

Adult Abuse

314.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the investigation and reporting of suspected abuse of certain adults who may be more vulnerable than others. This policy also addresses mandatory notification for Franklin Community Schools Police Department members as required by law.

314.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Adult abuse - Any offense or attempted offense involving violence or neglect of an adult victim when committed by a person responsible for the adult's care, or any other act that would mandate reporting or notification to a social service agency or law enforcement.

314.2 POLICY

The Franklin Community Schools Police Department will investigate all reported incidents of alleged adult abuse and ensure proper reporting and notification as required by law.

314.3 MANDATORY NOTIFICATION

A member of the Franklin Community Schools Police Department shall notify Adult Protective Services (APS) when the member reasonably believes a person has been the victim of adult abuse (I.C. § 35-46-1-13(c); I.C. § 12-10-3-9; I.C. § 12-10-3-10).

For purposes of notification, adult abuse includes the battery, neglect, exploitation, or threat thereof, of a person who is 18 years or older and is incapable by reason of mental illness, developmental or intellectual disability, or dementia, or otherwise lacks the capacity to manage their property or to provide or direct the provision of self-care (I.C. § 12-10-3-2).

314.3.1 NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

Notification shall be immediately made to the APS hotline or local APS unit, and should include as much of the following as is known (I.C. § 12-10-3-10):

- (a) The name, age and address of the victim
- (b) The names and addresses of family members or other persons financially responsible for the victim's care or other individuals who may be able to provide relevant information
- (c) The apparent nature and extent of the alleged neglect, battery or exploitation and the victim's physical and mental condition
- (d) The name, address and telephone number of any person who reported the alleged abuse to the Department and the basis of the reporter's knowledge
- (e) The name and address of the alleged offender
- (f) Any other relevant information regarding the circumstances of the endangered adult

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314.4 QUALIFIED INVESTIGATORS

Qualified investigators should be available to investigate cases of adult abuse. Until the Department establishes its own investigator or investigative unit, the Chief of Police or the authorized designee may request a detective or investigator from the Franklin Police Department and/or the Johnson County Sheriff's Office Investigations Unit to assist with or conduct the follow-up criminal investigation, as appropriate. These investigators should:

- (a) Conduct interviews in appropriate interview facilities.
- (b) Be familiar with forensic interview techniques specific to adult abuse investigations.
- (c) Present all cases of alleged adult abuse to the prosecutor for review.
- (d) Coordinate with other enforcement agencies, social service agencies and facility administrators as needed.
- (e) Provide referrals to therapy services, victim advocates, guardians and support for the victim and family as appropriate.
- (f) Participate in or coordinate with multidisciplinary investigative teams as applicable.

314.5 INVESTIGATIONS AND REPORTING

All reported or suspected cases of adult abuse require investigation and a report, even if the allegations appear unfounded or unsubstantiated.

Investigations and reports related to suspected cases of adult abuse should address, as applicable:

- (a) The overall basis for the contact. This should be done by the investigating officer in all circumstances where a suspected adult abuse victim is contacted.
- (b) Any relevant statements the victim may have made and to whom he/she made the statements.
- (c) If a person is taken into protective custody, the reasons, the name and title of the person making the decision, and why other alternatives were not appropriate.
- (d) Documentation of any visible injuries or any injuries identified by the victim. This should include photographs of such injuries, if practicable.
- (e) Whether the victim was transported for medical treatment or a medical examination.
- (f) Whether the victim identified a household member as the alleged perpetrator, and a list of the names of any other potential victims or witnesses who may reside in the residence.
- (g) Identification of any prior related reports or allegations of abuse, including other jurisdictions, as reasonably known.
- (h) Previous addresses of the victim and suspect.

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- (i) Other potential witnesses who have not yet been interviewed, such as relatives or others close to the victim's environment.

Any unexplained death of an adult who was in the care of a guardian or caretaker should be considered as potential adult abuse and investigated similarly.

314.6 PROTECTIVE CUSTODY

Removal of an adult abuse victim from his/her family, guardian or other responsible adult is the responsibility of APS (I.C. § 12-10-3-23; I.C. § 12-10-3-28).

When it appears necessary to protect adult abuse victims by taking the victim into protective custody, members should contact APS and request APS to obtain an emergency protective order.

314.7 INTERVIEWS

314.7.1 PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS

Absent extenuating circumstances or impracticality, officers should audio record the preliminary interview with a suspected adult abuse victim. Officers should avoid multiple interviews with the victim and should attempt to gather only the information necessary to begin an investigation. When practicable, investigating officers should defer interviews until a person who is specially trained in such interviews is available.

314.7.2 DETAINING VICTIMS FOR INTERVIEWS

An officer should not detain an adult involuntarily who is suspected of being a victim of abuse solely for the purpose of an interview or physical exam without his/her consent or the consent of a guardian unless one of the following applies:

- (a) Exigent circumstances exist, such as:
 - 1. A reasonable belief that medical issues of the adult need to be addressed immediately.
 - 2. A reasonable belief that the adult is or will be in danger of harm if the interview or physical exam is not immediately completed.
 - 3. The alleged offender is a family member or guardian and there is reason to believe the adult may be in continued danger.
- (b) A court order or warrant has been issued.

314.8 MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

When an adult abuse investigation requires a medical examination, the investigating officer should obtain consent for such examination from the victim, guardian, agency or entity having legal custody of the adult. The officer should also arrange for the adult's transportation to the appropriate medical facility.

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In cases where the alleged offender is a family member, guardian, agency or entity having legal custody and is refusing to give consent for the medical examination, officers should notify a supervisor before proceeding. If exigent circumstances do not exist or if state law does not provide for officers to take the adult for a medical examination, the supervisor should consider other government agencies or services that may obtain a court order for such an examination.

314.9 DRUG-ENDANGERED VICTIMS

A coordinated response by law enforcement and social services agencies is appropriate to meet the immediate and longer-term medical and safety needs of an adult abuse victim who has been exposed to the manufacturing, trafficking or use of narcotics.

314.9.1 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief of Police or the authorized designee should:

- (a) Work with professionals from the appropriate agencies, including APS, other law enforcement agencies, medical service providers and local prosecutors to develop community-specific procedures for responding to situations where there are adult abuse victims endangered by exposure to methamphetamine labs or the manufacture and trafficking of other drugs.
- (b) Activate any available interagency response when an officer notifies the Chief of Police or the authorized designee that he/she has responded to a drug lab or other narcotics crime scene where an adult abuse victim is present or where evidence indicates that an adult abuse victim lives at the scene.
- (c) Develop a report format or checklist for use when officers respond to drug labs or other narcotics crime scenes. The checklist will help officers document the environmental, medical, social and other conditions that may affect the adult.

314.9.2 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

Officers responding to a drug lab or other narcotics crime scene where an adult abuse victim is present or where there is evidence that an adult abuse victim lives at the scene should:

- (a) Document the environmental, medical, social and other conditions of the adult, using photography as appropriate and the checklist or form developed for this purpose.
- (b) Notify the Chief of Police or the authorized designee so an interagency response can begin.

314.10 STATE MANDATES AND OTHER RELEVANT LAWS

Indiana requires or permits the following:

314.10.1 RECORDS BUREAU RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief of Police, Custodian of Records, or other person designated by the Chief of Police is responsible for:

- (a) Providing a copy of the adult abuse report to APS.
- (b) Retaining the original adult abuse report with the initial case file.

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314.10.2 RELEASE OF REPORTS

Information related to incidents of adult abuse or suspected adult abuse shall be confidential and may only be disclosed pursuant to state law and the Records Maintenance and Release Policy (I.C. § 12-10-3-15).

314.11 TRAINING

The Department should provide training on best practices in adult abuse investigations to members tasked with investigating these cases. The training should include (I.C. § 5-2-8-2):

- (a) Participating in multidisciplinary investigations, as appropriate.
- (b) Conducting interviews.
- (c) Availability of therapy services for adults and families.
- (d) Availability of specialized forensic medical exams.
- (e) Cultural competence (including interpretive services) related to adult abuse investigations.
- (f) Availability of victim advocates or other support.