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December 28, 2018

ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) NO. 18-147

TO: ALL COUNTY PROGRAM MANAGERS

SUBJECT: MANDATED REPORTER ONLINE TRAINING COURSES

REFERENCE: [THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND ACADEMY FOR PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE ONLINE MANDATED REPORTER TRAINING](#)

This All County Letter (ACL) 18-147 is to inform counties of the various mandated reporting online training resources provided by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). In addition to affecting many of your staff, the trainings referenced can be made available to persons in related fields, such as doctors, teachers, employees of financial institutions, and the public.

Adult Protective Services

The CDSS Adult Protective Services (APS) program offers a free online mandated reporting training for everyone working with elder and dependent adults. The link to the training is available through the [Academy for Professional Excellence](#). The online course reviews how, when, and where to report suspected abuse or neglect of elders or dependent adults, as well as educates reporters on what to expect after a report is filed. Mandated reporter responsibilities are detailed and how to recognize the signs of abuse are thoroughly examined.

Developed for the CDSS by San Diego State's School of Social Work's Academy for Professional Excellence MASTER-APS Training Program, the course is divided into four lessons and takes approximately 90 minutes to complete. It is interactive and can be tailored to specific professions and volunteer roles. It is available on demand, is not monitored, and participants will keep their own record of completion.

The training is recommended for all employees of public and private care facilities, for health care workers, members of the clergy, employees of financial institutions, law enforcement personnel, and anyone with full or intermittent responsibility for the care or custody of an elderly or dependent adult. A full listing of mandated reporters of elder and dependent adult abuse can be found in [Section 15630\(a\) of the Welfare and Institutions Code](#)

It is recommended that county social service agencies post the link to the training on their website and encourage their local mandated reporters to access the training and then follow-up with their local APS programs for county specific questions.

Child Welfare Services

The CDSS Office of Child Abuse Prevention offers free online mandated reporter training for all social workers and individuals identified as mandated reporters. The link to this training is accessible at the [child abuse mandated reporter website](#). The free training has seven modules, ranging from two to four hours in length. In addition to a general module for all mandated reporters, there are six profession-specific modules for clergy, school personnel, child care providers, law enforcement, mental health professionals/social workers, and medical professionals.

The gravity of child abuse and the role mandated reporters have in combatting it cannot be understated. Nationally, approximately 700,000 children are abused in the United States each year. In California alone, there were nearly 75,000 verified cases of child abuse in 2015, and 88 child fatalities resulting from child abuse or neglect in 2014. For these reasons alone, the education and training offered in these online trainings are fundamental to our ongoing commitment and responsibility to access every tool available to curb and combat child abuse.

Article 2.5 [11164-11174.3] of the California Penal Code provides a comprehensive list of professionals who are designated mandated reporters by the state. Given that 70 percent of all reports to Child Welfare Services (CWS) of suspected child abuse come from mandated reporters, employers are strongly encouraged to provide their employees who are mandated reporters with training in the duties imposed by the article. Penal code also encourages public and private organizations to provide training to their volunteers whose duties require direct contact with and supervision of children, as their evolving skill and continued competence in identifying signs of possible abuse are indispensable.

It is recommended that county social service agencies post the CDSS link to the free mandated reporter training on their website and encourage their local mandated reporters to access the training and then follow-up with their local CWS office for county-specific questions.

Domestic Violence

The mandatory reporter regulations concerning domestic abuse apply to a distinct subset of healthcare providers, but all professionals are encouraged to make reports. If the health care provider is seeing an adult patient under the age of 65 for a physical condition and suspect physical abuse, they are required to report it, even if the patient denies the abuse. Types of injuries to be reported include firearm injuries, incest, battery, stabbing, rape, spousal abuse, or torture.

If the patient is being seen by a health care provider for some other consultation, there is no mandate to report. Examples of situations where the health care provider has the discretion to report include:

- A psychiatrist seeing a patient for a psychiatric condition.
- A pediatrician learning that a patient's parent is experiencing domestic violence.
- A medical social worker learning of the domestic violence during a social work interview.

The patient may choose to make their own report by contacting police.

The CDSS internet site provides access to a training developed by the University of California, Davis, for statewide CalWORKs staff to better identify and work with clients who are victims of domestic abuse. It is accessible through the [information and resources link on the CDSS internet](#) site.

Should you have additional questions regarding this notice, please contact the California Department of Social Service, Adult Programs Division, Adult Protective Services, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, John Hartmire at (916) 651-5111.

Sincerely,

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c: CWDA