

## ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

The online version of this policy is official.  
Therefore, all printed versions of this  
document are unofficial copies.

### REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Clarksville-Montgomery County School System (CMCSS) recognizes that state law specifies that every citizen has a duty to report suspected brutality, abuse, neglect, or child sexual abuse. In accordance with T.C.A. §37-1-403(b), the district has developed its own policy and procedures for reporting suspected cases of abuse or neglect to give employees guidance to ensure that suspected child abuse or neglect is reported promptly.

Per T.C.A. 49-6-1601, each school has a designated Child Abuse Coordinator and Child Abuse Coordinator Alternate. In each situation of suspected abuse or neglect, the Child Abuse Coordinator is immediately notified unless the allegation involves a current or previous employee or individual otherwise affiliated with the school in which case an employee may choose to notify DCS and law enforcement prior to notifying the Child Abuse Coordinator.

The district requires any employee who suspects abuse or neglect to report that suspicion directly to the Department of Children’s Services (DCS). DCS reports are to be forwarded to the District Lead School Counselors ([leadcounselors@cmcss.net](mailto:leadcounselors@cmcss.net)). DCS reports that do involve sexual or severe physical abuse are to be forwarded to the District Lead School Counselors ([leadcounselors@cmcss.net](mailto:leadcounselors@cmcss.net)) and the School Resource Officer (SRO).

In addition to reporting to DCS, in all cases where the suspected abuser is a CMCSS employee, volunteer, or contracted services provider, district employees will report their suspicions directly to their supervisor who will then report to the Chief Human Resource Officer/designee who will notify the appropriate law enforcement agency. If an employee suspects a supervisor, the individual may contact CHRO/designee directly.

Each employee has an independent duty under state law and this policy to report child abuse. Persons making a report of child sexual abuse or reporting harm or physical abuse of a child are presumed to be acting in good faith and are immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that may be brought in a state court action. Such person’s identity will remain confidential as set forth in the school system’s applicable policies and procedures unless otherwise required by law or court order. Reporter’s name will not be released to any person other than DCS and/or law enforcement and Child Abuse Coordinator on a need-to-know basis as required by state law and as needed to “protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals.”

This policy will be reviewed and approved by legal counsel every two (2) years or upon any changes to the policy content. Approval signatures kept on file.

Associated Documents: INS-G016 Training Guidelines for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Accommodating Related Investigations  
INS-P040 Reporting Suspected Child Abuse Procedure  
INS-P041 Accommodating DCS Investigations Procedure  
INS-F140 Department of Children’s Services (DCS) Referral  
(TN Code Annotated) T.C.A. §37-1-403  
T.C.A. §37-1-410

#### Revision History:

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Rev.</u>	<u>Description of Revision:</u>
11/29/04		Initial Release

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7/15/08	A	Clarifies district policy on specific reporting channels for suspicions of severe physical/ sexual abuse.
8/27/12	B	Added statement "This policy will be reviewed and signed off by legal counsel every two (2) years or upon any changes to the policy content."
6/16/14	C	Deleted example of contracted service provider
5/4/15	D	Added TN Code Annotation
2/13/17	E	Added reporting promptly to first paragraph. Added statements regarding reporting to DCS. Clarified independent duty under state law and this policy.
10/2/17	F	Para. 3: Added "their supervisor who will then report to CHRO/designee. If an employee suspects a supervisor, they may contact CHRO/designee directly."
8/20/18	G	Cleaned up grammar and abbreviations throughout. Para. 3, added "who will notify the appropriate law enforcement agency". Para. 4, added "and/or law enforcement" after DCS.
7/29/19	H	Second paragraph rewritten: District Lead Counselors receive DCS reports that do not involve physical or sexual abuse.
9/30/20		HUM-A009 retired; the policy became INS-A085. No change to content of policy, just document number and numbers of associated documents referenced throughout.
10/4/22	I	Added information to reference the Child Abuse Coordinator, created through changes to state law in 2022. Also added a provision based on state law that allows an employee to report a suspected abuse case directly to DCS officials if the case involves an employee or someone else directly affiliated with the school.

**\*\*\* End of Policy \*\*\***