

<https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/services-programs/children-families-older-adults/child-and-family-services-and-foster-care-3>

Reporting Neglect, Abuse, or Abandonment. Idaho receives nearly 23,000 calls per year of suspected child abuse, neglect, or abandonment, so you are not alone if you need to report concerns about a child. Learn what to do if you need to make a report as we answer this and other questions about Idaho's reporting law.

Mandatory reporting and exemptions. Everyone in Idaho is required to report child abuse, neglect or abandonment. This includes doctors, hospital residents, therapists, interns, nurses, coroners, schoolteachers, daycare providers, social workers, relatives, friends, and private citizens. Idaho has only one exception for mandatory reporting for a "duly ordained minister of religion."

All callers can remain anonymous. Callers may provide their name and phone number for the assigned family services worker to contact them to confirm the report and gather any additional information. Department staff DO NOT disclose caller information to the family. The family services worker will tell the family the caller's information is confidential and if the family requests their records the information will be redacted.

Be prepared to provide the following information. The social worker will guide you through the reporting process, but some common things to have ready include:

- Child and family names, address, and phone number
- Current location of the child and if they are in immediate danger
- Description of any injury to the child and when and where the incident occurred
- Names of people who may also have information
- Explanation of your concerns regarding the child's safety
- Any additional information you have that may be helpful
- Your name, address, phone number, and relationship to the child

Useful information for callers. It is OK if you are not sure if abuse, neglect, or abandonment has occurred, but you feel you should call. Let the Department of Health and Welfare (DHW) or law enforcement decide if they have enough information to respond. You do not need to prove abuse, neglect, or abandonment has occurred before you call and make a report.

Ideally, the report should happen within 24 hours of becoming aware of the concerns. We recognize that making a report can be a difficult and scary decision. However, we need everyone to do their part to protect children. Remember, you do not need to prove your concerns before making the report.

Callers are immune from civil liability if they are reporting in good faith.

After the call. The intake worker will determine if the report meets the criteria to assign it to a family services worker to conduct a safety assessment. If not, the report is documented in the department's database and can be reviewed if additional calls are made about the same family.

If the case is assigned to a family services worker for a safety assessment, the family is contacted within specific timeframes. Sometimes law enforcement accompanies the family services worker. If the initial call is made to law enforcement, they will contact the department and a family services worker responds with an officer or deputy to jointly assess the situation.

The Division of Youth Safety & Permanency's role is limited to what may be happening in a family home. If a child is the victim of maltreatment by an individual not living in the home, such as a neighbor, family friend, or relative, the report is forwarded to law enforcement. However, if there are concerns that the child's parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child from further harm, Child and Family Services may proceed with a safety assessment.

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