Reporting Neglect and Abuse

As per System Regulation 24.01.06, *A person having cause to believe that a minor's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately make a report to local law enforcement.* This legal requirement will be communicated by members to all individuals participating in the management/supervision of camps and programs for minors or employees and volunteers of third-party camps utilizing member facilities. *For definitions of Neglect and Abuse please refer to System Regulation 24.01.06*

Administrators, Staff & Volunteer
Administrators, Staff, and Volunteers must be made knowledgeable of system requirements to report neglect or abuse. Procedures to report are as follows:

**Reporting Neglect or Abuse:**

**IMMEDIATELY REPORT SUSPICION OF NEGLECT OR ABUSE TO UNIVERSITY POLICE DEPARTMENT AND/OR LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT**

*Per the Office of the Attorney General of Texas: [https://www.oag.state.tx.us/victims/childabuse.shtml](https://www.oag.state.tx.us/victims/childabuse.shtml)*

**Your legal obligation**
Current law requires that professionals such as teachers, doctors, nurses, or child daycare workers must make a verbal report within 48 hours. Failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment of up to 180 days and/or a fine of up to $2,000 (*Texas Family Code, Chapter 261*). Reporting suspected child abuse to your principal, school counselor or superintendent will NOT satisfy your obligation under this law. Local school district policy cannot conflict with or supersede the state law requiring you to report child abuse to a law enforcement agency or DFPS.

**Your legal protection**
Your report of child abuse or neglect is confidential and immune from civil or criminal liability as long as the report is made in "good faith" and "without malice." In good faith means that the person making the report took reasonable steps to learn facts that were readily available and at hand. Without malice means that the person did not intend to injure or violate the rights of another person. Provided these two conditions are met, you will also be immune from liability if you are asked to participate in any judicial proceedings that might result from your report.

**If you suspect abuse:**

*DON'T* try to investigate
*DON'T* confront the abuser
*DO* report your reasonable suspicions

It is not up to you to determine whether your suspicions are true. A trained investigator will evaluate the child's situation. Even if your report does not bring decisive action, it may help establish a pattern that will eventually be clear enough to help the child.