

28. Abuse

- (a) Abuse can be either physical or emotional. It includes criminal acts, violations of human rights legislation, verbal abuse, or negligence. Examples of abusive acts include:
- (i) Hitting, kicking, slapping, pinching, hair-pulling
 - (ii) Unauthorized physical restraint
 - (iii) Isolation
 - (iv) Use of noxious substances - eg: cold showers
 - (v) Use of force - eg: force-feeding
 - (vi) Unnecessary roughness - eg: pushing
 - (vii) Inflicting undue physical discomfort or pain
 - (viii) Withholding basic rights - eg: food, clothing, health care
 - (ix) Degrading or humiliating behaviour
 - (x) Sexual abuse
 - (xi) Yelling, name-calling, swearing
 - (xii) Disregard for individual's right to dignity, privacy and respect
 - (xiii) Failure to respond to a health or safety risk
 - (xiv) Placing individual in unnecessary danger
 - (xv) Financial abuse, theft or intentional mismanagement of an individual's funds
- (b) Any act of abuse as defined above will be considered grounds for immediate dismissal.
- (c) Any employee, volunteer or sub-contractor suspected of abuse will be suspended until an investigation is completed. The employee or sub-contractor's pay during the term of the suspension will be placed in a trust account until the investigation is complete. If the allegations are found to be true, the employee will be dismissed, or the volunteer / sub-contractor's agreement will be discontinued, and the funds in the trust account will be returned to the employer. If the allegations are found to be false, the person will be reinstated with full pay.
- (d) Any employee who witnesses or suspects abuse must report it immediately in writing to the supervisor, who will immediately report it to the Executive Director. Failure to report abuse may be considered grounds for legal action and/or termination of employment.
- (e) The Executive Director will review the report and determine next steps, including who should follow up with the alleged abuser and victim. No-one should speak to the alleged abuser or victim about the allegation, or to any third party, unless directed to do so by the Executive Director.
- (f) All reports of abuse or suspected abuse must be reported to the funder on a Critical Incident Report, according to the steps outlined in Policy #25: Critical Incident Reporting.
- (g) All reports of abuse or suspected abuse will be taken seriously and treated with discretion and tact.

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERN OR SUSPICION AT ALL ABOUT ABUSE, REPORT IT.