

State of North Dakota Statutes
covering reporting of known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect

§ 50-25.1-01. Purpose

It is the purpose of this chapter to protect the health and welfare of children by encouraging the reporting of children who are known to be or suspected of being abused or neglected; the providing of adequate services for the protection and treatment of abused and neglected children and to protect them from further harm; the identifying of the cause of children's deaths, where possible; the identifying of those circumstances that contribute to children's deaths; and the recommending of changes in policy, practices, and law to prevent children's deaths.

§ 50-25.1-02. Definitions

2. "Abused child" means an individual under the age of eighteen years who is suffering from serious physical harm or traumatic abuse caused by other than accidental means by a person responsible for the child's welfare or who is suffering from or was subjected to any act involving that individual in violation of sections 12.1-20-01 through 12.1-20-08. *(These are sex crimes).*

§ 50-25.1-03. Persons required and permitted to report

1. Any physician, nurse, dentist, optometrist, medical examiner or coroner, or any other medical or mental health professional, religious practitioner of the healing arts, schoolteacher or administrator, school counselor, addiction counselor, social worker, day care center or any other child care worker, police or law enforcement officer, or member of the clergy having knowledge of or reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or neglected, or has died as a result of abuse or neglect, shall report the circumstances to the department if the knowledge or suspicion is derived from information received by that person in that person's official or professional capacity. A member of the clergy, however, is not required to report such circumstances if the knowledge or suspicion is derived from information received in the capacity of spiritual adviser.
2. Any person having reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or neglected, or has died as a result of abuse or neglect, may report such circumstances to the department.

§ 50-25.1-04. Method of reporting

All persons mandated or permitted to report cases of known or suspected child abuse or neglect shall immediately cause oral or written reports to be made to the department or the department's designee. Oral reports must be followed by written reports within forty-eight hours if so requested by the department or the department's designee. A requested written report must include information specifically sought by the department if the reporter possesses or has reasonable access to that information. Reports involving known or suspected institutional child abuse or neglect must be made and received in the same manner as all other reports made under this chapter.