

Helpful Resources

- **“Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect: A Resource Guide for Mandated Reporters”**
Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), available in English and Spanish at [http://mn.gov/dhs/search/child protection.](http://mn.gov/dhs/search/child%20protection)”
- **National Child Abuse Hotline**
1-800-422-4453
- **Sheriff Office Offices**
<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/bca/bca-divisions/administrative/Pages/county-sheriff-offices.aspx>
- **Local Police Department**
- **County Child Protection Offices**
Check your local phonebook or go to this website for a listing of local offices:
<https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/children-and-families/services/child-protection/contact-us/>.
- **Victim Assistance Coordinator**
You are also encouraged to contact the diocese’s Victim Assistance Coordinator at 507-454-2270 ext. 255.



IF A CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER DIAL 911

Outline of Reporting Process

1. Contact proper civil authorities – this is the local law enforcement or child protection agency in the county where the suspected abuse occurred.
 - See a county-by-county listing at <https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/children-and-families/services/child-protection/contact-us/>
2. Provide identifying information about the child, parent/guardian, suspected abuser, and anyone else involved.
3. Report as many details as possible about what happened.
4. Contact the person in charge at the parish or Catholic school where the suspected abuser works or volunteers.
5. Contact the diocese if the suspected abuser is a priest, deacon, religious, or any lay leader of a parish or Catholic school within the diocese.

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Safe Environment

Diocese of Winona-Rochester
55 West Sanborn Street
PO Box 588
Winona MN 55987
Phone: 507-858-1244
Fax: 507-454-8106
E-mail: mhamann@dowr.org



Diocese of
Winona-Rochester

Office of Safe Environment

HOW TO REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

***Important information for
anyone working or volunteering
in a Catholic parish or school.***

Anyone working or volunteering in a Catholic parish or school, who knows or has reason to believe that a minor (a person under the age of 18) is being abused or neglected, or has been abused or neglected, must report the abuse or neglect to proper civil authorities within 24 hours of the abuse or neglect becoming known to him or her.

Many people working or volunteering in a Catholic parish or school, including clergy, are mandated reporters under state law and *must* report abuse or neglect of a child to proper civil authorities within 24 hours or face criminal charges.

Under the law, mandated reporters must also follow up with a written report to civil authorities within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

Detailed Steps of the Reporting Process

1. Call law enforcement or the child protection agency in the county where the suspected abuse occurred.

NOTE: You may ask for the support of another person, such as the school principal or director of religious education, and have that person with you when you make the call. However, the report must come from the person who has first-hand knowledge of the reasons to suspect abuse.

2. Provide as much of the following identifying information as possible:

- Information about the suspected abuser
- Full name of mother, father, and any other names that may have been used
- Birthdates of parents, children, and suspected abuser, if known
- Location at which suspected abuse/neglect occurred

3. Tell the agent what happened. Be as specific as possible. For example:

- When did the incident you are reporting occur? Yesterday, a week ago, a month ago, etc.
- How was the child injured? Hit with a fist in the head, pushed into a wall, touched inappropriately, etc.
- What was the result? Child has 2-inch purple bruise on the right thigh or child has 5 red stripes about 5-6 inches long on his back, child disclosed being inappropriately touched, etc.
- How often has the suspected abuse/neglect occurred? This is a chronic problem or this is the first time it has occurred or you don't know.
- Do you know prior family history that would assist in the investigation? Family recently moved from Anytown, PA.

4. Contact the person in charge at the Catholic institution where the suspected abuser works or volunteers:

- The pastor or parochial administrator at a parish or the principal at a Catholic school.

5. Contact the diocese:

If the suspected abuser is a priest, deacon, religious, or any lay leader of a parish or Catholic school within the Diocese.

- Call the Victim's Assistance Coordinator at 507-454-2270 ext. 255.

6. Document and keep on file what you report:

The date and time you made the report, the name of the person suspected of abuse, and the name of the law enforcement or child protection agency that received the report. Also document any other steps you took to comply with established procedures (e.g., contacting the diocese, school principal, etc.).



Keep in Mind

Victim Assistance Coordinator

You are also encouraged to contact the diocese's Victim Assistance Program at 507-454-2270 ext. 255.

Simply report what you know or suspect. The law enforcement or child protection agency will undertake any necessary investigation after your report is filed. Your role is simply to report what a child has made known to you or you have observed.

The individual with direct knowledge of suspected abuse or neglect of a child is individually responsible to report to law enforcement or child protection.

Reporting the concern to a supervisor, administrator, or other co-workers does not mitigate your responsibility to report to law enforcement or the child protection agency.

You may ask your supervisor, for example, the school principal or director of religious education, to be a witness to the phone call as you make your report to the law enforcement or child protection agency.