

Child Abuse Reporting in Virginia

January 10, 2012

RE: An overview of current law for the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

- Va. Code Ann. section 63.2-1509 requires certain categories of individuals to report suspected child abuse or neglect.
- Va. Code Ann. 63.2-1510 states that any person who suspects that a child is an abused or neglected child MAY make a complaint to the local Department of Social Services or the department's toll free hotline.
- There is no general legal requirement in Virginia for university employees to report suspected child abuse or neglect.
- Universities may have policies that require reporting of child abuse or neglect in certain activities and programs, but many do not have a general policy requiring such reports.
- Certain university employees are required by law to report suspected child abuse:
 - Any person licensed to practice medicine
 - Any hospital resident or intern
 - Any person providing full-time or part-time child care for pay on a regularly planned basis
 - Any mental health professional
 - Any law enforcement officer
 - Any person associated with a private organization responsible for the care, custody, or control of children.
- Two bills have been introduced on this subject:
 - House Bill No. 3 would amend section 63.2-1509 require reporting by any athletic coach or director or other person employed by a private sports organization or team.
 - House Bill No. 4 would amend section 63.2-1509 to require reporting by any employee of an institution of higher education.