

#### **4.1.6 Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

##### **I. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Johnstown Police Department to comply with section 6311 of the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law [23 Pa. C.S.A. 6301, et seq.] in regard to persons required to report suspected child abuse.

##### **II. PURPOSE**

To provide police personnel with guidelines on the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law.

##### **III. PROCEDURES**

###### **A. Police Personnel Duties**

All Johnstown Police Department personnel who come in contact with a child, in which child abuse is suspected, shall start or cause to be started, a criminal investigation into the suspected abuse. All normal criminal investigative procedures shall be followed. To be included in the investigation, but not limited to, should be:

1. The names and addresses of the child and parents and all other persons, ex: babysitter, relatives, etc., responsible for the care of the child.
2. Where the suspected abuse occurred and the time or time period of the suspected abuse.
3. The age and sex of all the subjects in the investigation.
4. The nature and extent of the suspected child abuse, including any evidence of prior abuse to the child or siblings of the child.
5. The name and relationship of the person[s] responsible for causing the suspected abuse, if known and any evidence of prior abuse of that person[s].
6. Information in regards to the family composition.
7. Identify the source of the report and where that person can be reached.
8. Any actions taken by the reporting source and/or the investigating officer including the taking of photographs and x-rays, removal or keeping the child or notifying other agencies.
9. All other information required for a complete and detailed investigation.

#### 4.1.6 continued

10. Once the investigating officer/detective has reasonable facts, the Office of Children and Youth are to be notified. Along with the investigation, the department's primary concern is for the safety and welfare of the child.

#### B. Persons Required to Report Suspected Child Abuse

##### 1. General Rule

Person who, in the course of their employment, occupation or practice of their profession, come into contact with children shall report or cause a report to be made in accordance with section 6313 when they have reasonable cause to suspect on the basis of their medical, professional or other training and experience, that a child coming before them in their professional or official capacity is an abused child. *Except with respect to confidential communications made to an ordained member of the clergy, which are protected under 42 Pa. C.S. section 5943 the privileged communication between any professional person required to report and the patient or client of that person, shall not apply to situations involving child abuse and shall not constitute ground for failure to report as required by this chapter.*

##### 2. Enumeration of Persons Required to Report

Persons required to report include, but are not limited to, any licensed physician, osteopath, medical examiner, coroner, funeral director, dentist, optometrist, chiropractor, podiatrist, medical intern, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, hospital personnel engaged in the admission, examination, care or treatment of persons, Christian Science practitioner, member of the clergy, school administrator, school teacher, school nurse, social services worker, day-care center worker or any other child care or foster care worker, mental health professional, peace officer of law enforcement official.

##### 3. Reporting Procedure

Reports from persons required to report shall be made immediately by telephone and in writing within 48 hours after the oral report to the appropriate county agency.

**4.1.6 continued**

Effective Date:

Date: October 1, 2010

By Order Of:

Craig Foust  
Chief Of Police