

4.36 Abused and Neglected Child Reporting (Reaffirmed 11/28/23)

Highland is committed to the safety and welfare of children as governed by Illinois Law. The Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA) states that: All College personnel are mandated reporters who, if they have reasonable cause to believe a child known to them in their professional or official capacity may be an abused child or a neglected child, shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services by calling the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-2873 or 1-800-25-ABUSE. College personnel who are mandated reporters specifically include all athletic program personnel and/or athletic facility personnel. Students enrolled in an academic program leading to a position as a child care worker, school service personnel and/or education degree are also mandated reporters pursuant to the Act. Under this policy, College personnel includes student workers. Highland considers volunteers as defined under Highland's Volunteer Services Policy (4.07) also to be mandated reporters.

Child abuse is the mistreatment of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caretaker, someone living in their home or someone who works with or around children. The mistreatment must cause injury or put the child at risk of physical injury. Child abuse can be physical (such as burns or broken bones) or sexual (such as fondling or incest). Neglect happens when a parent or responsible caretaker fails to provide adequate supervision, food, clothing, shelter or other basics for a child.

A. Failure to Report:

1. Any mandated reporter of Highland Community College who fails to report suspected child abuse or neglect in violation of this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, expulsion and/or other sanctions. In addition, willful failure to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect is a misdemeanor (first violation) or a class 4 felony (second or subsequent violation).

B. Required Training:

1. Employees are required to complete online mandated reporter training within three months of their hire and periodically thereafter. Training information will be provided through the office of Human Resources.

A. Immunity for Good Faith Reports:

1. Individuals who in good faith make reports of suspected abuse or neglect are provided with certain statutory immunities from civil and/or criminal liability.

D. Confidentiality:

1. The confidentiality of a report of suspected child abuse or neglect, including the identity of an individual who makes a report under this policy, will be protected consistent with state law.

E. Retaliation:

1. Retaliation against any employee, student, volunteer or other individual who makes a good faith report of abuse or neglect or who participates in any investigation of abuse or neglect is prohibited. Anyone found to have engaged in prohibited retaliation may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, expulsion and/or other sanctions.
2. Procedures related to this policy will be published through the College's Human Resources Department and on Highland's web site.