



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

ROBERT GORDON  
DIRECTOR

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**CONTACT:** Bob Wheaton  
517-241-2112  
[wheatonb@michigan.gov](mailto:wheatonb@michigan.gov)

## **Mandated reporters of child abuse, neglect can use online system**

**LANSING, Mich.** – Mandated reporters who are legally required to report suspected child abuse and neglect can now do so online, strengthening efforts to keep Michigan children safe.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) recently launched the Michigan Online Reporting System for use by mandated reporters such as physicians, teachers and clergy who have established relationships with children based on their professions. Previously, mandated reporters had to call to make an immediate verbal report to Children’s Protective Services and follow up with a written report.

An amendment to Michigan’s Child Protection Law allowed MDHHS to create an online reporting system for mandated reporters as an option for reporting non-emergency suspected child abuse and neglect. More than 15,000 mandated reporters have registered to use the online system since February 2019.

Users have found the new reporting system to be efficient, convenient and timesaving, particularly during hours of high call volume on the CPS Centralized Intake toll-free hotline for abuse and neglect reporting.

“Protecting children is everybody’s business,” said JooYeun Chang, executive director of the MDHHS Children’s Services Agency. “We all have a role in making sure that children and families have the services and supports they need to grow and thrive. Children’s Protective Services needs the eyes and ears of the community – whether it’s mandated reporters or others – to investigate suspected child abuse or neglect and take action to keep children safe. The Michigan Online Reporting System makes it easier for mandated reporters to quickly provide the information that we need to protect Michigan’s children from future harm.”

The online system for mandated reporters also provides these advantages:

- Reports can be submitted 24/7 from anywhere with Internet access.
- The requirement to call the toll-free number and send a written report is eliminated when reporting suspected child abuse or neglect online.
- Supporting photos and documents can be uploaded into the online report.
- Submitted reports can be viewed for up to six months.

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- The mandated reporter's information is saved in the system so future reporting is faster and easier.

The toll-free hotline, 855-444-391, remains available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for verbal reports of child abuse and neglect from mandated reporters or from the public. For emergencies, mandated reporters must call 911 and then the hotline – just as all other reporters are expected to do.

In 2018, CPS investigated approximately 67,000 reports of suspected child abuse and neglect as a result of reports from mandated reporters and investigated about 29,000 reports from other members of the public who were not mandated reporters.

More information about the Michigan Online Reporting System and who is a mandated reporter can be found at [www.michigan.gov/mandatedreporter](http://www.michigan.gov/mandatedreporter). The MDHHS site contains registration instructions, a user's guide, a guide to detailed reporting, and frequently asked questions about online reporting. Only mandated reporters can use the online system.

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