

C3.8 – CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe Iowa HHS process for ensuring that no Title X Clinical Services Provider and Title X staff (including the recipient, subrecipient, and service sites, as appropriate) shall be exempt from any State law requiring a notification or report of child abuse, child molestation, sexual abuse, rape, or incest. (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, Pub. L. No. 117-103, 136 Stat. 49, 444, 466–67 (2022)).

Policy

Staff must report child abuse, child molestation, sexual abuse, rape, or incest in accordance with state law. See Iowa Code Chapter 232.

A child is defined in Iowa Code section 232.68 as any person under the age of 18 years. A “victim of child abuse” is a person under the age of 18 years who has suffered one or more of the categories of child abuse as defined in Iowa Code section 232.68.

If a mandatory reporter suspects sexual abuse of a child under the age of 12 by a non-caretaker, they are required by law to make a report of that suspected abuse. If the child is age 12 or older, the mandatory reporter may report the suspected sexual abuse by a non-caretaker, but is not required by law to do so.

Iowa law does not require health practitioners to document the age of the minor client’s sexual partners. However, if a provider suspects that the minor client has been the victim of abuse, they should ask additional questions and make any reports required by the law.

Mandatory reporters are not required to make a report if a client over the age of 18 discloses childhood abuse. However, if a client who is 17 or younger discloses abuse that happened in weeks, months, or years prior, health practitioners should make a report of suspected abuse based on that disclosure.

Procedure

Iowa HHS will ensure that SRs comply with the following:

- Process (step-by-step instructions) for notification and reporting of child abuse, child molestation, sexual abuse, rape, or incest, including notification of supervisor that a report has been made.
 - SRs will ensure that every minor who presents for services or care is provided counseling on how to resist attempts to coerce them into engaging in sexual activities. Providers will conduct a preliminary screening of any teen who presents with an STI, pregnancy or any suspicion of abuse, in order to rule out victimization of a minor.
- Such screening is required for any individual who is under the age of consent in Iowa.
- SRs must maintain screening records demonstrating:
 1. The age of minor clients, and
 2. Documentation of each notification or report made under the state law.

The HHS secretary may review records maintained by a grantee or SR for the sole purpose of ensuring compliance with the requirements of this section.

Training Requirements

To ensure that all project staff have been educated about state laws which require the report of child abuse, child molestation, sexual abuse, rape, or incest, staff shall complete the following trainings at the listed intervals.

Annually:

- o Title X State Reporting Requirements: Mandatory Reporting for Abuse, Rape, Incent, and Human Trafficking (Legislative Mandate)
 - *Refer to the RHNTC Federal Title X Training Requirements Summary for the Title X Training Resources*
- o Family Involvement and Coercion (Legislative Mandate)
 - *Refer to the RHNTC Federal Title X Training Requirements Summary for the Title X Training Resources*

Every three years:

- o Iowa Mandatory Reporter Training

SRs will provide proof upon request that all project staff have completed the required training.

Date Revised	September 2023
References	Title X Program Handbook, https://opa.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2022-08/title-x-program-handbook-july-2022-508-updated.pdf#page=9 Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, Pub. L. No. 117-103, 136 Stat. 49, 444 (2022) https://www.congress.gov/117/plaws/publ103/PLAW-117publ103.pdf Providing Quality Family Planning Services Recommendations of CDC and the U.S. Office of Population Affairs (QFP) [2014] https://www.hhs.gov/opa/guidelines/clinical-guidelines/quality-family-planning/index.html
Additional Resources	Iowa Code Section 232.69 https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/232.69.pdf Iowa Code Section 235B.3(2) https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/235B.3.pdf