

CURRY COLLEGE

DEFINITIONS RELATED TO REPORTING OF ABUSE, NEGLECT OR ANY INAPPROPRIATE ACTIVITY INVOLVING A MINOR

For your reference, the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) regulations (110 CMR, Section 2.00) offer the following definitions of child abuse and neglect:

- ***Abuse:*** The non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker upon a child under age 18 which causes or creates a substantial risk of physical or emotional injury; or an act by a caretaker involving a child that constitutes a sexual offense under the laws of the Commonwealth; or any sexual contact between a caretaker and a child under the care of that individual. This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e., abuse can occur while the child is in an out-of-home or in-home setting).
- ***Neglect:*** Failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence or inability, to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional stability and growth or other essential care; provided, however, that such inability is not due solely to inadequate economic resources or solely to the existence of a handicapped condition. This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e., neglect can occur while the child is in an out-of-home or in-home setting).
- ***Emotional Injury:*** An impairment to or disorder of the intellectual or psychological capacity of a child as evidenced by observable and substantial reduction in the child's ability to function within a normal range of performance and behavior.
- ***Physical Injury:*** Death or fracture of a bone, subdural hematoma, burns, impairment of any organ, and any other such nontrivial injury; or soft tissue swelling or skin bruising, depending on such factors as the child's age, circumstances under which the injury occurred, and the number and location of bruises; or addiction to drugs at birth; or failure to thrive.