POLICY TITLE: Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse for Volunteers		
Policy Number:	**Review Cycle:** **Annual**	**Effective Date:** **1/1/2025**
Reviewer: Deputy Director	**Approval Authority: Director**	

SCOPE:

This policy applies to Volunteers who have care, control or custody of minors and the reporting of suspected instances of Child abuse and neglect.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that suspected instances of child abuse or neglect are appropriately reported by Volunteers. The below language should be incorporated into a Council's internal operational policies.

All Maryland residents should report suspected abuse or neglect to the local department of social services or to a local law enforcement agency. Ensuring the safety of Maryland's children is an obligation shared by all residents and organizations. You should report your suspicion to the Recreation and Parks Supervisor in your area, as well as Maryland State Reporting at: **1-800-91 PREVENT**.

If you are a health care practitioner, educator, human service worker or a law enforcement officer, you are required by law to report both orally and in writing any suspected child abuse or neglect A mandated reporter must also complete a written report within 48 hours of contact which discloses the suspected abuse or neglect. Oral reports should be made immediately. When making a report of suspected abuse, the report must include at minimum:

- The name and home address of the child and the parent or other individual responsible for the care of the child;
- The present location of the child;
- The age of the child (or approximate age);
- Names and ages of other children in the home;

- The nature and extent of injuries or sexual abuse or neglect of the child
- Any information relayed by the individual making the report of previous possible physical or sexual abuse or neglect.
- Information available to the individual reporting that might aid in establishing the cause of the injury or neglect;
- The identity of the individual or individuals responsible for abuse or neglect

The person receiving your report will request additional information in order to obtain the most comprehensive and complete information possible to inform decision making and subsequent agency actions. Because Child Protective Services seeks to affect both safety and change, information on the family's strengths as well as difficulties will be requested. *If reporting abuse or neglect of a child involving mental injury, include a description of the substantial.* All reports of suspected child abuse are immune from civil liability unless they are purposefully erroneous or malicious.

Abuse/Neglect defined:

- Physical injury not (necessarily visible) of a child under circumstances that indicate that a child's health or welfare is harmed or at substantial risk of being harmed.
- The failure to give proper care and attention to a child, leaving a child unattended where the child's health or welfare is harmed or a child is placed in substantial risk of harm.
- An act or acts involving sexual molestation or exploitation whether physical injuries are sustained or not.
- Identifiable and substantial impairment of a child's mental or psychological ability to function.
- Finding credible evidence that has not been satisfactorily refuted that physical abuse, neglect or sexual abuse occurred.

Reports of child maltreatment should be made to the jurisdiction where the alleged maltreatment occurred. If maltreatment occurred in the State of Maryland, you can call the Maryland State reporting hotline at **1-800-91 PREVENT**. The hotline will direct you to select the County where the alleged maltreatment occurred to make your report.

REVISIONS:

Policy Created 12/15/2024