

# **SAMPLE INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT**

## **Interagency Agreement By and Between The Lynchburg City Schools and the Lynchburg Division of Social Services**

### **SECTION I – REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT BY SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**

- A. Responsibilities of Local School Employees
  - 1. According to Virginia state law, any teacher or other person employed in a public school is a mandated reporter.
  - 2. As such, any teacher or other person employed in a public school is required to report all instances of suspected abuse and neglect of children under age 18 to local departments of social services.
  - 3. When reporting child abuse or neglect, the local school employee must share with the local department of social services all information which establishes the basis for the suspicion of abuse or neglect of the alleged victim child.
  - 4. Each school should have a designated contact person to whom all reports from school staff on suspected child abuse or neglect will be made. A back-up person should also be designated.
  - 5. When reports of suspected child abuse or neglect are received from school staff by the contact person, the contact person will immediately transmit the report to the local department of social services or to the State Hotline (1-800-522-7096). The obligation of the designated contact person to report cases of suspected child abuse or neglect brought to his attention by staff members is not discretionary and the contact person shall assure that the case is duly reported.
  - 6. If a complainant believes that a delay resulting from following these procedures would be detrimental to the child, he may report this case directly and then inform the designated contact person of his referral.
- B. Responsibilities of Local Departments of Social Services
  - 1. Local departments of social services shall have the capability of receiving reports on a 24-hours-a-day, 7-day-a-week basis.
  - 2. Local departments of social services shall provide information and cooperate in training the local school division personnel regarding their responsibilities to report suspected child abuse or neglect, methods of reporting suspected incidents, and the role and functions of the local departments of social services in child abuse and neglect.

### **SECTION III – INVESTIGATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT WHEN THE CHILD IS ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN ABUSED/NEGLECTED IN AN IN-HOME SETTING**

- A. Responsibilities of Local School Divisions
  - 1. The school shall allow the local child protective services worker to interview the child or siblings without consent of parent/guardian. The interview shall be in private, without the presence of school personnel, in order to protect the family's right to privacy.

2. The local school division shall cooperate with the needs of the CPS worker, and provide the following resources, as appropriate:
    - a. Room/private space for interviews of child(ren).
    - b. Pertinent records such as home and work phone numbers of child's parents/guardians and home address for child(ren).
- B. Responsibilities of Local Departments of Social Services
1. Upon receipt of the complaint, the local social services department will conduct an immediate investigation or assessment. The local child protective services worker assigned to investigate will contact the designated school contact person to arrange, if necessary, for:
    - a. Securing further information in regard to the complaint;
    - b. Obtaining records and/or documentation relative to the complaint on which may be the basis for the complaint;
    - c. Child's home address and work and home telephone numbers of his parents or guardians.
    - d. Arrangements to see and interview the child at school when necessary.
  2. If the investigation /assessment requires the CPS worker to go onto school premises, the local CPS worker shall inform the site administrator or designee of the need for private space to interview the victim child.
  3. The CPS worker shall complete the investigation /assessment and make a disposition with 45 (or 60 days when an extension is documented to be necessary), unless the alleged abuser waives these time frames.
  4. If the initial report was made by a school employee, that individual shall receive a written communication from the local department of social services informing him that the investigation has been completed, and either that the disposition was "Unfounded," or that "Appropriate action had been taken," in the case of an investigation. When a family assessment is completed, the complainant will receive a written communication stating that the assessment is completed and needed services have been recommended.

#### SECTION IV – INVESTIGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT WHEN THE CHILD IS ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN ABUSED/NEGLECTED BY A SCHOOL EMPLOYEE

- A. Responsibilities of Local School Divisions
1. The local school site administrator, or designee, if there is no conflict of interest, may participate in the planning of the investigation when the report names a school employee as the alleged abuser or neglecter.
  2. If the investigation involves a school employee as the alleged abuser, the local school division shall cooperate with the needs of the CPS worker, and provide the following resources, as appropriate:
    - a. Room/private space for interviews of staff and children;
    - b. Accompaniment to the site of the alleged abuse;
    - c. Pertinent policies, procedures and records;
    - d. Names, functions, and roles of involved parties;
    - e. Work schedules of staff;
    - f. Phone numbers of collateral children's parents/guardians in order for the CPS worker to gain permission to interview them.

3. Allow the local CPS worker to interview the alleged victim child and siblings in private, without the presence of school personnel, in order to protect the family's right to privacy.
- B. Responsibilities of local Departments of Social Services

1. Conduct an immediate investigation upon receiving a report about suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect.
2. If the investigation requires the CPS worker to go onto school premises, the local CPS worker shall inform the site administrator or designee of the allegations being investigated, the subjects named in the report [alleged abuser and alleged victim child(ren)], and the CPS role and expectations, including private space to interview the victim child.
3. If the investigation involves a school employee as the alleged abuser, and if there is no conflict of interest, the CPS worker shall invite the site administrator or designee to participate in the planning of a joint investigation.
4. If the investigation involves a school employee as the alleged abuser, the CPS worker must request from the administrator the following resources, as appropriate:
  - a. Room/private space for interviews of staff and children;
  - b. Accompaniment to the site of the alleged abuse;
  - c. Pertinent policies, procedures and records;
  - d. Names, functions, and roles of involved parties;
  - e. Work schedules of staff;
  - f. Phone numbers of collateral children's parents/guardians in order to gain permission for the CPS worker to interview them.
5. If the investigation involves a school employee as the alleged abuser, the CPS worker shall interview the alleged abuser according to a plan developed jointly with facility administrator or designee. Where there is an apparent conflict of interest, the CPS worker shall use discretion regarding who is to be present in the interview.
6. If the investigation involves a school employee as the alleged abuser, the CPS worker shall inform the alleged abuser that he has the right to involve a representative of his choice to be present during the interviews. The CPS worker should also inform him if anyone other than the CPS worker is planning to be present.
7. If the investigation involves a school employee as the alleged abuser, the CPS worker shall provide him the allegation in writing, and offer to tape record the interview, and provide a copy to the alleged abuser at the earliest convenience.
8. If the investigation involves a school employee as the alleged abuser, the CPS worker shall interview collateral staff witnesses, as appropriate, according to a plan developed jointly with the facility administrator or designee. Where there is an apparent conflict of interest, the CPS worker shall use discretion regarding who is to be present in the interview.
9. If the investigation involves a school employee as the alleged abuser, the CPS worker shall keep the facility administrator or designee apprised of the progress of the investigation on an ongoing basis until the investigation is completed.
10. The CPS worker shall complete the investigation and make a disposition within 45 (or 60 days when an extension is documented to be necessary), unless the alleged abuser waives these time frames.

11. If the investigation involves a school employee as the alleged abuser, when the investigation is completed and a disposition is made, the CPS worker shall verbally notify both the alleged abuser and the facility administrator. The alleged abuser should be informed first, or at the same time as the administrator or designee.  
If the investigation involves a school employee as the alleged abuser, a written report of the finding shall be submitted to the facility administrator, with a copy to the school's Superintendent, and with a copy to the alleged abuser along with his disposition notification letter and appeal notification. This report of findings shall include a summary of the investigation, with an explanation of how the information gathered supports the disposition.
12. The local department of social services shall inform the parent or guardian or agency holding custody of the victim child by written notification of the disposition, with a verbal follow-up. The CPS worker may use discretion in determining the extent of investigative findings to share with the parent; however, sufficient detail must be provided for the child's custodian to know what happened to his child, to make plans for the child, and to provide needed support and services.
13. If the initial report was made by a school employee, that individual shall receive a written communication from the local department of social services informing him that the investigation has been completed, and either that the disposition was "Unfounded," or that "Appropriate action has been taken."

#### SECTION V – FOLLOW-UP TO THE INVESTIGATION/ASSESSMENT

- A. The local department of social services may provide post-investigative/assessment protective and/or treatment services, and follow-up contacts to the child, family and named abuser.
- C. When a school employee is named as the abuser, the local school division may provide post- investigation corrective action, as deemed appropriate by the school, for the school facility and any personnel, including the named abuser.

#### SECTION VI - CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. Information shall be shared between appropriate staff of local departments of social services and local school divisions which is accurate, complete, timely, and pertinent so as to assure fairness in determination of the disposition of the complaint.
- B. Appropriate precautions shall be taken by both local entities to safeguard the information maintained as a result to the investigation in accordance with the Department of Social Services' confidentiality laws governing child abuse and neglect investigations, except that information obtained from local school division shall be safeguarded in accordance with the confidentiality regulations which govern such information

This agreement is acknowledged this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ by the undersigned, on behalf of the Lynchburg City Schools and the Lynchburg Division of Social Services.

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James T. McCormick, Superintendent  
Lynchburg City Schools

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Mark C. Johnson, Director  
Lynchburg Division of Social Services