SAMPLE POLICY

Sample policy from the CareRulebook Georgia manual. Fictional agency. Rule-verified on September 30, 2026.

This is Policy 6.1 of the 25 in the manual, exactly as it prints in a buyer's copy, but filled in with example answers for a fictional agency, Sample Home Care, LLC. Rule-verified means each quote under Rule basis was checked word for word against the official text we saved on that date. It is not legal advice.

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POLICY 6.1

Reporting abuse, neglect and exploitation

O.C.G.A. §30-5-3 · O.C.G.A. §30-5-4 · O.C.G.A. §30-5-8(a) · O.C.G.A. §31-8-81 · O.C.G.A. §31-8-82 · Georgia DHS Division of Aging Services, Adult Protective Services reporting page · Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.03(q) · Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.09(4)(b)2 · Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.09(4)(d) · Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.09(5)(a)1 · Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.09(6)(a)3

Purpose

To make sure that everyone who works for Sample Home Care, LLC knows they are a mandated reporter, recognizes suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation of disabled adults and elder persons, and reports it to the right agencies in the way Georgia law requires (O.C.G.A. §30-5-4 and, for residents of long-term care facilities, O.C.G.A. §31-8-82).

Scope

This policy applies to every employee of Sample Home Care, LLC, whatever their role, including the administrator, Jordan Lee, the registered nurse, Taylor Brooks, RN, supervisors, direct care staff and office staff.

It covers suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation of any client, and of any other disabled adult or elder person staff come across in their work, whoever the suspected person is: a staff member, a family member, a caretaker or anyone else.

Policy

What the words mean (O.C.G.A. §30-5-3)

1. In this policy the words below have the meanings Georgia law gives them:
    1. **Abuse** is the willful infliction of physical pain, physical injury, sexual abuse, mental anguish, unreasonable confinement, or the willful deprivation of essential services to a disabled adult or elder person.

2. **Neglect** is the absence or omission of essential services to the degree that it harms or threatens with harm the physical or emotional health of a disabled adult or elder person.
3. **Exploitation** is the illegal or improper use of a disabled adult or elder person or that person's resources through undue influence, coercion, harassment, duress, deception, false representation, false pretense, or other similar means for one's own or another's profit or advantage.
4. An **elder person** is a person 65 years of age or older who is not a resident (of a long-term care facility).
5. A **disabled adult** is a person 18 years of age or older who is not a resident, but who is mentally or physically incapacitated, has Alzheimer's disease, or has dementia.

Item 9 covers clients who live in a long-term care facility, such as a personal care home, where a separate law, the Long-term Care Facility Resident Abuse Reporting Act, applies.

Who must report (O.C.G.A. §30-5-4(a))

2. **Staff are mandated reporters.** Georgia law requires employees of a public or private agency engaged in professional health related services to elder persons or disabled adults to report (§30-5-4(a)(1)(A)(ix)). Nursing personnel are also mandated reporters (Georgia Division of Aging Services). Sample Home Care, LLC treats every employee as a mandated reporter.
3. **When the duty applies.** A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to believe that a disabled adult or elder person has been the victim of abuse, other than by accidental means, or has been neglected or exploited, must report or cause reports to be made in accordance with §30-5-4 (§30-5-4(a)(1)(A)). Reasonable cause is enough. Staff do not wait for proof and do not investigate first.
4. **Anyone may report.** Any other person who has reasonable cause to believe that a disabled adult or elder person is in need of protective services, or has been the victim of abuse, neglect or exploitation, may report it (§30-5-4(a)(2)). Staff who are unsure whether a person meets the definitions in item 1 report anyway.

Where reports go (O.C.G.A. §30-5-4(b)(1)(A))

5. **Two reports.** A report must be made to an adult protection agency providing protective services as designated by the Department of Human Services, and to an appropriate law enforcement agency or prosecuting attorney (§30-5-4(b)(1)(A)). Sample Home Care, LLC reports to both:
    1. **Adult Protective Services (APS)**, Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services: online at any time through the reporting page at aging.georgia.gov/adult-protective-services, or by phone at 1-866-55AGING (1-866-552-4464), pressing 3, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and
    2. **law enforcement**: the police department or sheriff's office for the place where the person lives, or the prosecuting attorney.

6. **Immediate danger.** APS is not a first responder. If anyone is in immediate danger, staff call 911 first (Georgia Division of Aging Services), then make the reports in item 5.
7. **Making sure APS has the report.** A web report, or a phone message left when no intake specialist answers, does not count as an accepted report for investigation. If APS does not call back within 48 hours, the person who reported calls APS during regular business hours to follow up (Georgia Division of Aging Services).
8. **How reports are made and what they include (§30-5-4(b)(2)).** A report may be made orally or in writing. It must include the name and address of the disabled adult or elder person, and should include:
    1. the name and address of the person's caretaker;
    2. the person's age;
    3. the nature and extent of the person's injury or condition resulting from abuse, exploitation or neglect; and
    4. any other pertinent information.
9. **Clients living in a long-term care facility (O.C.G.A. §31-8-81, §31-8-82).** A client's residence can be a personal care home (Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.03(q)). If the person is 65 or older and is a resident, the report must be made in accordance with Article 4 of Chapter 8 of Title 31, the Long-term Care Facility Resident Abuse Reporting Act (§30-5-4(b)(1)(B)). The reporting duty in that Act covers any resident or former resident, whatever their age (§31-8-82(a)).
    1. **Who this covers.** A long-term care facility is any skilled nursing home, intermediate care home, assisted living community, personal care home, or community living arrangement subject to regulation and licensure by the Department of Community Health (DCH) (§31-8-81(3)). A resident is any person receiving treatment or care in a long-term care facility (§31-8-81(4)).
    2. **Staff are mandated reporters.** Employees of a public or private agency engaged in professional health related services to residents must report (§31-8-82(a)(10)). Sample Home Care, LLC treats every employee as a mandated reporter under this law too.
    3. **When the duty applies.** A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to believe that any resident or former resident has been abused or exploited while residing in a long-term care facility must report (§31-8-82(a)). Under this law, abuse includes any intentional or grossly negligent act or omission to act which causes injury to a resident, including failure to provide treatment or care (§31-8-81(1)), and exploitation is the illegal or improper use of a resident or the resident's resources through undue influence, coercion, harassment, duress, deception, false representation, false pretense, or other similar means for one's own or another's profit or advantage (§31-8-81(2)). Sample Home Care, LLC also reports suspected neglect of a resident under this item, as the Division of Aging Services directs reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation of people living in long-term care facilities to DCH.

4. **Immediate report to DCH and law enforcement (§31-8-82(a)).** The report must be made immediately, by telephone or in person, to DCH, and must also be made to the appropriate law enforcement agency or prosecuting attorney. The Georgia Division of Aging Services gives DCH Healthcare Facility Regulation's number for these reports as 1-800-878-6442.
5. **Written report within 24 hours (§31-8-82(b)).** The reporter must also make a written report to DCH within 24 hours after making the initial report.
6. **What the report includes (§31-8-82(d)).** A report of suspected abuse or exploitation must include:
    1. the name and address of the person making the report;
    2. the name and address of the resident or former resident;
    3. the name and address of the long-term care facility;
    4. the nature and extent of any injuries or the condition resulting from the suspected abuse or exploitation;
    5. the suspected cause of the abuse or exploitation; and
    6. any other information which the reporter believes might be helpful in determining the cause of the resident's injuries or condition and the identity of the person or persons responsible.
7. **Confidentiality.** These reports are also made even if the reasonable cause is based in whole or in part on a communication that is otherwise privileged or confidential by law (§31-8-82(f)).

How staff report at Sample Home Care, LLC (O.C.G.A. §30-5-4(a)(1)(C))

10. **Tell the administrator, without delaying the report.** A staff member with reasonable cause to believe tells the administrator, Jordan Lee, at once, and the administrator makes the reports in items 5 to 9 and tells the staff member when they are made. Telling the administrator never replaces or delays the report. If the administrator cannot be reached straight away, is the person suspected, or the staff member does not know that the reports have been made, the staff member makes the reports themselves. Any staff member may always report directly to APS and law enforcement.
11. **Confidentiality is no reason not to report.** Suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation or need for protective services that must be reported is reported even if the reasonable cause is based in whole or in part on a communication that is otherwise privileged or confidential by law (§30-5-4(d), §31-8-82(f)). The confidentiality of client records (Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.09(4)(b)2, Policy 10.1) does not stop staff from making a report.
12. **Immunity for reports.** Anyone who makes a report under Chapter 5 of Title 30 of the O.C.G.A., testifies in any judicial proceeding arising from the report, or participates in a required investigation, is immune from any civil liability or criminal prosecution on account of the report, testimony or participation, unless they acted in bad faith, with a malicious purpose, or were a party to the crime or fraud (§30-5-4(c)).

L3. **Failing to report is a crime.** It is unlawful for a mandated reporter knowingly and willfully to fail to make a required report, and doing so is a misdemeanor (O.C.G.A. §30-5-8(a)).

L4. **Cooperating with investigations.** Sample Home Care, LLC and its staff cooperate with APS, law enforcement and DCH in any investigation that follows a report.

Links to other policies

L5. **Incident reports.** Each suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation of a client is also recorded as an incident report. Sample Home Care, LLC must keep on file for at least five years all incident reports or reports of unusual occurrences that affect the health, safety and welfare of its clients, including what actions, if any, it took to address them (Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.09(4)(d), Policy 10.2).

L6. **Staff qualifications.** Every staff member hired by Sample Home Care, LLC must, prior to serving as a direct access employee, obtain a satisfactory fingerprint records check determination in compliance with DCH's Rules and Regulations for Criminal Background Checks, Chapter 111-8-12 (Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.09(5)(a)1). Policy 3.1 sets out the staff qualifications and Policy 3.3 the background checks. DCH may require a criminal background check on a staff member during an abuse investigation involving that staff member (Policy 3.3, item 20). If a staff member then appears on a registry check, or DCH gives notice of an unsatisfactory determination, the administrator acts under Policy 3.3, item 12, and Policy 3.1, item 8.

L7. **Training.** Orientation includes reporting client problems to supervisory personnel and procedures for handling incidents that affect the delivery of services (Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.09(6)(a)3). Every employee is trained on this policy in orientation, before working with clients (Policy 4.1).

L8. **Complaints.** A complaint from a client or anyone else that alleges abuse, neglect or exploitation is handled under this policy as well as Policy 2.3.

Procedure

1. **Danger first.** If anyone is in immediate danger or needs urgent medical care, the staff member calls 911 and stays with the client if it is safe to do so.
2. **Tell the administrator.** The staff member calls the administrator at once on (404) 555-0100 during office hours (Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) or (404) 555-0199 at other times, and says what they saw, heard or were told, and when. If the administrator cannot be reached straight away or is the person suspected, the staff member goes to step 3 themselves.
3. **Make the reports.** The administrator (or the staff member) reports:
    1. to APS online, or by phone at 1-866-552-4464, pressing 3, during its phone hours; and
    2. to the local police department or sheriff's office, using its non-emergency number unless the matter is an emergency.

For a resident of a long-term care facility (Policy item 9), the reporter instead reports immediately, by telephone or in person, to DCH Healthcare Facility Regulation at 1-800-878-6442 and to the local police department or sheriff's office, and then sends DCH a written report within 24 hours after the initial report. When calling, the reporter asks DCH where to send the written report.

4. **What to give.** The reporter gives the person's name and address and, as far as known, the caretaker's name and address, the person's age, the nature and extent of the injury or condition, and any other pertinent information (Policy item 8). For a resident of a long-term care facility, the reporter gives everything listed in Policy item 9.6, including their own name and address and the facility's name and address.
5. **Record the reports.** The administrator records the date and time Sample Home Care, LLC first learned of the concern, who raised it, the date and time of each report, how it was made, the agency reported to, the name of the person who took it and any reference number given. For a resident of a long-term care facility, the administrator also keeps a copy of the written report to DCH and records when and how it was sent.
6. **Confirm and follow up.** The administrator tells the staff member that the reports were made. If APS has not called back within 48 hours of a web report or phone message, the administrator calls APS during regular business hours.
7. **Incident report.** The administrator completes an incident report, including the actions Sample Home Care, LLC took, files it in the incident report file and files a copy in the client's file (Policy item 15, Policy 8.1).
8. **Client care.** The supervisor checks that the client's services continue safely, and reviews the service plan under Policy 5.1 if the client's needs have changed.
9. **Cooperation.** The administrator is the contact for APS, law enforcement and DCH, and makes staff, records and information available to them as the investigation requires.

Responsibilities

- **All employees:** know they are mandated reporters; tell the administrator at once; make the reports themselves when Policy item 10 says so; call 911 in an emergency; cooperate with investigations.
- **Administrator (Jordan Lee):** makes the reports to APS (or, for residents of long-term care facilities, to DCH, including the written report within 24 hours) and law enforcement, records them, follows up with APS, completes the incident report, acts on findings about staff, and makes sure every employee is trained on this policy.
- **Supervisors and the RN (Taylor Brooks, RN):** watch for signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation at supervisory visits, report under this policy, and make sure the client's care continues safely.

Records

- The log of each concern and report (Procedure step 5), kept at the office, with copies of written reports to DCH for residents of long-term care facilities.
- Incident reports, with the actions taken, kept for at least five years (Policy 10.2).
- Records that each employee was trained on this policy, in their personnel record (Policy 3.2).

Recommended practice

- Do not discipline or retaliate against anyone for making a report in good faith, and tell staff this in orientation.
- Ask the staff member to write down what they saw or were told, in their own words, with the date and time, as soon as they can.
- Protect the client while the matter is investigated, for example by assigning a different staff member or taking the staff member suspected off client contact.
- Give each client and responsible party the APS phone number and web page at the start of service.
- Retrain every employee on this policy once a year, as part of their eight hours of annual training.
- Report on the same day you have reasonable cause to believe, during APS phone hours where possible, so you can speak to an intake specialist.

Rule basis

> The following persons having reasonable cause to believe that a disabled adult or elder person has been the victim of abuse, other than by accidental means, or has been neglected or exploited shall report or cause reports to be made in accordance with the provisions of this Code section: ... (ix) Employees of a public or private agency engaged in professional health related services to elder persons or disabled adults
>
> `O.C.G.A. §30-5-4(a)(1)(A)`

> When the person having a reasonable cause to believe that a disabled adult or elder person is in need of protective services performs services as a member of the staff of a hospital, social agency, financial institution, or similar facility, such person shall notify the person in charge of the facility and such person or that person's designee shall report or cause reports to be made in accordance with the provisions of this Code section.
>
> `O.C.G.A. §30-5-4(a)(1)(C)`

> Any other person having a reasonable cause to believe that a disabled adult or elder person is in need of protective services or has been the victim of abuse, neglect, or exploitation may report such information as provided in this Code section.
>
> O.C.G.A. §30-5-4(a)(2)

> A report that a disabled adult or elder person is in need of protective services or has been the victim of abuse, neglect, or exploitation shall be made to an adult protection agency providing protective services as designated by the department and to an appropriate law enforcement agency or prosecuting attorney.
>
> O.C.G.A. §30-5-4(b)(1)(A)

> If the disabled adult or person is 65 years of age or older and is a resident, a report shall be made in accordance with Article 4 of Chapter 8 of Title 31.
>
> O.C.G.A. §30-5-4(b)(1)(B)

> Reporting required by subparagraph (A)(1) of this subsection may be made by oral or written communication. Such report shall include the name and address of the disabled adult or elder person and should include the name and address of the disabled adult's or elder person's caretaker, the age of the disabled adult or elder person, the nature and extent of the disabled adult's or elder person's injury or condition resulting from abuse, exploitation, or neglect, and other pertinent information.
>
> O.C.G.A. §30-5-4(b)(2)

> Anyone who makes a report pursuant to this chapter, who testifies in any judicial proceeding arising from the report, who provides protective services, or who participates in a required investigation under the provisions of this chapter shall be immune from any civil liability or criminal prosecution on account of such report or testimony or participation, unless such person acted in bad faith, with a malicious purpose, or was a party to such crime or fraud.
>
> O.C.G.A. §30-5-4(c)

> Any suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation, or need for protective services which is required to be reported by any person pursuant to this Code section shall be reported notwithstanding that the reasonable cause to believe such abuse, neglect, exploitation, or need for protective services has occurred or is occurring is based in whole or in part upon any communication to that person which is otherwise made privileged or confidential by law
>
> O.C.G.A. §30-5-4(d)

> "Abuse" means the willful infliction of physical pain, physical injury, sexual abuse, mental anguish, unreasonable confinement, or the willful deprivation of essential services to a disabled adult or elder person.
>
> O.C.G.A. §30-5-3(1)

> "Disabled adult" means a person 18 years of age or older who is not a resident, but who: (A) Is mentally or physically incapacitated; (B) Has Alzheimer's disease, as defined in Code Section 31-8-180; or (C) Has dementia, as defined in Code Section 16-5-100.
>
> O.C.G.A. §30-5-3(5)

> "Elder person" means a person 65 years of age or older who is not a resident.
>
> O.C.G.A. §30-5-3(6)

> "Exploitation" means the illegal or improper use of a disabled adult or elder person or that person's resources through undue influence, coercion, harassment, duress, deception, false representation, false pretense, or other similar means for one's own or another's profit or advantage.
>
> O.C.G.A. §30-5-3(8)

> "Neglect" means the absence or omission of essential services to the degree that it harms or threatens with harm the physical or emotional health of a disabled adult or elder person.
>
> O.C.G.A. §30-5-3(14)

> It shall be unlawful for any person or official required by paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Code Section 30-5-4 to report a case of disabled adult or elder person abuse to fail knowingly and willfully to make such report. (2) Any person violating the provisions of this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.
>
> O.C.G.A. §30-5-8(a)

> This article shall be known as the "Long-term Care Facility Resident Abuse Reporting Act."
>
> O.C.G.A. §31-8-80

> "Abuse" means any intentional or grossly negligent act or series of acts or intentional or grossly negligent omission to act which causes injury to a resident, including, but not limited to, assault or battery, failure to provide treatment or care, or sexual harassment of the resident.
>
> O.C.G.A. §31-8-81(1)

> "Exploitation" means the illegal or improper use of a resident or the resident's resources through undue influence, coercion, harassment, duress, deception, false representation, false pretense, or other similar means for one's own or another's profit or advantage.
>
> O.C.G.A. §31-8-81(2)

> "Long-term care facility" or "facility" means any skilled nursing home, intermediate care home, assisted living community, personal care home, or community living arrangement now or hereafter subject to regulation and licensure by the department.
>
> O.C.G.A. §31-8-81(3)

> "Resident" means any person receiving treatment or care in a long-term care facility.
>
> O.C.G.A. §31-8-81(4)

> Any of the following people who have reasonable cause to believe that any resident or former resident has been abused or exploited while residing in a long-term care facility shall immediately make a report as described in subsection (d) of this Code section by telephone or in person to the department and shall make the report to the appropriate law enforcement agency or prosecuting attorney: ... (10) Employees of a public or private agency engaged in professional health related services to residents
>
> O.C.G.A. §31-8-82(a)

> Persons required to make a report pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section shall also make a written report to the department within 24 hours after making the initial report.
>
> O.C.G.A. §31-8-82(b)

> A report of suspected abuse or exploitation shall include the following: (1) The name and address of the person making the report unless such person is not required to make a report; (2) The name and address of the resident or former resident; (3) The name and address of the long-term care facility; (4) The nature and extent of any injuries or the condition resulting from the suspected abuse or exploitation; (5) The suspected cause of the abuse or exploitation; and (6) Any other information which the reporter believes might be helpful in determining the cause of the resident's injuries or condition and in determining the identity of the person or persons responsible for the abuse or exploitation.
>
> O.C.G.A. §31-8-82(d)

> Any suspected abuse or exploitation which is required to be reported by any person pursuant to this Code section shall be reported notwithstanding that the reasonable cause to believe such abuse or exploitation has occurred or is occurring is based in whole or in part upon any communication to that person which is otherwise made privileged or confidential by law
>
> `O.C.G.A. §31-8-82(f)`

> You can file a report on the web 24/7. Reports are also accepted by phone Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Toll-Free 1-866-55AGING (1-866-552-4464) Press "3"
>
> `Georgia DHS Division of Aging Services, Report Elder Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation`

> APS is not a first responder. Call 911 if someone is in immediate danger! If you choose to call the toll-free line and are unable to reach a live intake specialist, please leave your detailed contact information for a return call. Phone messages will be returned the next business day. Completing a web report or leaving a message does not constitute an accepted report for investigation. If you do not receive a return call within 48 hours, please call during regular business hours to follow up.
>
> `Georgia DHS Division of Aging Services, Report Elder Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation`

> To report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an older adult or adult with a disability residing in a long-term care facility (i.e. community living arrangements, personal care homes, intermediate care, or skilled nursing homes), contact the Department of Community Health, ... at 1-800-878-6442 or
>
> `Georgia DHS Division of Aging Services, Report Elder Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation`

> Mandated reporters include: ... nursing personnel; ... employees of a public or private agency engaged in professional health-related services to elder persons or adults with disabilities
>
> `Georgia DHS Division of Aging Services, Report Elder Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation`

> "Residence" means the place where an individual makes that person's permanent or temporary home, whether that person's own apartment or house, a friend or relative's home, or a personal care home, but shall not include a hospital, nursing home, hospice, or other health care facility licensed under O.C.G.A. § 31-7-1 et seq.
>
> `Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.03(q)`

> Employees of the provider shall not disclose or knowingly permit the disclosure of any information in a client record except to appropriate provider staff, the client, responsible party (if applicable), the client's physician or other health care provider, the department, other individuals authorized by the client in writing or by subpoena.
>
> `Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.09(4)(b)2`

> A provider shall also maintain on file for a minimum of five years all incident reports or reports of unusual occurrences (e.g. falls, accidents, significant medication errors, etc.) that affect the health, safety, and welfare of its clients. Documentation required to be maintained shall include what actions, if any, the provider took to resolve clients' complaints and to address any incident reports or unusual occurrences required to be retained.
>
> `Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.09(4)(d)`

> Prior to serving as a direct access employee, obtain a satisfactory fingerprint records check determination in compliance with the Rules and Regulations for Criminal Background Checks, Chapter 111-8-12;
>
> `Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.09(5)(a)1`

> Reporting client progress and problems to supervisory personnel and procedures for handling medical emergencies or other incidents that affect the delivery of services in accordance with the client's services plan;
>
> `Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 111-8-65-.09(6)(a)3`

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