Hello Mandated Reporter

We want to start by thanking you for your care and attention to the children in Washington County, and for taking the time out of your day to call us when you have concerns to help ensure children in Washington County are safe.

You are each doing important work, your time is valuable and limited; therefore, we are sharing the following information that may be helpful to you when making a report.

This 2 page document will outline (3) areas:

1. Requirements as a mandated reporter
2. Answers to common questions
3. Tips and tricks in reporting

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As a mandated reporter, you are required to:

* Report early- timeliness of reporting is important to ensuring child safety
1. Call the 24/7 Hotline at 1-800-91PREVENT (1-800-917-7383)
2. Within 48 hours, submit a MD [180 (Report of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect)](https://dhs.maryland.gov/documents/Child%20Protective%20Services/180%20Form%20with%20instructions-fillable.pdf)
	1. Via email: wcdss.screening@maryland.gov, fax: 240.420.2549 or mail: WCDSS CPS 122 N Potomac Street, Hagerstown, MD 21740. This form is required in addition to your oral report.
	2. Emailed 180s will receive an emailed confirmation of receipt
3. The 180 also needs sent to the local State’s Attorney’s Office
	1. Via email: saonoticesdss@washco-md.net, fax: 240.313.2001 or mail: State’s Attorney Office of Washington County, 33 W Washington St., Room 302, Hagerstown, MD 21740.
4. At your request, an Acknowledgment Letter can be sent to you via email or mail. This letter reflects you made a report, it doesn’t provide the screening decision.

Common questions:

* [DHS Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Site](https://dhs.maryland.gov/child-protective-services/reporting-suspected-child-abuse-or-neglect/)
* Mandated reporters cannot be anonymous
* How do I know what to report? – WCDSS is committed to supporting the community and is open to providing a Mandated Reporter Training at any time
* Child Protective Services is not able to confirm or deny a case has been accepted due to confidentiality – (Family Law Article §5-707 and the Human Services Article §§1-201-1-203, Annotated Code of Maryland when asked to disclose or discuss any information contained in records concerning child abuse and neglect)

Reporting tips and tricks:

* If multiple reporters are concerned or the child has spoken to several individuals, consider calling together. That way we can ensure all information is received to support us in making the most comprehensive decision.
* The intake specialist is required to ask identifying information and follow up questions. We want to make the most informed clinical decision for possible next steps. It is okay to not know something, please just let us know.
* Complete the 180 prior to your oral report: this supports efficiency in your time, as well as, ensuring you have as much information as possible prior to calling.
* Things to consider:
	+ Who are you calling about? Who is the alleged maltreater?
		- Demographic information for all children and adults in the home (Name, Date of birth, Race, Gender, Address and Phone Number)
		- The criteria for an alleged maltreater includes caregivers, household members, family members, or persons with authority over the child (i.e., teachers, daycare providers, medical professionals, etc.).
			* Example- if a teen is sexually assaulted by a peer at a party it should be reported to police. A peer will not meet alleged maltreater criteria per COMAR regulations.
	+ What specifically are you worried about?
		- Share what the child told you exactly – in their words
		- If there is an injury – what does it look like? (i.e., color, shape, which limb/eye/cheek, diameter, etc.) and the location of the injury
		- You do not and should not ask to see a child’s private area
		- Share how the parent/caretaker’s drug use is impacting their ability to meet the child(ren’s) needs
		- You can use open ended questions to identify your concerns to a child, and then seek details from the child without investigating
			* I.e. I notice you have a bruise on your face, tell me more about what happened
	+ When did this happen?
	+ Where did this happen?
		- If the abuse or neglect occurred another county or state, the report should be made to that jurisdiction. Report where it occurred
		- Specific addresses are helpful in determining which law enforcement agency should be notified when appropriate
	+ Other helpful information
		- Where the child(ren) may be found (i.e. school, daycare, friend’s)