



2025 Edition

# Child Abuse and Neglect in Connecticut

A Guide to Resources in the Law Library

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This guide links to advance release opinions on the Connecticut Judicial Branch website and to case law hosted on Google Scholar **and Harvard's Case Law Access Project**.  
The online versions are for informational purposes only.

References to online legal research databases refer to in-library use of these databases.  
Remote access is not available.

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# Introduction

## *A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

- Abused: **"A child may be found 'abused' who (A) has been inflicted with physical injury or injuries other than by accidental means, (B) has injuries that are at variance with the history given of them, or (C) is in a condition that is the result of maltreatment, including, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment;" Conn. Gen. Stat. [§ 46b-120](#)(5) (2025).**
- Neglected: **"A child may be found 'neglected' who, for reasons other than being impoverished, (A) has been abandoned, (B) is being denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotionally or morally, or (C) is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to the well-being of the child;" Conn. Gen. Stat. [§ 46b-120](#)(4) (2025).**
- Uncared for: **"A child may be found 'uncared for' (A) who is homeless, (B) whose home cannot provide the specialized care that the physical, emotional or mental condition of the child requires, or (C) who has been identified as a victim of trafficking, as defined in section 46a-170. For the purposes of this section, the treatment of any child by an accredited Christian Science practitioner, in lieu of treatment by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts, shall not of itself constitute neglect or maltreatment;" Conn. Gen. Stat. [§ 46b-120](#)(6) (2025).**
- Person responsible for the health, welfare or care of a child or youth: **"means a child's or a youth's parent, guardian or foster parent; an employee of a public or private residential home, agency or institution or other person legally responsible in a residential setting; or any staff person providing out-of-home care, such as the provision of child care services, as described in section 19a-77, in a child care center, group child care home or family child care home;" Conn. Gen. Stat. [§ 17a-93](#)(12) (2025).**
- Person entrusted with the care of a child or youth: **"means a person given access to a child or youth by a person responsible for the health, welfare or care of a child or youth for the purpose of providing education, child care, counseling, spiritual guidance, coaching, training, instruction, tutoring or mentoring of such child or youth." Conn. Gen. Stat. [§ 17a-93](#)(15) (2025).**
- Civil proceedings: **"Child neglect proceedings are civil proceedings, which are not quasi-criminal in nature... Here, where the court was required to look at the well-being of an infant and there was medical evidence that revealed a fracture in the arm of that ten week old child, the exclusionary rule would not apply." [In re Nicholas R.](#), 92 Conn. App. 316, 321, 884 A.2d 1059 (2005).**

# Section 1: Duty to Report Child Abuse

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*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

## SCOPE:

Bibliographic resources relating to the duty to report suspected child abuse to the proper authorities.

## DEFINITIONS:

**Mandated Reporters:** "The following persons shall be mandated reporters: (1) Any physician or surgeon licensed under the provisions of chapter 370, (2) any resident physician or intern in any hospital in this state, whether or not so licensed, (3) any registered nurse, (4) any licensed practical nurse, (5) any medical examiner, (6) any dentist, (7) any dental hygienist, (8) any psychologist, (9) any school employee, as defined in section 53a-65, (10) any social worker, (11) any person who holds or is issued a coaching permit by the State Board of Education, is a coach of intramural or interscholastic athletics and is eighteen years of age or older, (12) any individual who is employed as a coach or director of youth athletics and is eighteen years of age or older, (13) any individual who is employed as a coach or director of a private youth sports organization, league or team and is eighteen years of age or older, (14) any paid administrator, faculty, staff, athletic director, athletic coach or athletic trainer employed by a public or private institution of higher education who is eighteen years of age or older, excluding student employees, (15) any police officer, (16) any juvenile or adult probation officer, (17) any juvenile or adult parole officer, (18) any member of the clergy, (19) any pharmacist, (20) any physical therapist, (21) any optometrist, (22) any chiropractor, (23) any podiatrist, (24) any mental health professional, (25) any physician assistant, (26) any person who is a licensed or certified emergency medical services provider, (27) any person who is a licensed or certified alcohol and drug counselor, (28) any person who is a licensed marital and family therapist, (29) any person who is a sexual assault counselor or a domestic violence counselor, as defined in section 52-146k, (30) any person who is a licensed professional counselor, (31) any person who is a licensed foster parent, (32) any person paid to care for a child in any public or private facility, child care center, group child care home or family child care home licensed by the state, (33) any employee of the Department of Children and Families, (34) any employee of the Department of Public Health, (35) any employee of the Office of Early Childhood who is responsible for the licensing of child care centers, group child care homes, family child care homes or youth camps, (36) any paid youth camp director or assistant director, (37) the Child Advocate and any employee of the Office of the Child Advocate, (38) any person who is a licensed behavior analyst, and (39) any family relations counselor, family relations counselor trainee or family services supervisor employed by the Judicial Department." Conn. Gen. Stat. [§ 17a-101](#)(b) (2025).

## STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website to confirm that you are using the most up-to-date statutes.

### Conn. Gen. Stat. (2025)

- Chapter 166. Teachers and superintendents  
Part I. Teachers  
[§ 10-149a](#). Felony conviction or fine pursuant to **mandated reporting provisions. Notification by state's attorney.**
- Chapter 319. Department of Children and Families  
[§ 17a-6f](#). Software application for computers and mobile devices.
- Chapter 319a. Child welfare  
Part I. Dependent and neglected children  
[§ 17a-93](#). Definitions.  
[§ 17a-101](#). Protection of children from abuse. Mandated reporters. Educational and training programs. Model mandated reporting policy.  
[§ 17a-101a](#). Report of abuse, neglect or injury of child or imminent risk of serious harm to child. Penalty for **failure to report. Notification of Chief State's Attorney.**  
[§ 17a-101b](#). Oral report by mandated reporter, Notification of law enforcement agency when allegation of sexual abuse or serious physical abuse. Notification of person in charge of institution, facility or school when staff member suspected of abuse or neglect.  
[§ 17a-101c](#). Written report by mandated reporter.  
[§ 17a-101d](#). Contents of oral and written reports.  
[§ 17a-101e](#). Employer prohibited from discriminating or retaliating against employee who makes good faith report or testifies re child abuse or neglect. Immunity from civil or criminal liability. False report of child **abuse. Referral to office of the Chief State's Attorney.** Penalty.  
[§ 17a-103](#). Reports by others. False reports. Notification to law enforcement agency.  
[§ 17a-103a](#). Telephone Careline to receive reports of child abuse or neglect.
- Chapter 813a. Office of victim advocate. Office of the child advocate  
Part II. Office of the child advocate  
[§ 46a-13f](#). Child Advocate's duties. Child fatality review panel. Reports to the Governor and the General Assembly. Investigations.
- Chapter 435. Dogs and Other Companion Animals. Kennels and Pet Shops.  
[§ 22-329b](#). Reporting of neglected or cruelly treated animals.

## FEDERAL STATUTES:

### United States Code

- 42 U.S.C. Part E- Federal Payments for Foster Care, Prevention, and Permanency  
[§ 670](#). Congressional declaration of purpose; authorization of appropriations  
[§ 671](#). State plan for foster care and adoption assistance

You can visit your local law library or [search the most recent U.S. Code](#) on the U.S. Code website to confirm that you are accessing the most up-to-date laws.

- [§ 672](#). Foster care maintenance payments program
- [42 U.S.C. §§ 5101 to 5108](#). Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Adoption Reform.
  - [42 U.S.C. § 5106a](#). Grants to States for child abuse or neglect prevention and treatment programs. (See § 5106a(b)(2)(B)(i) for provision related to reporting procedures)

## INDIAN LAW:

### United States Code

- [25 U.S.C. § 3201 to 3211](#). Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention
  - [§ 3203](#). Reporting Procedures
- [Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Laws. Title 5: Child Welfare](#), Ch. 1-3. ([2009-2014 pocket part](#); [2015-2024 Supplement](#)).

## LEGISLATIVE:

[Office of Legislative Research](#) reports summarize and analyze the law in effect on the date of each **report's** publication. Current law may be different from what is discussed in the reports.

- Michelle Kirby, *Statute of Limitations to Prosecute a Mandated Reporter's Failure to Report Child Abuse or Neglect*, Connecticut General Assembly. Office of Legislative Research Report No. [2021-R-0037](#) (January 25, 2021).
- Jessica Callahan, *Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect*, Connecticut General Assembly. Office of Legislative Research Report No. [2020-R-0305](#) (November 25, 2020).
- Jessica Callahan, *School Mandated Reporting in Connecticut and Other States*, Connecticut General Assembly. Office of Legislative Research Report No. [2020-R-0231](#) (November 9, 2020).
- Duke Chen, *Clergy Confidentiality and Mandated Reporting*, Connecticut General Assembly. Office of Legislative Research Report No. [2020-R-0059](#) (February 6, 2020).

## AGENCY REGULATIONS:

You can visit your local law library or browse the [Connecticut eRegulations System](#) on the Secretary of the State website to check if a regulation has been updated.

- Regs., Conn. State Agencies [§ 19a-87b-10\(k\)\(3\)](#) [Family child care homes]  
 "The provider shall report actual or suspected child abuse or neglect or the imminent risk of serious harm of any child to the Department of Children and Families as mandated by sections 17a-101 to 17a-101e, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes."

## DCF and DCF POLICY MANUAL:

- [Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect](#)
- Careline and Intake  
 Child Abuse and Neglect Careline, [Chapter 22-1](#) (Eff. 1/2/19)

## ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINIONS:

- Honorable Kristine D. Ragaglia, J.D., Department of Children and Families, [2002-033 Formal Opinion](#), Attorney General of Connecticut. "You have asked for an opinion interpreting

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-101a, the mandated reporter statute. Section 17a-101a requires certain individuals enumerated in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-101(b) to notify the Department of Children and Families (the Department or DCF) or a law enforcement agency when they have **'reasonable cause to suspect or believe' that child abuse or neglect**, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-120, has occurred. Your question concerns the obligations of a mandated reporter who becomes aware that a minor under the age of sixteen **is engaged in a sexual relationship."**

#### CASES:

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [Rosen v. Norwich Free Academy](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of New London at New London, KNL-CV22-6057462-S (June 20, 2024) (2024 WL 2932570). "The duty of a mandated reporter is to make a report to the DCF if the reporter in the ordinary course of her employment or profession has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child under the age of eighteen years has been abused or neglected... Construing § 17a-101a, which requires reasonable cause to suspect or believe that the child abuse took place and imposes penalties on the mandatory reporters who fail to report child abuse, in conjunction with § 17a-101e(b), which requires the report to be made in good faith for the statutory immunity to apply, it can be inferred that if the reporter, when making a report, had a reasonable cause to suspect or believe that the child has been abused, the report has been made in good faith.' *Parisi v. Johnsky*, Superior Court, Judicial District of New Haven, Docket No. NNH-CV05-4009374-S (*Cosgrove, J.*, February 20, 2007). 'In order to effectuate the public policy of this state, the test for reasonable cause must remain objective, that is, that which would warrant a person of ordinary caution, prudence and judgment, under the circumstances, to act.' *Id.* 'Reasonable cause to suspect is an objective standard that focuses ... on whether a reasonable person, having the information available to and known by them would have had that level of suspicion.' *Doe v. Town of Madison*, 340 Conn. 1 (2021)."
- [Doe v. Town of Madison](#), 340 Conn. 1, 23-24, 262 A.3d 752 (2021). "We begin by noting that it is undisputed that the employees of the town and the board—Principal Salutari, all teachers, including Robert, and the various football coaches—had a ministerial duty under the board reporting policy and the mandatory reporting statute to report to the Commissioner of Children and Families if, 'in the ordinary course of [their] employment or profession,' they obtained 'reasonable cause to suspect' abuse of or 'imminent risk of serious harm' to a child or student. General Statutes § 17a-101a (a) (1)...Consistent with case law governing the **concept of "reasonable suspicion" in the criminal law** context, the mandatory reporting statute provides that 'suspicion or belief may be based on factors including, but

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not limited to, observations, allegations, facts or statements by a child, victim ... or third party...The assessment considers the 'totality of the circumstances' at the time of the decision and must be based on 'specific and articulable facts' and 'rational inferences' taken therefrom. Whether reasonable cause or suspicion exists in view of a given set of facts presents a question of law subject to plenary review."

- [Doe v. Flanigan](#), 201 Conn. App. 411, 413-414, 243 A.3d 333 (2020). "The plaintiff appeals from the summary judgment rendered by the trial court in favor of the defendant [city of Waterbury] ..., which alleged that, pursuant to General Statutes § 52-557n, the defendant [city of Waterbury] was liable to the plaintiff for the injuries he sustained arising out of Flanigan's negligent conduct... Flanigan acted negligently when he (1) pushed the plaintiff to the ground and handcuffed him, (2) failed to protect the plaintiff from Fullenwiley's assault, and (3) failed to report Fullenwiley's assault."

[Kruger v. Grauer](#), 173 Conn. App. 539, 552-553, 164 A.3d 764 (2017). "Despite the presumption that legislative action is not in derogation of the common law, we conclude, that § 17a-101e(b) expresses a clear legislative intent to abrogate the absolute immunity that the common law may have afforded to individuals who report child abuse to the department. In reaching this resolution, we are guided by our Supreme Court's reasoning in Chadha. Here, as in Chadha, we begin our analysis with a review of the language of the relevant statutory provisions. General Statutes § 17a-103(a) **provides in relevant part that any person 'having reasonable cause to suspect or believe that any child under the age of eighteen is in danger of being abused, or has been abused or neglected ... may cause a written or oral report to be made to the Commissioner of Children and Families or the commissioner's representative or a law enforcement agency....'** Section 17a-101e(b) provides in relevant part that '[a]ny person...[who] in *good faith* makes ...the report pursuant to [section]...17a-103 shall be *immune from any liability, civil or criminal, which might otherwise be incurred or imposed* and shall have the *same immunity* with respect to *any judicial proceeding which results from such report...*'" (Emphasis added.)

- [Doe v. Hartford Bd. of Educ.](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of Hartford, No. CV14-6049842S (Aug. 31, 2016) (2016 WL 5798794). "In the present case, count one states a viable cause of action for negligence per se. The complaint alleges that Bell violated § 17a-101a by failing to report instances of alleged child abuse communicated to her by the plaintiff. Also, the complaint alleges that the plaintiff was a student at the Fred D. Wish School at which Bell was a social worker. Further, the complaint alleges that Bell's failure to report the



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abuse was a direct result of the plaintiff's injury. The plaintiff's allegations establish a duty of care owed to the plaintiff arising by virtue of § 17a-101a because the statute was intended to protect her as an abused child and her injury was the type of harm the statute was intended to prevent. See *Ward v. Greene*, **supra**, 267 Conn. 560 ('[T]he class of persons protected by § 17a-101 is limited to those children who have been abused or neglected and are, or should have been, the subject of a mandated report'). Therefore, as a matter of law count one states a viable cause of action for negligence per se pursuant to § 17a-101a."

- *Doe v. Kennedy*, Superior Court, Judicial District of Waterbury, No. CV09-5013921 (Nov. 29, 2012) (55 Conn. L. Rptr. 193) (2012 WL 6743547). "Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46b-120 defines 'abused' to include any child or youth, including any unemancipated sixteen **or seventeen year old, who is** 'in a condition that is the result of maltreatment, including but not limited to...sexual molestation or exploitation...' These statutes do not admit of any exercise of judgment or discretion on the part of a police officer, and also do not require that the police officer know for sure that the child is being sexually molested or exploited, only that the police officer has 'reasonable cause to suspect or believe' that the child has been so abused. Rather these statutes involve a mandatory duty, one that is ministerial rather than discretionary. In such a situation, the municipality is not entitled to the cloak of governmental immunity when the municipal official fails to adhere to this duty. See, e.g., *Wright v. Brown*, 167 Conn. 464, 356 A.2d 176 (1975)"
- *Perez-Dickson v. City of Bridgeport*, 304 Conn. 483, 508, 43 A.3d 69 (2012). "Both the contours of the right created by § 17a-101e and the specific remedy for a violation of the right are plain and unambiguous. Nothing in the text of the statute even remotely suggests that, contrary to this plain and unambiguous language, the legislature intended to authorize private citizens to bring actions on their own behalf **pursuant to the statute....Accordingly, we conclude that** §17a-101e does not provide a private cause of action and that the trial court therefore lacked subject matter jurisdiction over the plaintiff's claim pursuant to that **statute.**"
- *Doe v. Yale University*, Superior Court, Judicial District of Waterbury, No. CV08-5010994-S (July 06, 2009) (2009 WL 2357998). "Defendant has argued that requiring a professor to report suspected child abuse would do little to promote the Legislature's intent and likely result in professors making a high percentage of unsubstantiated reports. This very concern was expressed by the Supreme Court in the *Ward* decision. However, the Court in *Ward* was concerned with unidentifiable victims whom it ruled were not in the class

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protected by the statute. In this case we have an identifiable victim. In reality, if professors are considered to be school teachers, the public policy of the state would be furthered by providing protection to minors who may otherwise be denied the protection afforded to them merely by virtue of the varying circumstances of their education, where they attend secondary school, and the age at which they enter college."

- [Ward v. Greene](#), 267 Conn. 539, 555, 839 A.2d 1259 (2004). "The confidentiality requirements, taken together with the fact that the statute requires that only information relating to the abused or neglected child be reported and not information relating to other known children in the care of the suspected abuser, strongly suggests that the class of persons protected by the statute is limited to the children who have been abused or neglected and are, or should have been, the subject of a mandated report."
- [Manifold v. Ragaglia](#), 272 Conn. 410, 420-421, 862 A.2d 292 (2004). "In furtherance of this public policy goal of protecting children from abuse, the statute provides a **comprehensive list of persons who are 'mandated reporters,'** many of whom are health care providers, including physicians either licensed in Connecticut or acting as interns or residents at our hospitals. See General Statutes § 17a-101 (b). **Thus, the statute prescribes that a 'mandated reporter . . . who in the ordinary course of [his or her] employment or profession has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that any child under the age of eighteen years (1) has been abused or neglected . . . (2) has had nonaccidental physical injury, or injury which is at variance with the history given of such injury, inflicted upon such child, or (3) is placed at imminent risk of serious harm, shall report or cause a report to be made [to the department]. . . .'** General Statutes § 17a-101a. **Indeed, 'mandated reporters' who fail to report reasonable suspicions of child abuse are subject to a fine and compulsory participation in an appropriate training program. See General Statutes § 17a-101a."**
- [In re Nicholas R.](#), 92 Conn. App. 316, 321, 884 A.2d 1059 (2005). "Child neglect proceedings are civil proceedings, which are not quasi-criminal in nature."
- [Morales v. Kagel](#), 58 Conn. App. 776, 783, 755 A.2d 915 (2000). " ... we conclude that the defendant in this case did not owe a duty to the plaintiff to investigate the accusations against him prior to making a good faith report."
- [Doe v. Vibert](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of New Britain, Docket No. CV97-048332S (July 12, 1999) (1999 WL 545746). "...plaintiff has alleged that defendant Wartonick was negligent for failing to report to the Board of Education her stated suspicion of defendant's ... misconduct toward the

plaintiff... This court concludes that the plaintiffs' complaint states a viable cause of action for negligence per se in that the plaintiffs allege the violation of a statute and plead facts sufficient to allege a causal link between the statutory violation **and the alleged injury.**"

#### WEST KEY NUMBERS:

- Infants- Child Abuse Reporting  
## 1501-1519

#### ENCYCLOPEDIAS:

Encyclopedias and ALRs are available in print at some law library locations and accessible online at all law library locations.

Online databases are available for in-library use. Remote access is not available.

- *6 Am Jur POF 2d 345, Failure to Report Suspected Case of Child Abuse*, by Jimmie E. Tinsley, Thomson West, 1975 (also available on Westlaw).
- *2 Am Jur POF 2d 365, Child Abuse –The Battered Child Syndrome*, by Frederick E. John, Thomson West, 1974 (also available on Westlaw).
- *38 Am Jur Trials 1, Professional Liability for Failure to Report Child Abuse*, by Thomas L. Gowen & Richard J. Kohlman, Thomson West, 1989 (also available on Westlaw).

#### TEXTS & TREATISES:

Each of our law libraries own the Connecticut treatises cited. You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the other treatises cited or to search for more treatises.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

- *Burden of Proof Begone: The Pernicious Effect of Emergency Removal in Child Protective Proceedings*, by Paul Chill, University of Connecticut School of Law. University of Connecticut School of Law Articles and Working Papers. Paper 55, July 1, 2004.
- *The Law of Child Abuse and Neglect in Connecticut*, by Paul Chill, University of Connecticut Legal Clinic, 1997.
  - Chapter 2: Abuse and Neglect
    - 5. Reporting
      - A. Historical overview
      - B. Mandated reporters
      - C. Reporting by other persons
      - D. Legal protection for reporters
- *Children and the Law: Rights and Obligations*, by Thomas A. Jacobs, Thomson West, 2024 (also available on Westlaw).
  - Chapter 2. Protection of children (Dependency process)
    - III. Entry into system: Voluntary vs. involuntary removal
      - §2: 13. Mandatory reporting laws
- *A Practical Guide to Connecticut School Law, 10th ed.*, by Thomas B. Mooney, Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, 2023.
  - Chapter 4. Students
    - F. Child abuse and neglect
- *2 Legal Rights of Children*, 3d ed., by Thomas R. Young, 2024-2025 ed., Thomson West (also available on Westlaw).

Each of our law libraries own the Connecticut treatises cited. You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the other treatises cited or to search for more treatises.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

#### Part IV. Substantive Legal Protection for Children.

- *Handling Child Custody, Abuse and Adoption Cases*, 3d ed., by Ann M. Haralambie, Thomson West, 2009, with 2024-2025 supplement.
  - Chapter 12. Dependency and neglect actions
    - § 12:36.50 Special immigration provisions
  - Chapter 16. Proving sexual abuse
  - Chapter 17. Proving physical abuse
  - Chapter 18. Proving neglect, abandonment, and emotional abuse
- *Understanding Juvenile Law*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., by Martin R. Gardner, Carolina Academic Press, 2018.
  - Chapter 4. Child abuse
    - §4.02 Child abuse legislation
    - [B] Duty to report
- *Teen Rights*, by Traci Truly, Sphinx Publishing, 2002.
  - Chapter 40. Dependency and neglect cases
- *5 Child Custody and Visitation Law and Practice*, by Sandra Morgan Little, Matthew Bender, 2024 (also available on Lexis).
  - Chapter 31. Allegations of abuse
    - § 31.03. Reporting laws

#### LAW REVIEWS:

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- Daniel Maggen, *Predict and Suspect: The Emergence of Artificial Legal Meaning*, 23 N.C. J.L. & Tech. 67 (2021).
- Devon Bombassei, *Child Abuse Disclosure by Lawyers: An "Agency-Capability" Approach*, 14 Wash. U. Jurisprudence Rev. 1 (2021).
- Andrew T. Solomon, *Preventing Recurrences of the Cover-ups at Penn State & Baylor (and Now Michigan State): Where Does it End*, 28 Marq. Sports L. Rev. 379 (2018).
- Elizabeth Tippet, *Child Abuse as an Employment Dispute*, 17 Quinnipiac Health L.J. 139 (2014).
- Jon M. Hogelin, *To Prevent and to Protect: The Reporting of Child Abuse by Educators*, 2013 BYU Educ. & L.J. 225 (2013).
- David L. Walther, *Duty to Report Abuse*, 26 Amer. J. Fam. L., 201 (Winter 2013).

## Section 2: Investigations in Child Abuse or Neglect Cases

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

### SCOPE:

Bibliographic resources relating to the investigation of allegations of child abuse and/or child neglect.

### SEE ALSO:

- [Section 6: Child Abuse Prevention](#)

### DEFINITIONS:

- ABUSE:  
Conn. Gen. Stat. [§ 46b-120](#)(5) (2025).  
"A child may be found '**abused**' who (A) has been inflicted with physical injury or injuries other than by accidental means, (B) has injuries that are at variance with the history given of them, or (C) is in a condition that is the result of maltreatment, including, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment."

DCF Policy Manual, Operational Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect, [Chapter 22-3](#) (Eff. 4/12/23).

- o PHYSICAL ABUSE- "**A child may be found to have been** physically abused who: has been inflicted with physical injury or injuries other than by accidental means, is in a condition which is a result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment, and/or has injuries at variance with the history given of them."
- o SEXUAL ABUSE/EXPLOITATION- "**is any incident involving a child(ren)'s non-accidental exposure to sexual behavior.**"
- o HUMAN TRAFFICKING- "**includes, but is not limited to:** sex trafficking: the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age  
labor trafficking: the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery."
- o EMOTIONAL MALTREATMENT/ABUSE- "**act(s), statement(s), or threats, which: has had, or is likely to have an adverse impact on the child; and/or interferes with a child's emotional development.**

Note: Whether or not the adverse impact has to be **evident is a function of the child's age, cognitive abilities, verbal ability and developmental level.** Adverse impact is

not required if the action/inaction is a single incident **which demonstrates a serious disregard for the child's welfare."**

- **NEGLECT:**

Conn. Gen. Stat. [§ 46b-120](#)(4) (2025).

"A child may be found 'neglected' who, for reasons other than being impoverished, (A) has been abandoned, (B) is being denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotionally or morally, or (C) is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to the well-being of the child."

DCF Policy Manual, Operational Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect, [Chapter 22-3](#) (Eff. 4/12/23).

- o **PHYSICAL NEGLECT-** **"A child may be found neglected** who: has been abandoned; is being denied proper care and attention physically, educationally, emotionally, or morally; is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his well-being; **and/or has been abused."**
- o **MEDICAL NEGLECT-** **"the unreasonable delay, refusal or** failure on the part of the person responsible for the child's health, welfare or care or the person entrusted **with the child's care to seek, obtain, and/or maintain** those services for necessary medical, dental or mental health care when such person knows, or should reasonably be expected to know, that such actions may **have an adverse impact on the child."**
- o **EDUCATIONAL NEGLECT-** **"occurs when a school-aged** child has excessive absences from school through the **intent or neglect of the parent or caregiver."**
- o **EMOTIONAL NEGLECT-** **"is the denial of proper care and** attention, or failure to respond, to a child's affective needs by the person responsible for the child's health, welfare or care; by the person given access to the child; **or by the person entrusted with the child's care which has** an adverse impact on the child or seriously interferes with **a child's positive emotional development.**  
Note: Whether or not the adverse impact has to be **demonstrated is a function of the child's age, cognitive** abilities, verbal ability and developmental level. Adverse impact is not required if the action/inaction is a single incident which demonstrates a serious disregard for the **child's welfare."**
- o **MORAL NEGLECT-** **"Exposing, allowing, or encouraging** the child to engage in illegal or reprehensible activities by **the person responsible for the child's health, welfare or** care or person given access or person entrusted with the **child's care."**

- **UNCARED FOR:**

Conn. Gen. Stat. [§ 46b-120](#)(6) (2025). "A child may be found 'uncared for' who is homeless or whose home cannot

provide the specialized care that the physical, emotional or mental condition of the child requires. For the purposes of this section, the treatment of any child by an accredited Christian Science practitioner, in lieu of treatment by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts, shall not of itself constitute neglect or maltreatment.”

#### STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website to confirm that you are using the most up-to-date statutes.

Conn. Gen. Stat. (2025)

- Chapter 166. Teachers and superintendents  
Part I. Teachers  
[§ 10-145b](#)(i)(3)(E). Teaching certificates.  
[§ 10-149a](#). Felony conviction or fine pursuant to **mandated reporting provisions. Notification by state’s attorney.**
- Chapter 319. Department of Children and Families  
[§ 17a-28](#). Definitions. Confidentiality and access to records; exceptions. Procedure for aggrieved persons.  
[§ 17a-47](#). Legal division re child abuse and neglect
- Chapter 319a. Child welfare  
Part I. Dependent and neglected children  
[§ 17a-100](#). Ill treatment of children.  
[§ 17a-101f](#). Examination by physician. Diagnostic tests and procedures to detect child abuse.  
[§ 17a-101g](#). Classification and evaluation of reports. Home visit. Removal of child in imminent risk of harm.  
[§ 17a-101h](#). Coordination of investigatory activities. Interview with child. Consent.  
[§ 17a-101i](#). Abuse of child by school employee. Suspension.  
[§ 17a-101j](#). Notification of law enforcement and prosecutorial authorities when reasonable belief of sexual abuse or serious physical abuse. Notification of agency responsible for licensure of institution or facility where abuse or neglect has occurred.  
[§ 17a-101k](#). Registry of findings maintained by Commissioner of Children and Families.  
[§ 17a-103b](#). Notice to parent or guardian of substantiated complaint of child abuse or neglect.  
[§ 17a-103d](#). Initial contact with parent or guardian. Written notice re parent or guardian rights. List of legal services.  
[§ 17a-105](#). Temporary custody of abused child upon arrest of parent or guardian.  
[§ 17a-105a](#). Child abuse and neglect unit within Division of State Police to assist investigation of child abuse and neglect.  
[§ 17a-106](#). Cooperation in relation to ... investigation of child abuse and neglect.  
[§ 17a-106b](#). Impact of family violence in child abuse cases.  
[§ 17a-110](#). Permanency plans for children.



You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website to confirm that you are using the most up-to-date statutes.

[§ 17a-111b](#). Commissioner of Children and Families'

duties re reunification of child with parent. Court determination that reunification efforts are not required. Permanency plans.

- Chapter 802h. Protected persons and their property  
Part II. Guardians of the person of a minor  
[§§ 45a-607 to 45a-625](#) *Removal and appointment of guardians of a minor in Probate Court*  
[§ 45a-619](#). Investigation by Commissioner of Children and Families.  
[§ 45a-623](#). Transfer of proceeding to Superior Court or **regional children's probate court**.
- Chapter 813a. Office of the Child Advocate  
[§§ 46a-13k to 46a-13r](#) Office of the Child Advocate.
- Chapter 815t. Juvenile matters  
[§ 46b-121](#). "Juvenile matters" defined. Authority of court.  
[§ 46b-129](#). Commitment of child or youth. Petition for neglected, uncared for or abused child or youth. Hearing re temporary custody, order to appear or petition. Review of permanency plan. Cost of care and maintenance of child or youth; reimbursement. Revocation of commitment. Legal guardianships and permanent legal guardianships. Applicability of provisions re placement of child from another state and Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children.  
[§ 46b-129a](#). Examination by physician, psychiatrist or psychologist. Counsel and guardian ad litem.
- Chapter 939. Offenses against the person  
[§ 53-20](#). Cruelty to persons.  
[§ 53-21](#). Injury or risk of injury to, or impairing morals of children. Sale of children.
- Chapter 952. Penal code: Offenses  
[§ 53a-71](#). Sexual assault in the second degree: Class C or B felony.  
[§ 53a-73a](#). Sexual assault in the fourth degree: Class A misdemeanor or class D felony.

**FEDERAL  
STATUTES:**

You can visit your local law library or [search the most recent U.S. Code](#) on the U.S. Code website to confirm that you are accessing the most up-to-date laws.

United States Code

Title 42. Public Health and Welfare

Chapter 67. Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Adoption Reform

- [42 U.S.C. §§ 5101 to 5108](#).
  - o [42 U.S.C. § 5106c](#). Grants to states for programs relating to investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect cases.

## INDIAN LAW:

### United States Code

- [25 U.S.C. § 3201 to 3211](#). Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention

### [Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Laws. Title 5: Child Welfare,](#)

- Ch. 1-3. ([2009-2014 pocket part](#); [2015-2024 Supplement](#)).  
Chapter 3. Reporting of child neglect and abuse
  - § 1. Notification of child abuse reports
  - § 2. Interviews and examinations
  - § 3. Emergency removal
  - § 4. Procedures for removal
  - § 5. Hearing
  - § 6. Court findings
  - § 7. Review of placement and supervision
  - § 8. Placement preferences
  - § 9. Emergency authorization of medical treatment
  - § 10. Confidentiality and Records
  - § 11. Modification, revocation or extension of court orders
  - § 12. Appeals

## AGENCY REGULATIONS:

You can visit your local law library or browse the [Connecticut eRegulations System](#) on the Secretary of the State website to check if a regulation has been updated.

- [Regs., Conn. State Agencies](#)
  - Reports of child abuse by a certified school employee  
[§ 10-145g-1](#). Reports of child abuse by a certified school employee.
  - Operation of child-caring agencies and facilities  
[§ 17a-145-54](#). Causes for revoking or refusing to renew license.
  - Family child care homes  
[§ 19a-87b-14](#). Complaint investigations.

## DCF POLICY MANUAL:

Operational Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect, [Chapter 22-3](#) (Eff. 4/12/23).

## COURT RULES:

Amendments to the Practice Book (Court Rules) are published in the [Connecticut Law Journal](#) and posted [online](#).

- Conn. Practice Book (2025)
  - [Chap. 32a](#). Rights of Parties. Neglected, Abused and Uncared for Children and Termination of Parental Rights.
  - [Chap. 33a](#). Petitions for Neglect, Uncared for, Dependency and Termination of Parental Rights: Initiation of Proceedings, Orders of Temporary Custody and Preliminary Hearings.
  - [Chap. 34a](#). Pleadings, Motions and Discovery Neglected, Abused, and Uncared for Children
  - [Chap. 35a](#). Hearings Concerning Neglected, Abused and Uncared for Children and Termination of Parental Rights.

## LEGISLATIVE REPORTS:

- Jessica Callahan, *[2021] Acts Affecting Children*, Connecticut General Assembly. Office of Legislative Research Report No. [2021-R-0143](#) (August 13, 2021).

[Office of Legislative Research](#) reports summarize and analyze the law in effect on the date of each **report's** publication. Current law may be different from what is discussed in the reports.

- Jessica Callahan, *Child Abuse and Fatality Reporting*, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research, Report No. [2020-R-0223](#) (September 15, 2020).
- Katherine Dwyer, *Child Abuse or Neglect Investigations*, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research, Report No. [2016-R-0209](#) (Oct. 6, 2016).
- Katherine Dwyer, *Alleged Child Abuse or Neglect by School Employees*, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research, Report No. [2016-R-0219](#) (Oct. 19, 2016).

## CASES:

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- Abubakari v. Schenker, Superior Court, Judicial District of New Haven at New Haven, NNH- CV-22-6123280-S (August 2, 2024) (2024 WL 3665701). "General Statutes § 17a-101g (b) provides the criteria for when the commissioner should substantiate a reported case of child abuse or neglect ....' *Matthew C. v. Commissioner of Children & Families*, 188 Conn. App. 687, 693 n.6, 205 A.3d 688 (2019). Section 17a-101g (b) provides in relevant part: 'After an investigation into a report of abuse or neglect has been completed, the commissioner shall determine, based upon a standard of reasonable cause, whether a child has been abused or neglected, as defined in section 46b-120.' 'The commissioner's determination that an individual is responsible for the abuse or neglect of a child is referred to as a substantiation.' *Matthew C. v. Commissioner of Children & Families*, supra, 188 Conn. App. 693 n.6. Section 17a-101k-1 (11) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies provides that 'substantiated' means 'that the department has found after investigation of a report, pursuant to section 17a-101g of the Connecticut General Statutes, that there is reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred and that a specific person is the individual responsible for an act or acts of child abuse or neglect ....'"
- Rosen v. Norwich Free Academy, Superior Court, Judicial District of New London at New London, KNL-CV22-6057462-S (June 20, 2024) (2024 WL 2932570). "The Plaintiff further argues that Welch, Pendleton, or Carmody should have asked the student further questions or reached out to the Plaintiff prior to making a report. '[A] mandated reporter's failure to investigate accusations of child abuse prior to reporting them to the DCF does not defeat the reporter's claim that the report was made in good faith nor does it defeat her qualification for the statutory immunity privilege.' *Parisi v. Johnsky*, supra, Superior Court, Judicial District of New Haven, Docket No. NNH-CV-05-4009374-S. This argument was also rejected by our Appellate Court in *Morales v. Kagal*, 58 Conn. App. 776 (2000). 'Nothing in the General Statutes requires a mandated reporter to

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undertake such further investigation ... § 17a-101 (e) provides that the investigation will be made by the agency receiving the report, not by the reporting [individual]... imposing a duty on [reporters]... would carry with it the impermissible risk of discouraging such professionals in the future.. out of a fear of liability to the very persons whose conduct they may implicate. Such a result would necessarily run contrary to the state's policy of encouraging the reporting and investigation of suspected child abuse.' *Id.*, 782-783. It is for the DCF to investigate and make the ultimate decision regarding the abuse allegations."

- [Robinson-Maresca v. Commissioner, Department of Children & Families](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of Waterbury, No. CV-13-6020031-S (November 2, 2016) (63 Conn. L. Rptr. 346). "In the present case, given that the department statement was issued close in time to the Ansonia Police Department press release and after the Medical Examiner's Office had ruled the death a homicide by blunt force trauma, it is undisputed that information regarding Kyle's death was either already public or that the Commissioner could reasonably believe that it would be made public. Public interest in the circumstances surrounding the homicide death of a five-month-old boy was a virtual certainty. As such, the statute clearly allowed the Commissioner to disclose information with respect to the department's investigation of Kyle's death and 'in general terms, any action taken by the department.' General Statutes (Rev. to 2009) §17a-28(c)."
- [Matthew M. v. Dep't of Children & Families](#), 143 Conn. App. 813, 831-32, 71 A.3d 603, 614-15 (2013). "The plaintiff next argues that the violation of the department's policy manual § 34-5 rendered the investigation improper and any findings based upon it not legally supportable, and that the court improperly placed the burden on the plaintiff to prove that he was prejudiced by the department's failure to follow its policy and interview him. The department contends that the burden of proof rests with the plaintiff and that the trial court properly found that he had failed to satisfy this burden. We agree with the department."
- [Manifold v. Ragaglia](#), 102 Conn. App. 315, 326-327, 926 A.2d 38, 45-46 (2007). "The remaining three allegations, even if they were proven, would not raise an inference that the defendants' conduct exceeded the bounds of negligence or gross negligence, as required to defeat summary judgment on the ground of statutory immunity. As a result, although those allegations may be genuinely in dispute, they are not genuine issues of *material fact* that would challenge the defendants' entitlement to immunity under § 4-165. See *Buell Industries, Inc. v. Greater New York Mutual Ins. Co.*, 259 Conn. 556 (material fact as 'a fact

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which will make a difference in the result of the case' [internal quotation marks omitted])."

- [Doe v. Connecticut Department of Children and Youth Services](#), 712 F.Supp. 277 (1989), *aff'd*, 911 F.2d 868 (1990). *DCF workers entitled to "qualified immunity" from liability.*
- [Williams v. Hauser](#), 948 F.Supp. 164 (D. Conn. 1996). *DCF workers not entitled to "absolute prosecutorial immunity".*
- [In re Brian D. and Shannon D.](#), Superior Court, Juvenile Matters at New Haven, April 27, 1999, 5 Conn. Ops. 582 (May 24, 1999). *Foster parents' motion to intervene in an abuse and neglect action brought by DCF; motion denied.*

## WEST KEY NUMBERS:

## TEXTS & TREATISES:

Each of our law libraries own the Connecticut treatises cited. You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the other treatises cited or to search for more treatises.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

- Infants- Child Protection -Agencies and Proceedings  
##1421—1480
- *The Law of Child Abuse and Neglect in Connecticut*, by Paul Chill, University of Connecticut Legal Clinic, 1997.  
Chapter 2. Abuse and neglect  
Chapter 6. D.C.F. investigations
- *Rights of Juveniles: The Juvenile Justice System*, by Samuel M. Davis, 2024 ed., Thomson West (also available on Westlaw).  
Chapter 6. The adjudicatory process: Child abuse cases  
§ 6:1. General  
§ 6:2. Family autonomy or state intervention  
§ 6:3. Definition of child maltreatment  
§ 6:4. —Neglect and dependency  
§ 6:5. —Abuse  
§ 6:6. Determination of the incidence of abuse  
§ 6:7. Evidentiary problems in child abuse cases  
§ 6:8. Competency and credibility of child witnesses  
**§ 6:9. Evidence of child's extrajudicial statements**  
§ 6:10. Waiver of privileges—Spouse privilege  
§ 6:11. —Physician/patient privilege  
§ 6:12. Use of character evidence
- *Handling Child Custody, Abuse and Adoption Cases*, 3d ed., by Ann M. Haralambie, Thomson West, 2009, with 2024-2025 supplement.  
Chapter 12. Dependency and neglect actions  
§ 12:36.50 Special immigration provisions  
Chapter 16. Proving sexual abuse  
§ Appendix 16-1. American Medical Association Diagnostic and Treatment Guidelines on Child Sexual Abuse  
§ Appendix 16-4. American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children Guidelines for Psychosocial

Each of our law libraries own the Connecticut treatises cited. You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the other treatises cited or to search for more treatises.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

Evaluation of Suspected Sexual Abuse in Children (2d ed)

Chapter 17. Proving physical abuse

§ Appendix 17-1. American Medical Association Diagnostic and Treatment Guidelines on Child Physical Abuse and Neglect

Chapter 18. Proving neglect, abandonment, and emotional abuse

§ Appendix 18-1. American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children Guidelines for Psychosocial Evaluation of Suspected Psychological Maltreatment in Children and Adolescents

- *Understanding Juvenile Law*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., by Martin R. Gardner, Carolina Academic Press, 2018.  
Chapter 3. The child and the family  
§ 3.03. Parental neglect

- *Representing Children in Child Protective Proceedings: Ethical and Practical Dimensions*, by Jean Koh Peters, Lexis Law Pub., 2007.

#### LAW REVIEWS:

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- Victor I. Vieth, *Anatomical Diagrams and Dolls: Guidelines for Their Usage in Forensic Interviews and Courts of Law*, 48 Mitchell Hamline L. Rev. 83 (2022).
- Amos N. Guiora, *Failing to Protect the Vulnerable: The Dangers of Institutional Complicity and Enablers*, 2022 U. Ill. L. Rev. 139 (2022).
- Sara Katz, *Trauma-Informed Practice: The Future of Child Welfare*, 28 Widener Commw. L. Rev. 51 (2019).
- Michelle Burrell, *What Can the Child Welfare System Learn in the Wake of the Floyd Decision: A Comparison of Stop-and-Frisk Policing and Child Welfare Investigations*, 22 CUNY L. Rev. 124 (2019).
- Emily Barry, *Babies Having Babies: Advocating for a Different Standard for Minor Parents in Abuse and Neglect Cases*, 39 Cardozo L. R. 2329 (2018).
- Tal D. Eisenzweig, *In the Shadow of Child Protective Services: Noncitizen Parents and the Child-Welfare System*, 128 Yale L. J. Forum 482 (November 21, 2018).
- Shauneen M. Garrahan and Andrew W. Eichner, *Tipping the Scale: A Place for Childhood Obesity in the Evolving Legal Framework of Child Abuse and Neglect*, 12 Yale J. Health Poly L. & Ethics 336 (Summer 2012).

## Section 3: Immediate Removal of Child

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

### SCOPE:

Bibliographic resources relating to circumstances which warrant the immediate removal of a child from his or her home environment and the procedures for removal.

### DEFINITIONS:

- **Immediate Removal:** "If the Commissioner of Children and Families, or the commissioner's designee, has probable cause to believe that the child or any other child in the household is in imminent risk of physical harm from the child's surroundings and that immediate removal from such surroundings is necessary to ensure the child's safety, the commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, shall authorize any employee of the department or any law enforcement officer to remove the child and any other child similarly situated from such surroundings without the consent of the child's parent or guardian. The commissioner shall record in writing the reasons for such removal and include such record with the report of the investigation conducted under subsection (b) of this section." Conn. Gen. Stat. [§ 17a-101g](#)(e) (2025).
- **96-hour hold:** "The removal of a child pursuant to subsection (e) of this section shall not exceed ninety-six hours. During the period of such removal, the commissioner, or the commissioner's designee, shall provide the child with all necessary care, including medical care, which may include an examination by a physician or mental health professional with or without the consent of the child's parents, guardian or other person responsible for the child's care, provided reasonable attempts have been made to obtain consent of the child's parents or guardian or other person responsible for the care of such child. During the course of a medical examination, a physician may perform diagnostic tests and procedures necessary for the detection of child abuse or neglect. If the child is not returned home within such ninety-six-hour period, with or without protective services, the department shall proceed in accordance with section 46b-129." Conn. Gen. Stat. [§ 17a-101g](#) (f) (2025).

### STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website to confirm that you are using the most up-to-date statutes.

Conn. Gen. Stat. (2025)

- Chapter 319a. Child welfare
  - [§ 17a-101f](#). Examination by physician. Diagnostic tests and procedures to detect child abuse.
  - [§ 17a-101g](#). Classification and evaluation of reports.
    - Determination of abuse or neglect of child.
    - Investigation. Notice, entry of recommended finding.
    - Referral to local law enforcement authority. Home visit.
    - Removal of child in imminent risk of harm. Family assessment response program. Regulations. Disclosure of information to providers.



You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website to confirm that you are using the most up-to-date statutes.

[§ 17a-105](#). Temporary custody of abused child upon arrest of parent or guardian.

[§ 17a-113](#). Custody of child pending application for removal of guardian or termination of parental rights; enforcement by warrant.

- Chapter 802h. Protected persons and their property
  - [§ 45a-607](#). Temporary custody of minor pending application to probate court for removal of guardian or termination of parental rights. [including ex parte orders]
  - [§ 45a-609](#). Application for removal of parent as guardian. Hearing. Notice. Examination.
  - [§ 45a-610](#). Removal of parent as guardian.
- Chapter 815t. Juvenile matters
  - [§ 46b-129\(b\)](#). Commitment of child or youth. Petition for neglected, uncared for or abused child or youth. Hearing re temporary custody, order to appear or petition. Review of permanency plan. Cost of care and maintenance of child or youth; reimbursement. Revocation of commitment. Legal guardianships and permanent legal guardianships. Applicability of provisions re placement of child from another state and Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children.

#### INDIAN LAW:

- [Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Laws. Title 5: Child Welfare](#),
  - Ch. 1-3. ([2009-2014 pocket part](#); [2015-2024 Supplement](#)).
  - Chapter 3. Reporting of child neglect and abuse
    - § 3. Emergency removal
    - § 4. Procedures for removal

#### COURT RULES:

Amendments to the Practice Book (Court Rules) are published in the [Connecticut Law Journal](#) and posted [online](#).

- Conn. Practice Book (2025).
  - [§ 33a-6](#). Order of Temporary Custody; Ex Parte Orders and Orders to Appear.
  - [§ 33a-7](#). Preliminary Order of Temporary Custody or First Hearing; Actions by Judicial Authority.
  - [§ 33a-8](#). Emergency, Life-Threatening Medical Situations – Procedures.

#### FORMS:

Official Judicial Branch forms are frequently updated. Please visit the [Official Court Webforms page](#) for the current forms.

- [Motion/Order of Temporary Custody/Order to Appear](#), Rev. 1-22.
- [Notice of Temporary Custody/Order to Appear](#), Rev. 1-22.
- [Custody Affidavit](#), Rev. 12-22.

#### CASES:

- [In Re Adrian K.](#), 191 Conn. App. 397, 400-401, 215 A.3d 1271 (2019) "The child was adjudicated neglected on March 6, 2018. The court, *Woods, J.*, ordered placement of the child with the mother with six months of protective supervision until September 6, 2018. Specific steps for the respondent and the mother were ordered. On April 10, 2018,



Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

the respondent was convicted of risk of injury to a child and assault in the third degree arising out of his physical abuse of the child in October, 2017. At the respondent's sentencing, the court issued a standing criminal protective order prohibiting the respondent from having any contact with the child until January 1, 2083. On August 2, 2018, the court, *Sanchez-Figueroa, J.*, granted the petitioner's motion to extend protective supervision of the child in the mother's custody until December 6, 2018..."

"On November 26, 2018, the department received a new referral alleging that the mother was engaging in substance abuse and was allowing the respondent access to the child. After an investigation, the petitioner, pursuant to General Statutes § 17a-101g, placed a ninety-six hour hold on the child and removed him from the mother's custody. On November 29, 2018, the petitioner filed a motion for an order of temporary custody, which was granted ex parte that same day."

- [Manifold v. Ragaglia](#), 102 Conn. App. 315, 327, 926 A.2d 38, 46 (2007). "With regard to the third allegation, that Days knowingly filed a false affidavit in order to receive an order of temporary custody, the court concluded that such an assertion was contrary to the evidence in the record. We agree. Beyond the allegations set forth in the complaint, we are unable to find, and the plaintiffs have not cited, any *evidence in the record substantiating their claim that Days'* affidavit was not only false, but that Days knew it was false at the time that he filed it with the court. In fact, all of the evidence in the record supports the exact opposite conclusion, namely, that **the statements made in Days'** affidavit were truthful in light of the facts known at the time and that Days filed the **affidavit in good faith.**"
- [Teresa T. v. Ragaglia](#), 272 Conn. 734, 749-50, 865 A.2d 428, 436-37 (2005). "The remedies provided in §§ 46b-129(b) and 17a-101g(c) are available only upon a finding that there is probable cause to believe that the child is in unsafe surroundings and that immediate removal is necessary to protect the child from harm. If, however, we were to determine that a finding of probable cause requires a ninety-six hour hold under § 17a-101g(c), instead of leaving the choice of a remedy to the commissioner's discretion, the commissioner would not have the option of petitioning the court for a hearing or for an ex parte order under § 46b-129(b) until after a ninety-six hour hold had been invoked. Significantly, there is no language suggesting that § 46b-129 applies solely to children who are in the commissioner's custody pursuant to § 17a-101g(c). Accordingly, the only logical construction of the statutory scheme is to view the finding of probable cause as a threshold determination that permits the commissioner to

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choose among these and other available remedies to ensure the child's safety."

- [Tenenbaum v. Williams](#), 193 F.3d 581, 596 (2d Cir. 1999), *U.S. cert. denied* 529 U.S. 1098, 120 S. Ct. 1832 (2000). **"Because we now hold that it is unconstitutional for a state official to effect a child's removal on an 'emergency' basis where there is reasonable time safely to obtain judicial authorization consistent with the child's safety, caseworkers can no longer claim, as did the defendants here, that they are immune from liability for such actions because the law is not 'clearly established.'"**
- [Williams v. Hauser](#), 948 F. Supp. 164, 167 (D. Conn. 1996). *Mother brought action against DCF social workers and four police officers alleging they violated her rights when they secured a court order to obtain custody of her children.* **"... the motion to dismiss based on absolute immunity is denied. Qualified immunity sufficiently protects the interests of DCF employees and ensures the right balance between an efficient judicial process and the responsible removal of children."**
- [Doe v. Connecticut Department of Children and Youth Services](#), 712 Fed. Supp. 277 (D. Conn. 1989), affirmed 911 F.2d 868 (1990). **"Civil rights action was brought against state child welfare officials arising out of emergency removal and temporary custody of child based on allegations of child abuse."**

#### WEST KEY NUMBERS:

- Infants
  - Child Protection- Agencies and Proceedings
    - #1441-Protective custody and removal of child
    - ##1450—1460 Actions by or against agency
  - Dependency, Permanent custody, and Termination of Rights; Children in Need
    - ##1831—1848 Protective or pendent lite custody and removal

#### TEXTS & TREATISES:

You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the treatises cited.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases.

- *The Law of Child Abuse and Neglect in Connecticut*, by Paul Chill, University of Connecticut Legal Clinic, 1997.
  - Chapter 7. Emergency removal and temporary custody
    - A. Overview
    - B. 96-hour hold
    - C. 96-hour hold by physician
    - D. Orders of temporary custody
- *Handling Child Custody, Abuse and Adoption Cases*, 3d ed., by Ann M. Haralambie, Thomson West, 2009, with 2024-2025 supplement.
  - Chapter 12. Dependency and neglect actions

§ Appendix 12-3. American Bar Association Standards  
of Practice for Lawyers Representing Children in  
Abuse and Neglect Cases

LAW REVIEWS:

Public access to law  
review databases is  
available on-site at  
each of our [law  
libraries.](#)

- Shanta Trivedi, *The Harm of Child Removal*, 43 N.Y.U. Rev. L. & Soc. Change 523 (2019).
- Vivek Sankaran, Christopher Church & Monique Mitchell, *A Cure Worse Than the Disease: The Impact of Removal on Children and Their Families*, 102 Marq. L. Rev. 1161 (2019).
- Kathleen B. Simon, *Catalyzing the Separation of Black Families: A Critique of Foster Care Placements without Prior Judicial Review*, 51 Colum. J.L. & Soc. Probs. 347 (2018).
- David Pimentel, *Protecting the Free-Range Kid: Recalibrating Parents Rights and the Best Interest of the Child*, 38 Cardozo L. Rev. 1 (2016).

## Section 4: Commitment of Child or Youth in Connecticut to DCF

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

### SCOPE:

- Bibliographic resources related to commitment of child or youth to the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) in Connecticut

### SEE ALSO:

- [Section 3: Immediate Removal of Child](#)

### DEFINITIONS:

- **Commitment: “means an order of the judicial authority whereby custody and/or guardianship of a child or youth are transferred to the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families.” Conn. Practice Book [§ 26-1\(e\)](#) (2025).**

### STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website to confirm that you are using the most up-to-date statutes.

Conn. Gen. Stat. (2025)

- Chapter 815p. Uniform child custody jurisdiction and enforcement act  
[§ 46b-115n](#). Temporary emergency jurisdiction.
- Chapter 815t. Juvenile matters  
[§ 46b-120](#). Definitions.  
[§ 46b-121](#). “**Juvenile matters**” defined. Authority of court V  
[§ 46b-129](#). Commitment of child or youth. Petition for neglected, uncared for or abused child or youth. Hearing re temporary custody, order to appear or petition. Review of permanency plan. Cost of care and maintenance of child or youth; reimbursement. Revocation of commitment. Legal guardianships and permanent legal guardianships. Applicability of provisions re placement of child from another state and Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children.  
[§ 46b-129a](#). Examination by physician, psychiatrist or psychologist. Counsel and guardian ad litem.  
[§ 46b-135](#). Right to counsel and cross-examination.  
[§ 46b-136](#). Appointment of attorney to represent child or youth and parent or guardian.

### DCF POLICY MANUAL:

- “A Neglect Petition shall be filed in the juvenile court when the child is neglected in that he or she:
  - o has been abandoned;
  - o is being denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotionally or morally;
  - o is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances **or associations injurious to the child’s well-being**; or
  - o has been abused and has:
    - physical injury or injuries inflicted by other than accidental means;
    - injuries which are at variance with the history given about them; or
    - a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation,

deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or **cruel punishment.**" DCF Policy Manual, Superior Court Juvenile Matters, [Chapter 6-6](#) (Eff. 1/2/19).

- "A Motion for Order of Temporary Custody shall be filed if it is determined that immediate out of home placement is required to safeguard the immediate safety of a child without a hearing. A Neglect Petition must be filed concurrently with a Motion for Order of Temporary Custody **or have been previously filed.**" DCF Policy Manual, Superior Court Juvenile Matters, [Chapter 6-6](#) (Eff. 1/2/19).

#### COURT RULES:

Amendments to the Practice Book (Court Rules) are published in the [Connecticut Law Journal](#) and posted [online](#).

- Conn. Practice Book (2025)  
Superior Court—Procedure in juvenile matters  
[Chapter 26](#). Definitions.  
§ 26-1. Definitions applicable to proceedings on juvenile matters

#### CASES:

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [In re M. S.](#), 226 Conn. App. 857, 863-864, 319 A. 3d 833 (2024). "The proper standard of proof in a [contested hearing] on an order of temporary custody is the normal civil standard of a fair preponderance of the evidence."
- [In re Alizabeth L.-T.](#), 213 Conn. App. 541, 552, 278 A.3d 547 (2022). "A preliminary hearing on any ex parte custody order ... issued by the court shall be held not later than ten days after the issuance of such order. ...' General Statutes § 46b-129 (b). 'Connecticut law is clear that, in the context of a hearing for an order of temporary custody pursuant to § 46b-129 (b), a finding of immediate physical danger is a prerequisite to the court's entry of a temporary order vesting custody of a child in one other than the child's parents.' (Internal quotation marks omitted.) In re J.R., 161 Conn. App. 563, 573, 127 A.3d 1155 (2015). Following the preliminary hearing on an ex parte order of temporary custody, '[u]pon request, or upon its own motion, the court shall schedule a hearing on the order for temporary custody ... to be held not later than ten days after the date of the preliminary hearing.' General Statutes § 46b-129 (f). 'The proper standard of proof in a [contested hearing] on an order of temporary custody is the normal civil standard of a fair preponderance of the evidence.' (Internal quotation marks omitted.) In re J.R., supra, 161 Conn. App. at 571, 127 A.3d 1155; see also Practice Book § 32a-3."
- [In re Teagan K.-O.](#), 212 Conn. App. 161, 172-173, 274 A.3d 985 (2022). "On August 26, 2020, the petitioner [Commission of Children and Families] filed a motion for order regarding jurisdiction, in which she asked the court to find that it had jurisdiction over Teagan's case, including the pending petition

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for termination of parental rights pursuant to General Statutes § 46b-115n. The petitioner argued in her motion that § 46b-115n, a provision of the UCCJEA [Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act] that has been adopted by both Connecticut and Florida, is the provision that our Supreme Court determined to empower the Superior Court to exercise temporary emergency jurisdiction over Teagan, although it had originally lacked jurisdiction over the neglect petition filed with respect to Teagan. The petitioner further argued that under § 46b-115n (b) temporary emergency jurisdiction can become permanent if three conditions are satisfied: '(1) A child custody proceeding has not been or is not commenced in a court of a state having jurisdiction under a provision substantially similar to section 46b-115k, 46b-115l or 46b-115m; (2) this state has become the home state of the child; and (3) the child custody determination provides that it is a final determination.' General Statutes § 46b-115n (b)."

- [In Re Naomi W.](#), 206 Conn. App. 138, 139, 259 A.3d 1263 (2021). "This case concerns the efforts of Naomi W. (Naomi), a child in the custody of the petitioner, the Commissioner of Children of Families (commissioner), to undergo a surgical procedure to correct severe curvature of her spine. Following a hearing, the trial court authorized the surgery, and the respondent mother (respondent), who objected to the surgery, filed the present appeal."
- [In Re Kadon M.](#), 194 Conn. App. 100, 105-106, 219 A.3d 985 (2019). "The adjudication of a motion to transfer guardianship pursuant to General Statutes § 46b-129 (j) (2) requires a two step analysis. '[T]he court must first determine whether it would be in the best interest[s] of the child for guardianship to be transferred from the petitioner to the proposed guardian.... [Second] [t]he court must then find that the third party is a suitable and worthy guardian....' *In re Mindy F.*, 153 Conn. App. 786, 802, 105 A.3d 351 (2014), cert. denied, 315 Conn. 913, 106 A.3d 307 (2015).

During such proceedings, the trial court is required to appoint counsel to represent the minor child's interests pursuant to General Statutes § 46b-129a (2) (A). 'The primary role of any counsel for the child shall be to advocate for the child in accordance with the Rules of Professional Conduct, except that if the child is incapable of expressing the child's wishes to the child's counsel because of age or other incapacity, the counsel for the child shall advocate for the best interests of the child.' General Statutes § 46b-129a (2) (C). In addition, § 46b-129a (2) (D) provides in relevant part: 'If the court, based on evidence before it, or counsel for the child, determines that the child cannot adequately act in his or her own best interests and the child's wishes, as determined by counsel, if followed, could lead to substantial physical, financial or other harm to the child unless protective action is taken, counsel may

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request and the court *may* order that a separate guardian ad litem be assigned for the child .... The guardian ad litem shall perform an independent investigation of the case and may present at any hearing information pertinent to the court's determination of the best interests of the child.' (Emphasis added.)"

- [In Re Adrian K.](#), 191 Conn. App. 397, 215 A.3d 1271 (2019)  
"On November 29, 2018, the petitioner filed a motion for an order of temporary custody, which was granted ex parte that same day. A preliminary hearing was scheduled for December 7, 2018. In light of the order of temporary custody, the petitioner, pursuant to Practice Book § 33a-6 (c), should have filed a motion to modify protective supervision at least one business day prior to the preliminary hearing. The petitioner, however, did not file a motion to open and modify the dispositional order of protective supervision to commitment until the morning of the hearing on December 7, 2018." (p. 401-402)

"In balancing the factors, we conclude that the court's decision to accept the petitioner's motion to modify, which had been filed one day later than the time set forth in our rules of practice, when the respondent had notice of the order of temporary custody over which the court had jurisdiction, and when the respondent was afforded an opportunity to contest fully the order of temporary custody, did not deprive him of his right to procedural due process. Accordingly, we conclude that the respondent has not demonstrated the existence of a constitutional violation." (p. 413)

- [Matthew C. v. Commissioner of Children and Families](#), 188 Conn. App. 687 (2019). "On the basis of our review of the findings by the juvenile court, which were clearly articulated by the hearing officer in her final decision, we conclude that the juvenile court made a factual determination that the plaintiff was responsible for the neglect of his children, which precluded him from being afforded a substantiation hearing under the department regulation and policy manual." (p. 712)

"The plaintiff's contention that his right to fundamental fairness **was violated is belied by the record....Our review of the record** clearly indicates that, through the course of the hearing before the juvenile court on both the order of temporary custody and the neglect petitions regarding his children, the plaintiff was provided the protections that fundamental fairness mandate. First, he was on notice that the factual allegations in support of both the applications for orders of temporary custody and neglect petitions were premised almost exclusively on his conduct. Second, the record clearly demonstrates that the plaintiff was represented by counsel who defended his position at a two day consolidated hearing on the orders of temporary custody and the neglect petitions. Last, the record makes



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manifest that he testified at the hearing, called witnesses, presented his own evidence, and had his counsel cross-examine other witnesses.” (pp. 713-714)

- [In Re Katherine H.](#), 183 Conn. App. 320, 324-325, 192 A.3d 537, 540-541 (2018). “A contested hearing on the motions for **temporary custody was held on December 14, 2016...**The court found that the children were in immediate physical danger due to the respondent's delusional disorder and abuse of alcohol and concluded that their removal from the respondent's care **was necessary to ensure their safety.**”

“On December 5, 2017, following a contested hearing on the neglect petitions, *Hon. Michael A. Mack*, judge trial referee, found ‘by a fair preponderance of the evidence that the children had been permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to their well-being and that they were being denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotionally or morally. As noted by Judge Foley . . . the court is not required to, nor should it, wait until an actual catastrophe occurs involving the children or either of them. There is significant evidence that under the circumstances before the [orders of temporary custody], it was only a question of time before an act or actual happening of neglect occurred. Living in the presence of actual delusional thinking and acting is itself a condition of negligence and/or neglect. No credible evidence was offered demonstrating that there has been a significant improvement in [the respondent's] situation.’ Moreover, the respondent did not acknowledge that she had mental health issues or that she needed help.”

- [In Re Zoey H.](#), 183 Conn. App. 327, 354, 192 A.3d 522, 537 (2018). “The state, virtually since Zoey's birth, has had the custody and responsibility to care for her. Thus, the respondent is seeking to *acquire* custody of Zoey from the petitioner following Zoey's commitment; he is not seeking to prevent interference with an existing and ongoing parent/child relationship. He has never had custody of Zoey; the petitioner has had custody since Zoey was days old. Indeed, at the time of her commitment to the petitioner, the respondent was not known to be her father. When Zoey was found to be uncared for, the respondent was not in her life providing for her care. These factual distinctions are important. Furthermore, the state's interest in protecting the well-being of Zoey, an uncared for child for whom it has been responsible for since the child's birth, is much greater than was the state's interest in *Troxel* and in *Roth*.”
- [In re Brianna C.](#), 98 Conn. App. 797, 805, 912 A.2d 505 (2006). “We first note that the commitment in this case is not one of ‘permanency,’ such as a judgment of termination of parental rights, but one that requires, pursuant to § 46b–



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129(j), the **court to 'order specific steps which the parent must take to facilitate the return of the child or youth to the custody of such parent.'** The commitment was a difficult, nobody wins situation that makes it necessary to choose whether the interest of the child to have a constant twenty-four hour per day, year-round relationship with the respondent is in the child's best interest when weighed against the possibility that the respondent is unable to prevent the child's father from causing injury to the well-being of the child in the event that he fails to medicate himself appropriately. In this case, there **may be no 'best,' but only a 'better,' solution."**

- [In re Ja-Lyn R.](#), 132 Conn. App. 312, 324, 31 A.3d 441 (2011). **"Here, the court committed Ja-lyn to the custody of the commissioner after finding that the respondent was unable to care for him safely on the basis of the respondent's prior history with the department, her anger management issues and her inability to work with the department to improve her parenting skills."**
- [In Re Juvenile Appeal \(1983-4\)](#), 39 Conn. Supp. 490, 493, 466 A.2d 798 (1983). "The defendant further claims that the court erred in committing the child to the custody of the DCYS. State intervention in family matters is only justified when it is in the best interests of the child. *In re Juvenile Appeal (83-CD)*, 189 Conn. 276, 285, 455 A.2d 1313 (1983). In making its disposition, the trial court must balance the child's interests in safety and in a stable family environment with the mother's interest in the integrity **of the family. It is only when 'the child's interest no longer coincides with that of the parent, thereby diminishing the magnitude of the parent's right to family integrity; *In re Angelia P.*, 28 Cal.3d 908, 916-17 [171 Cal.Rptr. 637], 623 P.2d 198 (1981);' *In re Juvenile Appeal (83-CD)*, supra, 189 Conn. 287-88, 455 A.2d 1313; that the state may intervene to protect the child."**

#### WEST KEY NUMBERS:

- Infants
  - Child Protection- Agencies and Proceedings
    - #1441-Protective custody and removal of child
    - ##1450—1460 Actions by or against agency
  - Dependency, Permanent custody, and Termination of Rights; Children in Need
    - ##1811—2440

#### FORMS:

Official Judicial Branch forms are frequently updated. Please visit the [Official Court Webforms page](#) for the current forms.

- [Custody Affidavit](#), Rev. 12-22.
- [Motion/Order of Temporary Custody/Order to Appear](#), Rev. 1-22.
- [Petition: Neglected, Uncared-Form, Abused Child/Youth](#), Rev. 1-22.
- [Plea of Nolo Contendere](#), Rev. 1-22.
- [Specific Steps](#), Rev. 1-22.
- [Notice/Summons and Order For Hearing - Termination of Parental Rights](#), Rev. 10-22.

- [Motion, Permanent Legal Guardianship](#), Rev. 1-22.
- [Affidavit/Consent to Termination of Parental Rights](#), Rev. 12-22.

#### ENCYCLOPEDIAS:

Encyclopedias and ALRs are available in print at some law library locations and accessible online at all law library locations.

Online databases are available for in-library use. Remote access is not available.

- 211 *Am Jur POF 3d* 259, *Proof of Child Neglect*, by Jay M. Zitter, Thomson West, 2024 (also available on Westlaw).
- 115 *Am Jur Trials* 465, *Termination of Parental Rights Under Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)*, by Elizabeth O'Connor Tomlinson, Thomson West, 2010 (also available on Westlaw).

#### TEXTS & TREATISES:

Each of our law libraries own the Connecticut treatises cited. You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the other treatises cited or to search for more treatises.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

- ***Connecticut Lawyer's Deskbook: A Reference Manual***, 3d ed., LawFirst Publishing, 2008.
  - Child Protection*, Ch. 21, by Lynn B. Cochrane
    - Basic principles: Neglect and Termination of parental rights cases, pp. 518-519
    - Neglect, Initiation of a neglect case, pp. 519-524
    - Neglect petitions, pp. 524-529
    - Common evidentiary issues, pp. 529-532
    - Permanency plan review p. 532
    - Revocation of commitment, pp. 532-533
    - Appeals, pp. 533-534
    - Duty to foster children, p. 534
    - Termination of parental rights, pp. 534-539
- *The Law of Child Abuse and Neglect in Connecticut*, by Paul Chill, University of Connecticut Legal Clinic, 1997.
  - Chapter 7. Emergency removal and temporary custody
    - A. Overview
    - B. 96-hour hold
    - C. 96-hour hold by physician
    - D. Orders of temporary custody
- *Handling Child Custody, Abuse and Adoption Cases*, 3d ed., by Ann M. Haralambie, Thomson West, 2009, with 2024-2025 supplement.
  - Chapter 12. Dependency and neglect actions
    - § Appendix 12-3. American Bar Association Standards of Practice for Lawyers Representing Children in Abuse and Neglect Cases
- Connecticut Estates Practice Series, *Incapacity, Powers of Attorney and Adoption in Connecticut*, by Ralph H. Folsom et al., 4th ed., Thomson West, 2024 (also available on Westlaw).
  - Chapter 1. Commitments and Placements
    - § 1:22. Commitment in juvenile proceedings,

termination of parental rights, statutory parent

- *Children and the Law: Rights and Obligations*, by Thomas A. Jacobs, Thomson West, 2024 (also available on Westlaw).  
Chapter 2. Protection of children (Dependency process)  
III. Entry into system: Voluntary vs. involuntary removal  
§§2: 16 – 2:31. Involuntary commitment

#### LAW REVIEWS:

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- Sarah A. Font & Lindsey Palmer, *Timely Permanency for Children in Foster Care: Revisiting Core Assumptions about Children's Options and Outcomes*, 58 Ct. Rev. 26 (2022).
- Anne C. Dailey & Laura A. Rosenbury, *The New Parental Rights*, 71 Duke L.J. 75 (2021).
- Martin Guggenheim, *The History and Influence of the National Association of Counsel for Children - An Alternate Perspective*, 39 Child. Legal Rts. J. 12 (2019).
- Jordan Blair Woods, *Unaccompanied Youth and Private-Public Failures*, 103 Iowa L. Rev. 1639 (2018).
- Yvonne Vissing; Quixanda Moore-Vissing; Leah Salloway, *Complexity in the Determination of Child Abuse: A Statistical and Rights Based Approach*, 32 J. C. R. & Econ. Dev. 1 (2018).
- Emily Suski, *The Privacy of the Public Schools*, 77 Md. L. Rev. 427 (2018).
- Rakesh Beniwal, *Implicit Bias in Child Welfare: Overcoming Intent*, 49 Conn. L. Rev. 1021 (Feb. 2017).
- Charisa Smith, *Making Good on an Historic Federal Precedent: Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Claims and the Termination of Parental Rights of Parents with Mental Disabilities*, 18 Quinnipiac Health L. J. 191 (2015).

Table 1: Temporary Custody and Commitment Procedures

<p>Temporary Custody and Commitment Procedures</p> <p>Conn. Gen. Stat. <a href="#">§ 46b-129</a> (2025).</p>	
Petition	(a) Any selectman, town manager, or town, city or borough welfare department, any probation officer, or the Commissioner of Social Services, the Commissioner of Children and Families or any child-caring institution or agency approved by the Commissioner of Children and Families, a child or such child's representative or attorney or a foster parent of a child, having information that a child or youth is neglected, uncared for or abused may file with the Superior Court that has venue over such matter a verified petition plainly stating such facts as bring the child or youth within the jurisdiction of the court as neglected, uncared for or abused within the meaning of section 46b-120, the name, date of birth, sex and residence of the child or youth, the name and residence of such child's parents or guardian, and praying for appropriate action by the court in conformity with the provisions of this chapter.
Summons	Upon the filing of such a petition, except as otherwise provided in subsection (k) of section 17a-112, the court shall cause a summons to be issued requiring the parent or parents or the guardian of the child or youth to appear in court at the time and place named, which summons shall be served not less than fourteen days before the date of the hearing in the manner prescribed by section 46b-128, and the court shall further give notice to the petitioner and to the Commissioner of Children and Families of the time and place when the petition is to be heard not less than fourteen days prior to the hearing in question.
Order to Appear  or  Ex Parte Order of Temporary Custody	(b) If it appears from the specific allegations of the petition and other verified affirmations of fact accompanying the petition and application, or subsequent thereto, that there is reasonable cause to believe that (1) the child or youth is suffering from serious physical illness or serious physical injury or is in immediate physical danger from the child's or youth's surroundings, and (2) as a result of said conditions, the child's or youth's safety is endangered and immediate removal from such surroundings is necessary to ensure the child's or youth's safety, the court shall either (A) issue an order to the parents or other person having responsibility for the care of the child or youth to appear at such time as the court may designate to determine whether the court should vest the child's or youth's temporary care and custody in a person related to the child or youth by blood or marriage or in some other person or suitable agency pending disposition of the petition, or (B) issue an order ex parte vesting the child's or youth's temporary care and custody in a person related to the child or youth by blood or marriage or in some other person or suitable agency. [Emphasis added]
Preliminary hearing on:	A preliminary hearing on any ex parte custody order or order to appear issued by the court shall be held not later than ten days after the issuance of such order. The service of such orders may be made by any officer authorized by law to serve process, or by any probation officer appointed in accordance with section 46b-123, investigator from the

<p>Ex Parte Order of Temporary Custody</p> <p>or</p> <p>Order to Appear</p>	<p>Department of Administrative Services, state or local police officer or indifferent person. Such orders shall include a conspicuous notice to the respondent written in clear and simple language containing at least the following information: (i) That the order contains allegations that conditions in the home have endangered the safety and welfare of the child or youth; (ii) that a hearing will be held on the date on the form; (iii) that the hearing is the opportunity to present the parents' position concerning the alleged facts; (iv) that an attorney will be appointed for parents who cannot afford an attorney; (v) that such parents may apply for a court-appointed attorney by going in person to the court address on the form and are advised to go as soon as possible in order for the attorney to prepare for the hearing; (vi) that such parents, or a person having responsibility for the care and custody of the child or youth, may request the Commissioner of Children and Families to investigate placing the child or youth with a person related to the child or youth by blood or marriage who might serve as a licensed foster parent or temporary custodian for such child or youth. The commissioner shall investigate any relative or relatives proposed to serve as a licensed foster parent or temporary custodian for such child or youth prior to the preliminary hearing and provide a preliminary report to the court at such hearing as to such relative's or relatives' suitability and any potential barriers to licensing such relative or relatives as a foster parent or parents or granting temporary custody of such child or youth to such relative or relatives; and (vii) that if such parents have any questions concerning the case or appointment of counsel, any such parent is advised to go to the court or call the clerk's office at the court as soon as possible. Upon application for appointed counsel, the court shall promptly determine eligibility and, if the respondent is eligible, promptly appoint counsel. The expense for any temporary care and custody shall be paid by the town in which such child or youth is at the time residing, and such town shall be reimbursed for such expense by the town found liable for the child's or youth's support, except that where a state agency has filed a petition pursuant to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, the agency shall pay such expense. The agency shall give primary consideration to placing the child or youth in the town where such child or youth resides. The agency shall file in writing with the clerk of the court the reasons for placing the child or youth in a particular placement outside the town where the child or youth resides. Upon issuance of an ex parte order, the court shall provide to the commissioner and the parent or guardian specific steps necessary for each to take to address the ex parte order for the parent or guardian to retain or regain custody of the child or youth. Upon the issuance of such order, or not later than sixty days after the issuance of such order, the court shall make a determination whether the Department of Children and Families made reasonable efforts to keep the child or youth with his or her parents or guardian prior to the issuance of such order and, if such efforts were not made, whether such reasonable efforts were not possible, taking into consideration the child's or youth's best interests, including the child's or youth's health and safety. Any person or agency in which the temporary care and custody of a child or youth is vested under this section shall have the following rights and duties regarding the child or youth: (I) The obligation of care and control; (II) the authority to make</p>
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	decisions regarding emergency medical, psychological, psychiatric or surgical treatment; and (III) such other rights and duties that the court having jurisdiction may order.
Purpose of preliminary hearing	<p>(c) The preliminary hearing on the order of temporary custody or order to appear or the first hearing on a petition filed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be held in order for the court to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Advise the parent or guardian of the allegations contained in all petitions and applications that are the subject of the hearing and the parent's or guardian's right to counsel pursuant to subsection (b) of section 46b-135;</li> <li>(2) Ensure that an attorney, and where appropriate, a separate guardian ad litem has been appointed to represent the child or youth in accordance with subsection (b) of section 51-296a and sections 46b-129a and 46b-136;</li> <li>(3) Upon request, appoint an attorney to represent the respondent when the respondent is unable to afford representation, in accordance with subsection (b) of section 51-296a;</li> <li>(4) Advise the parent or guardian of the right to a hearing on the petitions and applications, to be held not later than ten days after the date of the preliminary hearing if the hearing is pursuant to an order of temporary custody or an order to show cause;</li> <li>(5) Accept a plea regarding the truth of the allegations;</li> <li>(6) Make any interim orders, including visitation orders, that the court determines are in the best interests of the child or youth. The court, after a hearing pursuant to this subsection, shall order specific steps the commissioner and the parent or guardian shall take for the parent or guardian to regain or to retain custody of the child or youth;</li> <li>(7) Take steps to determine the identity of the alleged genetic parent of the child or youth, including, if necessary, inquiring of the birth parent of the child or youth, under oath, as to the identity and address of any person who might be the genetic parent of the child or youth and ordering genetic testing, and order service of the petition and notice of the hearing date, if any, to be made upon such alleged genetic parent;</li> <li>(8) If the person named as the alleged genetic parent appears and admits that such person is the genetic parent, provide such person and the birth parent with the notices that comply with section 17b-27 and provide them with the opportunity to sign an acknowledgment of parentage on forms that comply with section 17b-27. Such documents shall be executed and filed in accordance with chapter 815y and a copy delivered to the clerk of the superior court for juvenile matters. The clerk of the superior court for juvenile matters shall send the original acknowledgment of parentage to the Department of Public Health for filing in the parentage registry maintained under section 19a-42a, and shall maintain a copy of the acknowledgment of parentage in the court file;</li> <li>(9) If the person named as an alleged genetic parent appears and denies that such person is the genetic parent of the child or youth, order genetic testing to determine parentage in accordance with the Connecticut Parentage Act. The clerk of the court shall send a certified copy of any judgment adjudicating parentage to the Department of Public Health for filing in the parentage registry maintained under</li> </ol>

<p>Identify persons related to the child or youth for placement</p>	<p>section 19a-42a. If the results of the genetic tests indicate that the person named as the alleged genetic parent is not the genetic parent of the child or youth, the court shall enter a judgment that such person is not the genetic parent and the court shall remove such person from the case and afford such person no further standing in the case or in any subsequent proceeding regarding the child or youth;</p> <p>(10) Identify any person or persons related to the child or youth by blood, marriage or law residing in this state who might serve as licensed foster parents or temporary custodians and order the Commissioner of Children and Families to investigate and report to the court, not later than thirty days after the preliminary hearing, the appropriateness of placing the child or youth with such relative or relatives; and</p> <p>(11) In accordance with the provisions of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children pursuant to section 17a-175, identify any person or persons related to the child or youth by blood, marriage or law residing out of state who might serve as licensed foster parents or temporary custodians, and order the Commissioner of Children and Families to investigate and determine, within a reasonable time, the appropriateness of placing the child or youth with such relative or relatives.</p>
<p>Motion to Intervene by relatives for temporary custody</p>	<p>(d) (1) (A) If not later than thirty days after the preliminary hearing, or within a reasonable time when a relative resides out of state, the Commissioner of Children and Families determines that there is not a suitable person related to the child or youth by blood or marriage who can be licensed as a foster parent or serve as a temporary custodian, and the court has not granted temporary custody to a person related to the child or youth by blood or marriage, any person related to the child or youth by blood or marriage may file, not later than ninety days after the date of the preliminary hearing, a motion to intervene for the limited purpose of moving for temporary custody of such child or youth. If a motion to intervene is timely filed, the court shall grant such motion except for good cause shown.</p> <p>(B) Any person related to a child or youth may file a motion to intervene for purposes of seeking temporary custody of a child or youth more than ninety days after the date of the preliminary hearing. The granting of such motion shall be solely in the court's discretion, except that such motion shall be granted absent good cause shown whenever the child's or youth's most recent placement has been disrupted or is about to be disrupted.</p> <p>(C) A relative shall appear in person, with or without counsel, and shall not be entitled to court appointed counsel or the assignment of counsel by the office of Chief Public Defender, except as provided in section 46b-136.</p> <p>(2) Upon the granting of intervenor status to such relative of the child or youth, the court shall issue an order directing the Commissioner of Children and Families to conduct an assessment of such relative and to file a written report with the court not later than forty days after such order, unless such relative resides out of state, in which case the assessment shall be ordered and requested in accordance with the provisions of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children, pursuant to section 17a-175. The court may also request such relative to release such relative's medical records, including any psychiatric or</p>

Motion to Intervene by relatives for temporary custody <b>(cont'd)</b>	<p>psychological records and may order such relative to submit to a physical or mental examination. The expenses incurred for such physical or mental examination shall be paid as costs of commitment are paid. Upon receipt of the assessment, the court shall schedule a hearing on such relative's motion for temporary custody not later than fifteen days after the receipt of the assessment. If the Commissioner of Children and Families, the child's or youth's attorney or guardian ad litem, or the parent or guardian objects to the vesting of temporary custody in such relative, the agency or person objecting at such hearing shall be required to prove by a fair preponderance of the evidence that granting temporary custody of the child or youth to such relative would not be in the best interests of such child or youth.</p> <p>(3) If the court grants such relative temporary custody during the period of such temporary custody, such relative shall be subject to orders of the court, including, but not limited to, providing for the care and supervision of such child or youth and cooperating with the Commissioner of Children and Families in the implementation of treatment and permanency plans and services for such child or youth. The court may, on motion of any party or the court's own motion, after notice and a hearing, terminate such relative's intervenor status if such relative's participation in the case is no longer warranted or necessary.</p> <p>(4) Any person related to a child or youth may file a motion to intervene for purposes of seeking guardianship of a child or youth more than ninety days after the date of the preliminary hearing. The granting of such motion to intervene shall be solely in the court's discretion, except that such motion shall be granted absent good cause shown whenever the child's or youth's most recent placement has been disrupted or is about to be disrupted. The court may, in the court's discretion, order the Commissioner of Children and Families to conduct an assessment of such relative granted intervenor status pursuant to this subdivision.</p> <p>(5) Any relative granted intervenor status pursuant to this subsection shall not be entitled to court-appointed counsel or representation by Division of Public Defender Services assigned counsel, except as provided in section 46b-136.</p>
Failure to appear	(e) If any parent or guardian fails, after service of such order, to appear at the preliminary hearing, the court may enter or sustain an order of temporary custody.
Hearing	(f) Upon request, or upon its own motion, the court shall schedule a hearing on the order for temporary custody or the order to appear to be held not later than ten days after the date of the preliminary hearing. Such hearing shall be held on consecutive days except for compelling circumstances or at the request of the parent or guardian.
Contested hearing	(g) At a contested hearing on the order for temporary custody or order to appear, credible hearsay evidence regarding statements of the child or youth made to a mandated reporter or to a parent may be offered by the parties and admitted by the court upon a finding that the statement is reliable and trustworthy and that admission of such statement is reasonably necessary. A signed statement executed by a mandated reporter under oath may be admitted by the court without the need for the mandated reporter to appear and testify unless called by a respondent or the child, provided the statement: (1) Was provided at the preliminary hearing and promptly upon request to any counsel
Contested hearing <b>(cont'd)</b>	



	appearing after the preliminary hearing; (2) reasonably describes the qualifications of the reporter and the nature of his contact with the child; and (3) contains only the direct observations of the reporter, and statements made to the reporter that would be admissible if the reporter were to testify to them in court and any opinions reasonably based thereupon. If a respondent or the child gives notice at the preliminary hearing that he intends to cross-examine the reporter, the person filing the petition shall make the reporter available for such examination at the contested hearing.
Default judgment	(h) If any parent or guardian fails, after due notice of the hearing scheduled pursuant to subsection (g) of this section and without good cause, to appear at the scheduled date for a contested hearing on the order of temporary custody or order to appear, the court may enter or sustain an order of temporary custody.
Mental and physical examination	(i) When a petition is filed in said court for the commitment of a child or youth, the Commissioner of Children and Families shall make a thorough investigation of the case and shall cause to be made a thorough physical and mental examination of the child or youth if requested by the court. The court after hearing may also order a thorough physical or mental examination, or both, of a parent or guardian whose competency or ability to care for a child or youth before the court is at issue. The expenses incurred in making such physical and mental examinations shall be paid as costs of commitment are paid.
Adjudication: uncared for, neglected or abused  Disposition: commitment, transfer of guardianship, permanent legal guardianship, protective supervision	<p>(j) (1) For the purposes of this subsection and subsection (k) of this section, (A) <b>"permanent legal guardianship" means a permanent guardianship, as defined in section 45a-604, (B) "caregiver" means (i) a fictive kin caregiver, as defined in section 17a-114, who is caring for a child, (ii) a relative caregiver, as defined in section 17a-126, who is caring for a child, or (iii) a person who is licensed or approved to provide foster care pursuant to section 17a-114, who is caring for a child, and (C) "trial home visit" means the temporary placement of a child or youth committed to the Commissioner of Children and Families in the home of such child's or youth's parent or guardian.</b></p> <p>(2) Upon finding and adjudging that any child or youth is uncared for, neglected or abused the court may (A) commit such child or youth to the Commissioner of Children and Families, and such commitment shall remain in effect until further order of the court, except that such commitment may be revoked or parental rights terminated at any time by the court; (B) vest such child's or youth's legal guardianship in any private or public agency that is permitted by law to care for neglected, uncared for or abused children or youths or with any other person or persons found to be suitable and worthy of such responsibility by the court, including, but not limited to, any relative of such child or youth by blood or marriage; (C) vest such child's or youth's permanent legal guardianship in any person or persons found to be suitable and worthy of such responsibility by the court, including, but not limited to, any relative of such child or youth by blood or marriage in accordance with the requirements set forth in subdivision (6) of this subsection; or (D) place the child or youth in the custody of the parent or guardian with protective supervision by the Commissioner of Children and Families subject to conditions established by the court.</p>

	<p>(3) If the court approves a permanency plan filed with the court that recommends the reunification of the child or youth with such child's or youth's parent or guardian, the Commissioner of Children and Families may, with the agreement of all parties of record, authorize a trial home visit prior to the revocation of the order of commitment pertaining to such child or youth. The commissioner shall (A) provide the court and all parties of record written notice of the commissioner's intent to authorize any such trial home visit not later than fifteen days prior to such authorization; (B) create a trial home visit plan that shall be provided to all parties of record, and include, but need not be limited to, announced and unannounced visits to the home by the department and the provision of any services during such trial home visit that the commissioner determines are necessary to promote the child's or youth's well-being; and (C) file a motion for revocation of commitment not later than thirty days after the date such trial home visit commences, unless the commissioner removes the child or youth from the home prior to that time pursuant to its responsibility and authority over children and youth committed to the care and custody of the commissioner. A trial home visit authorized under this section shall remain in effect until the commissioner removes such child or youth pursuant to subparagraph (C) of this subdivision or the court grants a motion for revocation of commitment filed pursuant to said subparagraph.</p>
Specific Steps	<p>(4) If the court determines that the commitment should be revoked and the child's or youth's legal guardianship or permanent legal guardianship should vest in someone other than the respondent parent, parents or former guardian, or if parental rights are terminated at any time, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that an award of legal guardianship or permanent legal guardianship upon revocation to, or adoption upon termination of parental rights by, any caregiver or person or who is, pursuant to an order of the court, the temporary custodian of the child or youth at the time of the revocation or termination, shall be in the best interests of the child or youth and that such caregiver is a suitable and worthy person to assume legal guardianship or permanent legal guardianship upon revocation or to adopt such child or youth upon termination of parental rights. The presumption may be rebutted by a preponderance of the evidence that an award of legal guardianship or permanent legal guardianship to, or an adoption by, such caregiver would not be in the child's or youth's best interests and such caregiver is not a suitable and worthy person. The court shall order specific steps that the parent must take to facilitate the return of the child or youth to the custody of such parent.</p>
Commitment	<p>(5) The commissioner shall be the guardian of such child or youth for the duration of the commitment, provided the child or youth has not reached the age of eighteen years, or until another guardian has been legally appointed, and in like manner, upon such vesting of the care of such child or youth, such other public or private agency or individual shall be the guardian of such child or youth until such child or youth has reached the age of eighteen years or, in the case of a child or youth in full-time attendance in a secondary school, a technical</p>

Reasonable Efforts finding	<p>education and career school, a college or a state-accredited job training program, until such child or youth has reached the age of twenty-one years or until another guardian has been legally appointed. The commissioner may place any child or youth so committed to the commissioner in a suitable foster home or in the home of a fictive kin caregiver, relative caregiver, or in a licensed child-caring institution or in the care and custody of any accredited, licensed or approved child-caring agency, within or without the state, provided a child shall not be placed outside the state except for good cause and unless the parents or guardian of such child are notified in advance of such placement and given an opportunity to be heard, or in a receiving home maintained and operated by the commissioner. When placing such child or youth, the commissioner shall provide written notification of the placement, including the name, address and other relevant contact information relating to the placement, to any attorney or guardian ad litem appointed to represent the child or youth pursuant to subsection (c) of this section. The commissioner shall provide written notification to such attorney or guardian ad litem of any change in placement of such child or youth, including a hospitalization or respite placement, and if the child or youth absconds from care. The commissioner shall provide such written notification not later than ten business days prior to the date of change of placement in a nonemergency situation, or not later than two business days following the date of a change of placement in an emergency situation. In placing such child or youth, the commissioner shall, if possible, select a home, agency, institution or person of like religious faith to that of a parent of such child or youth, if such faith is known or may be ascertained by reasonable inquiry, provided such home conforms to the standards of the commissioner and the commissioner shall, when placing siblings, if possible, place such children together. At least ten days prior to transferring a child or youth to a second or subsequent placement, the commissioner shall give written notice to such child or youth and such child's or youth's attorney of said commissioner's intention to make such transfer, unless an emergency or risk to such child's or youth's well-being necessitates the immediate transfer of such child and renders such notice impossible. Upon the issuance of an order committing the child or youth to the commissioner, or not later than sixty days after the issuance of such order, the court shall determine whether the department made reasonable efforts to keep the child or youth with his or her parents or guardian prior to the issuance of such order and, if such efforts were not made, whether such reasonable efforts were not possible, taking into consideration the child's or youth's best interests, including the child's or youth's health and safety.</p>
Custody beyond 18 years of age	<p>(6) A youth who is committed to the commissioner pursuant to this subsection and has reached eighteen years of age may remain in the care of the commissioner, by consent of the youth and provided the youth has not reached the age of twenty-one years of age, if the youth is (A) enrolled in a full-time approved secondary education program or an approved program leading to an equivalent credential; (B) enrolled full time in an institution which provides postsecondary or vocational education; or (C) participating full time in a program or activity approved by said commissioner that is designed to promote or remove</p>

Permanent legal guardianship	<p>barriers to employment. The commissioner, in the commissioner's discretion, may waive the provision of full-time enrollment or participation based on compelling circumstances. Not more than one hundred twenty days after the youth's eighteenth birthday, the department shall file a motion in the superior court for juvenile matters that had jurisdiction over the youth's case prior to the youth's eighteenth birthday for a determination as to whether continuation in care is in the youth's best interest and, if so, whether there is an appropriate permanency plan. The court, in its discretion, may hold a hearing on said motion.</p> <p>(7) Prior to issuing an order for permanent legal guardianship, the court shall provide notice to each parent that the parent may not file a motion to terminate the permanent legal guardianship, or the court shall indicate on the record why such notice could not be provided, and the court shall find by clear and convincing evidence that the permanent legal guardianship is in the best interests of the child or youth and that the following have been proven by clear and convincing evidence:</p> <p>(A) One of the statutory grounds for termination of parental rights exists, as set forth in subsection (j) of section 17a-112, or the parents have voluntarily consented to the establishment of the permanent legal guardianship;</p> <p>(B) Adoption of the child or youth is not possible or appropriate;</p> <p>(C) (i) If the child or youth is at least twelve years of age, such child or youth consents to the proposed permanent legal guardianship, or (ii) if the child is under twelve years of age, the proposed permanent legal guardian is: (I) A relative, (II) a caregiver, or (III) already serving as the permanent legal guardian of at least one of the child's siblings, if any;</p> <p>(D) The child or youth has resided with the proposed permanent legal guardian for at least a year; and</p> <p>(E) The proposed permanent legal guardian is (i) a suitable and worthy person, and (ii) committed to remaining the permanent legal guardian and assuming the right and responsibilities for the child or youth until the child or youth attains the age of majority.</p> <p>(8) An order of permanent legal guardianship may be reopened and modified and the permanent legal guardian removed upon the filing of a motion with the court, provided it is proven by a fair preponderance of the evidence that the permanent legal guardian is no longer suitable and worthy. A parent may not file a motion to terminate a permanent legal guardianship. If, after a hearing, the court terminates a permanent legal guardianship, the court, in appointing a successor legal guardian or permanent legal guardian for the child or youth shall do so in accordance with this subsection.</p>
Permanency plan	<p>(k) (1) (A) Nine months after placement of the child or youth in the care and custody of the commissioner pursuant to a voluntary</p>

<p>Permanency plan <b>(cont'd)</b></p>	<p>placement agreement, or removal of a child or youth pursuant to section 17a-101g or an order issued by a court of competent jurisdiction, whichever is earlier, the commissioner shall file a motion for review of a permanency plan if the child or youth has not reached his or her eighteenth birthday. Nine months after a permanency plan has been approved by the court pursuant to this subsection or subdivision (5) of subsection (j) of this section, the commissioner shall file a motion for review of the permanency plan. Any party seeking to oppose the commissioner's permanency plan, including a relative of a child or youth by blood or marriage who has intervened pursuant to subsection (d) of this section and is licensed as a foster parent for such child or youth or is vested with such child's or youth's temporary custody by order of the court, shall file a motion in opposition not later than thirty days after the filing of the commissioner's motion for review of the permanency plan, which motion shall include the reason therefor. A permanency hearing on any motion for review of the permanency plan shall be held not later than ninety days after the filing of such motion. The court shall hold evidentiary hearings in connection with any contested motion for review of the permanency plan and credible hearsay evidence regarding any party's compliance with specific steps ordered by the court shall be admissible at such evidentiary hearings. The commissioner shall have the burden of proving that the proposed permanency plan is in the best interests of the child or youth. After the initial permanency hearing, subsequent permanency hearings shall be held not less frequently than every twelve months while the child or youth remains in the custody of the Commissioner of Children and Families or, if the youth is over eighteen years of age, while the youth remains in voluntary placement with the department. The court shall provide notice to the child or youth, the parent or guardian of such child or youth, and any intervenor of the time and place of the court hearing on any such motion not less than fourteen days prior to such hearing.</p> <p>(B) (i) If a child is at least twelve years of age, the child's permanency plan, and any revision to such plan, shall be developed in consultation with the child. In developing or revising such plan, the child may consult up to two individuals participating in the department's case plan regarding such child, neither of whom shall be the foster parent or caseworker of such child. One individual so selected by such child may be designated as the child's advisor for purposes of developing or revising the permanency plan. Regardless of the child's age, the commissioner shall provide not less than five days' advance written notice of any permanency team meeting concerning the child's permanency plan to an attorney or guardian ad litem appointed to represent the child pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.</p> <p>(ii) If a child is at least twelve years of age, the commissioner shall notify the parent or guardian, foster parent and child of any administrative case review regarding such child's commitment not less than five days prior to such review and shall make a reasonable effort to schedule such review at a time and location that allows the parent or guardian, foster parent and child to attend.</p>
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<p>Permanency plan <b>(cont'd)</b></p>	<p>(iii) If a child is at least twelve years of age, such child shall, whenever possible, identify not more than three adults with whom such child has a significant relationship and who may serve as a permanency resource. The identity of such adults shall be recorded in the case plan of such child.</p> <p>(2) At a permanency hearing held in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection, the court shall approve a permanency plan that is in the best interests of the child or youth and takes into consideration the child's or youth's need for permanency. The child's or youth's health and safety shall be of paramount concern in formulating such plan. Such permanency plan may include the goal of (A) revocation of commitment and reunification of the child or youth with the parent or guardian, with or without protective supervision; (B) transfer of guardianship or permanent legal guardianship; (C) filing of termination of parental rights and adoption; or (D) for a child sixteen years of age or older, another planned permanent living arrangement ordered by the court, provided the Commissioner of Children and Families has documented a compelling reason why it would not be in the best interests of the child or youth for the permanency plan to include the goals in subparagraphs (A) to (C), inclusive, of this subdivision. Such other planned permanent living arrangement shall, whenever possible, include an adult who has a significant relationship with the child, and who is willing to be a permanency resource, and may include, but not be limited to, placement of a youth in an independent living program or long term foster care with an identified foster parent.</p> <p>(3) If the permanency plan for a child sixteen years of age or older includes the goal of another planned permanent living arrangement pursuant to subparagraph (D) of subdivision (2) of this subsection or subdivision (3) of subsection (c) of section 17a-111b, the department shall document for the court: (A) The manner and frequency of efforts made by the department to return the child home or to secure placement for the child with a fit and willing relative, legal guardian or adoptive parent; and (B) the steps the department has taken to ensure (i) the child's foster family home or child care institution is following a reasonable and prudent parent standard, as defined in section 17a-114d; and (ii) the child has regular opportunities to engage in age appropriate and developmentally appropriate activities, as defined in section 17a-114d.</p> <p>(4) At a permanency hearing held in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection, the court shall (A) (i) ask the child or youth about his or her desired permanency outcome, or (ii) if the child or youth is unavailable to appear at such hearing, require the attorney for the child or youth to consult with the child or youth regarding the child's or youth's desired permanency outcome and report the same to the court, (B) review the status of the child or youth, (C) review the progress being made to implement the permanency plan, (D) determine a timetable for attaining the permanency plan, (E) determine the services to be provided to the parent if the court approves a permanency plan of reunification and the timetable for such</p>
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	<p>services, and (F) determine whether the commissioner has made reasonable efforts to achieve the permanency plan. The court may revoke commitment if a cause for commitment no longer exists and it is in the best interests of the child or youth.</p> <p>(5) If the permanency plan for a child sixteen years of age or older includes the goal of another planned permanent living arrangement pursuant to subparagraph (D) of subdivision (2) of this subsection, the court shall (A) (i) ask the child about his or her desired permanency outcome, or (ii) if the child is unavailable to appear at a permanency hearing held in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection, require the attorney for the child to consult with the child regarding the child's desired permanency outcome and report the same to the court; (B) make a judicial determination that, as of the date of hearing, another planned permanent living arrangement is the best permanency plan for the child; and (C) document the compelling reasons why it is not in the best interest of the child to return home or to be placed with a fit and willing relative, legal guardian or adoptive parent.</p> <p>(6) If the court approves the permanency plan of adoption: (A) The Commissioner of Children and Families shall file a petition for termination of parental rights not later than sixty days after such approval if such petition has not previously been filed; (B) the commissioner may conduct a thorough adoption assessment and child-specific recruitment; and (C) the court may order that the child be photo-listed within thirty days if the court determines that such photo-listing is in the best interests of the child or youth. As used in this <b>subdivision, "thorough adoption assessment" means conducting and documenting face-to-face interviews with the child or youth, foster care providers and other significant parties and "child specific recruitment" means recruiting an adoptive placement targeted to meet the individual needs of the specific child or youth, including, but not limited to, use of the media, use of photo-listing services and any other in-state or out-of-state resources that may be used to meet the specific needs of the child or youth, unless there are extenuating circumstances that indicate that such efforts are not in the best interests of the child or youth.</b></p>
Cost of care and maintenance of child or youth	<p>(I) The Commissioner of Children and Families shall pay directly to the person or persons furnishing goods or services determined by said commissioner to be necessary for the care and maintenance of such child or youth the reasonable expense thereof, payment to be made at intervals determined by said commissioner; and the Comptroller shall draw his or her order on the Treasurer, from time to time, for such part of the appropriation for care of committed children or youths as may be needed in order to enable the commissioner to make such payments. The commissioner shall include in the department's annual budget a sum estimated to be sufficient to carry out the provisions of this section. Notwithstanding that any such child or youth has income or estate, the commissioner may pay the cost of care and maintenance of such child or youth. The commissioner may bill to and collect from the person in charge of the estate of any child or youth aided under this chapter, or the payee of such child's or youth's income, the total amount expended for care of such child or youth or such portion</p>

	thereof as any such estate or payee is able to reimburse, provided the commissioner shall not collect from such estate or payee any reimbursement for the cost of care or other expenditures made on behalf of such child or youth from (1) the proceeds of any cause of action received by such child or youth; (2) any lottery proceeds due to such child or youth; (3) any inheritance due to such child or youth; (4) any payment due to such child or youth from a trust other than a trust created pursuant to 42 USC 1396p, as amended from time to time; or (5) the decedent estate of such child or youth.
Motion to revoke commitment	(m) <b>The commissioner, a parent or the child's attorney may file a</b> motion to revoke a commitment, and, upon finding that cause for commitment no longer exists, and that such revocation is in the best interests of such child or youth, the court may revoke the commitment of such child or youth. No such motion shall be filed more often than once every six months.
Motion for reinstatement of guardianship	(n) If the court has ordered legal guardianship of a child or youth to be vested in a suitable and worthy person pursuant to subsection (j) of <b>this section, the child's or youth's parent or</b> former legal guardian may file a motion to reinstate guardianship of the child or youth in such parent or former legal guardian. Upon the filing of such a motion, the court may order the Commissioner of Children and Families to investigate the home conditions and needs of the child or youth and the home conditions of the person seeking reinstatement of guardianship, and to make a recommendation to the court. A party to a motion for reinstatement of guardianship shall not be entitled to court-appointed counsel or representation by Division of Public Defender Services assigned counsel, except as provided in section 46b-136. Upon finding that the cause for the removal of guardianship no longer exists, and that reinstatement is in the best interests of the child or youth, the court may reinstate the guardianship of the parent or the former legal guardian. No such motion may be filed more often than once every six months.
Surrender of child or youth to custodian	(o) Upon service on the parent, guardian or other person having control of the child or youth of any order issued by the court pursuant to the provisions of subsections (b) and (j) of this section, the child or youth concerned shall be surrendered to the person serving the order who shall forthwith deliver the child or youth to the person, agency, department or institution awarded custody in the order. Upon refusal of the parent, guardian or other person having control of the child or youth to surrender the child or youth as provided in the order, the court may cause a warrant to be issued charging the parent, guardian or other person having control of the child or youth with contempt of court. If the person arrested is found in contempt of court, the court may order such person confined until the person complies with the order, but for not more than six months, or may fine such person not more than five hundred dollars, or both.
Foster parent(s)	(p) A foster parent, prospective adoptive parent or relative caregiver shall receive notice and have the right to be heard for the purposes of this section in Superior Court in any proceeding concerning a foster child living with such foster parent, prospective adoptive parent or relative caregiver. A foster parent, prospective adoptive parent or relative caregiver who has cared for a child or youth shall have the right to be heard and comment on the best interests of such child or



	youth in any proceeding under this section which is brought not more than one year after the last day the foster parent, prospective adoptive parent or relative caregiver provided such care.
Siblings	(q) Upon motion of any sibling of any child committed to the Department of Children and Families pursuant to this section, such sibling shall have the right to be heard concerning visitation with, and placement of, any such child. In awarding any visitation or modifying any placement, the court shall be guided by the best interests of all siblings affected by such determination.
Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children	(r) The provisions of section 17a-152, regarding placement of a child from another state, and section 17a-175, regarding the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children, shall apply to placements pursuant to this section. In any proceeding under this section involving the placement of a child or youth in another state where the provisions of section 17a-175 are applicable, the court shall, before ordering or <b>approving such placement, state for the record the court's finding</b> concerning compliance with the provisions of section 17a-175. The <b>court's statement shall include, but not be limited to: (1) A finding that</b> the state has received notice in writing from the receiving state, in accordance with subsection (d) of Article III of section 17a-175, indicating that the proposed placement does not appear contrary to the interests of the child, (2) the court has reviewed such notice, (3) whether or not an interstate compact study or other home study has been completed by the receiving state, and (4) if such a study has been completed, whether the conclusions reached by the receiving state as a result of such study support the placement.
Out-of-state placement, notice	(s) In any proceeding under this section, the Department of Children and Families shall provide notice to each attorney of record for each party involved in the proceeding when the department seeks to transfer a child or youth in its care, custody or control to an out-of-state placement.
Out-of-home care, required information for any report to court	(t) If a child or youth is placed into out-of-home care by the Commissioner of Children and Families pursuant to this section, the commissioner shall include in any report the commissioner submits to the court information regarding (1) the safety and suitability of such <b>child or youth's placement, taking into account the requirements set forth in section 17a-114; (2) such child or youth's medical, dental, developmental, educational and treatment needs; and (3) a timeline for ensuring that such needs are met.</b> Such information shall also be submitted to the court (A) not later than ninety days after such child or youth is placed into out-of-home care; (B) if such child or youth's out-of-home placement changes; and (C) if the commissioner files a permanency plan on behalf of such child or youth. The court shall consider such information in making decisions regarding such child or <b>youth's well-being.</b>

## Section 5: Child Witnesses in Connecticut

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

### SCOPE:

Bibliographic resources relating to the vulnerability of child witnesses and the reliability of child testimony.

### CONSTITUTION:

- [U.S. Const.](#) amend. VI.
- [Conn. Const.](#) art. I, § 8.

### STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website to confirm that you are using the most up-to-date statutes.

Conn. Gen. Stat. (2025)

- Chapter 4. Oaths  
[§ 1-25](#) Oath for witnesses 12 years of age or younger
- Chapter 815j. Dissolution of marriage, legal separation and annulment  
[§ 46b-49](#) Private hearing.
- Chapter 815t. Juvenile matters  
[§ 46b-138a](#) Testimony of accused juvenile, parent or guardian in juvenile proceeding.
- Chapter 961. Trial and proceedings after conviction  
[§ 54-86g](#) Testimony of victim of child abuse.  
[§ 54-86h](#) Competency of child as witness.

### FEDERAL STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or [search the most recent U.S. Code](#) on the U.S. Code website to confirm that you are accessing the most up-to-date laws.

United States Code

- [18 U.S.C. § 3509](#). **Child victims' and child witnesses' rights**

### COURT RULES:

Amendments to the Practice Book (Court Rules) are published in the [Connecticut Law Journal](#) and posted [online](#).

- Conn. Practice Book (2025)  
Chapter 25. Superior Court—Procedure in family matters  
[§ 25-59](#). Closure of courtroom in family matters.  
Chapter 32a. Rights of parties: Neglected, uncared for and dependent children and termination of parental rights  
[§ 32a-1](#). Right to Counsel and to Remain Silent  
[§ 32a-2](#). Hearing procedure; Subpoena  
[§ 32a-3](#). Standard of proof  
[§ 32a-4](#). Child or Youth Witness  
[§ 32a-5](#). Consultation with Child or Youth

### CASES:

- [State v. James S.](#), 221 Conn. App. 797, 819-820, 303 A.3d 261 (2023). "Furthermore, although the defendant notes that our Supreme Court in *Michael H.* did not foreclose the possibility that due process might require a pretrial taint hearing upon a showing of some evidence of suggestiveness or coercion, the defendant in *Michael H.* actually moved for a pretrial taint hearing for the purpose of precluding the testimony of two young children on the ground that their

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

testimony was unreliable due to improper pretrial questioning. *State v. Michael H.*, supra, 291 Conn. at 757, 970 A.2d 113. Nothing in *Michael H.* suggests that a defendant's due process rights are violated when a trial court fails to sua sponte hold a pretrial taint hearing. On the contrary, the fact that the defendant in that case asked for such a hearing and our Supreme Court left open the possibility that one might be required upon a proper showing by a defendant; see *id.*, at 767–68, 970 A.2d 113; underscores the fact that the defendant in the present case had sufficient notice and opportunity, as well as the obligation, to request such a hearing. Accordingly, we conclude that the defendant's claim fails *Golding's* second and third prongs because he has not established that the trial court's failure to hold a hearing sua sponte was constitutional in nature or violated his constitutional rights.”

- [State v. Devon D.](#), 321 Conn. 656, 686, 138 A.3d 849, 867 (2016). “We conclude that the trial court may exercise its discretion to permit a dog to provide comfort and support to a testifying witness. Before doing so, the court must balance the extent to which the accommodation will help the witness to testify reliably and completely against any possible prejudice to the defendant's right to a fair trial. The trial court should consider the particular facts and circumstances for the request to have a dog accompany the particular witness, the extent to which the dog's presence will permit the witness to testify truthfully, completely and reliably, and the extent to which the dog's presence will obviate the need for more drastic measures to secure the witness' testimony. The trial court should balance these factors against the potential prejudice to the defendant and the availability of measures to mitigate any prejudice, such as limiting instructions and procedures to limit the jury's view of the dog.”
- [In re Tayler F.](#), 296 Conn. 524, 544–45, 995 A.2d 611, 626–27 (2010). “**Consistent with these authorities and our** jurisprudence, we conclude that a trial court properly may conclude that a child is unavailable if there is competent evidence that the child will suffer psychological harm from testifying. The court's determination must be based, however, on evidence specific to the child and the circumstances, not a generalized presumption that testifying is per se harmful. We further conclude that, although the nature of the conduct that is the subject of the testimony may be a relevant consideration, we decline to limit the court's discretion to deem the child unavailable to only cases involving sexual abuse, as the respondent appears to suggest. This state's policies, as reflected in our statutes and rules of practice, support a broader view of the protection of child witnesses. See General Statutes § 54–86g (providing special procedures for testimony of child in criminal

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prosecution of offense involving assault, sexual assault or abuse of child twelve years of age or younger); Practice Book § 32a-4 (providing alternative to in-court testimony and confrontation of parent for child witness, irrespective of conduct at issue). This is especially true in neglect proceedings, in which the sole focus is the safety and general well-being of the child. *In re Allison G.*, 276 Conn. 146, 158-59, 164, 883 A.2d 1226 (2005); *In re T.K.*, 105 Conn.App. 502, 505-506, 939 A.2d 9, cert. denied, 286 Conn. 914, 945 A.2d 976 (2008)."

- [State v. Bronson](#), 258 Conn. 42, 50, 779 A.2d 95 (2001). "In the exercise of discretion, the trial court must conduct an **assessment of the victim's reliability as a witness pursuant to the test set forth in *Jarzbek* ...We conclude that the defendant's request for an expert's assessment should have been granted.**"
- [State v. Aponte](#), 249 Conn. 735, 738 A.2d 117 (1999)  
**"We conclude that the actions of the prosecutor in giving the victim a Barney doll prior to her testifying, along with the trial court's limitations on the defendant's ability to expose to the jury the impact that such conduct may have had on her testimony, harmfully deprived the defendant of due process..."** (p. 737)  
**"This four year old's inability to immediately 'shift gears' does not demonstrate a lack of comprehension such that her testimony should have been disallowed"** (p. 760).
- [State v. Jarzbek](#), 204 Conn. 683, 704, 529 A.2d 1245 (1987), *cert. denied*, 484 U.S. 1061, 108 S.Ct. 1017, 98 L.Ed.2d 982 (1989). **"We conclude that, in criminal prosecutions involving the alleged sexual abuse of children of tender years, the practice of videotaping the testimony of a minor victim outside the physical presence of the defendant is, in appropriate circumstances, constitutionally permissible... We ... mandate a cases-by-case analysis, whereby a trial court must balance the individual defendant's right of confrontation against the interest of the state in obtaining reliable testimony from the particular minor victim in question... Under the approach we adopt today, a trial court must determine, at an evidentiary hearing, whether the state has demonstrated a compelling need for excluding the defendant from the witness room during the videotaping of a minor victim's testimony."**
- [State v. Angell](#), 237 Conn. 321, 331, 677 A.2d 912 (1996). **"The defendant in this case has similarly failed to establish that the trial court's refusal to grant his request for a child credibility instruction constituted an abuse of discretion."**
- [State v. Marquis](#), 241 Conn. 823, 824-825, 699 A.2d 893 (1997). **"The issue in this certified appeal is whether a trial**

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court has the discretion, under *State v. Jarzbek*, .... and General Statutes § 54-86g, to order that a child witness be examined by an expert witness for the defense before **deciding whether to grant the state's motion for videotaped testimony pursuant to § 54-86g(a).** We conclude that the trial court has the discretion to order such an examination ..."

- [Globe Newspaper Co. v. Superior Court](#), 457 U.S. 596, 102 S.Ct. 2613 (1982). "This case addresses the constitutionality of a Massachusetts statute which, 'as construed by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, requires trial judges, at trials for specified sexual offenses involving a victim under the age of 18, to exclude the press and general public from the courtroom during the testimony of that victim.'" (p. 598)

"For the foregoing reasons, we hold that § 16A, as construed by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, violates the First Amendment to the Constitution." (p. 610-611)

#### WEST KEY NUMBERS:

- Infants-Criminal Acts Against Children  
#1688 Child testimony in general; credibility  
#1689 Child hearsay and statements  
#1703 Weight and sufficiency- credibility; child testimony

#### ENCYCLOPEDIAS:

Encyclopedias and ALRs are available in print at some law library locations and accessible online at all law library locations.

Online databases are available for in-library use. Remote access is not available.

- 81 *Am Jur 2d*, Witnesses, Thomson West, 2015 (also available on Westlaw).
  - § 198. Test of competency
  - § 199. Duty and discretion of court
  - § 200. Examination by court
  - § 201. Effect of statute
  - § 203. —Manner and extent of examination
  - § 204. —Participation of counsel
  - § 205. —Failure to conduct examination
  - § 206. Examination by psychiatrist or psychologist
  - § 208. Particular factors of child competency. Age and intelligence of child. Generally
  - § 209. Presumption of competence
  - § 210. —Effect of statute
  - § 211. Particular ages of competency
  - § 212. Sensibility of child to obligation of oath. Generally
- 98 *CJS* Witnesses, Thompson West, 2023.
  - § 128. Competency of children, generally; tests of competency
  - § 129. Presumptions regarding competency of children
  - § 130. Special rules as to competency of children in sex offense cases
  - § 131. Time of competency of child
  - § 132. Ability to understand obligation to tell truth on competency of child, generally
  - § 133. Effect of knowledge of legal terms and consequences on competency of child

- § 134. Effect of child's religious belief on duty to tell truth
- § 135. Special rules on child witness's duty to tell truth in sex offense and other criminal cases
- § 136. Effect of coaching and rehearsing on competency of child; taint
- § 137. Effect of intellectual disability and disorders or commitment to juvenile facility on competency of child
- § 138. Effect of parent as party litigant or criminal defendant on competency of child
- § 139. Effect of uncertainties and reluctance to testify on competency of child
- § 140. Examination to determine competency of child, generally
- § 141. Types of questions to determine competency of child
- § 142. Examination of child by psychiatrist to make determination of competency

## TEXTS & TREATISES:

Each of our law libraries own the Connecticut treatises cited. You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the other treatises cited or to search for more treatises.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases. Remote access is not available.

- *The Law of Child Abuse and Neglect in Connecticut*, by Paul Chill, University of Connecticut Legal Clinic, 1997.  
Chapter 14 Trials  
F. Rules of evidence: Child witnesses (p. 81).
- *Handling Child Custody, Abuse and Adoption Cases*, 3d ed., by Ann M. Haralambie, Thomson West, 2009, with 2024-2025 supplement.  
Chapter 21. Trial techniques: Basic strategies  
§ 21.7. The child witness  
**Chapter 24. Children's development, memory, and testimony**  
§ 24.7. Importance of development for child abuse/neglect issues  
**§ 24.10. Children's memory in general**  
§ 24.11. Memory for personally significant details  
§ 24.12. Memory for traumatic events  
§ 24.13. Suggestibility  
§ 24.14. Testimonial aids to children's memory  
§ 24.15. False Memory Syndrome  
**§ 24.16. Testimonial relevance of children's memory**  
§ 24.17. Competency  
§ 24.18. Preparing the child  
§ 24.19. Accommodations for child witnesses  
**§ 24.20. Expert testimony in preparation for child's testimony**  
§ 24.21. How to ask children questions they can understand  
§ 24.22. Ensuring fair cross-examination  
§ Appendix 24-2. Ten step investigative interview
- *Children and the Law: Rights and Obligations*, by Thomas A. Jacobs, Thomson West, 2024 (also available on Westlaw).  
Chapter 2. Protection of children (Dependency process)

#### IV. Judicial process

##### **§2:64 Minor's Testimony**

##### §2:65 Child witness

- *Understanding Juvenile Law*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., by Martin R. Gardner, Carolina Academic Press, 2018.  
Chapter 4. Child abuse  
§ 4.03 The judicial process  
**[B] Children's testimony**

- *Children in the Courtroom*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., by Sherrie Bourg Carter, National Institute for Trial Advocacy, 2009.

#### LAW REVIEWS:

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- E. Christi Cunningham, *Traumatized Systems Theory: Accountability for Recurrent Systemic Harm*, 71 Case W. Res. L. Rev. 987 (2021).
- Anne Marie Burke, *Raising the Bar: Increasing Protection for Athletes in the Olympic Movement from Sexual Harassment and Abuse*, 31 J. Legal Aspects Sport 60 (2021).
- Ashley Englund, *Canines in the Courtroom: A Witness's Best Friend without Prejudice*, 17 J. Animal & Nat. Resource L. 45 (2021).
- Madeline L. Porter, *From the Stand to on Tape: Why Recorded Child Victim Testimony is Safer, More Effective & Fairer*, 22 U. C. Davis J. Juv. L. & Pol'y 37 (2018).
- M. Arthur II Vaughn, *Children Are Speaking. It's Time We Listen: The Case for a Child Hearsay Exception in Military Courts*, 78 A.F. L. Rev. 169 (2018).
- Ashley Fansher; Rolando V. del Carmen, *Child as Witness: Evaluating State Statutes on the Court's Most Vulnerable Population*, 36 Child. Legal Rts. J. 1 (2016).

## Section 6: Child Abuse Prevention

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

### SCOPE:

Bibliographic resources relating to state and federal programs and activities developed to prevent child abuse and neglect.

### STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website to confirm that you are using the most up-to-date statutes.

Conn. Gen. Stat. (2025)

- Chapter 104. Municipal police and fire protection  
[§ 7-294g](#). State and local police training programs to provide training re domestic violence, child abuse, and suicide intervention procedures.
- Chapter 319. Department of Children and Families  
[§ 17a-3](#). Powers and duties of the department.  
Comprehensive strategic plan.  
[§ 17a-6a](#). Commissioner to require applicants, vendors and contractors to submit to state and national criminal history records checks and state child abuse registry checks  
[§ 17a-49](#). Grants for programs to treat and prevent child **abuse and neglect....**
- Chapter 319a. Child welfare  
[§ 17a-101](#). Protection of children from abuse. Mandated reporters. Educational and training programs.  
[§ 17a-101r](#). Guidelines for appropriate interaction with youth athletes and identifying and reporting child sexual abuse. Distribution.  
[§ 17a-106](#). Cooperation in relation to prevention, identification and investigation of child abuse and neglect.
- Chapter 319rr. Child care and protection  
[§ 17b-751a](#). Eligibility for grants under the Kinship Fund and Grandparents and Relatives Respite Fund. Transfer of grant funds by Probate Court Administrator to Probate Courts.  
[§ 17b-751b](#). Connecticut Home Visiting System.  
[§ 17b-751d](#). Office of Early Childhood designated as state agency responsible for programs and activities to prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Chapter 368a. Department of Public Health  
[§ 19a-4i](#). Office of Injury Prevention.
- Chapter 813a. Office of the Child Advocate  
[§ 46a-13k](#) et seq. Office of the Child Advocate.

### LEGISLATIVE REPORTS:

- Michelle Kirby, *Laws on the Use of Cameras in Child Care Facilities*, Connecticut General Assembly. Office of Legislative Research, Report No. [2024-R-0008](#) (January 2, 2024).
- Michelle Kirby, *Connecticut Law on Background Checks for Child Care Employees*, Connecticut General Assembly. Office of Legislative Research, Report No. [2021-R-0105](#) (July 12, 2021).



[Office of Legislative Research](#) reports summarize and analyze the law in effect on the date of each **report's** publication. Current law may be different from what is discussed in the reports.

- Jessica Callahan, *Child Abuse and Fatality Reporting*, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research, Report No. [2020-R-0223](#) (September 15, 2020).
- Michele Kirby, *Human Trafficking Laws*, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research Report No. [2020-R-0005](#) (March 3, 2020).
- Marybeth Sullivan, *OLR Backgrounder: Vetting Applicants for Public School Employment*, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research, Report No. [2019-R-0339](#) (December 23, 2019).
- Michelle Kirby, *Court Appointed Special Advocates*, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research Report, No. [2017-R-0076](#) (March 13, 2017).
- Mark Randall, *"Predictive Neglect" Cases Based on Parent's Mental Health*, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research, Report No. [2012-R-0103](#) (Feb. 16, 2012).

#### CASES:

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [In re Teagan K.-O.](#), 335 Conn. 745, 747-748, 242 A.2d 3d (2020). "This case requires us to consider whether a Connecticut trial court has subject matter jurisdiction over a petition to adjudicate a newborn child neglected on the basis of 'predictive neglect' when the parents relocated to another state shortly before the child's birth, purportedly with no intention of returning, and that state determined that Connecticut would be a more convenient forum to adjudicate **this matter.**"
- [In re Joseph W.](#), 305 Conn. 633, 646, 46 A.3d 59 (2012). **"We conclude, therefore, that the trial court must find that it is more likely than not that, if the child remained in the current situation, the child would be 'denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotionally or morally'; General Statutes (Rev. to 2011) § 46b-120 (8)(B); or would be 'permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to the well-being of the child or youth....' General Statutes (Rev. to 2011) § 46b-120 (8)(C); see also *Stuart v. Stuart*, 297 Conn. 26, 38, 996 A.2d 259 (2010) ('the general rule [is] that when a civil statute is silent as to the applicable standard of proof, the preponderance of the evidence standard governs factual determinations required by that statute' [internal quotation marks omitted] ). We further conclude that, in neglect proceedings involving the doctrine of predictive neglect, the petitioner is required to meet this standard with respect to each parent who has contested the neglect petition and who has expressed a desire, or at least a willingness, to care for the child independently of the other parent."**

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [In re Michael D.](#), 58 Conn. App. 119, 123-124, 752 A.2d 1135 (2000), *cert. denied* 254 Conn. 911 (2000). “By its terms, § 17a-101(a) connotes a responsibility on the state’s behalf to act before the actual occurrence of injury or neglect has taken place... Our statutes clearly and explicitly recognize the state’s authority to act before harm occurs to protect children whose health and welfare may be adversely affected and not just children whose welfare has been affected.”
- [In re Kelly S.](#), 29 Conn. App. 600, 613, 616 A.2d 1161 (1992). “The trial court found that the respondent was not capable of providing the necessary care. The evidence fully supports that conclusion... Actual incidents of abuse or neglect are not required in determining that a child is uncared for under the ‘specialized needs’ section of the statute... For purposes of commitment of a child to the custody of the commissioner pursuant to § 46b-129, proof of ongoing parenting deficiencies is sufficient to satisfy the statute where those deficiencies mean that the child’s home is unable to provide the care required for her special needs.”

#### LAW REVIEWS:

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- Sarah J. Beal , Paul DeMott, Rich Bowlen & Mary V. Greiner, *The Role of Information Sharing to Improve Case Management in Child Welfare*, 58 Ct. Rev. 16 (2022).
- Emily C. Hoskins, *Actions Speak Louder than Words: When Should Courts Find That Institutions have a Duty to Protect Minor Children from Sexual Abuse?*, 24 Chap. L. Rev. 487 (2021).
- Nicola A. Boothe, *Traffickers' "F"ing Behavior during a Pandemic: Why Pandemic Online Behavior Has Heightened the Urgency to Prevent Traffickers from Finding, Friending and Facilitating the Exploitation of Youth via Social Media*, 22 Geo. J. Gender & L. 533 (2021).
- Alicia Le-Vezu, *Alone and Ignored: Children without Advocacy in Child Abuse and Neglect Courts*, 14 Stan. J. C.R. & C.L. 125 (2018).
- Anne M. Nurse, *Construction of the Offender in Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Training for Adults*, 28 J. Crim. Just. Educ. 598 (2017).
- (2016). *Within Our Reach: A National Strategy to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Families*, Washington, Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities. (Available in the HeinOnline Legal Classic Database)
- Pamela Laufer-Ukeles, *The Relational Rights of Children*, 48 Conn. L. R. 741 (February, 2016).

## Section 7: Safe Havens Act

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

### SCOPE:

**Bibliographic resources relating to Connecticut's Safe Havens Act for Newborns.**

### STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website to confirm that you are using the most up-to-date statutes.

Conn. Gen. Stat. (2025)

- Chapter 319. Department of Children and Families
  - [§ 17a-57](#). Designation of emergency room nursing staff to take physical custody of infant voluntarily surrendered.
  - [§ 17a-58](#). Physical custody of infant upon voluntary surrender by parent or agent. **Mother's surrender of custody of infant in hospital.** Medical history. Identification bracelet.
  - [§ 17a-59](#). Notification of custody. Assumption of care and control by commissioner.
  - [§ 17a-60](#). Reunification of parent with infant. Confidentiality of information provided designated employee.
  - [§ 17a-61](#). Public information program.
- Chapter 939. Offenses against the person
  - [§ 53-21](#)(b). Injury or risk of injury to, or impairing morals of, children.
  - [§ 53-23](#)(b). Abandonment of child under the age of six years.

### DCF and DCF POLICY MANUAL

- State of Connecticut, Department of Children and Families, [Safe Havens Act for Newborns](#), available on the DCF website.
- State of Connecticut, Department of Children and Families, Policy Manual, Safe Havens for Newborns, [Chapter 21-12](#) (Eff. 1/2/19).

### CASES:

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [In re Doe](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of Fairfield, No. M08CP14012304A (Nov. 4, 2014) (2014 WL 7156188). **"By leaving newborn Baby Boy Doe at the hospital on July 21, 2014 pursuant to the Safe Haven Act, the surrendering mother, or the agent who acted on her behalf, made it clear that she intended to abandon the child, abdicating to others all responsibilities for meeting the infant's basic and fundamental needs for love, food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and parental supervision. As found in Part II, there are no grounds upon which the court could reasonably attribute the surrendering woman's conduct to be related to issues of impoverishment. Moreover, the court has drawn the reasonable inference that the hospital where Baby Boy Doe was surrendered fulfilled its statutory obligation to deliver information concerning the legal ramifications of such surrender to the unidentified woman who left him there, prior to her departure from the hospital grounds."**

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

#### LAW REVIEWS:

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- In re Baby Girl Doe, Superior Court, Judicial District of Fairfield, No. F04CP12009701A, (Mar. 12, 2013) (2013 WL 1365004). **"Pursuant to General Statutes § 17a-112(j)(1)**, the court finds that DCF has used its best efforts to identify the parents and to unify the child with the parents within the strictures of the Safe Haven Act. Because of the mother's assertion of the Safe Haven Act, the court concludes that unification efforts are not required. The court further finds that: the parents have abandoned the child under General Statutes § 17A-112(j)(2)(A); and the parents do not have a parent-child relationship with the child under § 17A-112(j)(D). It would be detrimental to the child's best interests for the parents to receive more time to establish such a relationship. The court also finds that DCF has proven that the termination of parental rights is in the child's best interests. See General Statutes § 17a-112(j)(2)."
- Jeffrey A. Parness, *Innocent Losses of Constitutional Rights*, 39 Quinnipiac L. Rev. 275 (2021). See *Sec. H Childcare Opportunities in Safe Haven Cases*.
- Anarida Delaj; Anna Schamberg; Natalia Sosa; Camille Mendoza Soto, *Adoption and Foster Care*, 19 Geo. J. Gender & L. 157 (2018) See *Sec. III. Rights of Biological Parents- Impact of Safe Haven Laws on the Rights of Biological Fathers*.
- Diane S. Kaplan, *Who are the Mothers Who Need Safe Haven Laws: An Empirical Investigation of Mothers Who Kill, Abandon or Safely Surrender Their Newborns*, 29 Wis. J. L. Gender, & Soc'y 447 (2014).
- Jeffrey A. Parness, *Lost Paternity in the Culture of Motherhood: A Different View of Safe Haven Laws*, 42 Val. U. L. Rev. 81 (2007).
- Carol Sanger, *Infant Safe Haven Law: Legislating in the Culture of Life*, 106 Colum. L. Rev. 753 (2006).
- Laura K. Lacci, *Statistically Speaking: Can Safe Haven Legislation Succeed without Education*, 26 Child. Legal Rts. J. 88 (2006).

# Section 8: False Allegations of Child Abuse

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

## SCOPE:

Bibliographic resources relating to false reports or false allegations of child abuse.

## STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website to confirm that you are using the most up-to-date statutes.

Conn. Gen. Stat. (2025)

- Chapter 319a. Child welfare  
[§ 17a-101e](#)(c). False report of child abuse. Penalty.  
[§ 17a-103](#). Reports by others. False reports. Notification to law enforcement agency.
- Chapter 802h. Protected persons and their property  
[§ 45a-615](#). False or malicious application for removal of guardian. Penalty.

## AGENCY

## REGULATIONS:

You can visit your local law library or browse the [Connecticut eRegulations System](#) on the Secretary of the State website to check if a regulation has been updated.

- Regs., Conn. State Agencies  
[§ 17a-101k-16](#). Expunged Reports and Investigations.

## CASES:

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [Aguilar v. Eick](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of Ansonia-Milford at Milford, AAN-CV23-6049988S (March 4, 2024) (2024 WL 1068744). **"Since *DeLaurentis*, two Superior Court cases have considered whether a DCF administrative proceeding arising out of alleged abuse could form the bases for a vexatious litigation claim. Both found it could not."**
- [Kruger v. Grauer](#), 173 Conn. App. 539, 557, 164 A.3d 764, 775 (2017). "To be sure, § 17a-101e reflects the determination that, although child protection is an important goal, its achievement does not outweigh the harms resulting from reports of child abuse that are made in bad faith. That is, by excepting reports made in bad faith from its purview, the statute contemplates and accounts for (1) the harm likely inuring to an individual falsely and maliciously accused of child abuse, and (2) the extent to which false reports waste limited department resources and detract from the investigation of real cases of child abuse."
- [Bhatia v. Debek](#), 287 Conn. 397, 416, 948 A.2d 1009, 1023 (2008). **"For substantially the same reasons, we reject the defendant's claim that she is entitled to statutory immunity pursuant to § 17a-101e(b), which provides immunity from criminal liability to persons who 'in good faith' report child**

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abuse. Although the statute **does not define the term 'good faith,'** it is not necessary to engage in a lengthy statutory interpretation to resolve the defendant's claim, because, given the trial court's well supported factual findings that the defendant acted with malice and without probable cause, the meaning of the term 'good faith' does not support a conclusion that the defendant acted with good faith in **reporting the alleged sexual abuse."**

- Vargas v. LaBella, Superior Court, Judicial District of Fairfield at Bridgeport, No. CV06-5001941-S (Mar. 8, 2007) (43 Conn. L. Rptr. 22) (2007 WL 901813). **"Third, the plaintiff's allegations imply the legal conclusion that maliciousness, in the form of making a false report of sexual abuse, is a dangerous propensity. The plaintiff's memorandum has offered no legal authority for that proposition and the court is unaware of any such authority. Thus, the second count insufficiently alleges a claim of negligent supervision of a child and is stricken."**
- Riedl v. Plourde, Superior Court, Judicial District of Litchfield, No. CV-02-0088965-S (Feb. 10, 2003) (2003 WL 541191). **"The defendants were not mandated reporters and can not expect to receive any greater immunity than accorded to mandated reporters. In fact, any person who makes a knowingly false report of child abuse may be fined not more than \$2,000 or imprisoned not more than on year or both. It would be incongruous if the defendants were immune from civil liability in this situation. For these reasons the motion to strike is denied."**
- Wilkinson v. Wiegand, Superior Court, Judicial District of Hartford, Docket No. FA92-0517285 (Jan. 27, 1995) (1995 WL 43693). *In this dissolution of marriage case, the plaintiff husband was awarded a \$500,000 lump sum alimony payment. "Of particular note is the intolerable cruelty which the defendant has caused by subjecting the plaintiff to false allegations of sexual abuse, and the humiliation which resulted from that..."*

#### WEST KEY NUMBERS:

#### TEXTS & TREATISES:

You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the treatises cited.

- Infants -Child Abuse Reporting  
#1515 False reports and accusations
- 5 *Child Custody and Visitation Law and Practice*, by Sandra Morgan Little, Matthew Bender, 2024 (also available on Lexis).  
Chapter 31. Allegations of abuse in child custody and visitation proceedings  
§ 31.03. Reporting laws  
[1] Introduction  
[2] Purpose, operation, and effect of reporting statutes

[3] Problems with and concerns about reporting laws

[a] Underreporting

[b] Substantiation of cases

[c] Misperceptions concerning allegations of sexual abuse

[d] Disposition of unfounded cases

#### LAW REVIEWS:

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- Victoria Talwar , Kyle Hubbard , Christine Saykaly , Kang Lee, R.C.L. Lindsay & Nicholas Bala, *Does Parental Coaching Affect Children's False Reports: Comparing Verbal Markers of Deception*, 36 Behav. Sci. & L. 84 (2018).
- Philip N. S. Rumney & Kieran F. McCartan, *Purported False Allegations of Rape, Child Abuse and Non-Sexual Violence: Nature, Characteristics and Implications*, 81 J. Crim. L. 497 (2017).
- Michael Malcolm, *What Can We Make of Unsubstantiated Child Abuse Reports: A New Approach*, 13 Rev. L & Econ. 1 (2017).
- Robert W. Jr. Kerns, *Crying Wolf: The Use of False Accusations of Abuse to Influence Child Custodianship and a Proposal to Protect the Innocent*, 56 S. Tex. L. Rev. 603 (2015).
- John E.B. Myers, *Testifying in Family Court*, 46 McGeorge L. Rev. 499 (2014).



Table 2: False Reports of Child Abuse

<p>Reports of Child Abuse</p> <p>Conn. Gen. Stat. <a href="#">§ 17a-101e</a> (2025)</p>	
Discrimination against employees	(a) No employer shall (1) discharge, or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against, any employee who in good faith makes a report pursuant to sections 17a-101a to 17a-101d, inclusive, and 17a-103, testifies or is about to testify in any proceeding involving child abuse or neglect, or (2) hinder or prevent, or attempt to hinder or prevent, any employee from making a report pursuant to sections 17a-101a to 17a-101d, inclusive, and 17a-103, or testifying in any proceeding involving child abuse or neglect. The Attorney General may bring an action in Superior Court against an employer who violates this subsection. The court may assess a civil penalty of not more than two thousand five hundred dollars and may order such other equitable relief as the court deems appropriate.
Immunity for reporting	(b) Any person, institution or agency that (1) makes or does not make, in good faith, a report pursuant to sections 17a-101a to 17a-101d, inclusive, and 17a-103, or (2) provides, in good faith, professional medical intervention or assistance in any proceeding involving child abuse and neglect, including, but not limited to, (A) causing a photograph, x-ray or a physical custody examination to be made, (B) causing a child to be taken into emergency protective custody, (C) disclosing a medical record or other information pertinent to the proceeding, or (D) performing a medically relevant test, shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, which might otherwise arise from or be related to the actions taken pursuant to this subsection and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding which results from such report or actions, provided such person did not perpetrate or cause such abuse or neglect. The immunity from civil or criminal liability extends only to actions done pursuant to this subsection and does not extend to the malpractice of a medical professional that results in personal injury or death.
False report of child abuse. Penalty	(c) Any person who is alleged to have knowingly made a false report of child abuse or neglect pursuant to sections 17a-101a to 17a-101d, inclusive, and 17a-103 shall be referred to the office of the Chief State's Attorney for purposes of a criminal investigation.
False report - penalty	(d) Any person who knowingly makes a false report of child abuse or neglect pursuant to sections 17a-101a to 17a-101d, inclusive, and 17a-103 shall be fined not more than two thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than one year or both.



## Section 9: Child Abuse and the Unborn

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

### SCOPE:

Bibliographic resources relating to abuse or neglect of an unborn child and the extent to which a parent may be held accountable for prenatal injury.

### STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website.

Conn. Gen. Stat. (2025)

- Chapter 319a. Child Welfare  
Dependent and Neglected Children  
[§ 17a-102a](#). Education and training for nurses and birthing hospital staff caring for high-risk newborns re responsibilities as mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. Information dissemination. Development of guidelines for safe care of newborns. Notification to Department of Children and Families re symptoms consistent with prenatal substance exposure, withdrawal or fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Definitions.
- Chapter 319i. Persons with Psychiatric Disabilities  
Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services  
[§ 17a-451\(j\)](#). Commissioner of mental health and addiction services. Duties.
- Chapter 319j. Addiction Services  
[§ 17a-710](#). Treatment programs for pregnant women with substance use disorders and their children.

### DCF POLICY MANUAL:

- Specialized Child Welfare Subject Matter  
High Risk Newborns, [Chapter 21-11](#) (2019).

### CASES:

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [In re Sage B.](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of Windham, No. T11CP16014981A (May 26, 2016) (2016 WL 3391816). "A nurse obstetrics manager from the hospital testified that April delivered at approximately 4:30 AM. Both mother and child tested positive for marijuana. April reported her use of subutex and, by protocol, the hospital monitors the baby for 5 to 7 days for opiate addiction. Within 48 hours the child displayed increased, inconsolable fussiness, inability to suck or swallow, high-pitched crying, runny stools and tremors. Based on the infant's neonatal abstinence scale, the child was transferred to the UCONN Medical Center for morphine treatment."

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"The court concludes that there is reasonable cause to believe that (1) the child ... is in immediate danger from her surroundings and (2) that as a result of said conditions, the child's safety is endangered and immediate removal from such surroundings was necessary to ensure the child's safety."

- [State v. Courchesne](#), 296 Conn. 622, 707, 998 A.2d 1 (2010). "It is evident, therefore, that the legislature's

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enactment of P.A. 03–21 ‘merely reflects a desire to afford greater protection to the unborn fetus than was available under common law, not less protection to a child who, despite the homicidal conduct of another, happens to survive **past birth.**’ (Emphasis added.) *State v. Cotton*, supra, 197 Ariz. at 588, 5 P.3d 918. Of course, as a consequence of the enactment of P.A. 03–21, this court lacks the authority to reject the born alive rule in favor of an expansion of our murder statute to include the killing of a viable fetus that dies in utero because the legislature already has determined that such conduct shall be treated as an aggravated assault against the mother under P.A. 03–21 and not as a **homicide.**”

- [In Re Valerie D.](#), 223 Conn. 492, 524, 613 A.2d 748 (1992). **“We therefore infer from the legislative activity in 1990 and intent that § 45a-171(f)(2) does not contemplate a petition for termination of parental ights based upon the prenatal drug use by the mother.”**
- [Ex rel. Cesar G.](#), Superior Court, Child Protection Session at Middletown (May 4, 2000) (2000 Conn. Super. LEXIS 1197). **“In neither Ground F nor Ground E did the legislature provide that the conduct related to the ‘other child’ had to have occurred subsequent to the birth of the subject child. If it had intended that meaning, it easily could have included such language... Accordingly, the court holds that Ground F may apply to a child who was not born when the subject conduct occurred.”**

#### WEST KEY NUMBERS:

- Infants
  - Status, Capacities, and Disabilities
    - #1021 Unborn Children
  - Actions
    - #1285(7) Tortious and personal injuries to child—Injuries prior to birth; wrongful life

#### TEXTS & TREATISES:

You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the treatises cited.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases.

- *Understanding Juvenile Law*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., by Martin R. Gardner, Carolina Academic Press, 2018.
  - Chapter 3. The child and the family
    - §3.02 Support and maintenance
      - [A] “Necessary” support
        - [4] Unborn children

#### LAW REVIEWS:

- Katherine Drabiak, *Treating for Two: Reforming Maternal Substance Abuse Policy*, 32 [Health Matrix](#) 311 (2022).

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- Hannah French, *Criminalizing Prenatal Opioid Use: The Creation of a Gender-Based Crime*, 59 Dug. L. Rev. 167 (2021).
- Emma Milne, *Putting the Fetus First - Legal Regulation, Motherhood, and Pregnancy*, 27 Mich. J. Gender & L. 149 (2020).
- James F. Anderson, Kelley Reinsmith-Jones, Laronistine Dyson, Adam H. Langsam, *Opioid Addicted Pregnancies: A Public Health Issue*, 6 Intl. J. Soc. Sci. Stud. 64 (2018), [No. 9].

## Section 10: Adult Memories of Child Abuse

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

### SCOPE:

Bibliographic resources relating to adult memories of child abuse or **"repressed memory syndrome."**

### STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the CGA website.

Conn. Gen. Stat. (2025)

- Chapter 926. Statute of Limitations.  
[§ 52-577d](#). Limitation of action for damages to person under twenty-one years of age caused by sexual abuse, exploitation or assault.

### LEGISLATIVE:

[Office of Legislative Research](#) reports summarize and analyze the law in effect on the date of each **report's** publication. Current law may be different from what is discussed in the reports.

- Michelle Kirby, State Legislation on the Civil Statute of Limitations for Child Sexual Abuse, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research, Report No. [2021-R-0120](#) (December 22, 2021).
- Michelle Kirby, Connecticut Sex Crimes Statistics (Convictions 2015-2019), Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research, Report No. [2020-R-0023](#) (February 5, 2020).
- Michelle Kirby, Changes in State Laws on Civil Statute of Limitations for Sexual Assault Victims, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research, Report No. [2019-R-0191](#) (September 13, 2019).
- Sandra Norman-Eady, Child Sexual Abuse Prosecutions, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research Report, No. [2012-R-0136](#) (April 5, 2012).

### CASES:

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [Sherman v. Ronco](#), 294 Conn. 548, 563-564, 985 A.2d 1042 (2010). **"Applying that principle to the present case, it is apparent that this case is analogous to *Sharp*, and not to *Gurliacci*. As we already have explained in this opinion, the allegations in the amended substitute complaint depend on different facts from those alleged in the original complaint, as reflected by the plaintiff's addition of new and different facts to support the new allegations of assault and battery and intentional infliction of emotional distress. Because the new theories of liability asserted in the amended substitute complaint would not have been supported by the factual allegations set forth in the original complaint, the relation back doctrine does not apply to the amended substitute complaint, and those counts are barred by the limitations period established by § 52-577d."**
- [Doe v. Norwich Roman Catholic Diocesan Corp.](#), 279 Conn. 207, 209, 901 A.2d 673 (2006). **"In this appeal, we are asked to decide when the thirty year statute of limitations**

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period under General Statutes § 52-577d, triggered by a minor victim of sexual assault attaining the age of majority, begins to run for the plaintiff, David Doe, who was nineteen years old when the legislature lowered the age of majority from twenty-one years to eighteen years in 1972."

- [Borawick v. Shay](#), 68 F.3d 597, 606 (2d Cir. 1995), *cert. denied*, 597 U.S. 1229 (1996). "...the fact remains that the literature has not yet conclusively demonstrated that hypnosis is a consistently effective means to retrieve repressed memories of traumatic, past experiences accurately..."
- [Henderson v. Woolley](#), 230 Conn. 472, 486, 644 A.2d 1303 (1994). "... the parental immunity doctrine does not bar an action by a minor child against his or her parent for personal injuries arising out of sexual abuse, sexual assault or sexual exploitation."
- Limitations of Actions
  - Applicable to Particular Actions
    - #31 Injuries to the Person
  - Computation of Period of Limitation
    - #72 Infancy
    - 72(2) Personal Actions

## WEST KEY NUMBERS:

## ENCYCLOPEDIAS:

Encyclopedias and ALRs are available in print at some law library locations and accessible online at all law library locations.

Online databases are available for in-library use. Remote access is not available.

- 57 *Am Jur Trials* 313, *Trial Report: Third Party Suit Against Therapists for Implanting False Memory of Childhood Molestation*, by Charles S. Parnell, Thomson West, 1995 (also available on Westlaw).

## TEXTS & TREATISES:

You can [contact](#) us or visit our [catalog](#) to determine which of our law libraries own the treatises cited.

References to online databases refer to in-library use of these databases.

- *Handling Child Custody, Abuse and Adoption Cases*, 3d ed., by Ann M. Haralambie, Thomson West, 2009, with 2024-2025 supplement.
  - Chapter 20. Child abuse and neglect torts
    - § 20.08. Statutes of limitation
    - § 20.09. Delayed discovery

#### LAW REVIEWS:

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- Emma M. Hetherington, *Considering the Therapeutic Consequences of Recent Reforms to Civil Statutes of Limitations for Child Sexual Abuse Claims*, 15 Charleston L. Rev. 639 (2021).
- Cynthia V. Ward, *Trauma and Memory in the Prosecution of Sexual Assault*, 45 Law & Psychol. Rev. 87 (2020-2021).
- Theodore R.A. Ovrom, *Reasonable for Whom- Developing a More Sensible Approach to the Discovery Rule in Civil Actions based on Childhood Sexual Abuse*, 103 Iowa L. Rev. 1843 (2018).
- Rosemary La Puma, *De-Categorizing Child Abuse - Equally Devastating Acts Require Equally Solicitous Statutes of Limitations*, 20 U.C. Davis J. Juv. L. & Pol'y 139 (2016).
- Rebecca Lowe, *Extending Statutes of Limitations for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse Based on the Developmental Model and International Law*, 24 B.U. Pub. Int. L.J. 27 (2015).

# Section 11: Child Abuse and Neglect Registry

*A Guide to Resources in the Law Library*

## SCOPE:

Bibliographic resources relating to the Child Abuse and Neglect Central Registry.

## STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or search the most recent [statutes](#) and [public acts](#) on the Connecticut General Assembly website to confirm that you are using the most up-to-date statutes.

Conn. Gen. Stat. (2025)

- Chapter 319. Department of Children and Families  
[§ 17a-28](#). Definitions. Confidentiality and access to records; exceptions. Procedure for aggrieved persons.  
Chapter 319a. Child welfare  
Part I. Dependent and neglected children  
[§ 17a-101g](#). Classification and evaluation of reports.  
Determination of abuse or neglect of child.  
Investigation. Notice, entry of recommended finding.  
Referral to local law enforcement authority. Home visit. Removal of child in imminent risk of harm.  
[§ 17a-101k](#). Registry of findings of abuse or neglect of children maintained by Commissioner of Children and Families. Notice of finding of abuse or neglect of child. Appeal of finding. Hearing procedure. Appeal after hearing. Confidentiality. Regulations.

## FEDERAL STATUTES:

You can visit your local law library or [search the most recent U.S. Code](#) on the U.S. Code website.

United States Code

- [34 U.S.C. 40101 to 40104](#). Child abuse crime information and background checks.

## INDIAN LAW:

United States Code

- [25 U.S.C. § 3204](#). Central Registry

## INTERNATIONAL REGISTERIES:

- [Child Abuse Registries in Foreign Countries and Geographic Entities](#)

## LEGISLATIVE:

[Office of Legislative Research](#) reports summarize and analyze the law in effect on the date of **each report's** publication. Current law may be different from what is discussed in the reports.

- Katherine Dwyer, *Child Abuse and Neglect Registry*, Connecticut General Assembly. Office of Legislative Research Report No. [2018-R-0341](#) (December 21, 2018)
- Susan Price, *Parents' Appeal Rights When a Child Protection Agency Removes a Child from Their Home*, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research Report No. [2011-R-0332](#) (September 29, 2011).
- R. F. O'Neil, *DCF Substantiation Hearing Process*, Connecticut General Assembly, Office of Legislative Research Report No. [2006-R-0517](#) (August 21, 2006).

## AGENCY REGULATIONS:

You can visit your local law library or browse the [Connecticut eRegulations System](#) on the Secretary of the State website to check if a regulation has been updated.

- Regs., Conn. State Agencies  
[Child Abuse and Neglect Registry](#)
  - § 17a-101k-2. Notice of Substantiation or Listing on Central Registry.
  - § 17a-101k-3. Criteria for registry finding that individual responsible for abuse or neglect of a child poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children.
  - § 17a-101k-4. Request for Internal Review
  - § 17a-101k-5. Conduct of the Internal Review
  - § 17a-101k-6. Request for an Administrative Hearing
  - § 17a-101k-8. Conduct of the Administrative Hearing
  - § 17a-101k-10. The Administrative Hearing Decision
  - § 17a-101k-11. Reconsideration and Appeal
  - § 17a-101k-13. Disclosure
  - § 17a-101k-15. Access to the Central Registry.
  - § 17a-101k-16. Expunged Reports and Investigations.

## DCF and DCF POLICY MANUAL:

- Office of Legal Affairs  
Administrative Hearings, [Chapter 6-5](#) (2021)
  - Substantiation Hearings pp. 11-13.
- Careline and Intake  
Child Abuse and Neglect Careline
  - Central Registry, [Chapter 22-4](#) (2019)
- Legal Division  
[Coming off the Department's Child Abuse and Neglect Registry](#)

## DCF DECISIONS:

- [Summary of Substantiation Decisions Jan. 2000 to Dec. 2023](#)

## CENTER FOR **CHILDREN'S** ADVOCACY

- [Case Library- Abuse and Neglect Cases](#)

## CASES:

Once you have identified useful cases, it is important to update the cases before you rely on them. Updating case law means checking to see if the cases are still good law. You can [contact your local law librarian](#) to learn about the tools available to you to update cases.

- [William D. v. Department of Children and Families](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of New Britain at New Britain, HHB-CV23-6078123S, n.2 (Oct. 26, 2023) (2023 WL 7148931). "Section 17a-101g (b) requires DCF to determine whether a child has been abused, whether an identifiable person was responsible for such abuse, and whether such identifiable person should be placed on the child abuse and neglect registry. Section 17a-101k mandates the establishment of the central registry, allows for the alleged abuser to receive notice of his potential placement on the registry and to request a hearing before placement. If the hearing officer finds that the person's name should be added to the registry, he may take an administrative appeal. General Statutes § 17-101k (e)."
- [Jay R. v. Department of Children and Families](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of New Britain, Tax and Administrative



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Appeals Session, HHB-CV21-6064120S (Feb. 16, 2023) (2023 WL 2134371) affirmed, 224 Conn. App. 904, 311 A.3d 254 (2024). **"The hearing officer's analysis continued with the appropriateness of DCF's placing the father on the Central Registry. 'The father is seeking to reverse the DCF decision to include the father's name on the Department's Central Registry. To be included on the registry the DCF must consider certain criteria including the intent, severity, chronicity of abuse and neglect and involvement of substance abuse or domestic violence to determine if the person poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children. Regulations of Conn. Agencies § 17a-101k-3, DCF Policy Manual § 22-4. In this case, the Central Registry listing shall be upheld. In addressing intent, the DCF examines whether there is reason to believe the father had sufficient knowledge and resources, the ability to utilize them and an understanding of the implications for failing to provide appropriate care but made a conscious decision not to do so. The Appellant is Nisha's father, and should know that he should not engage in this sexual abuse of Nisha and that this behavior would have a severe impact on the child, although he made a decision to do so. When considering the severity of the father's actions, the DCF must determine if there was a serious adverse impact to the victim, or a serious disregard for the child's welfare. The father's actions demonstrated a serious impact to the child. Nisha was petrified that her father would find out about her disclosures, and the child's therapist reported that Nisha struggles to process the trauma. The 2019 report was the second substantiation, and Nisha described and the record reflects a pattern of emotional neglect and sexual abuse. Therefore, the DCF has demonstrated chronicity of the abuse and neglect.'"**

- [Natasha B. v. Department of Children and Families](#), 189 Conn. App. 398 (2019). **"In the present matter, the plaintiff argues that a finding of chronicity *must* be made in order to place an individual on the central registry. As stated in the trial court's thorough and well reasoned memorandum of decision, although the hearing officer must *consider* whether the abuse was chronic, there is no requirement in the regulations or the department's policy manual that the hearing officer must find chronicity as a prerequisite to adding a person's name to the central registry. If we were to accept the plaintiff's position that chronicity must be found in each case, the department would be left in the anomalous position of being unable to list individuals on the central registry who commit a single severe and intentional violent act against a child."** (pp. 405-406)

**"The plaintiff next claims that the trial court erred in concluding that hearing officer did not improperly shift the burden of proof to the plaintiff when the hearing officer**

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scheduled a second hearing date so that the parties could present evidence regarding whether the plaintiff had demonstrated changed conditions that would justify the **removal of her name from the central registry. We disagree.**" (p. 407)

- [Eric W. v. Department of Children and Families](#), Superior Court, Judicial District of New Britain, No. CV17-5020951 (October 9, 2018) (67 Conn L. Rptr. 352) (2018 WL 5797778). **"In considering appellant's intent the hearing officer found that he 'knew, or should have known that his failure to cooperate with law enforcement officers could lead to a volatile situation' and that he placed Amelia into the 'zone of danger.' These findings, however, are no more than a restatement of the grounds for finding that the appellant had physically neglected Amelia and do not satisfy the statutory requirement that once child neglect has been established, the department make a *separate* finding whether the responsible person poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children. See §17a-101g(b).**

**"The plain language of the statute, that the person responsible for child neglect be separately found to pose a risk to the health, safety, or well-being of 'children' demonstrates that the legislature's intent was that those who pose a danger to *children generally* be listed on a registry where their names would be available, for example, to person, institutions or agencies the employees of which would be in direct contact with children."**

- [Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection v. Freedom of Information Commission](#), 330 Conn. 372, 389, 194 A.3d 759, 769-770 (2018). "Similarly, the Appellate Court also has required that, in order for a statute to form the basis for an exemption pursuant to § 1-210 (a), the statute must by its express terms address confidentiality or otherwise limit the disclosure, copying, or distribution of the documents at issue. See, e.g., *Groton Police Dept. v. Freedom of Information Commission*, 104 Conn. App. 150, 160, 931 A.2d 989 (2007) (concluding that records from registry of abuse or neglect findings maintained by the Department of Children and Families are exempt from the act under § 1-210 [a] because General Statutes § 17a-101k [a] expressly provided that '[t]he information contained in the registry and any other information relative to child abuse, wherever located, shall be confidential'").
- [Isabella D. v. Dep't of Children & Families](#), 320 Conn. 215, 238, 128 A.3d 916, 930, cert. denied sub nom. *Isabella D. v. Connecticut Dep't of Children & Families*, 137 S. Ct. 181, 196 L. Ed. 2d 124 (2016). **"A review of the statutory scheme demonstrates that the alleged victim is not a party to the substantiation appeal process and, as we have discussed**

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previously in this opinion, the process is designed to protect the community. Although the alleged victim is entitled to be notified of the outcome of the department's initial investigation into the alleged victim's allegations of abuse or neglect; see Policy Manual, *supra*, § 34-3-6; the department's substantiation appeal process does not afford the alleged victim an opportunity to challenge the department's determination that such allegations are unfounded. Moreover, despite the fact that the department is required to provide the alleged perpetrator with notice of the substantiation hearing, no statute, regulation, or provision in the Policy Manual requires that the alleged victim be informed of the substantiation hearing or its outcome. Lastly, it is notable that the alleged victim who is the subject of the substantiation is prohibited from testifying at the substantiation hearing. Regs., Conn. State Agencies § 17a-101k-8 (h); see also Policy Manual, *supra*, § 22-12-7."

- [Frank v. Dept. of Children and Families](#), 312 Conn. 393, 416, 94 A.3d 588 (2014). "The department claims that the Appellate Court improperly determined that the relevant term, 'emotional abuse', is void for vagueness. Specifically, the department claims that the term is not unconstitutionally vague when one examines the department's regulations and policy manual in combination with the remainder of the statutory scheme and relevant case law. Moreover, the department contends that, as an educator, the plaintiff should have been on fair notice that his conduct would fall within the statutory definition of 'abuse', particularly in light of Connecticut's anti-bullying statute. In response, the plaintiff claims that the Appellate Court correctly held that § 46b-120(3) is unconstitutionally vague as applied to the facts in the present case because 'the plaintiff ... could [not] have been on notice that his cheek-pinching and name-calling behavior toward K could amount to child abuse within the meaning of §46b-120(3) as interpreted by the [department's] regulations.' *Frank v. Dept. of Children & Families*, 134 Conn. App. 288, 315, 37 A.3d 834 (2012). We agree with the department."
- [In re Alba P.-V.](#), 135 Conn. App. 744, 754, 42 A.3d 393 (2012). "The respondent contends that, under the department's policy, a failure to overturn the court's adjudications of neglect will result in the denial of her administrative hearings as a matter of course. The respondent points to § 17a-101k-4 (d) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and the department's policy manual in support of her argument. Section 17a-101k-4 (d) provides that a 'request for an internal review shall be denied by the department when a civil court proceeding has been finally disposed with a factual determination by the court that the identified person committed the act of child abuse or neglect that is the subject of the substantiation.'

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We reject the respondent's argument, again noting that the court's adjudications of neglect challenged on appeal are not findings about the respondent, but are directed at the status of her children."

- [Hogan v. Dept. of Children and Families](#), 290 Conn. 545, 574, 964 A.2d 1213 (2009). "The defendant must consider the nature, extent and cause of the abuse or neglect—terms defined by statute—to determine whether the person responsible for the abuse poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children. This undoubtedly is a predictive exercise. As we previously have recognized, 'the legislative process would frequently bog down if the General Assembly were constitutionally required to appraise beforehand the myriad situations to which it wishes a particular policy to be applied... To require any more specificity in the standards... would hamper the flexibility needed for the [defendant] to [carry out its duties].' (Citations omitted; internal quotation marks omitted.) *University of Connecticut Chapter, AAUP v. Governor*, 200 Conn. 386, 398-99, 512 A.2d 152 (1986)."

#### WEST KEY NUMBERS:

- Infants
  - Child Protection
    - #1439 Child abuse reports and investigations
    - #1468 Registry, index, or list
    - #1471 Safeguards and protections against error
    - #1472 Administrative review
  - Records
    - #3174 Child abuse

#### LAW REVIEWS:

Public access to law review databases is available on-site at each of our [law libraries](#).

- Colleen Henry & Vicki Lens, *Marginalizing Mothers: Child Maltreatment Registries, Statutory Schemes, and Reduced Opportunities for Employment*, 24 [CUNY L. Rev.](#) 1 (2021).
- Lori McPherson, *Leveraging Information to Prevent Offending Abroad: International Megan's Law and Sex Offender Registration Systems around the World*, 57 [Gonz. L. Rev.](#) 209 (2021).
- Courtney Barclay, *When the Need to Know Outweighs Privacy: Granting Access to Child Welfare Records in Fifty States*, 34 [Child. Legal Rts. J.](#) 175 (2014).
- Diane L. Redleaf, *Attorneys Help Parents Keep Families Intact Amid Misplaced Child Protection Allegations*, 39 [Litig.](#) 34 (2013).
- Joan Owhe, *Indicated Reports of Child Abuse or Maltreatment: When Suspects Become Victims*, 51 [Fam. Ct. Rev.](#) 316 (2013).