



UW-Stevens Point

SUBJECT: Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

Original Issue Date:
Last Revision Date: 10/01/2016

1. Policy Purpose

The UW-Stevens Point prioritizes safety and strives to provide a safe learning environment for everyone. Children come into contact with UW-Stevens Point through various programs, camps, and events.

2. Background

On December 19, 2011, the Governor signed [Executive Order #54](#), which requires that all University of Wisconsin System employees must report incidents of child abuse and neglect. In addition, this policy extends that obligation to volunteers and contractors performing services for the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

3. Definitions

Abuse of a child includes any of the following:

- i. Physical injury inflicted on a child by other than accidental means
 - Physical injury includes but is not limited to lacerations, fractured bones, burns, internal injuries, severe or frequent bruising or great bodily harm
- ii. Sexual intercourse or sexual contact with a child under the age of 16 or with a 16 or 17-year-old child without their consent
- iii. Sexual exploitation of a child
 - Sexual exploitation of a child occurs when a person employs, uses, persuades, induces, entices, or coerces any child to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of recording or displaying the conduct or records or displays a child engaged in sexually explicit conduct
 - Sexual exploitation of a child also occurs when a person produces, performs in, profits from, promotes, imports into the state, reproduces, advertises, sells, distributes, or possesses with intent to sell or distribute, any recording of a child engaging in sexually explicit conduct
- iv. Permitting, allowing or encouraging a child to violate the statute prohibiting prostitution
- v. Causing a child to view or listen to sexual activity for purposes of sexual arousal or sexual gratification
- vi. Exposing genitals or pubic area to a child or exposing a child's genitals or pubic area for purposes of sexual arousal or sexual gratification
- vii. Manufacturing methamphetamine with a child present, or in a child's home (including the premises of a child's home or in a motor vehicle located on the premises of a child's home), or under any other circumstances in which a reasonable person should have known that the manufacture would be seen, smelled, or heard by a child
- viii. Emotional damage for which the child's parent, guardian or legal custodian has neglected, refused or been unable for reasons other than poverty to obtain the necessary treatment or to take steps to ameliorate the symptoms. Emotional damage is harm to a child's psychological or

intellectual functioning and is evidenced by one or more of the following characteristics exhibited to a severe degree: anxiety, depression, withdrawal; outward aggressive behavior; or a substantial and observable change in behavior, emotional response or cognition that is not within the normal range for the child's age and stage of development

Child: a person who is less than 18 years of age.

Child abuse or neglect involving UW-Stevens Point:

- i. An allegation against a(n) employee, student, agent, volunteer, or contractor, or
- ii. The suspected child abuse or neglect occurred in or at UW-Stevens Point facilities or land, or
- iii. The suspected child abuse or neglect occurred during or in connection with a UW-Stevens Point sponsored activity.

Employee: includes all [employee categories](#), emeritus faculty, and visiting faculty.

Neglect: failure, refusal or inability on the part of a caregiver, for reasons other than poverty, to provide necessary care, food, clothing, medical or dental care or shelter so as to seriously endanger the physical health of the child.

Supervisor: Dean, Director, Department Head, or Vice Chancellor.

4. Policy

Executive Order #54 requires that UW-Stevens Point employees make a report of child abuse or neglect immediately if, in the course of employment, an employee observes an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect, or learns of an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect, and the employee has reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur.

This policy hereby establishes the requirements that volunteers and contractors performing services for UW-Stevens Point abide by the same reporting obligations as employees (as stated above) to the maximum extent feasible.

B. Reporting Requirements:

Collecting additional information that is readily available (such as talking to coworkers who also interact with that child) or verifying that the information learned meets the criteria for reporting may be appropriate, but any such action must be conducted promptly. Making a report should not be delayed in order to gather evidence; the agency to whom the report is made will determine whether such an investigation is warranted.

A report must be made personally or by telephone to the county department of social services or the county department of human services, or to law enforcement (county sheriff or the city, village, town, or university police department). **If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.**

- i. *Portage County Health and Human Services Department, 817 Whiting Avenue Stevens Point, WI 54481; (715) 345-5350*
- ii. *Stevens Point Police Department, 1515 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481; (715) 346-1500*
- iii. *Portage County Sheriff's Office, 1500 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481; (715) 346-1400*
- iv. *UW-Stevens Point Protective Services, 001 George Stein Building, 1925 Maria Drive, Stevens Point, WI 54481; (715) 346-3456.*

If the reported abuse or neglect involves UW-Stevens Point, then the employee must also report it to their supervisor, Protective Services, and Human Resources and Affirmative Action. Any employee may request assistance from their supervisor in making a report.

A UW-Stevens Point employee who is a mandatory reporter by profession under [Wis. Stat. § 48.981\(2\)](#) (e.g., health practitioner, social worker, law enforcement officer, child care provider) must continue to comply with the state mandatory reporter law requirements.

UW-Stevens Point employees may share information regarding suspected child abuse or neglect only with appropriate individuals, such as the agencies to whom reports are to be made, appropriate University officials, and co-workers when the employee is promptly seeking additional information for a report. Beyond appropriate disclosures, employees should treat the information as sensitive and confidential.

Resources regarding mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect are available at the following website: <https://www.wisconsin.edu/general-counsel/legal-topics/child-safety/>.

Questions regarding mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect should be directed to the Director or Associate Director of Human Resources and Affirmative Action at (715) 346-2606, or the UW System Office of General Counsel at (608) 262-2995.

C. Policy Implications and Consequences

No UW-Stevens Point employee making a report of child abuse or neglect in good faith may be discharged from employment, disciplined or otherwise discriminated against in regard to employment, or threatened with any such treatment because that employee made a report in good faith.

Any employee who fails to report suspected child abuse or neglect in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

D. Responsibilities of UW-Stevens Point

Criminal background checks will be performed pursuant to the background check policies for UW-Stevens Point, and must be conducted on employees, volunteers, and contractors who have regular contact with children in the course of performing duties or services for UW-Stevens Point or in connection with a UW-Stevens Point sponsored activity.

All contractual arrangements must require the contractor to supply employees that have passed criminal background checks, if such employees will have regular contact with children.

To the maximum extent feasible, UW-Stevens Point will include, in all written contracts for the provision of services by independent contractors, an obligation to report incidents of child abuse and neglect. Whenever possible, written contracts shall include the following provision (or alternative language as approved by legal counsel):

If, in the course of providing services to UW-Stevens Point, contractor (or its agent or employee) observes an incident of child abuse or neglect, or learns of an incident of child abuse or neglect and the contractor (or its agent or employee) has reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur, contractor (or its agent or employee) must make a report of that child abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to a county social service agency as listed above. If the suspected child abuse or neglect involves UW-Stevens Point, the contractor (or its

agent or employee) shall also report that abuse to the UW-Stevens Point Human Resources and Affirmative Action.

UW-Stevens Point employees and volunteers will receive training or education on the subject of child abuse and neglect; this training or education may differ depending upon (1) the type and degree of contact the individual may have with children on campus or (2) other training or education regarding mandatory reporting an individual might receive due to their profession.

UW-Stevens Point employees and volunteers will be informed through handbooks, institutional websites, or other appropriate means about:

- i. Executive Order #54;
- ii. Institutional policies and procedures;
- iii. Contact information for the local county department of human services and local law enforcement

UW-Stevens Point will provide and/or post information in appropriate areas to notify children who to contact if they are a victim of child abuse or neglect.

Any documentation related to a UW-Stevens Point employee or volunteer report of child abuse or neglect will be stored and maintained in a secure location.

E. Related Documents

[Executive Order #54](#)

[UW-Stevens Point Children of Employees in the Workplace Policy](#)

F. Policy History

This policy was previously known as the *Policy on Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect*.