



ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY: REPORTING ALLEGED OR SUSPECTED ABUSE AND NEGLECT  
Program: Agency-wide  
Effective: December 28, 2018  
Functional Responsibility: Human Rights Officer

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## **REPORTING ALLEGED OR SUSPECTED ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

### **I. POLICY:**

A. It is the policy of Centro Las Americas, Inc. (“CENTRO”) to report all instances of suspected abuse and neglect to the appropriate protective services department in accordance with Massachusetts statute. The statute provides immunity from civil or criminal liability for persons making reports of abuse in good faith.

B. Abuse and neglect for the purposes of this policy are defined as follows:

- 1) **Children**: Child abuse and neglect shall mean the harm or threatened harm to a child’s health or welfare by a person responsible for the child’s health or welfare. This includes but is not limited to non-accidental physical injury and verbal, emotional, or sexual abuse. Persons responsible for a child’s welfare can include a parent, legal guardian, custodian, foster parent, persons 18 years of age or older with whom the child’s parent is cohabiting, or any adult residing in the home; an agent/employee of a public/private residential home, institution, or facility; or an owner, operator, or employee of a childcare facility. Reasonable suspicions shall be reported to:

**The Department of Children and Families, via their hotline:  
1-800-792-5200**

- 2) **Elderly or Incapacitated Persons**: The abuse of elderly or incapacitated persons includes neglect and financial exploitation as well as physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual abuse. Under the Disabled Persons Protection Act, all provider personnel who provide services to individuals with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 59 years inclusive, are mandated to report complaints or allegations regarding abuse or neglect that result in physical harm. Reasonable suspicions should be reported to:

**The Department of Mental Health (DMH), via their hotline:  
1-800-221-0053**

**Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC), via their hotline:  
1-800-426-9009**



**Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA), via their hotline:  
1-800-922-2275**

**II. PROCEDURES:**

- A. All personnel members will have a functional knowledge of the statutes concerning confidentiality and reporting of suspected abuse and neglect.
- B. All personnel members will seek immediate consultation with their supervisor to seek validation of the suspected abuse and the reporting of the abuse to
  - (a) the appropriate authority or
  - (b) CENTRO's Human Rights Officer.
- C. All reports of suspected abuse or neglect will be made in a descriptive and objective manner and will not contain statements of conjecture or conclusions related to the reported suspected abuse. The report will contain the following information, if obtainable.
  - 1) The name, address, age, and sex of the person.
  - 2) If a child, the name and address of the child's parents or other person responsible for care.
  - 3) The nature and extent of the abuse or neglect.
  - 4) Any evidence of previously known or suspected abuse or neglect.
  - 5) The name, address, and relationship, if known, of the person who is alleged to have perpetuated the abuse or neglect.
- D. Any adult victim who reports or describes abuse or neglect will be advised to contact DMH, DDPC or EOEA. In the event the victim is unable to take immediate action, personnel must immediately consult with their supervisor to seek validation before contacting the proper authorities on behalf of the person served or contact CENTRO's Human Rights Officer and will cooperate with the proper authorities during any investigation.
- E. In the case of persons under eighteen years of age who by report or appearance provide evidence to warrant suspicion that they have been abused or neglected, personnel will seek validation with their direct supervisor and immediately contact DCF or CENTRO's Human Rights Officer.
- F. Personnel members will document verbal, written, and/or observed evidence that results in suspicion of abuse or neglect in the appropriate record and complete an incident report as per policy and procedures. Documentation should describe the incident, include the time and date, the action taken as a result of the incident, and the name of the person to whom the report was made at DCF, DMH, DPPC, or EOEA.
- G. In the event the personnel member is the person contacting DCF, DMH, DPPC or EOEA to file a complaint on behalf of a person served, they must provide CENTRO's Human



Rights Officer documentation of the complaint within 24 hours of contacting DCF, DMH, DPPC, or EOEА.

- H. Any personnel who act in a manner which results in a person served being abused or exploited, or who fails to report or take action on behalf of a person served when the employee has reason to suspect abuse or neglect is occurring, shall be subject to disciplinary action.



## **REPORTING ALLEGED OR SUSPECTED ABUSE & NEGLECT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

By signing below, I acknowledge I have received a copy of CENTRO's Reporting Alleged or "Suspected Abuse & Neglect" policy and procedures. I have had an opportunity to ask questions. I voluntarily accept and agree to its terms.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Personnel Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Personnel Signature