children or their families is required by law to report suspected or confirmed maltreatment within 24 hours of learning of the maltreatment.

What is considered maltreatment? Maltreatment is defined by Minnesota law, not local counties, and falls into four general categories: physical, sexual or emotional maltreatment, or neglect.

How do I make a report? As soon as possible after you learn of the maltreatment, call Goodhue County Social Services with the following information:

- What happened to the child and when
- Whether the child is in immediate danger
- Names of household members and contact information for caretakers
- Any additional information about the family

A written report must follow within 72 hours of the oral report.

What happens after I report? The screening team will meet and a determination will be made as to whether Social Services can intervene based on your report. If Social Services does not have the authority to intervene in the situation, it is reviewed to see if there are resources that may be helpful to the family. The report is always sent to law enforcement. Some screened out maltreatment reports are referred to the Parent Support Outreach Program (PSOP). The intake worker may also give the reporter ideas for how to support the family or connect the family with resources.

If an assessment is warranted, a social worker will make contact with the family to conduct interviews of all family members to address the reported concern and plan for ongoing safety. A law enforcement officer may accompany the social worker. Child safety is of primary importance, and in circumstances of egregious harm, sexual abuse, or immediate danger, the first contact is with the child within 24 hours. If it is determined that the child is unsafe to go home, the child will be placed with a relative or in foster care. In some cases, a social worker will continue to work with the family to help them implement changes necessary to improve their situation.

What can Social Services tell me about the case? As the reporter of the information, you are entitled to know a general summary of the outcome of the case.

Will anyone know I reported? As the reporter, your identity is protected unless you are subpoenaed to testify in court regarding the situation, which is rare. However, the family may be able to ascertain who made the report based on the information or timing of the report.

Goodhue County Health & Human Services: 651-385-3200
www.dhs.state.mn.us