



Bizzy Bees Therapy LLC at The Ability Institute

Mandated Reporting & Child Safety Policy – Rhode Island – 2026

I. Commitment to Child Safety & Protection

At Bizzy Bees Therapy at The Ability Institute (BBTAI), the safety, dignity, well-being, and protection of children remain our highest priorities.

Our organization serves many children with:

- developmental disabilities,
- communication differences,
- neurologic conditions,
- medical complexity,
- sensory processing differences,
- emotional and behavioral regulation challenges,
- and varying levels of dependence upon caregivers and support systems.

Because children with disabilities and complex developmental needs may face increased vulnerability to abuse, neglect, exploitation, coercion, and unsafe environments, BBTAI is committed to maintaining a culture of vigilance, advocacy, protection, and ethical responsibility.

All BBTAI staff members are expected to prioritize child safety above all other organizational, relational, or operational concerns.

II. Rhode Island Mandated Reporting Law

Under Rhode Island law, all persons are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect. Rhode Island General Law §40-11-3 requires reporting of known or suspected child abuse and/or neglect within twenty-four (24) hours of becoming aware of concerns. ([RIDCYF](#))

Importantly:



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- abuse or neglect does NOT need to be directly witnessed in order for a report to be made,
- proof or certainty is NOT required,
- and reports are based upon reasonable suspicion or reasonable cause for concern.

Mandated reporting responsibilities may arise from patient or family:

- direct disclosures,
- concerning statements,
- observed injuries,
- behavioral indicators,
- caregiver interactions,
- environmental concerns,
- emotional presentations,
- developmental regressions,
- neglect indicators,
- medical concerns,
- or patterns of information that raise concern for child safety or well-being.

BBTAI staff are expected to act promptly and responsibly whenever concerns arise.

III. Internal Reporting Process at BBTAI

Any BBTAI staff member who becomes aware of:

- suspected abuse,
- neglect,
- exploitation,
- unsafe living conditions,
- concerning caregiver behavior,
- inappropriate sexual behavior,
- emotional abuse,
- medical neglect,
- educational neglect,
- or any concern involving child safety



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must immediately notify:

- the Clinical Director,
- and/or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Concerns should never be ignored, minimized, delayed, or independently investigated by staff members.

BBTAI staff are not responsible for:

- proving abuse,
- conducting investigations,
- interviewing children extensively,
- or determining whether abuse definitively occurred.

The responsibility of BBTAI staff is to:

- recognize concerns,
 - document objective observations,
 - communicate concerns internally,
 - and support the mandated reporting process appropriately.
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IV. Organizational Reporting Procedure

Once concerns are escalated internally, BBTAI leadership will determine appropriate next steps in accordance with Rhode Island mandated reporting laws and child safety obligations.

At BBTAI:

- the Family Resource Specialist,
- the CEO,
- and/or the Clinical Director

will place reports to the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) when reasonable suspicion exists.

In addition:



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- the child's pediatrician and/or medical provider may also be notified when clinically appropriate,
- and if concerns involve criminal conduct, immediate danger, sexual abuse, severe physical injury, or circumstances meeting legal thresholds, Rhode Island State Police or appropriate law enforcement agencies may also be contacted.

Reports to DCYF may be made through:

1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453)

which operates 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. ([RI DCYF](#))

V. Good Faith Reporting & Legal Protection

Rhode Island law provides legal protection for individuals making good faith reports of suspected abuse or neglect. ([Child Welfare Information Gateway](#))

BBTAI fully supports staff members who raise concerns in good faith regarding child safety and well-being.

No employee will face retaliation for:

- reporting concerns,
- escalating safety issues,
- participating in mandated reporting procedures,
- or prioritizing child protection responsibilities.

Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect may carry legal consequences under Rhode Island law. ([Church Law & Tax](#))

VI. Documentation Expectations

When concerns arise, staff members are expected to:

- document objective observations,
- avoid speculation or personal assumptions,
- accurately document disclosures when possible,

- and promptly communicate concerns to leadership.

Documentation should remain:

- factual,
- clinically objective,
- timely,
- and professional.

Staff members should not:

- independently question children repeatedly,
 - attempt forensic interviewing,
 - promise secrecy,
 - or conduct independent investigations.
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VII. Trauma-Informed & Family-Centered Approach

BBTAI recognizes that mandated reporting situations are emotionally complex and deeply sensitive for:

- children,
- caregivers,
- providers,
- and families.

Whenever possible, our organization strives to approach these situations with:

- professionalism,
- compassion,
- emotional sensitivity,
- trauma-informed care,
- and respect for all individuals involved.

However, the protection and safety of children must always remain the primary priority.

VIII. Commitment to Vulnerable Populations

Children with disabilities, developmental differences, communication impairments, and complex medical needs may:

- have difficulty reporting abuse,
- experience increased dependence upon caregivers,
- demonstrate atypical behavioral indicators,
- or face increased vulnerability to coercion, neglect, or mistreatment.

BBTAI is committed to:

- recognizing these vulnerabilities,
 - advocating for child safety,
 - empowering children and families,
 - and maintaining a therapeutic environment grounded in dignity, protection, and ethical responsibility.
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IX. Staff Education & Training

BBTAI may provide ongoing staff education regarding:

- mandated reporting laws,
- trauma-informed care,
- abuse and neglect indicators,
- disability-related vulnerabilities,
- documentation standards,
- and child protection responsibilities.

All staff members are expected to remain familiar with organizational procedures regarding child safety and mandated reporting. However, it is important to recognize that our staff are NOT mental health specialists, counselors, psychologists, or psychiatrists.

BBTAI reserves the right to hold or transition services to the appropriate care team when the child's needs are beyond our scope of practice.



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X. Acknowledgement

By signing below, I acknowledge that:

- I have reviewed and understand the BBTAI Mandated Reporting & Child Safety Policy,
- I understand that Rhode Island law requires reporting of suspected abuse or neglect based upon reasonable suspicion,
- I understand that abuse does not need to be directly witnessed in order for a report to be made,
- and I understand that BBTAI prioritizes child safety, ethical responsibility, and trauma-informed care in all mandated reporting situations.

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Last Updated: May 2026