

Title: Mandatory Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse

Policy and Procedure Number: 007A

Effective Date: January 19, 2013

Revised Date: March 9, 2015

Approval Authority: Board of Directors

Purpose:

To provide procedures for any director, employee, staff, and/or volunteer of Cornerstone Community Ministries, Inc. (CCM) who suspects any form of child abuse or neglect.

Basis of Understanding:

1. The terms “child”, “children”, or “youth” include all persons under eighteen (18) years of age.
2. The term “Child Abuse” is defined in CCM’s *Child Abuse Policy*.
3. All Cornerstone volunteers, employees and/or Board Members are considered mandatory reporters in accordance with Pennsylvania law.
4. Privileged communications between any persons that are required to report shall not apply to situations involving child abuse and shall not constitute grounds for failure to report.
5. The *Mandated Reporter* shall not reveal the existence or content of the report to any person other than those to whom the reporting is required under this procedure.
6. Any volunteer, employee, and/or Board member will cooperate with the proper authorities investigating a report of suspected child abuse.
7. Any volunteer, employee, and/or Board member who is a suspected perpetrator of child abuse shall be immediately suspended of their duty, service, and/or office until the conclusion of the investigation.
8. All reports filed by the *Mandatory Reporter* will be kept confidentially at Cornerstone for six (6) months unless otherwise deemed necessary or required by law.
9. Any *Mandated Reporter* that fails to report suspected abuse may be liable to prosecution by the proper authorities.
10. All volunteers are required to sign an indemnification waiver acknowledging that they know and understand that CCM takes no responsibility to indemnify them with respect to any incidents of alleged child abuse that occur on site or elsewhere.

Procedure:

The below procedures describes the mandatory process of reporting suspected or witnessed Child Abuse:

1. A *Mandated Reporter* must make a report of suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse under any of the following circumstances:
 - a. The *Mandated Reporter* comes into contact with the child (youth) in the course of employment, occupation and practice of a profession or through a regularly scheduled program, activity or service.
 - b. The *Mandated Reporter* is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child, or is affiliated with an agency, institution, organization, school, regularly established church or religious organization or other entity that is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child.
 - c. A person makes a specific disclosure to the *Mandated Reporter* that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse.

- d. An individual fourteen (14) years of age or older makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that the individual has committed child abuse.
2. *Mandated Reporters* must make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine either electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us or by calling 1-800-932-0313.
 - a. Mandated Reporters are required to immediately thereafter notify the Executive Director of such report.
 - b. If a Board member and/or the Executive Director are a suspected perpetrator then the witness shall immediately notify the Chairperson of the Board.
 - c. A Mandated Reporter making an oral report of suspected child abuse must also make a written report, which may be submitted electronically, within forty-eight (48) hour after oral report.

Requested Information for Mandated Reporting:

The *Mandatory Reporter's* report to law enforcement officials shall include (as much information as possible):

1. Name, age, address, and school of the student
2. Name and address of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s)
3. Name and address of the mandatory reporter
4. Name, work, and home address of witness
5. Nature of the alleged offense
6. Any specific comments or observations that are directly related to the alleged incident and the individuals involved.