

Guidelines for Calling the Child Abuse Hotline

Mandated reporters and other persons should call the Hotline when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected. The Hotline worker will determine if the information given by the reporter meets the legal requirements to initiate an investigation.

Criteria needed for a child abuse or neglect investigation

- The alleged victim is a child under the age of 18.
- The alleged perpetrator is a parent, guardian, foster parent, relative caregiver, paramour, any individual residing in the same home, any person responsible for the child's welfare at the time of the alleged abuse or neglect, or any person who came to know the child through an official capacity or position of trust (for example: health care professionals, educational personnel, recreational supervisors, members of the clergy, volunteers or support personnel) in settings where children may be subject to abuse and neglect.
- There is a specific incident of abuse or neglect or a specific set of circumstances involving suspected abuse or neglect.
- There is demonstrated harm to the child or a substantial risk of physical or sexual injury to the child.

Information the reporter should have ready to give to the Hotline

- Names, birth dates (or approximate ages), races, genders, etc. for all adult and child subjects.
- Addresses for all victims and perpetrators, including current location.
- Information about the siblings or other family members, if available.
- Specific information about the abusive incident or the circumstances contributing to risk of harm—for example, when the incident occurred, the extent of the injuries, how the child says it happened, and any other pertinent information.

If this information is not readily available, the reporter should not delay a call to the hotline.

**Illinois Child Abuse Hotline
1-800-25-ABUSE or 1-800-252-2873
1-800-358-5117 (TTY)
217-524-2606 if calling from outside Illinois**

The Hotline operates 24 hours per day, 365 days a year. Reporters should be prepared to provide phone numbers where they may be reached throughout the day in case the Hotline must call back for more information.