

SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Subject: Mandated Suspected Abuse Reporting

Number: D 16

Approved: Signature on file

Date: 09-26-02

POLICY

All employees of SSA are mandated to report suspected incidents of both child abuse and adult/elder abuse. Section 11166 of the Penal Code requires any child care custodian, health practitioner, or employee of a child protective agency who has knowledge of or observes a child in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment whom he or she knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of a child abuse to report the known or suspected instance of child abuse to a child protective agency immediately or as soon as practically possible by telephone and to prepare and send a written report thereof within 36 hours of receiving the information concerning the incident. Note: the Code also names other mandated reporters, such as teachers, physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, and clergy. Similarly, incidents of Adult/Elder Abuse are to be reported immediately or as soon as possible.

Employees shall report suspected incidents of abuse as stipulated in this procedure. Failure to report suspected child abuse is punishable by fine or confinement in county jail or both. Failure to report suspected adult/elder abuse is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment per W&I Code 15634.

Immunity from liability: No person required to make a report pursuant to this article shall incur any civil or criminal liability for any report required or authorized, unless it can be proven that an intentional or deliberately false report was made (W&I Code 15634) (a).

In addition, all SSA employees, as a condition of employment, are required to sign statements acknowledging the obligation to report any incident of alleged or suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation of any child or dependent/elder adult. These written statements are required prior to commencing employment as a prerequisite to employment, or as a condition of continued employment. Failure to report suspected abuse will also result in employment discipline, including suspension and discharge.
