

MANDATORY REPORTING LAWS

A bill passed by the General Assembly in Connecticut took effect on October 1, 2002, changed the penalties and requirements for mandatory reporters. The following is a summary of the changes affecting mandatory reporters.

I. PENALTIES

Conn. Gen. Stat. §17a-101 (d) is amended as follows:

Any mandatory reporter failing to make a report will be required to attend a state approved training program. Participants will be required to pay the necessary fee for this program and may also be fined up to \$500, as stipulated in the original statute.

II. WHAT MUST BE REPORTED

Conn. Gen. Stat. §17a-101a is amended as follows:

Any mandatory reporter who, in the ordinary course of his/her employment, has reason to believe or suspect that any of the following have occurred to a child/youth under the age of 18 must report such occurrence to the Department of Children and Families (DCF):

- a. abuse or neglect (see definitions below), or
- b. nonaccidental physical injury, regardless of the identity of the perpetrator, or
- c. imminent risk of serious harm, regardless of the identity of the perpetrator

Conn. Gen. Stat. §46b-120 remains unchanged and includes the following:

The definition of **abuse** is when a child presents either:

- a. nonaccidental physical injuries, or
- b. injuries that conflict with the reported injuries, or
- c. "...a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment."

The definition of **neglect** is when a child...

- a. has been abandoned, or
- b. is not being properly cared for physically, educationally, emotionally or morally, or
- c. is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his/her well-being, or
- d. has been abused

III. TIME FRAME FOR REPORTING

Conn. Gen. Stat. §17a-101b (a) is amended as follows:

An occurrence required to be reported under the new statute must be reported to either DCF or a law enforcement agency as soon as possible, but no longer than **12 hours** after the learning of the incident.