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I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for reporting.

II. Definitions

“Abandoned” or “abandonment” means a situation in which the parent or legal custodian of a child, vulnerable adult or elderly person or the caregiver, while being able, has made no significant contribution to the child, vulnerable adult or elderly care and maintenance or has failed to establish or maintain a substantial and positive relationship with the child, vulnerable adult or elderly, or both. Such a relationship includes, but is not limited to, frequent and regular contact with the child through frequent and regular visitation or communication to or with the child, and the exercise of parental rights and responsibilities. Marginal efforts and incidental or token visits or communications are not sufficient. The incarceration, repeated incarceration, or extended incarceration of a parent, legal custodian, or caregiver responsible for a child, vulnerable adult or elderly person’s welfare may support a finding of abandonment.

“Abuse” means any willful act or threatened act that results in any physical, mental, or sexual abuse, injury, or harm that causes or is likely to cause the child, vulnerable adult or elderly person physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired. Abuse of a child, vulnerable adult or elderly person includes acts or omissions. Corporal discipline of a child, vulnerable adult or elderly person by a parent or legal custodian for disciplinary purposes does not in itself constitute abuse when it does not result in harm to the child, vulnerable adult or elderly person.

“Neglect” occurs when a child, vulnerable adult or elderly person is deprived of, or is allowed to be deprived of, necessary food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment or is permitted to live in an environment when such deprivation or environment causes the child, vulnerable adult or elderly person’s physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired or to be in danger of being significantly impaired.

III. Procedure

1. **Abuse, Abandonment and Neglect.** All persons working or contracted to work with Clients at the Wonderful Counselor are mandated reporters. Reporting is required for suspected abuse of any kind, abandonment, neglect of a minor child, elderly person, or vulnerable adult.
 - a. Clinicians shall obtain support in determining the need to make the report from their supervisor.
 - b. Reports shall be made to the Department of Children and Family Services’ central abuse hotline (1-800-962-2873) or via facsimile, web-based chat or web-based report(<https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us/>)
 - c. Once the report is made, the report shall be documents to include: time, date, nature of the report, who obtained the information and whether the call was accepted or denied in the Client case note section of the record keeping platform.
2. **Homicide or Intent to Harm.** Clients who disclose homicidal thoughts, intentions or plan toward someone else, group or physical locations must be reported to that individual if the information to contact them is available. It must also be reported to law enforcement.
 - a. Once the report is made, the report shall be documents to include: time, date, nature of the report, who obtained the information and whether the call was accepted or denied in the Client case note section of the record keeping platform.
3. **Suicide.** Client who disclose thoughts, intentions or plans to die by suicide must be assessed using the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale.
 - a. If it is determined that the Client is not an immediate threat to themselves, the Brown Stanley Safety Plan should be completed. If they are a minor, their guardians must be made aware and all parties should have a copy of the plan.
 - b. If it is determined the Client is an immediate threat to themselves:
 - i. The Licensed Clinical designee of the organization must be contacted to initiate an evaluation and assessment for involuntary examinations.

- ii. The proper authorities should be contacted if transportation will be needed.
 - iii. Guardians of minors should be informed of the events that have taken place concerning their minor child.
 - iv. If the session is virtual, law enforcement should be contacted and when possible, request a “CIT trained officer” to respond to the client at their present location.
- c. Once the report is made, the report shall be document to include: time, date, nature of the report, who obtained the information and whether the call was accepted or denied in the Client case note section of the record keeping platform.

IV. References

NASW Code of Ethics

Fla. Stat. §§ 39.01, 39.201-206.

Section 456.059, **Florida** Statutes