



Massachusetts General Law Chapter 119 Section 51A

51A Reporting



All school personnel are mandated reporters and are legally required to contact the Massachusetts Department of children and Families (DCF) if they have reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from:

- ❑ Abuse inflicted upon him which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare, including sexual abuse;
- ❑ Neglect, including malnutrition;
- ❑ Physical dependence upon an addictive drug at birth, shall immediately communicate with the department orally and, within 48 hours, shall file a written report with the department detailing the suspected abuse or neglect; or
- ❑ Being a sexually exploited child; or
- ❑ Being a human trafficking victim as defined by section 20M of chapter 233.
- ❑ Greater Lowell Technical High School personnel should consult with a School Counselor, Adjustment Counselor, or School Psychologist for assistance if abuse or neglect is suspected.
- ❑ Abuse witnessed or suspected via remote/hybrid instruction is subject to the same reporting requirements

Reporting Process

STEP 1: Immediately reporting by oral communication to the local DCF Area Office

- ❑ Lowell area DCF: 978-275-6800
- ❑ Child at Risk Hotline: 800-792-5200

STEP 2: Completing and sending a written report via DCF report form to the local DCF Area Office within 48 hours of making the oral report:

[DCF Reporting Form](#)



Resources and Links

- [MA General Laws Section 51A](#)
- [Child Abuse and Neglect Brochure \(51-A\)
What you need to know about reporting
child abuse and neglect](#)