



Office of Children and Family Services

Kathy Hochul
Governor

52 WASHINGTON STREET
RENSSELAER, NY 12144

Suzanne Miles-Gustave, Esq.
Acting Commissioner

Administrative Directive

Transmittal:	23-OCFS-ADM-09
To:	Local Departments of Social Services Commissioners Voluntary Authorized Agencies Executive Directors
Issuing Division/Office:	Division of Child Welfare and Community Services
Date:	May 31, 2023
Subject:	New Mandated Reporter Training
Suggested Distribution:	Local Departments of Social Services Directors Voluntary Authorized Agencies Executive Directors
Contact Person(s):	See section VI.
Attachments:	LDSS-2221A , <i>Report of Suspected Child Abuse or Maltreatment</i>

Filing References

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	NYS Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
07-OCFS-ADM-15 08-OCFS-INF-01			SSL §413	<i>New York State Child Protective Services Manual</i> , Chapter 2	

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Administrative Directive (ADM) is to advise local departments of social services (LDSSs) and authorized voluntary agencies (VAs) of the requirement that staff who are mandated to report suspected child abuse and maltreatment complete the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) new self-directed Mandated Reporter Online Training by April 1, 2025.¹ This training is available in English and Spanish, 24 hours a day, seven days a week at www.nysmandatedreporter.org.

II. Background

Mandated reporters are those individuals who are required by law to report suspected child abuse or maltreatment to the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR), operated by OCFS.² Mandated reporters include, but are not limited to the following: social services workers; physicians; mental health professionals; police officers; day care providers; school officials

¹ NYS SSL§413(5) as added by Part JJ of Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2021.

² NYS SSL §413, NYS Child Protective Services Manual, Chapter 2.

including administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, etc.; and directors of day or overnight children's summer camps.

Mandated reporters are required to make a report, or cause a report to be made, when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child coming before them in their professional or official capacity is abused or maltreated, or when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is an abused or maltreated child where the parent, guardian, custodian or person legally responsible for the child comes before them in their professional or official capacity and states from personal knowledge facts, conditions, or circumstances which, if correct, would render the child an abused or maltreated child.

As a result of statutory change in 2007, social services workers have enhanced reporting requirements. Chapter 513 of the Laws of 2007 amended section 413 of the Social Services Law (SSL) to require that "social services workers" make a report when any person comes before them in their professional or official capacity with information from personal knowledge that causes them to have a reasonable cause to suspect that a child is an abused or maltreated child.³ This requirement applies to all professional and paraprofessional staff of LDSSs.

In 2022, OCFS approved a new version of the OCFS Mandated Reporter Online Training.

III. Program Implications

All LDSS and VA staff who are mandated reporters under section 413 of the SSL are required to complete the new Mandated Reporter Online Training no later than April 1, 2025. This requirement applies to staff who took the prior version of the training as well as newly hired staff.

The revisions to the training were made to comply with the current statutory requirements and to strengthen the skills of mandated reporters in making informed decisions about identifying potential abuse or maltreatment of a child. After completing the new training, mandated reporters will be able to:

- determine if a child shows indicators of maltreatment or abuse, including in a virtual environment.
- recognize the impact of trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on children, families, and themselves.
- recognize the mitigating effects of the five protective factors on trauma.
- recognize the impact of bias in their decision-making.
- understand when they have a legal obligation to make a report to the SCR.
- recognize how to better connect individuals and families with services.
- prepare to make a report to the SCR.
- complete the LDSS 2221A form.
- understand their rights as a mandated reporter.

The new training will also help mandated reporters identify when concerns do not rise to a level legally requiring a report be made to the SCR. The training will help mandated reporters determine whether a family could instead be supported by directing them to culturally responsive, effective and community-based programs through OCFS' new H.E.A.R.S. family line.⁴ Another key focus of the new training is an implicit bias training component to explore the impact of implicit bias on decision making and to reduce the number of SCR reports influenced by bias about race or poverty.

³ NYS SSL §413(1)(d), 07-OCFS-ADM-15.

⁴ (1-888-55HEARS)

IV. Required Action

The new Mandated Reporter Online Training replaces the previously approved training, and all mandated reporters are required to complete the new training by April 1, 2025. The training includes a pre and post test mandated reporters are required to take before and after the training designed to measure the transfer of knowledge and information about their duties and responsibilities as mandated reporters of child abuse and maltreatment.

V. Systems Implications

None

VI. Contacts

Any questions concerning this release should be directed to the appropriate regional office, Division of Child Welfare and Community Services:

Buffalo Regional Office - Amanda Darling (716) 847-3145

Amanda.Darling@ocfs.ny.gov

Rochester Regional Office - Christopher Bruno (585) 238-8201

Christopher.Bruno@ocfs.ny.gov

Syracuse Regional Office - Sara Simon (315) 423-1200

Sara.Simon@ocfs.ny.gov

Albany Regional Office - John Lockwood (518) 486-7078

John.Lockwood@ocfs.ny.gov

Westchester Regional Office - Sheletha Chang (845) 708-2498

Sheletha.Chang@ocfs.ny.gov

New York City Regional Office - Ronni Fuchs (212) 383-4873

Ronni.Fuchs@ocfs.ny.gov

Native American Services - Heather LaForme (716) 847-3123

Heather.LaForme@ocfs.ny.gov

VII. Effective Date

This ADM is effective immediately upon publication.

/s/ Lisa Ghartey Ogundimu, Esq.

Issued by:

Name: Lisa Ghartey Ogundimu, Esq.

Title: Deputy Commissioner

Division/Office: Division of Child Welfare and Community Services