

Mandated Reporting – Abuse or Neglect



Date effective: 1/5/01
Revision Dates: 4/23/07, 4/13/10, 2/23/11, 3/21/14, 3/04/16, 2/27/18
Review: 4/22/24
HRC Review: 12/7/22

Applies to: all

Policy number: 1.0.14
Regulatory: MGL 19C
reference: CMR 430.093

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All individuals at Communitas will be treated with respect and dignity and will be protected against abuse or neglect. All employees, volunteers, or interns are mandated reporters under the Massachusetts General Laws 19C and are required to report when they have reasonable cause to believe that a person with a disability is being abused or neglected.

Any member of staff, volunteer, or intern who has reasonable cause to believe that a person with a disability is being abused or neglected is required by law to make a report to the appropriate state agency:

- Children ages birth to 17: Department of Children & Families at 1-800-792-5200
- Adults Ages 18-59: Disabled Persons Protection Commission
 - 1-800-426-9009 or
 - 617-727-6465
- Adults ages 60+: Elder Abuse Hotline 1-800-922-2275

If any employee, volunteer or intern suspects abuse or neglect of a person with disabilities and fails to make such a report, they can be liable for a fine up to \$1,000. Mandated reporters are immune from any civil or criminal liability as a result of making a report.

If abuse or neglect is suspected, the appropriate supervisor should be contacted immediately so that the safety of the individual can be assessed. Employees, interns and volunteers are not required to obtain permission or authorization from anyone to file a report of abuse or neglect and cannot be punished for doing so if the report was made in good faith. However, the individuals we support may be better protected by involving supervisory staff who may be able to make arrangements for the immediate safety of the individual(s) involved.

To ensure the safety of the individual(s), it is important to inform your supervisor about any concerns or any calls made to report abuse or neglect, especially if the alleged abuser will have access to the individual(s). It is strongly suggested that the person with the most immediate information regarding the suspected abuse or neglect be the person to contact the appropriate state investigative agency. Notifying your supervisor does not negate your responsibility for reporting to DCF, DPPC or the Elder Abuse Hotline.

If a report of abuse or neglect has been filed with DCF, DPPC or Elder Abuse Hotline, an incident report must be filed.

All employees are required to be trained in Human Rights and Mandated Reporting of Abuse and Neglect upon hire, and this training must be renewed annually.