

Fact Sheet

Reporting and Investigating Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation Understanding the Difference Between Regulatory Requirements and Procedures in Assisted Living Facilities (ALF)

Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting and Investigating Allegations of Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation in Assisted Living Facilities – Regulations vs. Procedures Urgent Training Topic and Webinar
Authority	RCW 74.34.020 - Definitions RCW 74.34.035 – Reports - Mandated and Permissive - Content - Confidentiality 388-78A-2630 WAC - Reporting Abuse and Neglect 388-78A-2371 WAC - Investigations

A few recent situations have occurred that show training may be necessary for both Residential Care Services (RCS) staff and ALF providers to ensure reporting and investigating of alleged abuse, neglect and exploitation are completed and in the proper order according to RCW, WAC, and Procedure (the “[Blue Book](#)”). Example: When a resident is found to have suffered a significant injury of unknown origin.

RCW 74.34.035 states that when there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse, neglect or exploitation of any kind has occurred, mandated reporters shall immediately report this to the department’s Complaint Resolution Unit (CRU). Significant injury of unknown origin implies that there is reasonable cause to believe abuse, neglect or exploitation has occurred, so a report must be made to the CRU immediately after the situation is discovered. This is consistent with RCW, WAC, and Procedure (the “[Blue Book](#)”). After the CRU is notified, the facility must begin their internal investigation to determine the circumstances of the event to ensure the safety of residents.

While it is important to understand that citations can only be issued in association with the violation of specific RCW or WAC, it is also important to understand that procedural guides like the “[Blue Book](#)” are consistent with program regulations and were written to assist providers in having a better understanding of what is required of them. RCS staff are not able to issue citations specific to the “[Blue Book](#)”; however, information in the “[Blue Book](#)” is consistent with the requirements listed in program RCW and WAC.

A joint training is being developed by RCS, the Washington Health Care Association (WHCA), and Leading Age Washington. This plan includes a webinar hosted by WHCA, scheduled for May 3, 2023 from 1-3 p.m. ALF providers/employees and RCS licensing/complaint investigation staff are encouraged to attend.

Please register in advance for this meeting and use the link below to promote this webinar. Thank you!
https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlvc-yqrD4sHdyg3qMrPKJwESZ_ZZhiAO4!