

SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

REACH of Washington County does not permit or allow sexual abuse or molestation to occur in the workplace or at any activity sponsored by or related to it. In order to make this “zero tolerance” policy clear to all employees, volunteers, and staff members, we have adopted mandatory procedures that employees, volunteers, family members, board members, individuals, and victims must follow when they learn of or witness sexual abuse or molestation.

Sexual abuse takes the form of inappropriate sexual contact or interaction for the gratification of the actor who is functioning as a caregiver and is responsible for the **At-Risk Client**. Sexual abuse includes sexual assault, exploitation, molestation, or injury. It does not include sexual harassment, which is another form of behavior prohibited by REACH.

Reporting Procedure

All staff members who learn of sexual abuse being committed must immediately report it to Jodie Ostoich, Executive Director of REACH of Washington County. If the victim is an adult, Jodie will report the abuse to the local or state Adult Protective Services (APS) Agency. If the victim is a child, Jodie will report it to the local or state Child Abuse Agency. Appropriate family members of the victim must be notified immediately about suspected child abuse.

Investigation & Follow Up

We take allegations of sexual abuse seriously. Once the allegation is reported we will promptly, thoroughly, and impartially initiate an investigation to determine whether there is a reasonable basis to believe that sexual abuse has been committed. The investigation may be undertaken by an internal team or by an independent third party. We will cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by law enforcement or regulatory agencies and we may refer the complaint and the result of our investigation to those agencies.

We reserve the right to place the alleged perpetrator on an involuntary leave of absence or reassign that person to responsibilities that do not involve personal contact with individuals or students.

To the fullest extent possible, but consistent with our legal obligation to report suspected abuse to authorities, we will endeavor to keep the identities of the alleged victims and perpetrator(s) confidential.

If the investigation substantiates the allegation, our policy provides for disciplinary penalties, including but not limited to termination from our organization.

There are several signs or behaviors which suggest someone is being sexually abused. They include, but are not limited to:

- Sexually transmitted diseases;
- Difficulty walking normally;
- Stained, bloody or torn undergarments;
- Genital pain or itching;
- Physical injuries involving the external genitalia;
- Fear or reluctance about being left in the care of a particular person;
- Recoiling from being touched;
- Bundling oneself in excessive clothing, especially night clothes;
- Discomfort or apprehension when sex is referred to or discussed; and
- Nightmares or fear of night and/or darkness.

Retaliation Prohibited

We prohibit any retaliation against anyone, including an employee, volunteer, board member, student, or individual, who in good faith reports potential or real sexual abuse, alleges that it is being committed or participates in the investigation. Intentionally false or malicious accusations of sexual abuse are prohibited.

Anyone who improperly retaliates against someone who has made a good faith allegation of sexual abuse, or intentionally provides false information to that effect, will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF SEXUAL ABUSE POLICY

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received and read the sexual abuse policy immediately preceding my signature below. I understand that I am bound to follow the policy and understand the consequences in the event that I fail to do so.

Dated: _____

Print Name of Employee/Volunteer

Signature