

**OKEFENOKEE AREA COUNCIL
Boy Scouts of America**

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

CONTACTING THE COUNCIL

The Boy Scouts requires immediate notification of a Scout Executive whenever information about possible child abuse in the Boy Scout program is uncovered. The current policy for after-hours notification is to wait until the next business day and call the Scout Office in Waycross, Georgia at 912-283-6016.

The Scout Executive will ensure that all state reporting requirements have been met and will also take measures to protect the youth in the Scouting movement.

If an immediate report is to be made due to extreme urgency, a contact to Georgia Department of Family and Children Services, Child Support Hotline should be made at 800-227-7993 or local law enforcement agencies at 911. The Council should be contacted by leaving a message on the Council Service Center answering machine. The "Suspected Child Abuse Reporting Form" should be completed and submitted to the Council.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE IN THE STATE OF GEORGIA

The law says any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to child abuse or acts of child abuse shall report this information immediately to the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS).

From 8:00 am to 5:00 pm weekdays, reports of child abuse and neglect can be made to the local DFACS office in your county. The Georgia Department of Family and Children Services Child Support Hotline operates a toll-free, 24-hour, seven-day-a-week hotline 800-227-7993 to receive reports of child abuse and neglect. Calls received at the Child Support Hotline during normal working hours are immediately referred to the appropriate County DFACS office, and call after hours will be directed to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

DFACS accepts all allegations of child abuse and neglect by telephone and in person from all sources, including identified sources, news media, anonymous sources, sources that have incomplete information, and referrals from the child or parent themselves.

Upon receiving a report of child abuse or neglect, a DFACS caseworker shall investigate the allegations and take such action as is necessary to ensure the safety of the child.

IMUNITY FROM CIVIL OR CRIMINAL LIABILITY

Any person who, pursuant to the law, reports abuse and neglect or testifies in a child abuse hearing resulting from such a report is immune from any criminal or civil liability as a result of such action.

PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO REPORT

Any person who knowingly fails to report suspected abuse or neglect pursuant to the law or to comply with the provisions of the law is a disorderly person and subject to fine and or imprisonment.