

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES	
Subject: Abuse and Neglect Referral Process	Policy Number: 24
Number of Pages: 2	Section:
Attachments: A. Abuse and Neglect Intake Referral Form	Related Standards & References:
Effective Date: June 1, 2012 Revised September 15, 2019	Approved:  James Maccarone, Director

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Services (DYS) that DHS staff is obligated to report any allegations or suspicion of abuse or neglect of minor children.

II. DEFINITIONS

As used in this policy and procedures the following definitions apply:

A. **Child Abuse** – A youth whose parent, guardian or custodian or any person responsible for his care or support, where legally obligated to do so or not, has caused or allowed to be caused upon said youth sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, emotional abuse, mental injury, non-accidental physical injury or other maltreatment. Provided, however, that physical discipline, including spanking, performed on a youth by a parent, guardian or custodian in a reasonable manner shall not be deemed abuse under this section.

B. **Child Neglect** - A youth whose parent, guardian or custodian or any person responsible for his care or support, neglects or refuses, when able so to do, to provide for him proper and necessary care or support, or education as required by law, or medical, surgical, or other care necessary for his well-being; provided, however, a parent who withholds medical treatment from any youth who in good faith is under treatment by spiritual means alone through prayer in accordance with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination by duly accredited practitioner thereof shall not, for that reason alone, be considered to be neglectful under any provision of this chapter.

Subject	Policy #	Page
Abuse and Neglect Referral Process	24	2 of 2

III. PROCEDURE

- A. Any Division of Youth Services employee is responsible to report abuse and neglect cases.

- B. Division of Youth Services employees must call the Mississippi Child Protection Services centralize intake unit to report a case of alleged or suspected abuse or neglect, at the following number: 1-800-222-8000.

- C. Once the Division of Youth Services employee reported the case, if the youth in question has an open case file, a case note shall be made in the file notating the report.