

Policy Title: Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

Policy Statement: Clemson University is committed to providing a safe environment for all visitors. This commitment extends to minors who are participating in University-affiliated programs or interacting with more informally (e.g., visiting with a family member or as part of a school field trip).

I. Definitions

- A. Minor: Minors are persons under 18 years of age.
- B. Abuse or neglect: Physical or mental injury or acts or omissions which present a substantial risk of physical or mental injury. This includes, but is not limited to: sexual offenses as defined by South Carolina law; failure to supply the minor with adequate food, clothing or shelter; abandonment; and encouraging delinquent acts by the minor.

II. Responsibilities

All Clemson employees are responsible for being vigilant regarding the safety of minors. Any employee who, in the course of employment, receives information or observes conduct that gives that person reason to believe that a minor has been or may be abused or neglected, are expected to take the following steps **immediately**:

- A. Call law enforcement.
 - 1. If the child is in imminent danger, the employee must call 911.
 - 2. If the child is not in imminent danger, the employee should contact local law enforcement where the child resides or is found.
 - a. If the child is on Clemson's main campus, the employee should contact the Clemson University Police Department at 864-656-2222.
 - b. If the child is elsewhere, the employee should contact local law enforcement for the city or county where the child resides or may be found.
- B. After contacting law enforcement, the employee should notify a responsible supervisor at Clemson who has a legitimate reason to know about the report and who may need to take corrective or preventive action for the child's safety. For example, this may be a program director, a supervisor or a dean.
- C. Employees may also contact the following University offices for additional support after contacting law enforcement:
 - 1. Clemson's Pre-Collegiate Programs Office
 - 2. Office of University Compliance
 - 3. Office of General Counsel

III. Protections

Employees who make good-faith reports of suspected or known abuse or neglect to law enforcement are protected from adverse employment action. Further, South Carolina law allows the identity of any person who reports abuse or neglect to be kept confidential. South Carolina law also provides civil and criminal immunity for persons who make good-faith reports of abuse or neglect.

IV. Criminal Consequences

Additionally, South Carolina law defines certain professions to be “mandatory reporters.” These professions may be found under [SC Code §63-7-310](#). Persons who are mandatory reporters but who fail to report good-faith concerns to law enforcement may face criminal consequences, including fines and imprisonment, pursuant to [SC Code §63-7-410](#).

Purpose: South Carolina law sets forth mandatory reporting expectations for persons in certain professions that are more likely to receive information in their professional capacity giving him or her reason to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected. In addition, South Carolina law encourages reporting by all persons who are not otherwise mandatory reporters by offering important protections for persons who make good-faith reports. [SC Code §63-7-310 et seq.](#)

Responsible Department/Division (Contact Person):

Provost

Approval Dates:

Executive Leadership Team: December 17, 2018

Reviewed/Revised Dates:

Published Location(s):

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