



Parks & Recreation

State of Georgia Mandatory Reporter Law Information Sheet

Child Abuse Reporting Rules went into effect July 1, 2012

House Bill 1176 amended O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse. O.C.G.A. 19-7-5 is designed for the protection of children whose health and welfare are adversely affected and further threatened by the conduct of those responsible for their care and protection. O.C.G.A 19-7-5 has been amended as follows:

1. 'Child service personnel' means persons employed by or volunteering at a business or an organization, whether public, private, for profit, not for profit, or voluntary, that provides care, treatment, education, training, supervision, coaching, counseling, **recreational programs**, or shelter to children.

2. If a person is required to report child abuse pursuant to this subsection because that person attended to a child pursuant to such person's duties as an employee of or volunteer at a hospital, school, social agency, **youth sports organization** or similar facility, that person shall notify the person in charge of the facility or program, or the designated delegate thereof, and the person so notified shall report or cause a report to be made..

To whom do you report?

The law states:

"An oral report shall be made immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused, by telephone or otherwise and followed by a report in writing, if requested to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Services, or in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney."

Mandatory Reporting Within the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation:

Within the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department, mandated child abuse protocol directs athletic staff, volunteers, or anyone in contact with youth athletes to contact an Athletic Coordinator, Youth Supervisor, or Athletic Manager immediately to report suspected child abuse.

What are the Rights of Mandated Reporters?

1. Anonymity or confidentiality (when possible)
2. Immunity for a "good faith" report
3. Knowledge that a report was made

Penalty for Not Reporting – Guilty of a Misdemeanor

Any Board Member, volunteer, or coach that suspects child abuse should immediately contact an Athletic Coordinator, the Youth Athletic Supervisor, or the Athletic Manager by phone or in writing.

FCPRD staff will record any suspected child abuse and will forward a copy to the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office. All documentation will be kept in a locked file to ensure the confidentiality of the reporter. Confidentiality will not be broken unless required by the Sheriff's Office, the Division of Family and Children Services, or by a court of law.

It is recommended that ALL Forsyth County Parks and Recreation affiliated/approved Youth Booster Club Board Members, volunteers, and coaches seek training associated with identifying and reporting abuse.

Training may be obtained through Pro Solutions Training. The training is at NO cost and can be accessed at this link:

https://www.prosolutionstraining.com/menu/?dcsc_id=212&d_id=1&homestate_id=10

Select: **Child Abuse and Neglect: Mandated Reporting Requirements for Employees, Volunteers, and Contractors of Georgia Public Schools** from the listed options.