

Minors at the UW

University of Washington (UW) employees and volunteers may have interactions with minors in many ways such as:

- An estimated 200 programs and activities for children and youth offered by UW or held in UW facilities annually (an estimated 94,000 children);
- Enrolled students who are under 18 years of age;
- Community mentoring, tutoring, and college preparation;
- Patients in healthcare facilities;
- Student internships in area schools and organizations;
- Guests participating in camps and events, and visiting our public facilities.

Our Duty to Protect Children at UW

Chapter 26.44 Revised Code of Washington (RCW), mandates reporting by those who are in positions to identify when children are at risk of abuse and neglect or are victims of abuse or neglect. As of 2012, the law includes representatives of higher education as mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.

To comply with the requirements of the state law, UW published Executive Order 56, Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect, which includes:

- Prohibiting child abuse by any person using University facilities and programs;
- Steps for University employees to report suspected child abuse;
- A description of what to report;
- A prohibition against retaliation.

Executive Order 56 Policy Statement

The University of Washington does not tolerate child abuse. Any person who uses University facilities, property, or resources to engage in child abuse, may be subject to arrest and criminal prosecution.

University employees and volunteers who have a reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect must immediately report the suspected abuse, as specified in the policy.

The full policy can be viewed here:

<http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/PO/EO56.html>

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

Physical Abuse – The non-accidental infliction of physical injury on or physical mistreatment of a child, when it may cause harm to the child's health, welfare, or safety.

Negligent Treatment - An act or failure to act, or the cumulative effects of a pattern of conduct, behavior, or inaction, that evidences a serious disregard of consequences that constitute a clear and present danger to a child's health, welfare, or safety.

Sexual Abuse- committing or allowing any sexual offense against a child, including intentional touching of sexual or intimate parts for the purpose of sexual gratification

Sexual Exploitation - Allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution, or obscene or pornographic depictions of a child.

Abandonment- A parent or guardian foregoing the responsibility to provide essential care to a child.

As a public university we are deeply committed to serving everyone in our community.



It's not only the responsibility of staff and volunteers to report. It's the right thing to do.



Making a Report

All University employees and volunteers who have reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect must report the suspected abuse or neglect to the police or the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). Exception: Employees and volunteers of UW Medical center facilities must abide by policies outlined by UW Medicine.

Reporting Steps:

First, you must notify one of the following:

1. Call the police. In case of an emergency always call 911. Otherwise contact the jurisdiction in which abuse or neglect is suspected to have occurred. If the jurisdiction is unknown, call the University of Washington Police Department (UWPD) at 206-685-UWPD (8973) or
2. Call the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) at 1-866-ENDHARM (1-866-363-4276) (TTY accessible);

Second, if the suspected child abuse may have occurred in a University program, regardless of location, or at a University facility, University employees and volunteers must also contact SafeCampus at 206-685-SAFE (7233). SafeCampus will initiate a coordinated, University response, as warranted, to ensure proper safety, security, and administrative measures are taken.

Reports must be made no later than **within 48 hours** of determining the need to make a report.

University policy, EO 56, **prohibits retaliation** against any individual who makes a report in accordance with this policy and/or RCW 26.44 or who cooperates with or participates in any investigation of allegations of child abuse. Retaliation means to take adverse action against an individual because he or she has acted in accordance with the law or University policy.

What happens next

DSHS or the police will evaluate whether what you have told them could potentially be child abuse or neglect.

If yes, then an investigation will be initiated.

If no, then DSHS will make a record of the report in case future reports are received about the same situation.

If the report is about child abuse or neglect that may be occurring within a UW program or facility, the UW may also need to take action to ensure proper safety measures are in place.

Useful resources on reporting suspected child abuse or neglect can be found here:

UW Office for Youth Programs
Development and Support:
<https://www.uw.edu/youth>

Dept. of Social and Health Services
EndHarm website:
<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/child-safety-and-protection/how-report-child-abuse-or-neglect>

Questions? cshelton@uw.edu

