

455 - SEXUAL MISCONDUCT & ABUSE AGAINST MINORS

1.0 Purpose

The William Shore Memorial Pool District (District) is committed to providing the safest environment reasonably possible for all District sponsored programs and activities for children. It is the District's goal to provide programs free from abuse, including sexual abuse or misconduct.

2.0 Policy

To that end, the District will not tolerate abuse of children in any form and will take steps to ensure employees and volunteers are trained in recognizing the early warning signs of abuse of children and understand how to respond to suspected abuse or allegations of abuse.

This policy applies to children participating in any District sponsored program or activity and any children employed by the District or children who volunteer in any District sponsored program.

It is also the intent of this policy to prohibit and report abuse of children by employees and volunteers working on behalf of the District and who may come into contact with children in the scope of their employment.

For the purpose of this policy, abuse or misconduct means sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or injury of a child under the age of 18 years by any person under circumstances which cause harm to the child's health, welfare or safety.

3.0 Reporting Procedures

3.1 Mandatory Reporting:

Any employee who learns of or reasonably suspects the abuse of a child that occurred while the child was participating in a District sponsored activity, day care or recreational program shall report this in writing to the supervising official for the activity, day care or recreational program and that supervising official shall report it within 48 hours directly to the appropriate law enforcement agency as required by RCW 26.44.030 and send a copy of the report to the District's Executive Director.

3.2 Other Reporting:

In any other circumstance, if an employee or volunteer suspects that a child has been the victim of abuse, verbal and subsequent written notification will promptly be made to the Executive Director. The Director should then contact law enforcement or the Department of Social and Health Services' (DSHS) abuse hotline at 1-866-ENDHARM (363-4276) in order to be connected with the District's local DSHS office. The Director will make and keep a written contemporaneous record of all such reports made to law enforcement. If the report concerns an employee or volunteer of the District as being the suspected abuser the Director shall immediately forward a copy of the report to the appropriate management official with authority to place the suspected employee or volunteer on leave.

If the suspected abuser is another child enrolled in a District day care or program the Supervisor and/or Aquatics Manager will immediately send a copy of the report to the supervising official of the program with instructions to suspend the suspected child's participation in the program until the completion of the law enforcement investigation. The District should cooperate with any investigation conducted by DSHS or law enforcement agency. Due to the sensitive nature of the investigation, employees and/or volunteers who

455 Sexual Misconduct and Abuse Against Minors

are aware of the investigation should treat the situation as confidential and refrain from discussing the details with anyone not involved.

If an employee or volunteer witnesses a child being abused or is advised by a child that they have been abused, notification will immediately be made to the Director. This includes, but is not limited to, allegations or reasonable suspicions that an employee or volunteer of the District abused a child. The Director should then contact local law enforcement regarding the allegations so that an investigation can be started. The Aquatics Manager should ensure that DSHS is contacted either by the law enforcement agency or the District. In all cases written records of all notifications shall be made and preserved by the District employees making said notifications.

INVESTIGATION:

If any District employee is accused of abuse of a child, the employee will immediately be placed in a position at work where he/she has no contact with children and/or will be placed on paid leave until law enforcement and/or DSHS have completed their investigation; or until the employee is terminated from employment. If any District volunteer is accused of abuse of a child, the volunteer will immediately be asked to leave and not be allowed to participate as a volunteer in any District programs until the investigation into the allegations has been completed. A sustained allegation shall act to bar the accused volunteer from any further participation in District sponsored programs for children.

If any child in the District's care is alleged to have abused another child, the District will advise the parent's of the accused child that the accused child will not be allowed to participate in the District program until the investigation has been completed. A sustained allegation shall act to bar the accused child from any further participation in District sponsored programs for children.

In addition to the actions cited above, if the allegation of abuse of a child involves a child allegedly abused while in the District's care, the supervising official of the child care program will follow the mandatory reporting requirements to notify the appropriate law enforcement agency of the allegations within 48 hours as required by RCW 26.44.030 .

Even if no specific allegation of abuse has been made, any District employee or volunteer who has good reason to suspect that a child has been the victim of abuse or neglect by any District employee, volunteer, other child enrolled in a District Program, or any other person, shall promptly report their reasonable suspicion to their supervisor and/or the Aquatics Manager.