

1 REPORTING FAQ

1.1 WHO IS A MANDATORY REPORTER?

By state law, **anyone** 18 years or older is a mandatory reporter. Please note, your status as a mandatory reporter both legally and ethically supersedes your clergy-penitent privileges meaning that in certain cases you are required to disclose knowledge of criminal acts

1.2 WHAT SHOULD I REPORT?

Under North Carolina law you are required to report if you have “cause to suspect” that a minor, elder, or disabled adult is being abused. Remember, abuse comes in many forms, not all of which are physical.

1.2.1 Types of Abuse

Abuse comes in many forms, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect (intentional or unintentional), and many more. For more info on the types of abuse, [click here](#).

1.2.2 Who Do I Report To?

If you suspect that a child, elder, or disabled adult is being abused, you should contact your local county Department of Social Services, who will direct your report from there. To find your local Department of Social Services, click [here](#). Be aware, in some cases your report may be redirected to the local authorities. When in doubt call your local DSS office, and they will direct your report to where it needs to go.

1.2.3 What Information Do I Need to Report?

Your report should include any and all pertinent information. This includes the name, age, and address of the victim, as well as the alleged perpetrator alongside the exact nature of the abuse (to the best of your knowledge). It is also wise to include current whereabouts of all involved parties, to assist in a speedy intervention.

2 CARE AFTER THE REPORT

2.1 ASSISTING AN INVESTIGATION

Once a report has been made, it is best practices to have each person involved in the report write down a statement of what happened including date, location, and the events that transpired. As time goes on memories become hazy and having individual written accounts may be useful in the future.

2.2 SPIRITUAL CARE

Making a report can be emotionally and spiritual taxing, and yet it is vital to the care and safety of our most vulnerable. In the time after a report, both pastors and laypersons will require deep spiritual care. Furthermore, if the pastor of your church is implicated in anyway in a report, it is prudent to have an external clergy person provide spiritual care for reporters in that season.